THE ROSARY PROJECT

The Assumption of Mary

Lesson Instructions

1. Read the information in Section 1 and complete the check for understanding questions
2. Follow the investigation prompts to complete your research
3. Use your research to write a discussion essay

1. The Feast of the Assumption

The Feast of the Assumption is celebrated by Catholics on 15 August each year. Catholics believe that at the end of Mary's earthly life, God took Mary, body and soul, into heaven. Catholics believe Mary was given this special honour because of her unique role as the mother of Jesus and her faithful response to God throughout her life. Mary accepted God's call to become the mother of Jesus and remained a faithful follower of her Son. The Assumption therefore shows the special place Mary holds in God's plan of salvation.

Being taken body and soul into heaven is also significant. Catholics believe that Mary shares fully in the new life promised through Jesus' Resurrection. Her Assumption is seen as a sign of hope for all Christians: Mary has already received what Christians hope will ultimately be fulfilled in them — resurrection and eternal life with God. The Assumption also highlights the Catholic belief in the dignity of the whole human person. The body is not something unimportant that is simply left behind. Both body and soul have value.

What is a 'Holy Day of Obligation'?

A Holy Day of Obligation is an important Catholic feast day when Catholics are expected to attend Mass, just as they do on Sundays. These days are more than simply a rule Catholics have to follow. They mark important events and beliefs in the Catholic faith and give Catholics an opportunity to come together as a community to worship and celebrate. Different countries may have different Holy Days of Obligation. In Australia, the Feast of the Assumption is a Holy Day of Obligation, showing the importance of this feast in the Catholic Church.

1. What do Catholics believe happened to Mary at the end of her earthly life?
   A. Mary travelled to another country to continue Jesus' work.
   B. Mary's soul went to heaven while her body remained on Earth.
   C. God took Mary, body and soul, into heaven.
   D. Mary ascended into heaven through her own divine power.

2. The Feast of the Assumption highlights that Mary:
   A. has the same divine power and authority as Jesus.
   B. is more important than all other people in the Bible.
   C. holds a special place in God's plan because of her unique role as the mother of Jesus and her faithfulness to God.
   D. did not experience an earthly life in the same way as other people.

3. What does the Assumption being a Holy Day of Obligation show about the feast?
   A. Catholics can choose whether the feast has religious importance.
   B. It is mainly a cultural celebration rather than a religious one.
   C. It is less important than celebrations held on Sundays.
   D. The Church considers it an important celebration of Catholic faith and expects Catholics to attend Mass.

2. Investigation

Overview

You will investigate THREE different ways the Assumption has been expressed: through an artwork, a sacred space, and a cultural celebration or ritual. This will support you to write a discussion piece in response to the inquiry question

Research requirements

- Use at least 3 credible sources across the task.
- Do not copy full sentences, write information in your own words.

Part 1: The Assumption in art

Look up <u>one</u> of the following artworks:

- Titian – Assumption of the Virgin (1516–1518)
- El Greco – The Assumption of the Virgin (1577–1579)
- Annibale Carracci – The Assumption of the Virgin (1588–1590)
- Guido Reni – Assumption of the Virgin (c. 1598–1599)
- Correggio – Assumption of the Virgin (1526–1530)

i. Focus on Mary

Look closely at Mary in your chosen artwork. Record three details about how the artist has depicted her. Think about:

- where Mary is positioned
- her body, arms and facial expression
- where she appears to be looking
- the light or colour around her
- how she is different from the other people in the painting

Detail 1	
Detail 2	
Detail 3	

ii. Focus on the scene

Look for signs of upward movement in the painting. This might be shown through Mary's position, her clothing, clouds, angels, people's gestures, lines in the composition or where figures are looking.

Outline one example (describe how movement is depicted)

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Why is upward movement important in an artwork about the Assumption?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

iii. Overall depiction of Mary

Consider the ideas listed below and choose the ONE you think is communicated most strongly in the artwork. To make your choice, ask yourself:

- Which idea can I see the most evidence for?
- What has the artist done to communicate this idea?
- Which details about Mary, the other figures, light, movement or setting support my choice?

Your choice should be based on evidence you can see in the artwork, not simply on which statement you agree with most.

<u>Ideas:</u>

☐ Mary has a special relationship with God.

☐ Mary is being honoured by God.

☐ Mary has a unique role in God’s plan.

☐ Mary is shown as an example of faithfulness to God.

☐ Mary represents the Christian hope of eternal life with God.

Justification:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Source/s:

Part 2: Sacred Spaces

Choose one sacred place to investigate:

- Cathedral of the Assumption – Gozo, Malta
- Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption – Covington, Kentucky, USA
- Assumption Cathedral – Bangkok, Thailand
- Basilica di Santa Maria Assunta – Torcello, Venice, Italy

i. Features

Choose **one feature** of the sacred space that shows Mary or the Assumption is important , statue, icon, altar, stained glass, dome, feast-day practice, etc.).

Description

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Significance

This feature suggests that Mary/ Assumption is important because...

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Source/s:

Part 3: Assumption around the world

The Feast of the Assumption is celebrated in different ways around the world. Choose ONE of the following celebrations to investigate.

- Elche, Spain – Misteri d'Elx (Mystery of Elche)
- Victoria (Rabat), Gozo, Malta – Santa Marija
- Siena, Italy – Palio dell'Assunta
- Lourdes, France – Assumption Pilgrimage
- Goa, India – Feast of the Assumption

i. The ritual/ practice

Describe what happens, including three important traditions or activities that are part of the celebration:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

ii. Significance

Discuss how the celebration shows that the feast of the Assumption is important. In your response, consider:

- How many people participate or attend?
- Does the whole town or community become involved?
- Are streets, churches or statues specially decorated?
- How much preparation appears to be involved?
- Has the tradition continued for many generations?

Source/s:

3. Writing Task

Write a discussion essay (approx. 300 words) in response to:

"The Assumption is more than a Catholic belief; it shows the special significance of Mary in Catholic faith." To what extent does your investigation support this statement?

You are required to:

- Briefly explain the Catholic belief of the Assumption
- Make a clear judgement about the extent to which you agree with the statement
- Use evidence from at least TWO examples from your investigation (artwork, sacred space, ritual/ celebration)
- Include specific details from the examples you investigated
- explain what these details suggest, symbolise or communicate about Mary
- Connect your evidence to Catholic beliefs about Mary

Connection to Research

Your final response must draw on your investigation. Before you begin, circle THREE pieces of evidence in your handwritten/typed notes that you will use in your discussion essay.

Planning scaffold

Introduction • Briefly explain what Catholics believe happened to Mary at the end of her earthly life. • What might the Assumption suggest about Mary's place in Catholic faith? • Decide how strongly your investigation supports the statement (to a great extent, considerable extent, some extent...)	
Evidence from your first example • Give a specific detail from your investigation. What does this detail suggest about the way Catholics understand or honour Mary? • What does the example from your research suggest about Mary's significance in Catholic faith?	

Evidence from your second example • Give a specific detail from your investigation. What does this detail suggest about the way Catholics understand or honour Mary? • What does the example from your research suggest about Mary's significance in Catholic faith?	
Conclusion Do not simply repeat your introduction. Bring together what your evidence has demonstrated. • Considering both examples, what do they reveal about why Mary has a special place in Catholic faith? • To what extent has your investigation supported the statement?	

Response