

The Easter Journey

It is important that there is a smooth transition from scene to scene so that the whole experience runs seamlessly. Encourage group leaders to keep in role at all times to enable the children and helpers to take part in a thoughtful and focused way.

Introductory warm-up

On arrival, the children are welcomed to the presentation and are told that they are going on a very special journey. They are invited into the first space and are greeted by the storyteller who introduces him- or herself. The storyteller asks the children to join him or her on a very special journey at this special time of year.

(Throughout the presentation it is important to remember that children are used to drama and role-play as part of their everyday curriculum. A firm but friendly manner and high expectation of behaviour helps to establish boundaries with lively Year 5s. Teachers are there to supervise if needed, but it is also helpful if they are encouraged to join in the experience.)

Aim

To introduce the children to the storyteller and other team members; to introduce the story of Easter and the Easter journey presentation, and to help children settle in to the environment.

Setting the scene

The warm-up helps the children to understand that Jerusalem at that point in history was a place full of contradictions. It was ruled by the Romans and security was high because of the approaching Passover festival. Many travellers had come to the city to take part in the festival and the streets were crowded. Jesus enters this busy scene riding on a donkey—not at all what would be expected of a king. His reputation as a teacher, healer and worker of miracles had gone before him and there was much excitement and anticipation at his arrival. The children are asked to imagine how they would have felt being part of that crowd.

Character(s)

Storyteller

Costume

None needed

Scenery

No scenery is necessary, just a space large enough for the children to move around. No special lighting is needed other than a feeling of daylight.

Props

None needed

If space allows, rather than miming on the spot invite the children to wander about and capture in freeze poses the moods of that week, such as excitement; surprise; suspicion; fear; sadness; puzzlement; disbelief; shock and so on.

Storyteller: We are about to set out on a journey. We are going to travel through the days that led up to what we now know as Easter Day. They are dramatic days. There will be lots to see and do and touch and taste and feel. We want to try to work out for ourselves what we think this journey means for us today. The Easter story has meant a great deal to people down the ages and even changed lives. However, it has to be a story we work out for ourselves. I wonder what this Easter journey will mean for you today...

To go on our Easter journey we need to step into a story. In fact, we are following in the footsteps of Jesus and his friends in the most dramatic week of Jesus' life. Let's get ourselves ready to step into the story of Jesus' Easter journey.

During this week we will experience many different moods.

Some people have walked for miles to be in Jerusalem for the great festival of Passover (*start miming walking on the spot and encourage the children to join in*).

It was a week that began with processions and people running to join the crowds (*mime running and jostling, but don't allow the children to push each other*).

But in the narrow streets of Jerusalem you could not move quickly (*mime people shuffling along*).

And with such large crowds there were security fears, so there were soldiers about (*mime marching on the spot*).

It was a week full of highs and lows, hopes and fears. Sometimes in the story people thought it best to just creep quietly around in the dark (*mime creeping quietly*).

It was a week that ended in a most unexpected way. People began running about again because they discovered something that changes everything (*mime running in excitement*).

What they heard and what they saw stunned people and left many rooted to the spot (*mime standing stock still*).

So are you ready? Let's step into the story of the Easter Journey!

Staying in the same room or area, the storyteller leads the children straight into the next story.