**What can we learn about the Christian faith from the Chronicles of Narnia?**

**Key Stage:** 2  
**Year Groups:** 5/6  
**Length of unit:** 6 lessons

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<td>1</td>
<td>INTRODUCTORY LESSON Who is Aslan?</td>
<td>Read section from The Magician’s Nephew -The founding of Narnia. Create music in reference to the passage. Use instruments and children’s voices to recreate the scene. Draw the ‘founding’. Ask and answer questions and reflect on God and creation. John chapter 1:1-4</td>
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| 3      | Why is it always winter and never Christmas? - Hope and change | Christians believe in hope and change.  
John 2:1-10 Changing water into wine  
Luke 8:22-25 Changing from storm to calm  
Luke 9:40-56 Changing sickness to health and death to life  
Mark 11:46-5 Changing from blindness to sight  
Listen to Spring ‘The Four Seasons’ by Vivaldi. Think of things that you would like to see change in your life and discuss things that could change in the life of the class. Plant some seeds/bulbs |
| 5      | Why did Aslan have to die? - | Read a longish extract from The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe. Post-its: as the children listen they write down questions that arise in their minds. Display questions. Read/Tell the story of Jesus death and resurrection and repeat exercise with post-its. Hot seat Aslan. Revisit the post-its. Have any questions been answered? |
| 6      | EVALUATION LESSON | Draw 2 main characters and illustrate with their characteristics  
Write a paragraph about the Christian faith as you have learnt from the Chronicles  
Write a letter to CS Lewis.  
Hot seat God! |
Notes / Background to the unit:
This unit is designed to be challenging in order to raise standards of understanding of Christian faith. For the purpose of the lessons it is assumed that CS Lewis wrote The Chronicles as an allegory of the Christian faith. You will need book copies of ‘The Magician’s Nephew’ and ‘The Lion, The Witch and the Wardrobe’ by CS Lewis. If you can make time it would be valuable to read the 2 books yourself before starting the units. You will need to allow time to read passages from the books to the children during the lessons as the unit ties in closely with the books and not with film versions. It would be interesting to view the relevant films after the unit have been completed and they may make for an end of term ‘treat’. Lots of questions are raised during the units but no one is expected to have all the answers!! For the source material there are many different versions of the Bible available: try to use a version that is suitable for the children but that does not leave out important ‘bits’. The New International Version is always very reliable.

- This unit addresses issues of SMSC and PSHE
- Assessment ideas: 1. Use the highlighted ‘skills’ as the basis of assessment. 2. Use a Reflections journal for the children to record their own response to the lessons. 3. Use the outcomes to assess which children have understood the objectives. 4. Evaluation lesson at end of unit.
Unit title: What can we learn about the Christian faith from The Chronicles of Narnia?

**Age range:** Upper KS2

**Lesson:** 1 of 6

**Skills being developed:** Reflection; Investigation; Interpretation; Expression

**Lesson title:** The Magician’s Nephew

### Learning Objectives

*Through the learning experiences, pupils should learn:*

- that allegory and story can help us to understand difficult ideas about God

### Resources / Background

- There are some challenging ideas in this unit. ‘Tell the children CS Lewis was a very clever man who found that he could understand difficult ideas by using stories and allegory.

### Introduction:

**Explain allegory:** "symbolic work: a work in which the characters and events are to be understood as representing other things and symbolically expressing a deeper, often spiritual, moral, or political meaning” –dictionary definition.

Some people think that the Chronicles of Narnia are an allegory of the Christian faith.

What do you think? (simply ask for reaction to the question and then come back to it at the end of the unit)

### Main activities (including skills-based learning):

- **Listen to The Magician’s Nephew chapter 8 (p93) The fight at the lamp-post from ‘In the darkness something was happening…’ to ‘It was a Lion.’**
- **Discuss what is happening when the Lion is singing.**
- **Listen to ch. 9 ‘The founding of Narnia’ paragraph beginning ‘All this time the Lion’s song, and his stately prowl…’ p99**

**Investigation:** What questions do you want to ask about the story so far?

**Expression:**

Create some music called ‘The Voice of the earth…’ which reflects The Founding (creation) of Narnia.

