



LIFELINE 4: PROJECTS AND TOPICS

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Article Category:

Lifeline Library

Byline:

Pat Thomson continues her seven-part series with the theme of Celebrations and Festivals.

Pat Thomson continues her seven-part series

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Putting a project together ideally begins with an unhurried survey of all the resources, and then a drawing together of the elements which most suit the age and ability of your particular group of children.

For the 5-12 age range, each section covers one major topic and suggests non-fiction books, stories and poems related to the one theme. The addresses of organisations which offer help and material to schools are also included. The result should be a broadly based range of options which remind you of good material, inform you about new books and maybe even suggest new approaches within the chosen theme.

PART 6: CELEBRATIONS AND FESTIVALS

Non-fiction books have been divided into three broad groups: festivals associated with particular faiths, family celebrations, and seasonal high jinks, some of which have only tenuous links with their origins. Inevitably, the groups will overlap. The very many books on Christmas are easy to find so this festival is represented briefly by less usual examples. Some good series which cover festivals from many different cultural origins are signposted and traditional British festivals, some of which are disappearing, have also been included.

INFORMATION BOOKS

Festivals and faiths

Eid-ul-Fitr, Kenneth McLeish, Ginn 1985, one of a set of six books plus teacher's notes, 0 602 22688 0. £11.50 pbk for set. Part of the 'Celebrations' series, this is an account of the 'Festival of the ending of the fast', the last day of Ramadan, in story format with illustrations. Three stories of the Prophet follow, and then the final section uses modern photographs to describe the feast day itself. This arrangement is used with the other titles. **Chinese New Year** tells how a creature is assigned to each year, the middle section gives birthdays and 'horoscopes' and the final section describes the modern festival, again with contemporary photographs. The other titles are **Diwali**, **Christmas**, **Hanukka** and **Carnival**.

Festival!, Rosalind Kerven, Macmillan Education 1986, £8.95 each. A series of four titles: **Carnival** (0 333 37904 7), **Diwali** (0 333 37903 9), **Chinese New Year** (0 333 37901 2) and **Ramadan and Eid-ul-Fitr** (0 333 37902 0). These

consist of teacher's notes and work cards for juniors.

Festival!, Olivia Bennett, Macmillan Education 1986, £3.75 each. A similar series, also with teacher's notes. **Ramadan and Eid-ul-Fitr** (0 333 37898 9) and **Chinese New Year** (0 333 37897 0) have copiable worksheets with suggest activities across the curriculum. **Carnival** (0 333 37900 4) takes us to Trinidad, tells us about the historical background and then describes the build-up to the great event. All its component parts, costume, musical instruments, the calypso, have sections and we finish back in Britain, in Notting Hill. Brief reference is made to other countries which have carnivals.

Faiths and Festivals, Martin Palmer, Ward Lock Educational 1984, 0 7062 4293 9, £7.95. A calendar of festivals across many faiths. A 'When?', 'What happens?' and 'Why?' approach. For older pupils or as a teacher's background book.

The **Living Festivals** series from the Religious and Moral Education Press concentrates on information in a fairly densely presented text. Questions, activities, addresses and further reading lists are appended. All the major festivals are represented, including Christian. As examples:

Guru Nanak's Birthday, Margaret Davidson, RMEP 1982, 0 08 027877 9, £1.60 non-net; 0 08 027878 7, £1.95 net, describes the Guru's youth, the roots of the Sikh religion, dress and customs and the birthday festival itself.

Saraswati Puja, Sauresh Ray, RMEP 1985, 0 08 031744 8, £1.60 non-net; 0 08 031745 6, £1.95 net, provides similar information about a Hindu festival.

My Class at Diwali, Ruth Thomson, Watts 1986, 0 86313 425 4, £5.95. From about 5 years. The class builds up to a Diwali assembly and we see the preparations: making diwas, rangoli patterns, shadow pictures, all photographed in a multi-ethnic classroom.

Sweet-Tooth Sunil, Joan Solomon, Hamish Hamilton 1984, 0 241 11201 X, £4.95. The family get ready for Diwali, each playing a part, but little Sunil's attention is concentrated on the sweets. Family photo-story.

Dat's New Year, Linda Smith, A & C Black 1985, 0 7136 2644 5, £4.50. The Chinese New Year for younger children with photographs and short, explanatory captions. The activities photographed would be fun to copy.

