



Assembly



With this ring . . .

Aim:

- To reflect on the significance of a wedding ring
- To consider the Christian belief of God's eternal love for humans

Introduction

Wedding game

Before the assembly, make a list of 10 things associated with weddings, for example:

1. Bride
2. Groom
3. Wedding dress
4. Rings
5. Wedding cake
6. Guests
7. Photographer
8. Reception
9. Bridesmaids
10. Best man



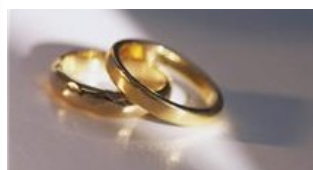
Ask pupils to make their own lists of 10 things, then reveal your list. Allow them to score one point for every item they have that you also have, but minus 2 points for items they have that you don't. Find out whose thinking is most in tune with your own!

Looking Deeper

Gold Wedding Ring

When they get married on 29th April, Prince William will give his bride, Kate Middleton, a ring made of gold from Clogau St David's mine in North Wales. This rare rose-coloured gold has long been associated with royal weddings, with the Queen Mother, the Queen, Princess Margaret, Princess Diana, Prince Charles and the Duchess of Cornwall

all having rings made from the same nugget of gold. The Queen was given a new supply of gold in 1986, which is the source for Miss Middleton's ring.



The tradition of brides wearing wedding rings can be traced back to ancient Egyptian

times, when the circle of the ring symbolised eternity – a commitment of the bride to her husband forever. During Mediaeval times in Europe, the ceremony for a Christian wedding involved putting the ring on the bride's index, middle and fourth fingers in turn, to represent the Holy Trinity (God the Father, God the Son and God Holy Spirit), a reminder that the vows are made before God.

Originally, rings were made of locks of hair, but these were not durable, and so were replaced by iron. Iron was used for quite some time and was a good symbol of the durability of the marriage commitment, but it did not reflect the beauty of the relationship. Nowadays, precious metals such as gold, silver or titanium are commonly used, showing durability, beauty and high value.

In the Church of England marriage service, the minister prays over the ring:

Heavenly Father, by your blessing
 let this ring be to *(William)* and
(Catherine)
 a symbol of unending love and
 faithfulness,
 to remind them of the vow and
 covenant
 which they have made this day
 through Jesus Christ our Lord.



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Reflection

'Gold relationships'

Unending love, faithfulness, endurance, beauty, high value – these are all characteristics people expect their partners to show in their relationship and marriage. There is no magic formula that enables these characteristics to be present in a relationship automatically. Couples need to work at maintaining their 'oneness' to each other. Christians believe that God's love for us helps us to show constant unselfish love for others. This is reflected in the marriage service where the groom will say:

(Catherine), I give you this ring as a sign of our marriage.
With my body I honour you,
all that I am I give to you,
and all that I have I share with you,
within the love of God,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

And the bride will reply:
(William), I receive this ring as a sign of our marriage.
With my body I honour you,
all that I am I give to you,
and all that I have I share with you,
within the love of God,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

'All that I am I give to you and all that I have I share with you, within the love of God.' It is very difficult to give up everything of one's self, unless one is secure that it will be reciprocated. Confidence that God's love for them will never diminish or fade away allows people to love others unconditionally.

Prayer

Lord God, thank you for your unending love for us. Please help us to be so aware of that love, that we are able to love others unconditionally.

Amen

Keywords

wedding
relationships
Prince William
Kate Middleton
rings
unending love



Prince William and Miss Kate Middleton pictured for their engagement announcement in November 2010.