Refer to the passage carefully...

Choose instruments for: the Voice (the most beautiful noise he had ever heard); the stars (cold, tingling, silvery voices); sky (changing from black, grey, white, pink, gold); instruments for the tiny streams and the broad swift river; instruments for the barren landscape that changes as the singing becomes more lilting, gentle and rippling and the land changes to be covered with trees, the rapid series of higher notes as the primroses suddenly appear in every direction.

The creation of the animals - A group of children could sing/hum a ‘tune that made you want to run and jump and climb. It made you want to shout’ as the land began to ‘bubble like water in a pot’

### Learning outcomes

**ALL:**

- make a connection between the ‘Founding of Narnia’ and the creation story in Genesis (AT1 L3)

**MOST:**

- express through music an understanding of the process of the story of creation (AT1 L4)

**SOME:**

- some will make connections between Jesus as the ‘Word’ and will begin to ask questions about the nature of Jesus (AT 2 L5)
Then all the noise fades into utter silence as all turn to the Lion.

**OR** Refer back to the passage from chapter 8 and to chapter 9 - Divide a single page into 3 equal divisions but allow some space to write somewhere on the page. In each division draw/colour The Founding of Narnia. The headings of each division could be ‘The appearance of the light’, ‘Grass, trees, daisies and buttercups’, ‘Grassy land bubbling like water in a pot’ as the animals appear’.

**Interpretation:**
- In the writing space make a list of the characteristics of Aslan. Eg powerful, stupendous, awesome. If Aslan represents Jesus write down what you think that Aslan teaches about Jesus. ‘I think that Aslan tells me that Jesus ….’
- ‘I think…..’
- Does anyone have any answers to our original questions?

**Plenary/Extending the thinking:**
Ask questions, discuss or quiet reflection time:

- ‘In the beginning was the WORD and the WORD was with God and the WORD was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. In him was life, and that life was the light of men.’ John chapter 1:1-4

NB Christians believe that the ‘Word’ refers to Jesus. What does this verse say about Jesus?
### Unit title: What can we learn about the Christian faith from The Chronicles of Narnia?

**Age range:** Upper KS2

**Lesson:** 2 of 6

**Skills being developed:**
- Reflection
- Investigation
- Empathy
- Evaluation

#### Lesson title: Temptation

**Learning Objectives**

*Through the learning experiences, pupils should learn:*

- that Christians believe that everyone is tempted to do wrong things (ECM 1) (SMSC)

**Resources / Background**

- Sweets – any allergies?

Temptation and betrayal are difficult but important subjects. This unit is designed to allow time for children to think about such issues but it may raise more questions than it answers – not a bad thing.

#### Introduction:

**Empathy** Have some sweets on show (to be eaten later if appropriate) What happens to you when you see these delicious things? What favourite treat would you find hard to resist? Make a list/draw pictures

OR Have sweets lying around and then make some pretext to leave the room. Have 2 children primed to ‘steal’ the sweets, others may be tempted! Come back in and own up to the set up, assure everyone that no one is in trouble then discuss what happened.

**Main activities (including skills-based learning):**

Listen to ‘The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe’ Chapter 4 – Turkish Delight

How did the White Witch get Edmund on her side?

Pretending to be kind/Making him comfortable/Promises of more Turkish Delight/Tricking him – Half truths ‘I very much want to know your charming relations…’

Tell the story of what happens next. Edmund betrays his brother and sisters. What made Edmund do that?

**Investigation:** What is ‘betrayal’? - Why do people ‘betray’ others (e.g. thinking of self, to get what we want, fear…..)

Do we ‘betray’ people?