Sam's Passover, Lynne Hannigan, A & C Black 1985, 0 7136 2646 1, £4.50. A group of young children visit the synagogue and learn something of the Jewish faith. Then we follow Sam and his family through the preparations for Passover.

Easter, Julian Fox, Wayland 1984, 0 85078 451 4, £5.95. The story of Easter, Holy Week day by day, the significance of eggs and then the secular aspects, plentifully illustrated.

Countdown to Easter, Lesley Cox and Leslie Foster, Macmillan Education 1984, 0 333 30753 4, o/p. The religious background and social customs are covered from Shrovetide. There are activities, including recipes, and chapters on art and music associated with this time. Includes a reference material section. Useful teacher's background book. See also **Countdown to Christmas**, 0 333 29136 0, £5.25.

The Christmas Road, Pamela Egan, Church House Publications 1986, (17151 0440 3, £4.50. A different kind of anthology containing many unusual pieces. Real life accounts of the Christmas experience, as well as poems and extracts from fiction. Top juniors.

Welcome to the Family

New Baby, Judith Baskerville, A & C Black 1985, 0 7136 2645 3, £4.50. Judith comes into school so that Iqbal's class

can share the anticipation of baby Jenny's arrival. The children work out growth patterns and birth customs according to their different cultures.

Birth Customs, Jon Mayled, Wayland 1986, 0 85078 717 3, £4.95. Appropriate customs and celebrations are described for each of the major religious groupings.

Kikar's Drum, Olivia Bennett, Hamish Hamilton 1986, 0 241 11235 4, £4.95. Kikar wants to play the drum at Pujenay's wedding. While the preparations go on, they celebrate Raksha Bandan, a celebration between brothers and sisters.

A Sikh Wedding, Olivia Bennett, Hamish Hamilton 1985, 0 241 11572 8, £4.95. An account in words and photographs, describing the advance preparations, the roles of the two families, the religious ceremony and the celebrations.

Mazal-Tov: a Jewish Wedding, Jose Patterson, Hamish Hamilton 1988, 0 241 12269 4, £4.95. Illustrated with photographs to give a celebratory account of the wedding and its preparations.

Let's Celebrate! Seasonal Festivals and Social Custom

Festivals Around the World, Philip Steele, Macmillan Education 1983, 0 333 34550 9, £5.95. Big format picture book, each double spread showing a festival from a different country. They are mostly lesser known events. Brief text.

High Days and Holidays, Margaret Joy, Faber 1981, 0 571 11771 6, £5.95. Brief descriptions of significant days: religious festivals across the world, national days, and special events like the Lord Mayor's Show.

Feasts and Seasons: Summer, Anthony Adams, Blackie 1978, 0 216 90398 X, o/p. Intended for classroom use (9-13), this series takes a broader view, including things like sheep shearing and well dressing. Contemporary texts, songs and poems are included, as well as activities and a teacher's reference section. There are also volumes for **Autumn**, **Spring** and **Winter** but they are also o/p.

Carnival, Ian Menter, Hamish Hamilton 1982, 0 241 10828 4, £4.95. Young picture book which follows two children as they take part in the carnival in St Paul's, Bristol. Bright pictures of the floats, the emphasis on fun and racial harmony.

Gunpowder, Treason and Plot, Lewis Winstock, Wayland 1987 (reissue), 1 85210 598 4, £6.95. November 5th celebrations raise a lot of complex questions. This is a meaty but straightforward historical background which should help the teacher to put what has become a light-hearted festival into context.

Hallowe'en, Robin May, Wayland 1986, 0 85078 467 0, £5.95. Hallowe'en has become a difficult issue for some schools. This book, suitable for top juniors, surveys the pre-Christian origins and all the forms of celebration which have subsequently developed, from a strange mixture of fear and hope to today's tricks and fun.

Hallowe'en, All Souls and All Saints, Antony Ewens, RMEP 1983, 0 08 029280 1, £1.60 non-net; 0 08 029281 X, £1.95 net. Hallowe'en is traced from the Celtic festivals to apple bobbing, and describes the Hallowe'en bonfire giving way to November 5th. The Christian 'Hallowtide' is described and All Souls customs remembered.

Shrove Tuesday, Ash Wednesday and Mardi Gras, Margaret Davidson, RMEP 1984, 0 08 029286 0, £1.60 non-net; 0 08 029287 9, £1.95 net. Substantial text and black and white photographs. The events are tied in with the religious year, but the secular aspects are also described.

