Christmas – Angels in the birth narratives

Focus concept – Angels (Type B)

Year Three, Autumn 2

Learning Objectives / Intended Learning Outcomes

Pupils should be able to:

- Express thoughts and ideas about angels. **(L2)**
- Discuss their own and others' ideas about angels. **(L3)**
- Identify and discuss the presence of angels in the birth narratives. **(L2)**
- Describe and explain the meaning of the angels in the birth narratives. **(L3)**
- Identify and discuss ways in which Christians use images of angels. **(L2/3)**

Assessment Opportunities

Evidence can be gathered when pupils:

- Share their pictures and express their ideas.
- Complete speech bubbles or diary entries.
- Create explanatory labels for the display.

Sequences of Activities

Step 1: Communicate – What do we think angels are like?
- Pupils close eyes and imagine an angel. Help pupils to create a "mind" picture by asking…*"how big is it? How do you know it is an angel? Can you see its face? How does it look? What words would you use to describe its face? Don't say them, remember them. How is it dressed? How does it move? Where has it come from? What does it do? Is it happy or sad? Why? Does it speak? What does it sound like? What does it say?*
- Pupils open eyes but do not discuss ideas yet. Straight away they paint/ draw/ create a collage of an angel and annotate it with a description.
- In class discussion, share pictures and descriptions and comment on one another's ideas.

Step 2: Apply – How are angels represented in art?
- **What do other artists think about angels?** Show a variety of Christmas cards showing angels. Have an open discussion about pupils' likes and dislikes of the images, what the artist or card designer is trying to show.
- *Questions: Where have artists got their ideas? Where do we get our ideas? Do these pictures help show us what Christians believe about angels?*

Step 3: Enquire – What do angels do in stories about the birth of Jesus?
- Tell the story of the angel visiting Mary (the annunciation). Suggested activities: On a picture of the annunciation, pupils complete speech bubbles for Mary and Gabriel. Hot seat pupils in role as Mary or Gabriel.
- Tell story of angels visiting shepherds. Pupils act out story, create a storyboard or complete a diary entry for one of the shepherds.

Step 4: Contextualise – Why do we think there are angels in these stories, what do they mean?
- Have a class discussion about the significance of angels in the stories.
- *Questions: where do you think the angels come from? What do the angels say about baby Jesus? What was their job/task in the stories? Can you think of other things which could be in the story which would show that baby Jesus is special? Would the stories be the same without them? What do you think Christians think about angels?*

Step 5: Evaluate – What do different depictions of Angels teach us?
- Create a display showing a variety of images of angels (eg in churchyards, stained glass windows, Christmas decorations, statues or in churches, wrapping paper etc) discuss. *How does this angel look? What do you think Christians believe about it? What do Christians think about when they see it?* Pupils write extended labels for the images.

Resources: Christmas cards, posters and works of art depicting angels. The bible story of the birth of Jesus from Matthew's gospel and Luke's gospel.

Key Concepts

- Concepts in human experience
- Concepts in religions
- Concepts specific to particular religions

Skills

- Reflection
- Empathy
- Comprehension
- Investigation
- Interpretation and analysis
- Evaluation

Attitudes

- Curiosity
- Open mindedness
- Self understanding
- Respect
- Wonder and appreciation

Programme of Study

Enquiry and skills.

Pupils should be taught how to:
- Enquire into concepts that are significant in religious and non-religious experiences.
- Contextualise the concept within religious practise and explore t diversity of practice and belief.
- Evaluate the concept within one or more religions.
- Communicate their own understanding and respond to the concept.