

# RE – Vows and commitments

Lesson 4: I understand the importance of fasting.

Key vocabulary: Sacrifice, religious, non-religious, fasting, sawm, pillars of Islam, Muslims, Ramadan, Qur'an, Allah.

\*Any note or reference to the Prophet Mohammed (Peace be upon him) should be followed by the term of respect shown in brackets

# Let us review:

## My commitment for the next six weeks:

### What have you committed to? How are you doing?

My commitment is:

How well did I commit to my goal since setting it? (out of 5 stars)

Something I need to improve on in order to reach my commitment goal is:

Which trait did I demonstrate last week:

Trait	This means that you will...
<b>Attentiveness</b>	Pay close attention to what you are doing.
<b>Confidence</b>	Believe in yourself and your abilities.
<b>Dedication</b>	Be devoted to the task you've set yourself.
<b>Determination</b>	Stick to your choices no matter what.
<b>Loyalty</b>	Never give up on what you are doing.
<b>Patience</b>	Put up with any delays or setbacks.
<b>Perseverance</b>	Continue even when the task is difficult.
<b>Resilience</b>	Get back up and try again when you fail.
<b>Responsibility</b>	Hold yourself to account for your own success.

# What Is Sacrifice?



Sacrifice means 'to give up something which is valuable to you. A sacrifice is made for your own good or the good of someone else.'

Think of an example of a **non-religious** sacrifice.  
How many can you think of?

Think of an example of a **religious** sacrifice.  
How many can you think of?

# Safiyya's Sacrifice

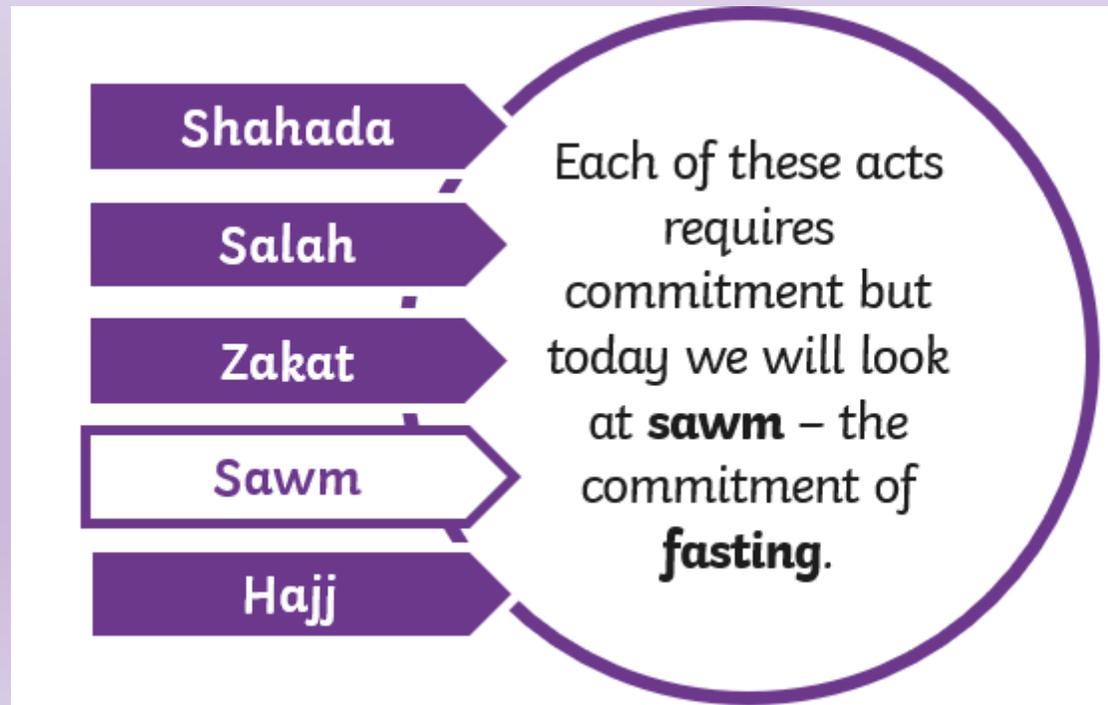
- Today, we will look in depth at a **religious sacrifice** which takes a lot of **commitment** and **dedication**.



This is Safiyya. Safiyya is a Muslim. As part of her faith, there are certain sacrifices that Safiyya must make to show her commitment to Islam.

# Safiyya's Sacrifice

- These sacrifices are so important to her faith that they form the five 'pillars of Islam' – the most important parts of life as a Muslim.



# Safiyya's Sacrifice



- **Sawm** is the act of **fasting**. Fasting means not eating or drinking anything at all during daylight hours. So, from when the sun comes up in the morning to the time it sets in the evening, I cannot eat or drink anything at all.
- Every year, all Muslims who are able to fast during **Ramadan** – the 9th month of the Islamic calendar. We fast because Allah commands us to in our holy book, the **Qur'an**. We believe that the Qur'an is the word of **Allah**. If Allah has told us to do something then we must do it.
- Even though it is difficult, we sacrifice our comfort to follow Allah's word and commit to our faith.