How do we ‘betray’ people? (e.g. tell lies about them)

**Reflect** on the ‘temptation’ of seeing all the sweets.

Make a list of things that we know are wrong but that we sometimes do e.g. taking a little bit of money from someone, telling a lie to get ourselves out of a difficult situation etc

Read story of Jesus tempted in the desert. Matthew chapter 4:1-11

In pairs/small groups think of a temptation. e.g. ‘Being tempted to steal some sweets…..’ or ‘Tempted to be unkind to someone in the playground…..’ Create some scenarios where someone acts as the ‘tempter’ and others show efforts to resist the temptation. The ‘tempter’ needs to be ingenious in trying to persuade someone to give in. Who is going to win? Why do people give in?

**Evaluation:** Look up the words temptation and sin. Are they the same? Christians believe that

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**Learning outcomes**

e.g. what am I looking for / what can pupils do better now?

| ALL: | will be able to say that Christians believe that everyone is tempted to do wrong things (AT1 L3) |
| MOST: | will recognise that wrong behaviour can result when people put themselves first before other people (AT2 L4) |
| SOME: | will be able to distinguish between the Christian belief that everyone is tempted and giving in to temptation (AT1 L5) |
temptation is different from sin. How might this be?

**Plenary/Extending the thinking:**

**Investigation** or quiet reflection time:

- ‘No test or temptation that comes your way is beyond the course of what others have had to face. All you need to remember is that God will never let you down and he’ll never let you be pushed past your limit; he’ll always be there to help you come through it.’ 1 Corinthians chapter 10:13
**Unit title:** What can we learn about the Christian faith from The Chronicles of Narnia?

**Age range:** Upper KS2

**Lesson:** 3 of 6

**Skills being developed:** Reflection; Investigation; Evaluation; Application; Expression

**Lesson title:** Always winter and never Christmas....

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<th>Learning outcomes</th>
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<td><strong>Through the learning experiences, pupils should learn:</strong></td>
<td>Who likes snow? What is good and fun about snow? What is bad about snow? How would life be different if we always had snow? Look at the contrasts - what is good about the following and what is bad? Eg: Water is essential for life. Too much water can destroy people and land (flood) Sun (life/ drought) Eating (essential/ greed) Money (survival/selfishness) • What does ‘too much of a good thing’ mean?</td>
<td><strong>e.g. what am I looking for / what can pupils do better now?</strong></td>
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| • that the change that Aslan brought to Narnia is an image of the change that Jesus brought to people's lives | | **ALL:**
| • that Christians believe Jesus forgives sin (ECM 3) (SMSC) | | • can say that Christians believe that Jesus changed people’s lives (AT1 L3)
| **Resources / Background** | Main activities (including skills-based learning): | **MOST:**
| Resources – Spring from Vivaldi’s ‘The four Seasons’ | • Listen to chapter 11 (whole chapter if time, otherwise page 108 ‘And of course Edmund had to obey...’ to the end) | • will be able to evaluate the impact of the changes that Jesus brought into people's lives (AT1 L4)
| Seeds/bulbs, pots and compost will be needed for the plenary | Spring symbolises change in Narnia. **Investigation and Evaluation:** In groups look at the stories of Jesus changing the situation in the bible. Use one colour ‘post it’ to write down as many changes as you can and another to highlight the impact/effect that you think that the changes had on the people who were there. **Extension and application:** If these stories of change happened today what impact do you think they would have? John 2:1-10 Changing water into wine Luke 8:22-25 Changing from storm to calm Luke 9:40-56 Changing sickness to health and death to life Mark 11:46-5 Changing from blindness to sight | **SOME:**
| Enough bibles for children to work in groups | | • will explain that Christians believe that Jesus still changes people’s lives (AT1 L5) |
Make a list (from memory or scan through the gospels) and see how many other stories you can find where Jesus changes the situation.

Edmund began to change as he saw the spring coming to Narnia. Listen to The four Seasons by Vivaldi ‘La primavera’ (Spring) As you listen think about things that you would like to see changed in your life and in the life of the class. **Reflection**
- Agree as a class some ‘behaviours’ that you would like to see change in the school over the next few weeks and display it publicly eg classmates showing greater respect to each other, classmates listening more to each other etc...

