

Top tips for teaching about Judaism:

- 1) Never say '**All Jews do...**' or '**All Jews believe...**' as this is never the case!

There are so many **ideological differences of opinion** and practice within the wider Jewish community.

Suggested ways to phrase things:

Some Jews believe/do...

Many Jews... It is common for lots of Jews to...

The traditional belief is... Traditionally this is done...

In some communities... whilst in others...

- 2) **Geographical differences** - Remember not all Jews are white/European etc. There are Jews in the UK and all over the world who look different, have different languages, traditions and life experiences.

- 3) **Judaism is an 'Ethnoreligion'**

Jewish identity can lay in ethnicity (heritage) OR religion OR both. Therefore there are secular (/cultural) Jews.

Therefore... **don't assume** that a pupils knows about or practises religious Judaism at home just because they are Jewish. Many people who are born into a culturally Jewish family may not be practicing and may not know / do anything Jewish. It may embarrass them to ask what they know / do.

- 4) It is not always helpful to compare Jewish practice to that of other faiths.

Not helpful:

Hanukah is NOT the Jewish Christmas.

The Torah is not 'Only the Old Testament'

It is helpful to compare sometimes:

Eg. 3 Abrahamic, monotheistic religions, Islam has rules about food, modest dress, fast days, Arabic and Hebrew being similar etc.

- 5) Try not to teach Judaism through a **Christian lens:**

Terminology - 'Old Testament' and 'worship' are Christian based and would not be used by Jewish people. Instead, these things would be referred to as 'the Torah' and praying or prayer services. A synagogue is NOT a 'Jewish Church'.

Concepts – (secondary) **Messiah** and **life after death** – Not a Jewish focus.

- 6) It's always good to teach **WHY** things are done in Judaism, not just **WHAT** is done. Much is symbolic and not obvious.
- 7) The word '**Jew**' should not be seen as a derogatory term. You do not have to say 'Jewish people' or 'people of Jewish faith'.
- 8) There is **no correct English spelling** for Hebrew words!
- 9) **Use artefacts** – Judaism has so many and it makes learning more interesting and interesting. (Contact me for help if you are struggling getting hold of artefacts.)