Mayday, Fay Sampson, RMEP 1985, 0 08 031746 4, £1.60 non-net; 0 08 031747 2, £1.95 net. Much ground is covered: Beltane, May Queens, Maypoles, the Green Man, the Helston Furry Dance and Labour Day. There are helpful suggestions at the back, including where to get your maypole!

And three useful books of a practical nature:

Japan: activities and projects in colour, New York: Sterling 1980, 0 8069 4556 7, o/p. A handy, practical book of things to make to enhance a Japanese festival project.

Christmas Tinderbox, Sue Nichols, A & C Black 1986, 0 7136 5557 7, £6.95. All singing and dancing collection of information, activities, songs and games. Good section on Christmas characters, and the 'light at the darkest time of the year' section brings in Diwali and Hanukkah.

Harlequin, David Gadsby and Beatrice Harrop, A & C Black 1981, 0 7136 2155 9, £5.95 (music edition); 0 7136 2157 5, £1.45 non-net (words edition). A collection of 44 songs, taking us round the year. 'Songs for the seasons, for ordinary days, for high days and festivals.'

FICTION AND POETRY

Because Christmas is so predominant as a theme, easily identified collections for Christmas have been omitted. Schools Library Services can usually supply lists. Examples which have been included indicate the variety of approach possible. Hallowe'en is represented by pieces that mention the event specifically, not by associated themes such as witches and magic. Again, lists on these themes are usually available and can be used according to the particular ethos of your school.

This time, the fiction is arranged according to the celebration rather than by form.

Alfie Gives a Hand, Shirley Hughes, Bodley Head, 0 370 30521 3, £5.25; **Picture Lions**, 0 (X) 662379 4, £1.95 pbk. Birthday parties can be alarming as well as exciting but Alfie finds courage by looking after an even more nervous guest.

Happy Birthday, Sam!, Pat Hutchins, Bodley Head, 0 370 30147 1, £5.95; **Picture Puffins**, 0 14 050.339 0, £1.95 pbk. Grandpa provides the perfect present for a small boy. About size and growing as well as birthdays.

Mog's Amazing Birthday Caper, Judith Kerr, Collins, 0 00 195557 8, £4.95. Unusual ABC based on alliterative sentences.

Thank You for the Tadpole, Pat Thomson and Mary Rayner, Gollancz, 0 575 04478 0, £1.99 pbk. Dad's ideas for a present seem a little rash but he has a trick up his sleeve. Readers can play the same language game and invent their own birthday presents.

Getting Rich with Jeremy James, D H Wilson, Chatto, 0 7011 2441 5, o/p; **Piccolo**, 0 330 28383 9, £1.50 pbk. 'Timothy's Birthday Party'. Horribly realistic short story about a children's party. There are also several Christmas stories for knowing infants.

Leaf Magic, Margaret Mahy, Dent, 0 460 06151 8, £6.50; **Magnet**, 0 416 63780 9, £1.50 pbk. 'The Rare Spotted Birthday Party' - with measly guests.

Uninvited Ghosts, Penelope Lively, Heinemann, 0 434 94960 4, £6.95; **Puffins**, 0 14 03.1966 2, £1.75 pbk. 'The Great Mushroom Mistake'. Mum's present threatens to take over the house so harsh measures (i.e. Aunt Sadie) are called for. Juniors.

Trouble in the Cupboard, Pat Thomson, Gollancz, 0 575 03976 0, £6.95. 'Birthday Ghost'. Bear's party takes a (gently) ghostly turn.

Noel Streatfeild Summer Holiday Book, Dent, 0 460 05850 9, £7.50. 'Loving and Giving' by Rumer Godden. Worth looking for - an extraordinary account of a Christmas in India under the 'Raj'.

A Problem for Mother Christmas, Ted Willis, Gollancz, 0 575 03884 5, £6.95. Agreeable 'end of term' story about Father Christmas's backroom problems. Junior novel.

Other Seasonal Celebrations

Where's My Easter Egg?, Harriet Ziefert, Picture Puffins, 0 14 050.537 7, £3.50 pbk. Large print picture book with flaps to search under.

The Wizard Party, Thelma Lambert, Hamish Hamilton, 0 241 12136 1, £3.95. Mini novel where a Hallowe'en party goes a little wrong.

