

Unit 17 – Il ritorno della primavera (The Return of Spring)

About the unit

In this unit children learn to describe seasons in the context of a poem, *Il ritorno della primavera*, and the Greek myth of Persephone. The poem is provided at the end of the unit. Children work on an end-of-unit performance to consolidate and celebrate their learning.

Where the unit fits in

This unit draws upon familiar vocabulary and structures. Children revise the months (see Unit 3), the weather (see Units 7 and 12), animals and their habitats (see Units 11 and 16) and the alphabet (see Unit 15).

Prior learning

It is helpful if children already know:

- some weather phrases
- how to say the date of their birthday
- the alphabet
- some animals and their habitats
- *Amo, non amo, voglio bene a...*
- some colours
- *caldo / freddo*.

New language

- Making statements (about seasons and weather)
- Adjectives used as antonyms
- Preposition *in* (with seasons)
- Adjectives: agreement and position (revision)
- Phonic focus: using knowledge of phoneme–grapheme correspondence to aid writing

Resources

- Picture flashcards and / or props for the weather and seasons
- Text cards for the seasons and weather phrases
- Song about the months
- Word cards for months, days of the week and seasons
- Hoops
- Visuals to illustrate the poem *Il ritorno della primavera*
- Multi-link cubes
- Illustrated word bank of animal habitats
- Visuals of Hades, Demeter and Persephone
- Feely bag with coloured objects
- Flashcards or images to introduce antonyms
- Props for a performance

Links with other subjects

Primary framework for literacy: compare different types of narrative (myths and legends), and identify how they are structured

Drama: perform a scripted scene, making use of dramatic conventions

Geography: identify and describe what places are like

Expectations

At the end of this unit

most children will: understand how a simple sentence is written; build sentences from a model; listen to a poem and select familiar key words and phrases; take part in a brief prepared task

some children will not have made so much progress and will: understand and respond to simple questions with prompts and single-word answers; need to refer to visual clues when listening to a poem or story

some children will have progressed further and will: show understanding of a short text containing familiar and unfamiliar language; take the initiative in preparing an oral task and use a bilingual dictionary to research new language

Language

Core language

in primavera in spring
in estate / in autunno / in inverno in summer / autumn / winter

luminoso shiny
cupo dull
felice happy
triste sad

vieni / resta con me Come to / Stay (singular) with me
I colori sono... The colours are...

Additional language for this unit

Batti le mani / I piedi Clap (singular) your hands /
tap (singular) your feet

il prato the meadow
lo stagno the pond
uno scoiattolo a squirrel
una rondine a swallow
una rana a frog
un gabbiano a seagull

il dio / la dea the god / goddess

colorato / cupo colourful / dull

ah, ah, ah! Ha, ha, ha (nasty laugh)

Additional language for teachers

Che stagione è? What season is it?
Associa / associate una stagione a un dio Match (singular / plural) a god to a season
Descrivi / descrivete una stagione Describe (plural / singular) a season
Cancella la lavagna Wipe the board

Che colore è? What colour is it?

