

# The beginning

## The resurrection



### Using the storybag® in Assembly

To introduce the subject, talk about times when sadness is changed to happiness. Draw a sad face on a paper bag and give your paper-bag puppet a name. Ask the pupils why the puppet is sad and give them some options to choose from. Pop a larger paper bag over the top with a smiley face. What might have happened to make the puppet happy? Explain that today's story is about a change from sadness to happiness. Introduce the Bible story (see Introduction, page 7).

Present the story using the storybag® or the web version (see pages 124–126) and the biblical material (see page 122).

#### Comment

This is a story about grief and sadness being changed to joy. For Christians, it is the most important story of all, because it tells of Jesus' resurrection. Christians believe that Jesus rose from the dead and came back living and loving. They believe that this shows that death is not the end and that life and love are stronger than hatred and death. Christians believe that Jesus is still alive and can be an invisible friend.

#### Reflection

Hold up items from the story for the reflection, making a short comment on each one.

Alternatively, ask every child and member of staff to wear something gold-coloured or bright yellow to assembly as an expression of joy and celebration—for example, yellow socks, gold coloured scarf, or gold coloured sticky badges (which can be made in class beforehand). Have a gold cloth and white candle as a reflective focus. Play joyful music.



#### Prayer (optional)

*Thank you, Father, that at Easter we can celebrate the victory of life over death, and good over evil, through the death and resurrection of Jesus.*

## Using the storybag® in RE

Introduce the subject using some of the material from the assembly introduction (see page 121).

Select the appropriate script and turn to pages 9 and 10 to find ways of using it.

### Biblical material

*Mark 16:1–8; Matthew 28:1–10; Luke 24:1–12; John 20:1–18*

After Jesus died on the Friday, some friends took his body and wrapped it and placed it in a tomb, like a cave. A large stone was rolled in front of the tomb and sealed. The family and friends then went home to mourn. All day Saturday they stayed together, sharing their sorrow. It was the holy day: nothing could be done.

On Sunday morning, several women walked to the tomb, taking spices with them to place on the body. It was a final act of kindness for their friend. On the way, they wondered how they were going to roll away the stone: it was large and heavy. The women walked quietly on, each thinking their own thoughts. Jesus had been their friend, their leader, the one who brought hope for the future. Now he was gone.

Nearing the end of the road, the women looked up. To their amazement, the stone was already rolled away and there, sitting on one side, was an angel. The women became afraid but the angel said to them, 'Don't be afraid. Jesus is not here; he is risen from the dead. He is alive again. Go and tell the others.'

The women did not know what to think. They ran back down the road to tell the others. This had been an amazing day—the day of all days.

**Note:** For a comment on this story, see the assembly section (page 121).

### Follow-up activities

(See also pages 11 and 12.) Select from these activities according to the age and aptitude of your pupils.

1. Encourage pupils to listen to music as they reflect on the story. They can express their own ideas and understanding through sound and music.

- 🎧 'Easter Hymn', from *Cavalleria Rusticana* by Mascagni
- 🎧 'Long live God' from *Godspell* by Schwartz
- 🎧 Modern Easter music and songs used in worship (available from Christian bookshops)

2. Choose some of the music to develop an Easter dance. Communicate through movement the change from sorrow to joy. Pupils can evaluate the dances. How far did they express the events and emotions of the Easter story? What makes people joyful today? How is their joy expressed?

3. Create a display of the story by covering a board in gold paper and adding two-dimensional versions of the items in the bag. Use parts of the script as captions. Add questions and comments from the pupils.

4. Discuss why this is the most important story for Christians. Explore how it is celebrated at Easter and interview Christians concerning its relevance to them.

5. Create an Easter poster or card for a church entitled 'The beginning...'. You can use some of the symbolism from the story (gold, flowers and so on).

6. Explore how artists express their understanding of this story, and encourage pupils to do the same. The websites listed below are active at the time of writing.