**Plenary/ Extending the thinking:**
- Plant some bulbs/seeds and watch them grow and change over the next few weeks.
**Application:** As the bulbs grow use them to be a focus for change in the classroom. Ask questions and make observations about changes of attitude/behaviour. Is the class ‘growing’ in respect, consideration, listening…? The bulb changes into something more beautiful, has the class changed into something more beautiful?
**Expression:** Be ready to explain to any visitors to the class room the purpose of the bulbs.
### Learning Objectives

**Through the learning experiences, pupils should learn:**

- that there is a parallel between the White Witch and the serpent in the creation story
- that Christians believe that everyone does wrong at times (ECM 1) (SMSC)

### Main activities (including skills-based learning):

- **Introduction:**
  
  - In mixed ability groups make a list of the names of evil characters that you know in literature or in film. Eg Draco Malfoy, Bellatrix Lestrange in Harry Potter
  
  - Brainstorm words that would describe these characters. Eg cruel, selfish…

- **Introduce**: 'Chapter 5 The Deplorable Word' in 'The Magician's Nephew' by CS Lewis

- **Listen to**: (page 33) chapter 3 ‘Edmund and the wardrobe’ from: ‘the sledge was a fine sight as it came sweeping towards Edmund….’to (page 41) chapter 4 ‘Turkish Delight’ to ‘Next time! Next time! Don’t forget. Come soon.’

- **Look back at your list of evil characteristics. How do the words match the character of the White Witch?** What words would you add and what words would you take away?

- **Empathy:** What do you think about Edmund’s behaviour? What words would you use to describe Edmund in this scene? Make a list of Edmund’s characteristics. How would you have behaved if you were Edmund?

- **Read Genesis 3:1-7**

- **Make connections:** Make another list of the characteristics of the serpent then compare them with the characteristics of the White Witch. Are there any similarities?

- **When Edmund first met the White Witch he thought that she was beautiful and good.** **Investigation:** Why? If we want something badly does it affect our perceptions? (eg if we want something that belongs to someone else does it affect our perception of how wrong it would be to steal it?)

- **Ideas for mixed ability group discussion:** (could use post its on large piece of paper)
  
  - Can evil be attractive? Can you give examples in real life or fiction?
  
  - Do ordinary people do bad things? If so why? (Is there any link with Edmund?)
  
  - Is anybody perfect? Examples?

- **Feedback to the rest of the class.**
Plenary/ Extending the thinking:
Choose one for reflection and discussion:
Refer back to the group discussion. The following bible verses help to guide Christians as they think about these things.
2 Corinthians 11:14 ‘for Satan himself pretends to be an angel of light’ What is the impact of this belief?
Romans 3:23 ‘for all have sinned’ What are consequences of this idea? (everyone is the same and no one is perfect)
For more able: John 8:7 ‘anyone who has not sinned let him throw the first stone’ Need to set this story in its context that stoning at that time in Jewish law was the accepted punishment for the woman’s behaviour and that woman were not regarded as equal to men at that time. Therefore, Jesus is being radical in 1. challenging the law of the time and the law enforcers and 2. defending a woman.
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<td><strong>Skills being developed:</strong> Reflection; Empathy; Investigation; Interpretation; Evaluation</td>
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<td><strong>Lesson title:</strong> Why did Aslan have to die?</td>
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### Learning Objectives

**Through the learning experiences, pupils should learn:**

- Aslan died in Edmund’s place and Christians believe that Jesus died in the place of individual people
- that the death and resurrection of Jesus is central to Christian faith (ECM 1)

### Resources / Background

**Introduction:**

Tell the children that you are going to read quite a long extract from The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe. **Investigation:** As they listen ask them to write down one or two questions that they would like to ask on a post-it. Read chapter 13 ‘Deep Magic from the dawn of Time’ page 128 from ‘You have a traitor there, Aslan,’ said the Witch…’ to the end of the chapter and then **all of chapter 14 and chapter 15**

**Main activities (including skills-based learning):**

Ask the children to read out their questions and put their post-it on a large sheet for display. (similar questions may be grouped together)

**Investigation:** Read the story of Jesus death and resurrection (John 18 -20 use either a children’s bible or an adult version which ever is most appropriate) and ask the children to repeat the exercise of the questions on a post-it.

