Let’s all celebrate!

Topic
Students will enter the realm of interfaith studies by investigating and reflecting on celebrations from two different religions. In particular, special days in the Christian and Islamic traditions will be explored.

Year levels: Early Years (5-7 years)

Values for Australian Schooling
- Care and Compassion
- Doing Your Best
- Respect
- Responsibility
- Understanding, Inclusion and Tolerance

KLA focus
- The Arts
- Society & Environment
- English
- Languages
- Technology

Lesson plan

Introductory activity

Activity 1: Holidays and celebrations
Invite students to sit in a circle and ask them to think about their favourite holidays or celebrations in the year. Tell students that when you ask a question, only the student with the ball (or another object) can answer the question. After the student answers a question, they should pass the ball to another student so they can respond to the question. The ball should be shared among all members of the class. Ask questions such as:
- Where do you go on holidays or for celebrations?
- What do you do when you go on holidays or celebrate?
- Who are you with when you go on holidays or celebrate?
- How do you feel when you are celebrating special times with family or friends?
- Why are these special events important?

Explain to students that they will consider one holiday or celebration in the Christian religion and one in the Islamic religion: Easter and Ramadan.

Guided inquiry activity

Activity 2: Let’s celebrate!
Invite students to complete a K-W-L about the two selected celebrations. The students are to say:
- what they know about the end of Lent (Easter) and the end of Ramadan (Eid-ul-Fitr)
What they want to find out
Later, at the end of this lesson, students say what they have learnt. Write students’ responses on the board.

You could use a data projector and access the following websites to show the students pictures and information representing the two religions:

http://www.cultureandrecreation.gov.au
http://www.muslimheritage.com/
www.infoplease.com/spot/islamicholidays.html
http://www.factmonster.com/spot/easterintro1.html
http://www.dvercity.com/easter.html
http://www.holidays.net/easter/story.htm
http://www.holidays.net/ramadan/index.htm
http://www.holidays.net/easter/index.htm
http://www.answers.com
(and do a search for Ramadan and Easter)

You could ask the following questions when accessing the website to stimulate class discussion:

• What do you see in the pictures?
• What do the pictures tell us about the two celebrations?

Culminating activity

Activity 3: Drawing and displaying
Students work with a partner and draw pictures to represent one of the special celebrations they have heard about. Students talk about their pictures and what they represent. Display the pictures in the classroom.

Activity 4: Reflection on learning
Students are asked to reflect on their learning. You could revisit students’ answers to the questions in the Guided inquiry activity and ask:

• What did we know about Easter and Ramadan?
• What did we want to find out?
• What have we learnt?

In a group discussion, specific reflective questions could be explored including:

• What is the same about Easter and Ramadan?
• What is different about Easter and Ramadan?
• How do these special holidays help us understand different people?
• What parts of the celebrations show people caring for others?

This reflective activity could be done with the ball (or another object) and students sitting in a circle again. Remind students that only the student with the ball can answer the question. After the student answers a question, he or she should pass the ball to another student so they can respond to the question. The ball should be shared among all members of the class.