

Divide the class into 6 groups as indicated in the story text above and create frozen pictures representing each part of the story. The 'wrestling' part is done without touching. Hot-seat each character. Pupils without specific characters can be bystanders with opinions about what they are seeing.

Explore the use of promises.



JACOB'S DREAM – RESPONDING TO GOD (KS3)

Communication between God and people is a central theme in the Christian and Jewish faiths. Here, God speaks to Jacob through a dream and then in real life. In each instance, Jacob responds to his encounter with God. Before using this story explore the concepts and importance of 'inheritance'.

THE DREAM – GOD MAKES A PROMISE (taken from Genesis chapter 28)

Jacob was Abraham's grandson. He was also a twin, the younger twin, Esau having been born first. Now Jacob cheated Esau out of his inheritance so it was going to be Jacob who inherited everything his father owned.

Esau was not happy about this and vowed to kill Jacob. He wanted blood. He wanted Jacob dead so he could have what rightly belonged to him. Their parents, Isaac and Rebekah, had to do something so they sent Jacob to live with Rebekah's brother, a long, long way away. Jacob had lost his home.

1. Years later Jacob travelled to Haran. At sunset he stopped for the night, ate some food and went to sleep, resting his head on a rock.

2. Jacob dreamed he was at the foot of a ladder. The ladder reached up to heaven with angels going up and down. The Lord God was by the ladder.

"I will give to you and your family the land on which you are sleeping," the Lord promised him. "Wherever you go I will

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watch over you. I won't leave you."

3. Jacob woke up. "The Lord is in this place," he breathed, "and I didn't even know it."

Jacob was very frightened. He was on the run. He was scared. His brother wanted him killed. And God had just spoken to him.

4. Next morning Jacob took the rock he had used as a pillow. He stood it upright. It was to become a place of worship, a special place to think about God. He poured olive oil on the rock to dedicate it to God and named the place 'Bethel'.

5. Jacob made a promise to God. "If you go with me, you will be my God and I will give you back a tenth of everything you give me."

LATER – GOD CHANGES JACOB'S NAME TO ISRAEL (taken from Genesis chapter 32)

6. A man came and fought with Jacob until just before daybreak. When the man saw he could not win, he struck Jacob on the hip and threw it out of joint. And still they kept on wrestling until the man said, "Let go of me! It's almost daylight."

"You can't go until you bless me," Jacob said.

The man said, "Your name will no longer be Jacob. You have wrestled with God and with men and you have won. That's why your name will be Israel."

Jacob said, "I have seen God face to face, and I am still alive."

Look at the meanings behind names. What do names communicate?

Discuss Jacob's reaction to realising he had seen God face to face. How did he know God was there? How do people today believe they communicate with God? How do they believe God communicates with them?

Use the story as a starter to explore family relationships.