LEARNING OBJECTIVES CHILDREN SHOULD LEARN	POSSIBLE TEACHING ACTIVITIES	LEARNING OUTCOMES CHILDREN	POINTS TO NOTE
Section 1. Weather and seasons			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to listen attentively and understand more complex phrases and sentences (O5. 3) • to make simple sentences and short texts (L5. 2) • to write words, phrases and short sentences, using a reference (L5. 3) • to look and listen for visual and aural clues (LLS) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use picture flashcards and props to revise weather phrases. See Unit 7, Section 3 and Unit 12, Section 1 for ideas. • Link seasons to the weather by displaying appropriate pictures and saying, for example <i>in primavera piove</i> (In spring it rains), <i>in estate fa caldo</i> (In summer it is hot) <i>in autunno c'è vento</i> (In autumn it is windy), <i>in inverno fa freddo</i> (In winter it is cold). Ask children to use visual and aural clues to work out the meanings in English. • Children repeat the phrases and invent a mime for each season to aid recall. Mime a season and ask the question <i>Che stagione è?</i> (What season is it?) Mime a weather phrase and children suggest the season. A child mimes a season and the class suggest a weather phrase. • Before showing the written words, challenge the children to write some from the sounds they hear. They could try <i>estate</i>, <i>vento</i> and <i>caldo</i> and <i>primavera</i>. • Display the written words for the seasons and practise the pronunciation. Display written weather phrases. Model how to build a sentence using a season and the weather e.g., <i>in estate fa caldo</i> (In summer it is hot). Encourage children to read aloud the sentences and do a mime. In pairs, children build sentences using text cards. Provide picture prompts on the back, if some children need support. Select several pairs of children to read out their sentences. • Extension: Children use a simple connective to extend their sentences. • Extension: Children write the names of the seasons from memory. Help them by saying the words very slowly, so they can hear individual phonemes. • Play <i>Dettato muto</i> (Silent dictation) (see 'Points to note'). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • pick out detail from spoken sentences • understand how a simple sentence is written and build sentences using text cards • write some weather phrases from memory 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grammar point: Highlight the use of <i>in primavera</i> when saying 'in spring'. • To play "<i>Dettato muto</i>" for practising the weather (the game can be adapted for other themes): write six numbered weather phrases on the board. Give children time to read and re-read them. Roll a dice and cover the phrase that matches the number on the dice. A volunteer comes to the front to write the weather phrase on the board from memory. Reveal the covered phrase and check. If the phrase written from memory is correct, rub out the original phrase. The aim of the game is to rub out the six original phrases. Children can go on to play this in pairs using mini-whiteboards. Those needing extra support can select the correct phrase from a selection of text cards rather than writing it. This game also works well on the interactive board. Use an electronic die, if available, and masks to cover up the phrases. Some boards have handwriting recognition software that converts handwriting to text: this encourages children to form letters correctly in order to see whether the board 'recognises' their Italian. • Follow-up: Throughout the week, mime some sentences for the class to guess. Create an interactive display where children build sentences using text cards. • Follow-up: Collect weather data from the internet, newspapers or

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			television. Investigate weather around the world. • Links with literacy work: The third activity links to using some drama strategies to explore stories in year 3. The first extension activity links to composing sentences using connectives (from year 3 onwards).
Section 2. Months and seasons			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to listen attentively and understand more complex phrases and sentences (O5.3) to appreciate that different languages use different writing conventions (KAL) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Play a recording of a song about the months or set these to a simple tune. Each child stands up when they hear their birthday month. Display picture or text cards for each season. Ask individual children to identify the season of their birthday month e.g., <i>Quand'è il tuo compleanno? In inverno.</i> (When is your birthday? In winter) Extension: Children give a longer response e.g., <i>Il mio compleanno è in inverno.</i> (My birthday is in winter) Set up a class 'speed challenge' where children order the months of the year against the clock. This can be done in pairs with word cards or as a whole-class activity using the interactive whiteboard. If using the latter, divide the screen into two, with a set of word cards in each half. Two teams compete using an electronic stop clock if available with the whiteboard software. In small groups, children divide a hoop into quarters to represent the seasons. They put word cards for each month into the correct season. Some children may benefit from having a chart with the months and seasons in English. Take feedback from the class. Play a game to revise how to say the date (see Unit 12, Section 6). Play <i>Impiccato</i> (Hangman) to revise the months and the alphabet. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> pick out key words when listening to a song remember how to write the date 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that children work in mixed-ability groups when working on collaborative activities. For Hangman, if using an interactive whiteboard, use a Hangman template as suggested in Unit 8. Follow-up: Throughout the week, children listen to and join in with songs about days and months. Follow-up: Throughout the week, write and read aloud the date every day. Follow-up: As a PE warm-up, display a picture or text card for each season around the hall. Call out a month and children run to the correct season. Follow-up: Discuss features of seasonal changes.

