

What is good and what is challenging about being a Jewish teenager in the UK today?

Knowledge Organizer

1. Key People

Abraham	The first leader of the Jews, when they were called "Hebrews". It is said God agreed to make Abraham's people into a great nation in return for their worship.
Moses	Moses is said to have formed a special relationship with God and led the Hebrews out of Egypt. They then became known as "Israelites".
Traditional Jews	These Jews follow the instructions in the Torah closely. Some do this strictly, while others are more relaxed.
Progressive Jews	These Jews have adapted some of the teachings of the Torah to take account the challenges of today's world.
The rabbi	"Rabbi" means "teacher". Leading services in synagogues, they instruct others in the mitzvot. This is why many Traditional Jews call their synagogue "shul", after the German word for school.
The family	Many acts of worship take place at home, and festivals are often enjoyed at home with family members. A main way to follow God's laws is through the treatment of the family.

4. Themes

charity 	service 	faith 
covenant 	relationships 	forgiveness 

2. You need to know...

- Jews have a collective **sense of identity** that is thousands of years old
- It is said that God **chose** the Jews to be his people and set an example to the world
- It is said that Abraham and Moses both made covenants to worship God by keeping laws in return for **God's favour**
- God **promised** that the Jews would rule over an area that is now covered by several countries in the Middle East; Canaan, **The Promised Land**
- God **revealed** the mitzvot to Moses while the Israelites were looking for the Promised Land
- The mitzvot were eventually **written down** (in Hebrew) as the **Torah**, which many Jews call the Five Books of Moses
- The **Tanakh** is **a combination** of the Torah, stories of prophets and other writings focused on God.
- One of the 10 Commandments is to **rest** on the seventh day of the week, **Shabbat**
- During Shabbat there are several services at synagogues and a **special meal** is served at home on Saturday
- Most Jews agree that **no work** is to be done during Shabbat, but "work" is interpreted differently by different Jewish groups
- Rosh Hashanah** and **Yom Kippur** are the most important days of the Jewish year. They are called the **Days of Awe**.
- It is said that God spends the time between the two days **judging** each person's deeds and makes a final decision on Yom Kippur, the **Day of Atonement**.
- Many Jews spend the **10 days** between the Days of Awe reflecting on their behaviour, asking God for forgiveness and making amends

3. Key vocabulary

Torah: the first five books of the Jewish and Christian Bibles

Tanakh: the Jewish Bible

Shabbat: a weekly day of rest for Jews

covenant: a binding agreement

synagogue: a Jewish place for worship and community events

mitzvot: the 613 laws of Judaism, including the 10 Commandments. The singular is "mitzvah".

Rosh Hashanah: the start of a period where God is said to judge everyone

Yom Kippur: the first day of the new Jewish year, in September/October

5. Contexts

All about God

- The mitzvot are either about doing things for God or how you treat others, so that God is pleased
- There's not much in the Tenakh about an afterlife- follow God's laws and whatever happens, happens

"God's chosen people"

- This term has often been misinterpreted
- It means that God has chosen the Jews to do things differently from God's other creations
- Most Jews would say they're not more special than anyone else, they just have extra duties

Diversity

- Not all Jews are the same!
- Most Jews in the UK are Traditional, but this branch has differences within it; synagogue attendance is just one example

Anti-Semitism

- Jews have been persecuted and victimized as a group many times.
- Stereotyping still happens in the UK, and young Jews are just one of the groups our society needs to support.