

# 13.1 Prepare To Wait

Back to themes

Back to Autumn

## Preparation

Search and display an image of an oil lamp.

Can anyone remind me of the theme of last week's assembly and thoughts for the day. For many people in the United Kingdom they are busily preparing for Christmas. If I had a Christmas to-do list, what sort of things do you think might be on it?

- Order turkey
- Buy partner/friends/children presents
- Find a nice gift for **Insert teachers name**
- Book a nice Christmas get away in the Bahamas (Only kidding)

For many Christians, Advent is a sort of practise for something they believe will happen in the future. Advent remembers the time before Jesus was born and Christmas celebrates his birth. Many Christians believe that Jesus will come back to earth some day and Advent helps them to remember and prepare for his return.

For Christians and many non-Christians, Advent is a time of waiting, but it is certainly not a time for sitting and not doing anything as if you were waiting for a bus. It is a time for preparation for what is coming. What does the word 'prepare' mean? To prepare means to get something ready. For example, you might prepare a meal by making sure you have all the correct ingredients. You might need to peel and chop the ingredients before cooking, only then can you eat the meal. You probably prepare your school bag the night before, putting



in your PE kit and books for the next day. Even waiting for a bus requires some sort of preparation – you will need to research the route and make sure you have some way of paying for your trip.

**Ask the teachers...** Have any of the teachers finished buying all the presents they need this year? Have you written your cards and sent them yet? Every year you will meet or hear of people who have already bought all the presents and sent all their cards very early in the run up to Christmas. Those people can enjoy the run up to Christmas without worrying that they will run out of time or the shops haven't got what they need.

**Matthew 25:1-13 is called the Parable of the Ten Virgins. The ten virgins were probably part of the bridal party, although some think they may be the brides. For the purpose of this story they have been called 'bridesmaids'.**

There is a parable in the Bible that Jesus uses to teach about preparation.



The parable goes something like this. At a wedding ceremony there were ten bridesmaids waiting for the groom to arrive and marry his new bride. In ancient Jewish weddings, the bride had to wait for the groom to come and collect her and take her to his family home. The wedding would also traditionally take place in the evening or during the night. The ten bridesmaids had oil lamps and waited for the groom to arrive. The groom was late and the bridesmaids fell asleep whilst they were waiting. Their lamps used oil to keep them alight, but because the groom was later than the bridesmaids were expecting the oil was beginning to run out. Five of the bridesmaids had prepared and bought along extra oil, they refilled their lamps and their lamps kept burning. The other five hadn't. They left the wedding procession to find a 24-hour oil seller so that they could buy some more oil. By the time they came back they had missed the wedding.

Jesus calls the bridesmaids that prepared the oil before the wedding 'wise'. They didn't know when the groom would arrive, and the groom often arrived late, so the wise bridesmaids made sure they had some spare oil just in case. The bridesmaids that weren't prepared are called 'foolish'. Waiting and preparation are important at Advent, but they are also important skills that we use throughout our lives. Schools are places of preparation. Nursery prepares us for infant school, infant school prepares us for junior school. Junior school prepares us for secondary school. Secondary school prepares us for whatever comes next. In the story the wise bridesmaids made the most of their time before the wedding preparing

the oil for their lamps. You could say that all of us are waiting for whatever is going to happen next, whether at Christmas, at school, in our jobs or at home. So, the question is how well do we prepare. Do we put in the effort now knowing that we will benefit from it later?

This week, in our assemblies and thoughts for the week, we are going to explore what it means to prepare.

## Time to reflect

- What did the wise bridesmaids do to be called wise?
- What did the foolish bridesmaids do to be called foolish?
- What are you waiting for? (Christmas? Another important festival?)
- Do you need to prepare for it?

## Reflection (Prayer)

*(Dear God)*

We are thankful for the events celebrated in our communities. We are reminded that preparation is something that can make our lives a little easier and can help us make the most of the events that are ahead of us. May we be wise in our decisions and help us to make the most of the opportunities we have now at school, knowing that they are preparing us for the future. *(Amen)*



## 13.2 Tortoise And The Hare

Back to themes

Back to Autumn

Can anyone recount the story of the wise and foolish bridesmaids? Why were five of them wise? Why were five of them called foolish?

Once upon a time there was a tortoise and a hare. The hare was the fastest animal in the woods and he challenged all the other animals to a race. No animal would volunteer because they thought the race was unfair. The hare kept asking until the tortoise accepted. The tortoise took a week training and preparing for the race. The race started and the hare shot off but even though the tortoise was walking as fast as he could the hare was just too quick. The hare thought to himself, I'm so fast and the tortoise is so slow, I could take a rest and still beat him. Not far from the finish line the hare sat down, it was a hot and sunny day and he soon felt drowsy and fell asleep. When the hare awoke he looked towards the start line, but the tortoise was nowhere to be seen, turning to the finish the hare spotted the tortoise. He ran as fast as he could, but the tortoise won the race.