# Safiyya's Sacrifice



Do you feel hungry or thirsty when you fast?



Yes. The first week is the hardest – especially when Ramadan falls in the summer months.

It can be very hard to go so long without food and water on hot days but making this **sacrifice** reminds us that there are people in the world who must fast every day. These people do not fast by choice – they fast because they cannot afford to eat and do not have access to water.

# Safiyya's Sacrifice



Do you eat at all during Ramadan?



Yes. We eat and drink to keep ourselves healthy but only when the sun has gone down and it is dark.

We eat a very early breakfast at around 4 a.m., before the sun rises. We then fast all day until the sun sets again and then we eat a late evening meal at around 10 p.m.

# Safiyya's Sacrifice



Are eating and drinking the only things you **sacrifice** during Ramadan?



There are other things that Muslims should not do during Ramadan. We have to commit to being kind – we are not allowed to argue, fight or gossip either because a good Muslim should try their best not to do these things at all.

These aren't necessarily a sacrifice but they certainly do benefit ourselves and others around us.

# Safiyya's Sacrifice



What do you do with all the extra time you have, that you would normally spend eating and drinking?



Ramadan, the month in which we fast, is the holiest month of the Islamic calendar because it is the month that the Qur'an, our holy book, was revealed to the Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him).

Because of this, we spend lots of time reading the Qur'an whilst we fast. We try to read the whole Qur'an over the course of the month.

# Safiyya's Sacrifice



Are there any other benefits to fasting?



Making the commitment to fast teaches us a lot of self-control. We must be patient and wait until the sun sets before we can have our next meal, instead of eating whenever we want to.

Fasting also helps us to control our behaviour – we cannot lose our temper or be unkind to other people.

Another benefit is that we have lots of time to pray and strengthen our faith. By sacrificing food and water for one month, we show commitment and dedication to our faith and try our best to become closer to Allah.

# Task:

- Write a diary entry as someone who is practicing Swam:
  - Think about:
    - What is it?
    - When does it occur? How long for?
    - Benefits
    - Why is it important
    - How does this show commitment?
- Look on the next slide for an example of a diary.

Thursday December 14<sup>th</sup>

The day I had thought would never come had finally arrived – the new Star Wars film was being shown in the cinema for the first time and I had tickets to go and see it with my dad! Ever since my dad first showed me the Star Wars films, they have been my favourite – I have watched some of them so many times that I have memorised whole sections of the script. I love the simplicity of the good vs evil story and I think the characters are perfect. Sometimes when I have nothing else to do I practise trying to use the 'force' to make objects move. Not surprisingly, they never do!

We were booked in to an early showing because we wanted to be among this first people to see the new film – we didn't want any of the twists and turns of the plot ruined before we saw it for ourselves. So after breakfast we got in the car and drove to the cinema chatting excitedly about what we thought would happen in the film. I was wearing my Darth Vader costume and as well as feeling excited, I had a nice warm feeling that came from having my dad all to myself.

When we got to the cinema there were people everywhere, many of them dressed up like me and despite the fact it was early in the day, there was a hubbub of excitement filling the huge lobby of the cinema. People were coming away from the snack counter carrying piles of popcorn and hotdogs and balancing drinks and sweets precariously. We had brought supplies from home, sneakily hidden in my dad's bag. Noticing the crush at the food counter, my dad patted the bag and gave me a wink. We waited to collect our tickets behind a Stormtrooper and a C3PO and when we had them we went directly to screen 4 to find our seats.

A lady with a torch led us down the stairs and pointed out where we needed to sit. 'If it's too dark, use the force!' she said smiling. As we relaxed into our seats, the cinema began to fill up around us and pretty soon the striking first notes of the soundtrack began to blare around us. We were straight into another galaxy. My dad and I looked at each other and smiled. Big smiles. For the next two hours we were completely bewitched by the story and I continued to stare at the screen even as the credits began to roll. When I became aware of my dad saying 'Come on son – let's go!' I looked around the cinema and was startled to see that we were the only ones left there! I better not say what happened in the film...

All the way back home my dad and I discussed what we thought of the film – it was amazing! I felt as though someone had flicked a switch in my brain – my imagination was fired by the new characters and thinking about what might come next. After we had our lunch, I was sitting on the sofa and I began to concentrate on the remote control, trying to move it closer with the power of my mind. I tried to clear my mind and imagine it edging closer, inch-by-inch. Until...it did! Just a little. I was sure it had. 'Did anyone else see that?' I shouted. The room was empty.

## Diary Checklist

### Did I...

Child

include the date and/or time?



use the words 'I', 'my', 'we' and 'our'?



write as if I were there?



talk about where events happened?



write about the most important events in order?



describe my feelings?



use time linking words, e.g. next, first, then?



# Your commitment

- What sacrifices have you made?
- Have you needed to sacrifice anything to meet your commitment goal?