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Section 3. Joining in a poem			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to listen attentively and understand more complex phrases and sentences (O5. 3) • to re-read frequently a variety of short texts (L5. 1) • to write words, phrases and short sentences, using a reference (L5. 3) • to recognise patterns in simple sentences (KAL) • to manipulate language by changing an element in a sentence (KAL) • to use actions and rhymes to aid memorisation (LLS) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revise seasons and months by repeating a game from Sections 1 and 2. For example, ask children when their birthday is, but instead of saying which season it is in, children give the month of their birthday e.g., <i>Il mio compleanno è in gennaio</i> (My birthday is in January). • Tell children that they are going to listen to a poem with a chorus that includes the lines <i>Batti le mani, batti i piedi</i> (Clap your hands... tap your feet). Read out the chorus, modelling when to clap hands and tap feet. Read it out again and encourage children to join in the actions. Ask children if they can identify the season mentioned in the chorus. Display the chorus and children read it aloud together. • Display the whole poem (<i>Il ritorno della primavera</i>) with some visuals and read each verse in turn. Children join in the chorus. Ask children what they think the poem is about and which are the elements that change in each verse. • Display one verse only and pick out some specific words e.g., <i>su</i> (on the), <i>una</i> (a), <i>vieni</i> (come), <i>primavera</i> (spring) (these are all the first word in each line) or <i>sul</i> (on the), <i>nel</i> (in the), <i>allo</i> (at the) (these are all prepositions) or <i>stamattina</i>, <i>avvicina</i> (these words rhyme). Ask children to discuss with talk partners why they think these words have been chosen. • Display six lines from the poem on the board, with each one colour-coded. Give children a selection of multi-link cubes in corresponding colours. Read out the poem. When children hear one of the lines on the board, they take the cube in the corresponding colour. They then look at their cubes and read aloud the lines in that order. • Extension: Children learn the chorus off by heart. Some children can learn the verses. • Highlight the animal and habitat in each verse. Ask children what strategies they can use to work out unfamiliar language in the poem. • Ask for suggestions of alternative animals and list these. Display an illustrated word bank of alternative habitats and model the pronunciation for each one. Individually or in pairs, children choose a different animal and habitat to complete their own written verse for a class poem. Provide differentiated writing frames, as appropriate. Some children may prefer to use text cards to produce their own verse instead of writing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identify key features of a spoken and written text • choose words, phrases and sentences for a class poem 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The text of the poem <i>Il ritorno della primavera</i> is provided at the end of the unit. It may be helpful to have it recorded by a confident or native speaker and linked to a presentation of the text. • Follow-up: Throughout the week, practise reading the poem aloud. • Follow-up: It will be helpful if children are familiar with the Greek myth of Persephone before the next session (see Points to note, Section 4). • In writing a class poem (final activity), you can choose a different season and different locations for the animals. For example, <i>Sulla spiaggia, stamattina, un gabbiano mi ha detto...</i> (On the beach this morning, a seagull said to me...) • Link with literacy work: The third activity links to preparing poems for performance using expression, tone and volume (year 3). • If using the electronic whiteboard for the last activity, open a blank screen and record the children's comments on it, marking the name of each contributor. This is a useful strategy for involving children in a professional dialogue and reminding them of their contribution to the lesson in a plenary or subsequent lesson.

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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For the final activity, if using the interactive whiteboard to model the language, differentiated versions of writing frames can be distinguished by changing the background colour of screens.
Section 4. The myth of Persephone			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to understand and express simple opinions (O5. 2) to make simple sentences and short texts (L5. 3) to integrate new language into previously learnt language (LLS) to manipulate language by changing an element in a sentence (KAL) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remind children about or tell them the story of Persephone in English. With some visual prompts, introduce the main characters e.g.,: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Ade: Mi chiamo Ade, sono il dio degli Inferi, amo Persefone</i> (My name is Hades. I am the god of the underworld. I love Persephone.) <i>Demetra: Mi chiamo Demetra, sono la madre di Persefone e la dea della terra. Voglio bene a Persefone</i> (My name is Demeter. I am Persephone's mother and the goddess of the earth. I love Persephone.) <i>Persefone: Mi chiamo Persefone, sono la figlia di Demetra. Voglio bene a Demetra. Non amo Ade</i> (My name is Persephone. I am the daughter of Demeter and Zeus. I love Demeter. I don't love Hades.) Consolidate understanding by asking <i>Demetra ama Persefone?</i> (Does Demeter love Persephone?) Elicit <i>Si</i> or <i>No</i> and extend if appropriate to <i>Sì, Demetra vuole bene a Persefone</i> (Yes, Demeter loves Persephone). Repeat for the other gods. Extension: Children 'hot seat' in the role of one of the gods and the class ask questions. Revise the seasons. Display <i>estate</i> (summer) and <i>inverno</i> (winter) as headings on the board and ask children in pairs to match the gods to a season. Children feed back to the class and give reasons for their choice. Play <i>Cosa c'è nel sacchetto?</i> (What's in the bag?) to revise colours. Place a selection of coloured objects in a bag and play some music. Pass the bag around the class and, when the music stops, ask the question <i>Di che colore è?</i> (What colour is it?) The child with the bag pulls out an object and says the colour. Ask children to suggest contrasting colours for summer and winter. Write their suggestions on the board under the correct heading. Introduce some additional antonyms. Display picture flashcards or images in random order to illustrate <i>caldo / freddo</i> (warm / cold), <i>luminoso / cupo</i> (light / dark), <i>allegro / triste</i> (happy / sad). Ask volunteers to come to the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> understand expressions of like and dislike choose words, phrases and sentences and write them into a short descriptive text 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In Greek mythology, the goddess Persephone was the daughter of Demeter and Zeus. One day when she was picking flowers, the earth opened up beneath her. Hades caught her and took her to the underworld. Demeter was angry at the gods for letting Persephone be taken away, so she didn't allow crops to grow. Zeus ordered Hades to return Persephone to her mother. Hades had tricked Persephone into marriage by making her eat a pomegranate, a fruit that stood for marriage, and this marriage could not be ended. Zeus arranged that Persephone would spend each winter with Hades – this is the time when Demeter is so sad that nothing grows. During the rest of the year, the ground prospers and is fertile. Follow-up: Throughout the week, play the Ping-Pong game with opposites and practise descriptions of seasons. Follow-up: Children illustrate descriptions of the seasons for display. Encourage them to refer to hot and cold colours from the colour wheel. Follow-up: Children use software packages to create calligrams for