Ramona the Pest, Beverly Cleary, Hamish Hamilton, 0 241 02412 9, £5.95; Puffins, 0 14 03.0774 5, £1.95 pbk. 'The Baddest Witch in the World'. Hallowe'en at school. Interesting sidelight on masks and identity as Ramona finds no one recognises her.

Charlie and Elly Stories, Frances Farrer, Gollancz, 0 575 03966 3, £6.95. 'Charlie and Elly's Bonfire Night'. A community bonfire with all the right elements from toffee to rockets. Infants.

The Owl Who was Afraid of the Dark, Jill Tomlinson, Methuen, 0 416 46640 0, £5.95; Young Puffins, 0 14 03.0634 X, £1.75 pbk. 'Dark is Exciting'. Plop comes to terms with his fear by learning about the positive aspects of the dark, including Bonfire Night.

Weddings

Here Comes the Bride, Emil Pacholek, Deutsch, 0 233 97668 X, £4.95..A vignette of the past. Sharply observed wedding game, played by children under the viaduct in 'a time of trams and treacle toffee'. Older juniors.

One Way Only, Gwen Grant, Heinemann, 0 434 94136 0, £6.95; Lions, 0 00 672290 3, £1.95 pbk. 'Can you have a wedding without a bride?' A chapter in this hilarious family saga which must be dedicated to all those girls who did not want to be bridesmaids.

Other Countries and Cultures

Cat's Carnival, Edith Schreiber-Wilke, Methuen, 0 416 61430 2, o/p. Fantasy adventure at the Venice Carnival. A picture book, strong on costume.

The Festival, Peter Bonnici and Lisa Kopper, Bell & Hyman, 0 7135 1458 2, o/p. Arjuna takes an important part in the village festival.

Nanda in India, Terry Furchgott, Deutsch, 0 233 97480 6, £5.95. Nanda rides the elephant in a wonderful, Indian procession. Vividly coloured picture book.

Kamla and Kate, Jamila Gavin, Methuen, 0 416 22780 5, £5.95; Magnet, 0 416 50450 7, £1.50 pbk. In 'Kamla and Kate Dress Up' the two little girls join a carnival procession and in 'Kamla's Secret' Kate is invited to share the Diwali celebrations.

Fingers Crossed, Chris Powling, Blackie, 0 216 92113 9, £6.95; Knight, 0 340 48566 3, £1.99 pbk. 'John and the Green Dragon'. Chinese New Year and a dragon arrives to take John to the celebrations.

Chris and the Dragon, Fay Sampson, Gollancz, (1 575 03661 3, £6.95. Chris and Tuan celebrate Christmas and Chinese New Year and poor Mr Downs, their long-suffering teacher, has to put up with it. Lively junior novel.

The Village by the Sea, Anita Desai, Heinemann, 0 434 93436 4, £6.95; Penguin Plus, 0 14 03.2505 0, £1.99 pbk. Really a story of Indian family and village life but the moving ending is a description of Diwali and then the Hindu New Year, made even more special by a homecoming.

The Hostages, Michael Smith, Hodder, 0 340 41321 2, £7.95. White children are held hostage by freedom fighters in the Sudan. A Dinka ceremony, in which the white boy participates, brings the two cultures together in increased understanding. Top juniors.

There are two books which offer several possibilities:

You're in the Juniors Now, Margaret Joy, Faber, (1 571 15008 X, £6.95. Seasonal stories, such as 'Hallowe'en' and 'Easter' which follow the school year. Early junior years context.

Family Gathering, Pat Thomson, Dent, 0 460 06268 9, £8.50. Many special family occasions are celebrations and this anthology contains 'My Birthday' by Laurie Lee; 'Gloves in High Summer', a touching story of a foster child's birthday by Janet Hitchman; 'Christmas' in Laura Ingall Wilder's warm pioneer family setting; and 'The Christening', D H Wilson's shocking story of a fight at the font.

Poetry

Seeing and Doing: a new anthology of songs and poems, Rosalind Farrimond, Thames/Methuen, 0 423 (X)660 6, £3.95 pbk. Whole section on festivals.

A Very First Poetry Book, John Foster, Oxford, 0 19 916051 1, £5.95; 0 19 916050 3, £2.95 non-net pbk. 'Happy Birthday Card' by Tony Robinson. Also poems suitable for Hallowe'en.

Poems for Nine Year Olds and Under, Kit Wright, Viking Kestrel, 0 670 82677 4, £6.95; Puffins, (1 14 03.1490 3, £2.50 pbk. 'A Party' by Laura E Richards.