Who has heard this story before? As it is Advent we have been thinking about the words 'waiting' and 'preparation'. Both 'waiting' and 'preparation' happen in this story. The tortoise took a week to prepare for the race. I wonder how he prepared? I wonder if he thought I'll get fitter training for the race even though I don't think I'll win it? Even though I think the tortoise didn't think he would win I'm sure he benefitted from the preparation. The hare 'waited' when he

should really have kept going. Sometimes it is good to wait, like when we wait with an open door for someone else. Sometimes it isn't good to wait, like when the hare was showing off in front of the tortoise. Sometimes we might wait for the teacher to give us the answer to a question, although we would benefit more if we could find the answer for ourselves.

### Time to reflect

- How do you think the tortoise would benefit from preparing for the race?
- When is it good to wait?
- When is it not good to wait?
- What skills would you improve if you worked out or researched the answer to a question rather just asking the teacher?

### Reflection (Prayer)

*(Dear God)*

We are thankful for the events celebrated in our communities. We are reminded that preparation is something that can make our lives a little easier and can help us make the most of the events that are ahead of us. May we be wise in our decisions and help us to make the most of the opportunities we have now at school, knowing that they are preparing us for the future. *(Amen)*



## 13.3 What's Next?

Back to themes

Back to Autumn

Can everyone touch their nose? Do you think a new born baby can touch their nose if I asked them? Why?

As babies move their arms and legs they begin to learn how to control them. Have you ever watched a baby lying under a mobile? They will try to touch the toys hanging above them. This movement is all good preparation. It is building up their muscles and helping them to control their arms and legs. There are lots of ways in which we prepare for the future without realising that we are preparing for the future.

In Physical Education we may learn and practise the skill of catching. Can you think of games that you will need to use the skill of catching: netball, basketball, rounders, softball, cricket, dodgeball (my favourite), football (goalkeeper). Learning and practicing how to catch will prepare us to be better at playing these games. Learning to add will prepare you to take away/subtract, learning your times tables will prepare you to use the skill of division.

Many skills that we learn prepare us to be able to learn other skills or to solve harder problems and challenges.

### Time to reflect

Think of the skills that would prepare a person for the following:

- Working on a fair ground ride
- A paper-round
- Accountant
- Doctor or nurse
- Teacher
- Shop keeper
- Soldier
- Working on a market stall
- Fireman or Firewoman
- To achieve your potential in school

### Reflection (Prayer)

*(Dear God)*

We are mindful that what we do now and what we have done in the past is preparing us for the future. We are thankful for those around us that want to help us prepare to be the best we can be. At Advent as many people are busily preparing for Christmas, remind us that what we do today will help us with whatever we face in the future. *(Amen)*



## 13.4 Walk Before We Can Run

Back to themes

Back to Autumn

Discuss the phrase 'We must learn to walk before we can run!'

### Time to reflect

Can pupils come up with similar phrases, share the ideas and discuss how the preparation helps in each phrase.

e.g.

'We should learn to times before we can divide!'

'Build the walls before putting on the roof!'

### Reflection (Prayer)

*(Dear God)*

We are mindful that what we do now and what we have done in the past is preparing us for the future. We are thankful for those around us that want to help us prepare to be the best we can be. At Advent as many people are busily preparing for Christmas, remind us that what we do today will help us with whatever we face in the future. *(Amen)*



# 13.5 Wise and Foolish Preparation

Back to themes

Back to Autumn

## Preparation

Bookmark Matthew 7:24-27 or download the video 'The Parable of the wise and foolish builders (2 minutes 4s)

<http://www.max7.org/en/resource/WiseFoolishBuilders> These videos can be downloaded on memory sticks and kept as a permanent resource in the school courtesy of [www.max7.org](http://www.max7.org)

In the first assembly this week, we heard the parable about the wise and foolish bridesmaids. Can anyone remember why five were called wise and five were called foolish? There is another parable in the Bible that starts with the words 'wise and foolish,' does anyone know what it is? Show the video or read the story. The wise builder in our story built his house on rock. He would have needed to work hard to make sure that his house was fastened to the rock, the foolish builder wouldn't have needed to work hard because securing his house to the sand would be as easy as putting a tent peg into soft earth. The storm came and the house on the rock stood firm but the house on the sand didn't have the foundations it needed to withstand the wind and the rain.

Jesus reminded his followers that the wise man was like a man who listens to his teachings and acts on them, the foolish

builder was like a person who listens but ignores Jesus' teachings. We will hear lots of teaching, advice and words from our teachers and our family. If we act on that advice it will help us to prepare for the future.

## Time to reflect

- What is a piece of good advice that you've heard recently?
- How would you act on that piece of advice?
- What could you do today that will help you in the future?
- What could you put a bit more effort into that will ensure a better result?

## Reflection (Prayer)

*(Dear God)*

We are mindful that what we do now and what we have done in the past is preparing us for the future. We are thankful for those around us that want to help us prepare to be the best we can be. At Advent as many people are busily preparing for Christmas, remind us that what we do today will help us with whatever we face in the future. *(Amen)*