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	<p>board and match them up. Use the matched pairs to introduce pronunciation of the new words.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Play Ping-Pong with the opposites. 'Bat' <i>caldo</i> to the children and the children 'bat' back <i>freddo</i>, etc. • Ask children to work in pairs to decide on adjectives to describe a season. Add these suggestions under the headings of summer and winter already on the board. • Use vocabulary on the board to describe a season e.g., <i>Fa caldo, è una stagione allegra, colorata e luminosa. I colori sono il verde, il giallo, il rosso. Che stagione è?</i> (It is hot, It is a joyful, colourful and bright season. The colours are green, yellow, red) Children listen and respond. Some children may benefit from having some pictures of summer and winter scenes on their tables. • Ask children to describe a season. Model some ways to start a sentence e.g., <i>In estate fa...I colori sono...(In summer it is..., the colours are...)</i> • Children write some descriptive sentences to describe one season. They present these to the class. • Extension: Repeat some of the above activities with spring and autumn. 		<p>antonyms.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Links with literacy work: The first activity links to work on myths and legends which children will have undertaken in year 3. The extension 'hot seating' activity relates to year 3 drama work on using strategies to explore stories or issues. The twelfth activity links to year 4 work on composing sentences with a variety of structures. • Many children will, by now, be able to work out the pronunciation of the antonyms. If the text has been recorded, they can check to see how accurate they have been. • The descriptive sentences to describe summer can be the model for any season. To stimulate children's creativity, present the sentence as a gapped text on the interactive whiteboard and insert words at their suggestion.

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Section 5. Conscience Alley			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to prepare and practise a simple conversation, reusing familiar vocabulary and structures in new contexts (O5. 1) to understand and express simple opinions (O5. 2) to prepare a short presentation on a familiar topic (O5. 4) to develop accuracy in pronunciation and intonation (KAL) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Display antonyms from the previous session in random order on the board. Write a number next to each one and ask children in pairs to write down the numbers of the matching words. They feed back their answers. Explain to the class that they are going to prepare a role-play showing how Hades tries to persuade Persephone to go to the underworld. In pairs, children take on the role of Persephone or Hades and use familiar language to prepare the beginning of their role-play e.g., <i>Buongiorno, signorina. Mi chiamo Ade, come ti chiami? Quanti anni hai?, Dove abiti?</i> (Good morning, lady. My name is Ade, what is your name? How old are you? Where do you live?) Some children may need adult support to prepare this. Invite confident pairs to perform to the class. Ask children to use known adjectives to present the argument for living in the underworld from Hades' point of view. Give prompts such as <i>È...Write down children's responses. Add more language by, for example, beginning the argument by reusing lines from the poem studied in Section 3, <i>Vieni, vieni, vieni, l'inverno si avvicina, vieni a casa mia</i> (Come, come, come, winter is on its way. Come to my home). <i>Il tempo è freddo, cupo, grigio</i> (The weather is cold, grey, dull)</i> Extension: Children suggest other familiar language to add to the opening of the role-play. Repeat the above teaching sequence, this time presenting Demeter's argument for staying on the earth e.g., <i>Vieni, vieni, vieni, l'estate si avvicina, resta con me</i> (Come, come, come, summer is on its way. Stay with me). <i>È luminosa, colorata, verde, calda</i>. (It is bright, colourful, green, hot) Extension: Invite individual children to play Hades or Demeter. Children practise both roles as a whole class and develop an appropriate rhythm for chousing the lines. Explain to children that they are going to take part in Conscience Alley. Divide the class into two. They form two lines facing each other. One child is chosen to be Persephone and walks down the alley. One of the lines of children takes on the role of Hades while the other half is Demeter. As Persephone walks down the alley children in both lines whisper the lines prepared above to persuade her. Allow some children to whisper one word only. At the end of the alley, Persephone must decide which world she will go to. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ask and answer questions memorise a rhyme and repeat this with correct pronunciation and intonation use tone of voice to help convey meaning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow-up: Throughout the week, practise language for the role-plays and play Conscience Alley. Follow-up: Look at features of persuasive writing. Links with literacy work: The second, final and extension activities link to drama work where children work in roles to explore complex issues (year 5). The third activity links to year 5 work on presenting a spoken argument, sequencing points logically, defending views with evidence and making use of persuasive language.