- 🌐 [www.nationalgallery.org.uk](http://www.nationalgallery.org.uk) > search 'resurrection'
- 🌐 [www.biblical-art.com](http://www.biblical-art.com) > biblical subject > New Testament > Gospels, Jesus: resurrection and ascension
- 🌐 [www.biblepicturegallery.com](http://www.biblepicturegallery.com).
- 🌐 [www.mccrimmons.com](http://www.mccrimmons.com) > posters or banners > seasonal > Easter
- 🌐 [www.jesusmafa.com](http://www.jesusmafa.com) > posters or mini posters
- 🌐 [www.heqiarts.com](http://www.heqiarts.com) (browse galleries)

Easter images, activities and lesson plans can be found on the CD *Cracking Easter* available from the website [www.stapleford-centre.org](http://www.stapleford-centre.org). See also *A-cross the World* by Martyn Payne and Betty Pedley for crosses from

different cultures (BRF, 2004). Church schools may be interested in the pack *Experience Easter with Children* for use in partnership with a local church: [www.gloucester.anglican.org/education/resources](http://www.gloucester.anglican.org/education/resources) . educational publications

### **Symbols used in this story**

- ☉ Gold: heaven and celebration.
- ☉ Grey: sorrow.
- ☉ Tears: sadness.
- ☉ Flowers: new life.
- ☉ Grave-tomb: loss of hope and loss of life; a prison for both.
- ☉ Open mouth of tomb: freedom; life let loose from the bounds of death; hope.

### **Reflective activity**

With older pupils, talk about new beginnings and hope. Add flowers made from tissue paper and art straws to a vase while suitable music plays. In church schools, pupils can make a large cross from card and cover it with elastic bands (not too tightly). To appropriate music, each child can add their own paper flower to the cross (slotting it into an elastic band). Time can be spent thinking about new beginnings and hope.

With younger pupils, make gold 'happiness' badges to wear. In circle time, discuss what changes sadness to happiness. Link this discussion to the story, if appropriate.

### **Assessment**

Assess the pupils' understanding by observing them replaying the script, or ask them to talk about the display or write about it.

### **Background information and understanding the story**

Jesus died on the Friday afternoon and was buried before the start of the Jewish sabbath, which lasts from sunset on Friday to sunset on Saturday. The women would not have been able to visit the tomb until daybreak on Sunday.

Easter is the most important festival for Christians because it is the time when they celebrate Jesus rising from the dead. Christians believe that Jesus died, then rose again, showing that death was not the end and evil does not triumph. They believe that in some way Jesus' death and resurrection broke the power of sin and death. This belief gives Christians hope for life now and

for the future. For more on Christian beliefs about the resurrection, see [www.theway2go.org](http://www.theway2go.org) > the hub > yellow ball > Alive!

The women who went to the tomb had followed Jesus and supported him throughout his ministry. Jesus had female as well as male followers (Luke 8:1–3) and these women stayed with him while he was dying and noted where he was buried. The women took with them sweet-smelling spices, which were traditionally put on the body at burial. The women had been unable to do this before as the burial had been hasty. They had come to pay their last respects.

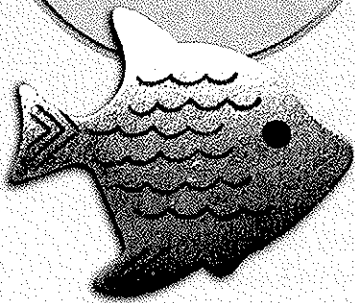
Jesus was buried in a rock tomb (a cave). A large stone would have been placed over the mouth of the cave.

### **Useful websites**

The websites listed below are active at the time of writing.

- ☉ [www.reonline.org.uk](http://www.reonline.org.uk) > infants > festivals > Easter
- ☉ [www.request.org.uk](http://www.request.org.uk) (browse teacher's area)
- ☉ [www.topmarks.co.uk](http://www.topmarks.co.uk) > search 'Easter')
- ☉ [www.textweek.com/art/art.htm](http://www.textweek.com/art/art.htm) > Jacob to Mustard Seed > Jesus/Christ > Resurrection

Younger  
pupils



#### You will need

- ❖ A gold bag
- ❖ Grey ribbon for the road
- ❖ Silver paper tears
- ❖ 4 'people':  
3 women,  
1 angel
- ❖ A circular margarine tub with separate lid for the grave-tomb (both covered in brown tissue)

#### Questions

(See also page 11.)