The Puffin Book of Magic Verse, Charles Causley, Puffins, 0 14 03.0660 9, £2.50 pbk. 'Hallowe'en' by Leonard Clark. Many witch poems, too.

Once Upon a Rhyme, Sara and Stephen Corrin, Faber, 0 571 11913 1, £5.95; Puffins, 0 14 03.1639 6, £2.25 pbk. 'Fireworks' by James Reeves and 'November 5th' by Leonard Clark.

Poets in Hand, Anne Harvey, Puffins, 0 14 03.1818 6, £2.95 pbk. 'November Story' by Vernon Scannell.

The Sun, Dancing, Charles Causley, Puffins, 0 14 03.1575 6, £3.50 pbk. A section on Easter poems, some having complex religious implications but others, such as the Russian 'Easter Eggs', are bravely simple.

Poems for Seven Year Olds and Under, Helen Nicoll, Viking Kestrel, 0 670 80757 5, £6.95; Puffins, 0 14 03.1489 X, £2.50 pbk. 'Shrove Tuesday, Ash Wednesday', anon., and 'In Marble Halls', anon.

Song of the City, Gareth Owen, Collins, 0 00 184846 1, £4.95; Lions, 0 00 672410 8, £1.95 pbk. 'Christmas Morning' and 'Christmas at Our House'.

Magic Mirror, Judith Nicholls, Faber, 0 571 13696,6, £2.95 pbk. 'Stable Song'.

The Jungle Sale, June Crebbin, Viking Kestrel, 0 670 82195 0, £5.95. 'The School Carol'.

Golden Apples, Fiona Waters, Heinemann, 0 434 97163 4, £7.95; Piper, 0 330 29728 7, £2.50 pbk. 'A Peculiar Christmas' by Roy Fuller.

The Kingfisher Book of Comic Verse, Roger McGough, Kingfisher, 0 86272 217 9, £7.95. 'Christmas Thank You's' by Mick Gowar.

I Din Do Nuttin, John Agard, Magnet, 0 416 49760 8, £1.75 pbk. 'All Fool's Bay'.

Every Colour Under the Sun, n.a., Ward Lock Educational, 0 7062 4266 1, £7.95. 'Village Festival' (Japanese song).

Third Time Lucky, Mick Gowar, Viking Kestrel, 0 670 81492 X, £5.95. Perhaps this one should be read first. 'Seasons Greetings' contains the child's complaint 'Any old excuse is/Time to draw another card'. Of course, we weren't going to, were we?

USEFUL ADDRESSES

First call should be on local multi-cultural associations and religious groups. They are often willing to provide the best resource of all - people. Check with your Adviser for contacts and addresses.

Many embassies and commissions, as well as associated Tourist Offices, offer materials and information. See your **Teacher's Treasure Chest** for addresses, e.g.

Office of the High Commission for Ghana

13 Belgrave Square

London

SW1X 8PR

(Posters, pamphlets, films)

British Tourist Authority

64 St James Street

London

SW1A INF

(Info.)

Commonwealth Institute

Kensington High Street

London

W8 6NO

(Booklists, music)

English Folk Dance & Song Society

Cecil Sharp House

2 Regents Park Road

London

NW1 7AY

(Pub. list)

Folklore Society

c/o University College

Gower Street

London

WC1E 6ST

(Booklist)

Hindu Centre

39 Grafton Terrace

London

NW5 4JA

(Info. service)

Islamic Cultural Centre

146 Park Road

London

NW8 7RG

(Info. service)

Jewish Education Bureau

8 Westcombe Avenue

Leeds

LS8 2BS

(Info., booklist)

National Society for Promoting Religious Education

Church House

Dean's Yard

London

SW1

(Booklist)

Oxfam Education Department

274 Banbury Road

Oxford

OX2 7DZ

(Free catalogue of schools material)

There is also a comprehensive guide to organisations and their addresses in the **BfK Guides to Children's Books for a Multi-cultural Society** (now both out of print).

The last theme to-be covered in the series will be **Minibeasts** in the July issue. Previous themes: **House and Home** (July 88); **Water** (September 88); **Clothing** (November 88); **Food** (January 89); and **The Senses** (March 89).

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Source URL (retrieved on Oct '20): <http://pop.booksforkeeps.co.uk/issue/56/childrens-books/articles/lifeline-library/lifeline-4-projects-and-topics>

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