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Section 6. Preparing a performance			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to prepare and practise a simple conversation reusing familiar vocabulary and structures in new contexts (O5. 1) to prepare a short presentation on a familiar topic (O5. 4) to plan and prepare – analyse what needs to be done to carry out a task (LLS) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explain to children that they are going to prepare a class performance based on the previous session. Ask them to suggest language for the three characters. They may wish to include a Greek chorus using repetitive language from the poem <i>Il ritorno della primavera (the return of spring)</i>. Extension: Give children some additional expressions to include, such as an expression of disgust from Persephone: <i>Che schifo! (How disgusting!)</i> See 'Points to note' for a suggested play script. Children prepare and practise a performance of their play to an audience. Children who are less confident at producing independent language can work with a supportive group and use repetitive language. Extension: Children write their own play scripts using a word and phrase bank. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ask and answer questions memorise a rhyme and repeat this with correct pronunciation and intonation use tone of voice and gesture to convey meaning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A suggested play script that can be added to as appropriate: Chorus: <i>Vieni, vieni, vieni (come, come)</i> <i>L'inverno si avvicina (winter is coming)</i> Hades: <i>Buongiorno, mi chiamo Ade.</i> <i>Vieni a casa mia, è bellissima, è cupa e fa freddo. Ah, ah, ah!</i> <p>Good morning, my name is Ade, come to my home, it is beautiful, it is gloomy and cold.</p> <p>Persephone: <i>Che schifo!</i></p> <p>How disgusting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow-up: Throughout the week, children practise their performance.

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	End-of-unit activity		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to apply the knowledge, skills and understanding in this unit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children perform their play to an audience. Film or photograph this with a digital camera. Children involved in the performance could store the video on their personal space on a learning platform to celebrate their achievement and to record it as evidence of progress. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ask and answer questions memorise a rhyme and repeat this with correct pronunciation and intonation use tone of voice and gesture to convey meaning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow-up: Children view the film or photographs of their performance. They discuss and evaluate it, using the 'Two Stars and a Wish' formula to highlight achievements and suggest improvements for the future. Link with literacy work: This activity links to drama work on developing scripts based in improvisation (year 4) and commenting constructively on performances.

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<p>Il ritorno della primavera</p> <p><i>Sul prato, stamattina una rondine mi ha detto: “vieni qui a giocare con me primavera si avvicina”</i></p> <p>ritornello:</p> <p><i>batti le mani, è primavera batti i piedi, è primavera</i></p> <p><i>Nel bosco stamattina uno scoiattolo mi ha detto: “vieni qui a giocare con me primavera si avvicina”</i></p> <p>ritornello</p> <p><i>Allo stagno stamattina una rana mi ha detto: “vieni qui a giocare con me primavera si avvicina”</i></p> <p>ritornello</p>	<p>The Return of Spring</p> <p><i>In the meadow this morning A swallow said to me: ‘Come, Come, come, come, Spring is on its way.’</i></p> <p>Chorus</p> <p><i>Clap your hands, it is spring. Tap your feet, it is spring .</i></p> <p><i>In the forest this morning A squirrel said to me: ‘Come, Come, come, come, Spring is coming.’</i></p> <p>(Chorus)</p> <p><i>By the pond, this morning A frog said to me: ‘Come, Come, come, come, Spring is on its way. ’</i></p> <p>(Chorus)</p>		