- ❖ Why are the women crying?
- ❖ How was sadness changed to joy?
- ❖ Why is it called 'the day of all days'?

# Script 1

## Unpacking the bag

*My bag is gold, the colour of joy.*

*There is a road in my bag that is grey, the colour of sadness.*

*There is a grave-tomb in my bag that is closed with a stone.*

*There are women in my bag who are sad, for they have lost a friend.*

*There are tears in my bag, for the women are crying.*

*There is an angel in my bag who brings good news.*

## The story

Our story starts on a gold cloth, the colour of joy, for this is a story of sadness turned to joy (*place bag and smooth*). Across our cloth runs a grey road (*place road*). It ends in a grave-tomb (*place closed tomb*). Along the road walk three women (*place women on road*). The women cry as they walk. They are sad, for their friend has died (*sprinkle some tears*).

Slowly the women walk along the road (*move women*), but when they reach the grave-tomb they find the stone door open (*open tomb*). An angel stands at the tomb (*place angel*). The angel brings a message of good news. The friend they thought was dead is alive! The women run down the road to pass the message on (*move women quickly down the road*). This is a joyful day, the day of all days.

# Script 2

## Unpacking the bag

*My bag is gold, the colour of glory.  
There is a road in my bag, a road of sadness.  
There is a tomb in my bag that is sealed with a stone.  
There are tears in my bag that flow freely.  
There are people in my bag who shed tears.  
There is an angel in my bag who speaks of living.  
There is a sun in my bag that warms the earth.  
There are flowers in my bag that burst into life.*

## The story

Our story takes place on gold;  
the colour of glory. *Place cloth and smooth*

Across our cloth runs a grey road. *Place road*

It is a dead, dry road where nothing grows.  
It is a road of tears that ends at a tomb... *Sprinkle tears on road*

a cave whose mouth is stopped with a stone. *Place closed tomb*

Feet walk the road, slow with grief. *Use hands to make slow walking noises*

They carry their sadness in silence.

This is the cave that swallowed the life they loved. *Indicate tomb*

This is the tomb that ends all possibilities;  
that imprisons hope.

For a day the road is silent. *Finger on lip*

No feet walk there... *Shake head*

no tears water it. *Brush aside tears*

Only the sun bakes its hard... *Hold up sun, then place on cloth*

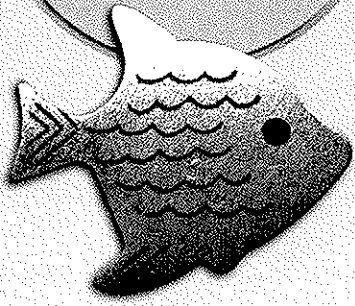
dry surface where nothing grows.



### You will need

- ❖ A gold bag
- ❖ Grey ribbon for the road
- ❖ Silver paper tears
- ❖ 4 'people': 3 women, 1 angel
- ❖ A circular margarine tub with separate lid for the grave-tomb (both covered in brown tissue)
- ❖ Paper sun
- ❖ Small paper or silk flowers

## Older pupils



Early one morning, women's feet  
quietly walk the road...

*Place women*

and the smell of spices fills the air.  
The women walk slowly...

*Move them slowly*

for grief weighs heavy.  
Their tears water the ground.

*Sprinkle tears on the road*

The morning sun warms the road,  
and beneath the ground seeds begin to grow,  
watered by the women's tears and the  
warmth of the sun.

*Lift and replace sun*

Soon the road will be covered in flowers.

The women reach the tomb...

*Move women to tomb*

but the mouth is open...

*Roll away door*

the stone is rolled away.  
An angel speaks of living.

*Place angel by tomb*

Confused and excited,  
the women run back down the road.

*Move women quickly*

Out of breath, they pause and look back.

*Pause, look back*

The cave stands open like a singing mouth.  
The prison door gapes.  
The life they loved has escaped...

*Sprinkle flowers down the road*

and with it hope is loosed into the world.  
Anything is possible.  
It is the beginning...

### Questions

(See also page 11.)

- ❶ Who was 'the life they loved'?
- ❷ How does the tomb imprison hope and end all possibilities?
- ❸ The story ends with the words, 'It is the beginning...'. The beginning of what?