

Biblical languages

Introduction

Go through the alphabet and look at the alphabet we use. Sing an alphabet song with small children. Talk about other languages. Some of the pupils may live in or have visited different parts of the British Isles where other languages are spoken. They may have been to other countries or speak languages other than English themselves. You can use the first three slides of the **Alphabets and languages** presentation.

Explain that there are many different alphabets and ways of writing. If you have pupils or staff who speak a range of languages they may be able to share different alphabets that they use. Make a display of different types of writing: Arabic, Chinese, Japanese, Tamil, Russian, sign language, Braille . . .

Useful websites for scripts and alphabets

www.word2word.com/alphabet.html Shows a wide selection of alphabets from around the world

www.ancientscripts.com This site has ancient scripts and many still in use today e.g. Bengali, Arabic

www.britishsignlanguage.com Description and video of a wide range of words in sign language

www.british-sign.co.uk/fingerspelling.php#print Finger spelling chart

www.bl.uk/learning/images/whywrite/large4897.html The alphabet in Braille

Core material

The Bible is very, very important to Christians. It is full of stories about God and Jesus. In its stories and teaching Christians learn about living in friendship with God and living God's way; a way of love, fairness and peace. That is why people spent so much time learning new languages so that they could translate the Bible.



Select from the following activities:

1. Show the rest of the presentation **Alphabets and languages** and engage the pupils in the activities.
 - What do they notice about the Biblical languages?
 - What looks like English? What is different?
 - Do any of them have a name that comes from Hebrew or Greek? You will find lists of names on the presentation.
2. Explain translation by doing some instant translation with the children. It does not matter what language is used. Alternatively use the translation tool on the computer. You could take an extract from the Bible:

'God is love'

The Bible had to be translated into English and into other languages of the British Isles so that people could read its stories. It was hard work and took many people a long time.

3. As a class ask pupils for suggestions of words that they would want to translate so that lots of people could read them. These should be words that make the world a better place.

Reflection

The words the pupils suggested under point three can be typed and printed on card. The same word in a different language can be printed on the back of the card using the computer translation facility or the resources of your staff and pupils.

