1. Facing our dragons 23rd April St Georges day

History of St Georges day <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Saint_George%27s_Day>

St George’s Day is on 23 April

**Aims**

To explore our own ‘dragons’.

**Preparation and materials**

* Have available some images of dragons and the means to display them during the assembly. Examples are available at: <https://tinyurl.com/ydxe7lso>, <https://tinyurl.com/y9tesham>, <https://tinyurl.com/yb466gly> and <https://tinyurl.com/y82uzppl>
* Optional: you may wish to show some images of lizards that have dragon-like features, in which case you will also need the means to do so. Examples are available at:  
    
  - 1. bearded dragon, available at: <https://tinyurl.com/yc7jm2nc>  
  - 2. Komodo dragon, available at: <https://tinyurl.com/nxrsn73>  
  - 3. armadillo lizard, available at: <https://tinyurl.com/yc57dqs6>  
  - 4. dragon lizard, available at: <https://tinyurl.com/yaoq4yam>

**Assembly**

1. Explain that 23 April is St George’s Day. This is the day when we celebrate the life of England’s patron saint, St George: he of dragon-slaying fame.  
     
   *Show the images of dragons.*  
     
   The legend of St George and the dragon has various versions. The most famous legend tells of a ferocious dragon who was holding a town in terror. The king offered the townspeople’s children to the dragon to keep him happy, but the king knew that eventually the dragon was going to have to eat his daughter. According to legend, St George slayed the dragon and rescued the town. It is a typical ‘good defeats evil’ story.
2. Dragons are mythical creatures, although it is easy to see where the idea of them could have originated.  
     
   *Show the images of lizards that have dragon-like features.*
3. Explain that today’s assembly is going to consider some of the ‘dragons’ that we may face on a daily basis.
4. A dragon was seen as something to be afraid of, to defeat. Of course, we know that dragons are mythical beings, creatures of imagination and of magic. However, we all have our own dragons to defeat on a daily basis.  
     
   Ask the students, ‘What are you afraid of?’  
     
   *Pause to allow time for thought.*  
     
   It might be spiders, snakes, heights, clowns . . . or it could be something like being afraid of walking into a roomful of people whom you don’t know, or going outside. It may be a phobia so severe that it stops you from doing everything that you would love to do in your life.
5. It is important to remember that the fear of a thing is often greater than the thing itself. That spider will certainly be more afraid of you than you are of it: look at the size difference! In that roomful of people, the ones you don’t know might hold the key to something really important for your future. Among the people in the room, there will also be those who are just as nervous as you are.
6. Sometimes, it is a lack of knowledge or understanding that leads to us being afraid. If we live our lives in fear of something, that fear may come to dominate us. It might become so great in our heads that the problem may seem insurmountable. The dragon will hatch and fledge.

**Time for reflection**

We may not like the idea of slaying dragons, but it may be possible to tame them.

Sometimes, we are just a little afraid of something. That feeling of fear can be useful. We stay away from a cliff-edge because we are worried about what might happen if we fall. We don’t pick up a snake because we are afraid of being bitten.

Encourage the students to think of one small thing that they might have to do today that frightens them a little. Examples could include:

– putting up your hand in class even if you’re not sure you have the right answer  
- talking to someone who is seen as ‘unpopular’  
- asking for help from a teacher or joining a new club

Encourage the students to be courageous and take a step towards trying these things.

Point out that sometimes, fear can grip us and we need to ask for help with it. Encourage the students to speak with a teacher if they feel that fear is stopping them from doing something in their life or if they feel that a fear is getting out of control. St George defeated his dragon and we can slay ours!

*Prayer*  
In your mind, look at your personal dragon.  
Now plan a strategy to enable you to deal with that dragon today, tomorrow and the rest of your life.  
Remember that this might mean speaking to someone and seeking help.

**Song/music**