Y3 Autumn: Religious Symbols
Enquiry: What do religious symbols represent?

Rationale	This opening KS2 RE unit develops pupils' understanding that objects and actions can communicate beliefs and values. Pupils begin by distinguishing everyday objects from objects that have religious meaning, recognising that significance comes from the beliefs and experiences people associate with them. They then study Christian symbols through the cross and the bread and wine of the Last Supper, before exploring the kara in Sikhi as a symbol of faith, belonging and commitment. The final enquiry brings these examples together: pupils explain what symbols represent, why they matter to believers and why an object's meaning cannot always be understood from its appearance alone. The unit introduces the golden threads of symbol, belief, identity and worship, laying foundations for later study of prayer and religious practices.			
Lessons	1. How can objects and symbols be special?	2. What is land used for in the UK?	3. What is land used for in the UK?	4. What do religious symbols tell us about people's beliefs?
Key vocab	symbol · religious · meaning	Christianity · cross · Last Supper · Communion	Sikhi · Sikh · kara · commitment	belief · identity · represent · compare
Key concepts	**Symbol and meaning:** An object or action can communicate an idea that is not obvious from its appearance. **Belief and worship:** Christian symbols express beliefs about Jesus and are used in worship and remembrance. **Identity and commitment:** The kara can show Sikh identity and remind its wearer of beliefs and responsibilities. **Religious literacy:** Different traditions use symbols in different ways; pupils explain meanings with reference to believers rather than guessing.			

	Core knowledge	Hinterland knowledge
Lesson 1	• A symbol is an object, image or action that represents an idea or meaning. • An object may be special because of the beliefs, memories or experiences connected with it. • Religious symbols can help believers express or remember what matters to them.	• Everyday examples such as a school badge, medal or family photograph can help explain symbolic meaning. • An object may look ordinary to someone who does not know its meaning. • Different people may attach different meanings to the same object.
Lesson 2	• Christians believe Jesus died on the cross; the cross can represent his sacrifice, love and hope. • At the Last Supper, Jesus shared bread and wine with his disciples and told them to remember him. • In Communion, many Christians use bread and wine to remember Jesus; practices and interpretations vary.	• The Last Supper took place before Jesus' arrest and crucifixion. • Bread is associated with Jesus' body and wine with his blood in the Last Supper account. • Churches may use a cross or crucifix, and Christian traditions differ in how they understand Communion.
Lesson 3	• Sikhi is a religion and Sikhs believe in one God. • The kara is a circular metal bracelet worn by many Sikhs; it is one of the Five Ks. • The kara can remind Sikhs that God has no beginning or end and encourage them to act rightly.	• Sikhi began in Punjab, in South Asia, over 500 years ago. • The Five Ks are kesh, kangha, kara, kachera and kirpan, associated with initiated Khalsa Sikhs. • Wearing the kara can express identity, belonging and commitment; individual Sikh experiences differ.
Lesson 4	• Religious symbols can represent beliefs and values that are not visible in the object itself. • The Christian cross and the Sikh kara communicate different religious meanings. • To explain a symbol accurately, we should connect it to what believers think, do and remember.	• Pupils can compare a cross, bread and wine, and a kara without assuming they are used in the same way. • Some symbols are worn, some displayed and some used during worship. • An informed response uses evidence from the religions studied and recognises that believers are not all identical.