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Introduction

This book offers 20 different assemblies that can be used throughout the school year. Some of the assemblies include Collective Worship, which will enable your school to meet the relevant legal requirements. Others are assemblies that will make a valuable contribution to the life of your school. While assemblies are not required by law, schools do legally have to provide a daily act of worship for all pupils.

The assemblies in this book focus on themes related to the seasons throughout the year, such as weather, nature and celebrations. The assemblies are ordered as they happen throughout the school year. Some of the assemblies are aimed at children in KS1 and some at children in KS2. They are designed for use with a whole key stage or individual classes. The assemblies involve a variety of approaches, including presentation, discussion, storytelling, and some offer the opportunity for child involvement.

What will I find in each assembly?

There is a helpful grid at the top of each assembly page showing the time of year, age range, audience and assembly type. The format for each assembly is the same, with clear objectives, required resources, background information, an introduction and main assembly ideas. In addition, each concludes with a closing prayer or thought. Some assemblies are also accompanied by supplementary resource materials in the form of photocopyable sheets to be used during the assembly. These resources are also available to download at www.scholastic.co.uk/20-best-assemblies. Where this is possible you will see this icon within the assembly notes:



Tips for smooth assemblies

- Ideally you should read through the background information and if there is time rehearse assemblies in advance.
- Make sure that any resources required are prepared ahead of time.
- Make sure that everyone will be able to hear you, and see both you and any resources you have.
- Try to involve children wherever possible but remember to allow time for this.
- Make sure that children are briefed if they are required to perform in any way.
- Try to create an appropriate atmosphere, for example by using music.

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Patterns in nature

Objectives

- To wonder at the intricate patterns in nature, as seen in the winter frost.

Resources

- the photocopiable sheet 'The little spider' on page 20 

Led by	Time of year	Age range
teacher	November to February	KS1
Audience	Type	
class	discussion and storytelling	

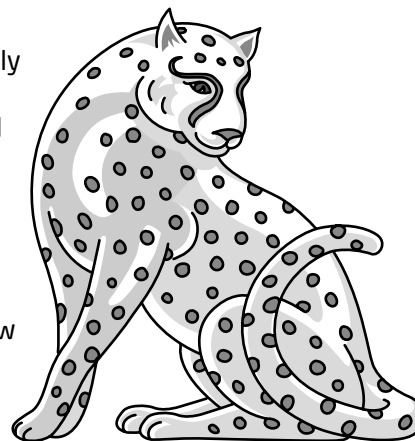
Background

This assembly gives the children the opportunity to wonder at the delicate frost patterns that can be seen at this time of the year and to appreciate the beautiful patterns found in nature.

Although the story of the spider's web is not in the Bible, it is a charming tale for young children and there are many published versions of it.

Introduction

- Ask the children if they have recently seen the frost sparkling on the grass? What did they think it looked like? Did they like the way it seemed to coat everything in tiny crystals that glitter in the light?
- Ask them if they have ever seen frost patterns on glass? What did they look like? Describe to them how frost patterns can sometimes look like fantastic flowers and leaves. Tell them that these patterns are made up of very tiny crystals.
- Ask them to think of other patterns in nature. For example, seeds in the centre of a sunflower, petals round the centre of a flower, rings in the middle of tree trunks, or spots on an animal's fur. Point out that these patterns are often made up of small parts, too.
- If nobody mentions it, suggest that the spider's web is also a pattern in nature and that today's story is all about spiders' webs.



Main assembly

- Read the photocopiable sheet 'The little spider' on page 20, telling the legend of the spider's web that protected the baby Jesus from Herod's soldiers. You may wish to ask children to act out the story as you tell it.
- When you have finished, discuss the story with the children. Point out that, although she is very small, the spider manages to save the lives of Joseph, Mary and Jesus.
- The story tells us that however small we are, we are all important and we can all make a contribution. Finish the assembly by drawing a parallel with the theme of the assembly: for example, each tiny frost crystal is important in making up the overall frost pattern on the windowpane in the morning.

Closing thought or prayer

Dear God, thank you for the frost which shimmers and sparkles, and thank you for the many beautiful patterns in nature. (Amen)

The little spider

Retold by Lizzie McWhirter

Everybody knows about the ox and the ass who were in the stable in Bethlehem the night Jesus was born. But not many people know about the little spider who lived up high in the rafters. She watched everything that happened, although no one saw her. She watched the ox and the ass give baby Jesus their manger to sleep in; she watched the shepherds bring him their simple gifts; she watched the three kings giving their grand gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. And the little spider wished and wished that she could give the baby Jesus a present too. But she was too small!

One night, Joseph, Mary and Jesus had to leave the stable in Bethlehem. They had been warned that King Herod wanted to kill Jesus because he had heard that the baby would one day be king. The family decided to go to Egypt,

and the spider decided that she would go too. They travelled a long way and eventually, tired and weary, they stopped to rest in a cave in the hillside.

That night, the little spider heard the Roman soldiers approaching. She tried to wake up the sleeping family. But she was too small! They could not hear her and slept on soundly. The spider was very worried and wondered what she could do. Then she had an idea. Quickly, she spun a thick web across the entrance to the cave. When the soldiers saw the web, they did not bother looking inside the cave – it was obvious that no one had entered it recently because the web was not broken!

The little spider had saved the Holy Family, and so had given them a very precious gift indeed!

