

10 Tips for Celebrating Harvest in schools



1. Don't assume that children know what a Harvest Celebration is in church or school. Explain that it is a traditional celebration of God's goodness in creation and an opportunity to remember our responsibility to care for those who don't have as much as we do.

Question: Can we plan to talk about Harvest in classrooms /assembly and have a display in our corridor?

2. Find out when your parish church is holding its harvest service.

Question: Could you hold a school harvest service in the church around the same time – when the church is decorated? This would need planning with your rector.



3. Have a harvest service / assembly in school. Invite your rector and also invite someone connected with harvest – e.g. a farmer / a shopkeeper / a cook to talk about the importance of harvest.

Question: Can we integrate this visit with other curricular topics or any work we are doing under the theme of farming or the environment?



4. As you prepare for Harvest you might have a theme of thankfulness in school. You might make the Autumn leaves of thankfulness display in the Harvest folder on the website.

Question: Can we talk about harvest and build a sense of expectation that this is a special time of saying thank you to God?

5. Find out about places in the world where harvest is poor, where there is famine or where there are food shortages. Display a list of places and a map and include them in prayers at Assembly or in prayers being written for the Harvest service.

Question: Can we think about the world, climate and environment and human factors that impact on harvest? Awareness is important but also allow children to pose the challenging questions about justice, climate and global citizenship issues.

6. Plan music and prayers for the service. You may like to practise some of the traditional harvest hymns such as 'We plough the fields' 'All things bright and beautiful' or others you will find online such as 'Cauliflowers fluffy'. Children can write prayers or you can

write a compilation prayer as a class, listing all the harvest items you are thankful for. It could be turned into a poem / song / accompanied by percussion instruments....

Question: Who will choose the songs and theme? Can the children from one class take on the planning?



7. Have a five-finger Harvest prayer.

The first finger is thanking God, the giver of life.

The second finger thanks the farmers who brought in the harvest

The third finger thanks the food processors who add variety and longer life to food

The fourth finger thanks the distributors and retailers who make the food available to us.

The fifth finger thanks the people who shop for and cook the food for us.



8. Sometimes it is a tradition of the parish or school to make a collection for those who don't have as much as we do. This could be a food collection of non-perishable goods for a local food bank or homeless charity or a collection of money for a national or international charity. Again, your class may have some ideas.

Question: How do we best focus on those in need while we celebrate harvest? What is our school policy re charity giving? Does our parish have a charity they are supporting at harvest and can we join with them?

9. Explore harvest traditions from different religions and around the world. This could be some research work in a classroom and findings could be presented in assembly. The Follow Me programme also includes many ideas and themes around harvest.

Question: Can we research the Jewish harvest celebration called Sukkot or the USA celebration of Thanksgiving? Other countries have different traditions such as Chuseok in Korea.



10. Advertise your celebration of harvest in school or church with displays, social media posts etc. It's a good highlight for September / October in school. It also links in well with events such as the National Ploughing Championships.

**For more resources/ training needs contact Jacqui Wilkinson
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