

# **Judaism & The Synagogue – Primary Level**

## **What is a Synagogue?**

Watch this downloadable five-minute video, showing the Synagogues across Scotland, including Garnethill, and explains the defining features found in all synagogues:

[https://www.scojec.org/resources/videos/synagogues\\_in\\_scotland.html](https://www.scojec.org/resources/videos/synagogues_in_scotland.html)

## **Questions**

**What are the three essential parts of a synagogue and what are their functions?**

1. Bimah – Platform from which the service is led and the scrolls are read
2. Ark – Cupboard where the torah scrolls are kept
3. Eternal Light – represents God's eternal nature

**What other items will you typically find?**

1. Torah
2. Yad
3. Tablet with the Ten Commandments
4. Star of David
5. The Royal Prayer
6. Memorial plaques and commemorative windows

**What is the difference between where people sit when they are in an Orthodox or a Reform synagogue?**

In an Orthodox synagogue men and women sit separately and in Reform, they sit together.

**What items are worn in a synagogue and what are the meanings of these items?**

1. Kippah – A head covering to symbolise that God is above you
2. Tallit – A prayer shawl worn due to a commandment to wear a garment with four corners and tassels.

**Discussion & Reflection** Are you familiar with any other places of worship?  
How is a Synagogue the same or different from those places?

## **What happens on Shabbat?**

Watch this short video, which shows how one family celebrate shabbat (also called Shabbos) at home: <https://jewishmuseum.org.uk/schools/asset/a-family-s-shabbat/>

### **Questions**

#### **What is the reason for shabbat?**

It commemorates God creating the world in six days and having a day of rest on the seventh day.

#### **What things do the family do to mark the beginning of shabbat?**

A family meal, light two candles, blessings are made over children, the wine and the food.

#### **What special food is eaten? What is its significance?**

Challah is eaten – a plaited bread. It represents the manna that God sent from heaven. Two loaves were sent on Friday so they didn't have to work on Saturday.

#### **What is the purpose of the Havdalah ceremony and what happens?**

Havdalah marks the end of shabbat and the beginning of the new week ahead. A multi-wicked candle is lit, spices are smelled, a blessing is said over the wine. The candle is extinguished in the wine.

**Discussion & Reflection:** Does your family have any days with special meals or traditions?

### **Activity**

Try making your own plaited challah using playdoh:

[https://www.scojec.org/resources/5\\_minute\\_judaism/shabbat/activity\\_sheets/plait\\_challah.pdf](https://www.scojec.org/resources/5_minute_judaism/shabbat/activity_sheets/plait_challah.pdf)

## General Resources

Educational resources with an emphasis on Judaism in Scotland are available on the website of JCoS (Jewish Council of Scotland):

<https://www.scojec.org/resources/education.html>

JCoS have produced downloadable posters with information about key festivals and events: <https://www.scojec.org/resources/jjc/jjc.html>

The Jewish Museum in London has resources for primary and secondary level, including videos, podcasts, ideas for activities and a selection of objects from the collection:

<https://jewishmuseum.org.uk/schools/in-the-classroom/learning-portal/>