

The awesome seed



Classroom resources

Resource 2: Pack of mustard seeds or picture of mustard seeds



Black mustard seeds (*Brassica nigra*).
by FotoosVanRobin

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Resource 3: The parable of the mustard seed (child-friendly version)

*What shall we say the kingdom of God is like, or what parable shall we use to describe it? **31** It is like a mustard seed, which is the smallest of all seeds on earth. **32** Yet when planted, it grows and becomes the largest of all garden plants, with such big branches that the birds can perch in its shade (**Mark 4: 30–32**).*

Resource 4: Quotes from the Qur'an and other relevant information

*O my son, know that even something as tiny as a mustard seed, deep inside a rock, be it in the heavens or the earth, GOD will bring it to light. GOD is sublime, all-knowing (**Qur'an 31: 16**).*

*Have you not considered how Allah presents an example, [making] a good word like a good tree, whose root is firmly fixed and its branches [high] in the sky? (**Qur'an 14: 24**)*

Muslims believe that in the above verse Allah is comparing a good word to a good tree because both bear fruit that are beneficial to people. The branches bare the fruits of a tree and the good deeds of a believer. If a tree has strong roots, it will be strong and extend its branches out further into the sky; similarly having a strong faith will lead a person to have good manners, noble character and high moral standards which will benefit everyone that the person comes into contact with.

*A smile for your brother is charity (**Hadith of the prophet Muhammad, Fiqh-us-Sunnah, 3: 98**).*

Here the Prophet is stating that to smile at another person—i.e. to come into contact with them and greet them in a positive way—is a beautiful characteristic. The Prophet always greeted people warmly, generating a welcoming and loving environment, and didn't lose his temper even when others treated him badly. It is said that he greeted his companions (the Sahaba) so warmly that each thought that he was the most beloved.

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Resource 5: The banyan tree

*There is a tree...an everlasting Banyan tree. Its roots are above in heaven and its branches are here below. Its leaves are the sacred songs, and the one who knows them knows the sacred Hindu texts (**Bhagavad Gita, 15: 1 child-friendly version**).*



Banyan tree (*Ficus benghalensis*).
by Kiran Gopi



Banyan Trees, Jamaica.

All rights reserved by The Caribbean Photo Archive



Seeds in the fruit of the banyan tree.
by Trees ForTheFuture



Resource 6: The Aum symbol and background information

In Hinduism and Buddhism, the term bija ('seed') is used as a metaphor for the origin or cause of things. It is also used to identify special syllables contained within a kind of prayer known as a mantra. These syllables do not have precise meanings, but are thought to connect to spiritual principles. The best-known bija syllable is Aum (or Om), first found in the Hindu scriptures known as the Upanishads. The idea behind the bija mantra is that, when a seed is sown it grows into a fruitful tree. In the same manner, Hindus and Buddhists believe that the pronunciation of a bija mantra helps a person grow spiritually.

Resource 7: Background information on the Millennium Seed Bank and pictures

The Kew Millennium Seed Bank project is a global partnership of botanic gardens, tree seed centres, government gene banks, universities, and NGOs whose common aim is to collect and conserve seeds, particularly of plants and habitats that are under threat. Partner organisations share information, skills and expertise. The seeds that are collected are kept in seed banks in the country of origin; at the same time duplicate samples are sent to Kew's Millennium Seed Bank at Wakehurst Place for testing and long term storage.

You can find more information and pictures on MSB on:

<http://www.kew.org/science-conservation/save-seed-prosper/millennium-seed-bank/index.htm>.

The Aum symbol



The Kew Millennium Seed Bank at Wakehurst Place.

by A. McRobb ©RBG Kew



Resource 7: Background information on the Millennium Seed Bank and pictures (continued)



Storing the largest and the smallest seeds of the world.

by A.McRobb ©RBG Kew

Collecting delicate seeds for storage.

by A.McRobb ©RBG Kew



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Classroom resources

Resource 7: Background information on the Millennium Seed Bank and pictures (continued)



Seeds need to be carefully catalogued for storage.
by A.McRobb ©RBG Kew



Some seeds are stored in glass jars at freezing temperatures.
by A.McRobb ©RBG Kew

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Classroom resources

Web links to download the pictures included in 'The awesome seed' lesson resources:

Coco de Mer (*Lodoicea maldivica*)

http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/b/be/Coco_de_mer_-_BOT.2007.26.21.jpg

Sunflower seeds (*Helianthus annuus*)

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/richardthomas78/144085146>

Cocoa seeds (*Theobroma cacao*)

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Cocoa_beans_P1410151.JPG

Coffee beans (*Coffea arabica*/*Coffea robusta*)

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Coffee_Beans_Photoshopped_in_Macro.jpg

Coffee beans hanging on the tree (*Coffea arabica*)

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Coffee_beans_on_tree.jpg

Edamame Beans (*Glycine max*)

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Edamame_by_Zesmerelda_in_Chicago.jpg

Kidney Beans (*Phaseolus vulgaris* var. *mexicanus*)

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Kidney_beans.jpg

Broad Beans (*Vicia faba*)

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Tuinboon_zaden_in_peul.jpg

Baked beans (*Phaseolus vulgaris*)

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:BakedBeansAndEggOnToast.jpg>

Black Mustard Seed (*Brassica nigra*)

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/fotoosvanrobin/5896917743/sizes/m/in/photostream/>

Banyan tree (*Ficus benghalensis*)

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Big_Banyan_Tree_at_Bangalore.jpg

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/caribbeanphotoarchive/3590079033/>

Seeds in the fruit of the Banyan tree

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/plant-trees/4476655086/>

The Kew Millennium Seed Bank at Wakehurst Place

<http://www.kew.org/science-conservation/save-seed-prosper/millennium-seed-bank/>

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