Compare the displays and look at any questions that are similar on both sheets. **Interpretation:** Does anyone have any answers to the questions?

Recap the story by Hot seating Aslan

**Empathy:** Ask Aslan questions such as:
- How do you feel about what Edmund did?
- Why did someone have to die as a result of Edmund being a traitor?
- Why did you let your enemies tie you up and not defend yourself?
- Why did you have to die?
- Where did your strength come from?
- What did you achieve by allowing the White Witch to kill you?
- What would have happened if you had stayed dead?

### Learning outcomes

**e.g. what am I looking for / what can pupils do better now?**

**ALL:**
- will know that the story of Aslan can be seen as an allegory for the story of the death and resurrection of Jesus (AT1 L3)

**MOST:**
- will ask questions about the purpose of the death of Aslan and the death of Jesus (AT2 L4)

**SOME:**
- will suggest answers to the difference it would make for Christian belief today if Jesus had stayed dead (AT2 L5)
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<td><strong>Evaluation:</strong> Look at some of the post-its. Have any of those questions been answered?</td>
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<td><strong>Reflection:</strong> To think about:</td>
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<tr>
<td>If Aslan had stayed dead what difference would that have made to the children/Narnia?</td>
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<tr>
<td>If Jesus had stayed dead what difference would that have made to his friends at the time?</td>
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<tr>
<td>If Jesus had stayed dead what difference would that make to Christian belief today?</td>
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**Evaluation lesson: What can we learn about the Christian faith from The Chronicles of Narnia?**

**Learning Objectives**

Through the learning experiences, pupils should learn:

- that allegory and story can help us to understand difficult ideas about the Christian faith
- that the death and resurrection of Jesus is central to Christian faith

**Resources / Background**

- The letters to CS Lewis could form part of an RE display
- Extension and additional background to CS Lewis – ‘Jack and the Wardrobe’ by Nicola Jemphrey Scripture Union

**Introduction:**

Recap on the idea of allegory. Assuming that CS Lewis was writing an allegory of the Christian faith who do you think is represented by:

- Aslan, the White Witch, the children, Mr Tumnus?

**Main activities (including skills-based learning):**

- Divide a landscape page in half and chose 2 of the characters from the Chronicles. Draw one character in each half and around the edge of the character write down words that describe them. If the character changed during the story find a way to explain that.
- Mixed ability pairs: Try to complete these statements ‘What we think Christians believe’
  - We think that Christians believe that temptation….and this leads them to…’
  - We think that Christians believe that sin…and this encourages them to…”
  - We think that Christians believe that forgiveness…. and this helps them to…”
  - We think that Christians believe that Jesus….and this inspires them to ……..’
- Write a letter to CS Lewis explaining whether or not you think that he wrote the Chronicles of Narnia as an allegory of the Christian faith. Write the evidence for your point of view. If you have changed your mind since the beginning of the unit write down the reasons for that. If you have not changed your mind then write down the reasons for that.

**Plenary/ Extending the thinking:**

- **Reflection:** Hot seat Jesus! What questions would you like to ask Him? What questions do you want to ask Him about temptation, sin, forgiveness, God? Are any of the questions that you asked Aslan relevant to ask Jesus? Jot the questions down and then ask for some volunteers who are prepared to have a go!

**Learning outcomes**

**e.g. what am I looking for / what can pupils do better now?**

**ALL:**
- will know that CS Lewis used allegory to explain difficult ideas about the Christian faith (AT1 L3)

**MOST:**
- will be able to describe the impact on Christians of their belief about temptation, sin, forgiveness and Jesus (AT2 L4)

**SOME:**
- will express their own view on the challenges that these beliefs have for themselves and others (AT2 L5)