Knowledge organiser: GCSE Judaism beliefs and Practices

Sub topics

- The importance and use of the synagogue.
- The features of a synagogue: Orthodox and Reform.
- Public worship and key prayers in Judaism.
- The importance of Shabbat.
- The celebration of Shabbat in the home and the synagogue.
- Worship and prayer at home.
- Key ceremonies relating to birth.
- Coming of age ceremonies: Bar Mitzvah and Bat Mitzvah.
- Marriage in Judaism.
- Key Jewish practices relating to death and mourning.

Key words

- **Minyan.** A group of at least 10 adults; the minimum number of Jews required for a Jewish religious service.
- **Menorah.** A many-branched candlestick that holds either seven or nine candles.
- **Bimah.** A platform in a synagogue from where the Torah is read.
- **Aron Hakodesh.** The Ark- the holiest part of the synagogue, which contains the Torah scrolls.
- **Ner tamid**. Eternal light; a light that is kept burning in the synagogue above the Ark.
- **Tallit.** A prayer shawl.
- **Tefillin.** Small leather boxes containing extracts from the Torah, strapped to the wearer's arm and forehead for morning prayer.
- **Amidah.** Also known as the 'standing prayer'. The central prayer of Jewish worship.
- **Kaddish.** A prayer said by Jewish mourners that praises God and asks for peace.

Possible H/WK tasks-

Assessed H/WK tasks

Self/Peer assessed H/WK tasks

Students may be set additional assessed tasks by their class teacher which will help the class teacher to assess their progress and inform their planning.

Explain two contrasting Jewish beliefs about the role of women in public worship. [4 marks]

Produce a booklet or FAQs sheet on daily worship in an Orthodox synagogue. It could include:

- the requirement of a minyan; the role of the rabbi and cantor
- the wearing of kippah, tallit and tefillin
- the books used
- the key prayers said at each of the three services.

Opportunities for independent learning/Stretch and challenge

BBC Bitesize. (AQA GCSE section on Judaism)
https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/topics/zkbmcqt

www.myjewishlearning.com- A great source of knowledge to help consolidate or further understanding of Judaism

Visit the Manchester Jewish Museum. (With parental permission).

Chabad is an excellent source of information.
https://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/3710122/jewish/What-Is-Judaism.htm

Complete examination practice questions for unit 9 on shared area

Synagogue

- The synagogue is the place where Jews come together and meet for prayer, worship and study. There are certain prayers that can only be said in the presence of a Minyan in a synagogue.
- The synagogue provides key functions beyond prayer and worship, it is also used as a social centre, community centre, place of education and a place where Jews can carry out charity/ hold charity events.
- Whilst synagogues vary in design, there are certain key features that will be found in all synagogues. These include the Ner Tami (everlasting light), Aron Hakodesh (Ark, which contains the Torah scrolls) and the Bimah (Raised Platform)
- Orthodox and reform Jews differ in how they worship in the synagogue (See pages 238-239 for more detail) Differences include structure of service, language, music and roles of men and women.
- Orthodox males and some reform males and females wear Tallitt and tefillin to help them worship during the morning services in the synagogue.
- Prayer an be carried out at the synagogue and at home- one of the key Jewish prayers is the Amidah- the prayer of 18 blessings

Shabbat

- Shabbat is the Jewish holy day of the week; a day of spiritual renewal starting shortly before sunset Friday and continuing to sunset Saturday.
- Jews view Shabbat as a gift from God- an opportunity to relax and temporarily forget the concerns of everyday life and spend time focusing on worship of God and spending time with family.
- Jews believe that they are to rest on the 7th day just as God rested after he created the world. The mitzvot state that Jews should 'Keep the Sabbath day Holy' and therefore Jews are forbidden from doing work on the Sabbath.
- The celebration of Shabbat begins in the home with the mother lighting candles and a family meal. Jews will also spend time at the synagogue during Shabbat to focus on worship of God.

Worship and prayer at home

- As well as worship in the synagogue, Jews will also worship and pray at home. Jews believe that every day brings the opportunity to worship God.
- Jews pray three times a day. Jewish homes will have reminders of God to help focus Jewish prayer and remind them of God's commandments.
- Jewish homes will contain a mezuzah (a small box containing Torah scrolls/verses of Torah) and a menorah- a seven branches candlestick used during festival of Hannukah.
- Orthodox Jews will also study the Torah and Talmud at home as they regard these as the source of all Jewish laws

Key ceremonies

There are 4 key events in the life of the family that are celebrated with Religious rituals in Judaism.

Brit Milah: This is a ceremony associated with birth. It is the ceremony of male circumcision. It recalls the covenant made with Abraham.
Bar-Mitzvah/bat-Mitzvah: These are coming of age ceremonies in Judaism. Happen when girls turn 12 and boys turn 13. They re considered old enough to take full responsibility for their faith at this age. They will take full responsibility for following the mitzvot.
Marriage: Marriage is an important part of Jewish life. The marriage ceremony is stepped in symbolism relating to the Jewish faith. For example, when the couple marry the groom breaks a glass under his hell to show regret for the destruction of the temple.
Mourning for the dead: Jews have set mourning periods when someone dies. This helps them to remember the person that has died. These include the shiva period, which is an intense period od mourning for 7 days after the person has died.

Jewish festivals

There are 3 key Jewish festivals that we study on the AQA course
Rosh Hashanah: The Jewish new year- a time of judgement and forgiveness
Yom Kippur- 10 days after Rosh Hashanah- day of atonement
Pesach: Festival of Passover- festival remembering the Jewish exodus from Egypt that is celebrated in Spring.

Dietary laws

Jews have strict rules about what they can and cannot eat.
Kosher is the term used for food that meets the requirement of Jewish laws.
Trefah is the term used for food that Jews are forbidden to eat.
Orthodox Jews follow the Dietary laws strictly as they believe they have come from God d and are a call to holiness as they remind people daily of their faith.