

Christmas 1

Idea 1 - Christmas Facts

- Up to one billion cards will be thrown away this Christmas.
- 83 square km of wrapping paper is thrown away.
- There will be enough rubbish to fill 400,000 double-decker buses.
- Half of the Christmas waste could be recycled, but over 80% will be binned.
- Britons will use 24 million jars of mincemeat, pickle and cranberry sauce.
- If these glass jars were recycled, it would save enough energy to boil water for 60 million cups of tea.
- Around 125,000 tonnes of plastic packaging and 4,200 tonnes of foil are expected to be thrown out.
- Once Christmas is over, about 6 million Christmas trees will be binned, creating more than 9,000 tonnes of waste.

Idea 2 - Christmas Top 10 / 40 Christmas Story

Find the Top 40 songs. Then write a script of the Christmas story, trying to get as many of the top 40 song titles into your script. If you can, make it a dramatised monologue where you play the part of Mary, Joseph, the Shepherds, the Wise Men and so on. Use small costumes to change between characters eg a tea towel over the head to represent Mary.

Here's an example of a 'script' from the 'Now 102' CD (April 2019)

There was a couple from Bethlehem, Mary and Joseph. They were in love. One day Joseph found out Mary was pregnant and said, "Mary, I'm not sure I "Love You Anymore" (Michael Bublé). What's been going on? I "Don't Feel Like Crying" (Sigrid) but I'm gutted. "Nothing Breaks Like a Heart" (Mark Ronson and Miley Cyrus). I thought you were loyal but have you been "Dancing With A Stranger?" (Sam Smith and Normani).

'Oh no Joseph' replied Mary, I haven't done anything wrong, it's not like that. You know that I'd be "Lost Without You" (Freya Ridings) "It's Not Living If It's Not With You" (The 1975). What the angel said is true and we are to be the parents of the Emmanuel and be together not just for "Thursday" (Jess Glynne) but for "Everlasting" (Take That).

It's not another person, the Holy Spirit put the baby inside me - "It's A Miracle" (Culture Club).

Sorry Mary, said Joseph. I was wrong and I've been so "Shallow" (Lady Gaga and Bradley Cooper). I'm so glad you're "Here With Me" (Marshmello ft CHVRCHES). Now I can see the power of God's "Grace" (Lewis Capaldi).

I forgive you, said Mary. Now come on Joseph, "Walk Me Home" (Pink).

And so on... try it - it really works.

Idea 3 - The 12 days of Christmas

The 12 days of Christmas is a classic rhyme - why not adapt it to fit some of the young people in your group. Then get some or all of the youth leaders to sing it together - we did!

I'll show you the one we came up with and you can carry it on and adapt it.. all good fun! Do the lines in the style of the young person, for example our 'Joe Bloggs' is quite loud so we shouted his line. All the names have been changed to protect the innocent:

On the first day of Christmas, Joe Bloggs texted me 'I'm gonna be late again' (he's also always late)

On the second day of Christmas, Gemma texted me 'John won't stop bouncing' (this lad's nickname is 'Tigger' from Winnie the Pooh) 'I'm gonna be late again'

On the third day of Christmas, Matt texted me 'Paul's got concussion' (he's always injuring himself!) 'John won't stop bouncing' 'I'm gonna be late again'

On the fourth day of Christmas, Laura texted me 'Girl's Cell Group are chatting' (they can't stop!) 'Paul's got concussion' 'John won't stop bouncing' 'I'm gonna be late again'

On the fifth day of Christmas, Jenna texted me 'Eat Fair Trade Chocolate' (one of this girl's favourite causes) 'Girl's Cell Group are chatting' 'Paul's got concussion' 'John won't stop bouncing' 'I'm gonna be late again'

GO ON - Be creative and have some fun!

Idea 4 - Movie Clips

Show a couple of movie clips. We chose the final chapter of 'The Muppets Christmas Carol' where Scrooge has changed and goes around doing good. It lasts around 6 minutes.

The clip is Chapter 10 on the DVD, from 01:08:41 - 01:17:55 with 'The End' on screen.

Scripture Union have a resource about the Shepherd's Story - [click here for this](#) (accessed April 2019 - requires a free account to download freely).

Idea 5 - "Top 5..."

Get hold of some post-its and get the young people to write down some 'Top 5s' such as:

- 1. Top 5 Christmas traditions**
- 2. Top 5 Worst Christmas presents**
- 3. Top 5 Christmas singles**
- 4. Top 5 images of the Christmas story**

Idea 6 - Worship and ideas

We also do some worship via a youth band. If you haven't got one, we've often jazzed up the songs using music software. Then bring it with you and play it - maybe sing over the top and play a guitar or two etc. We've done this to varying levels of sophistication over the years - depending on time and tiredness! For example we did a nice'n'cheesy remix of 'Look to the skies there's a celebration' by Graham Kendrick (it starts off like 'Can't Get You Out Of My Head' by Kylie Minogue).

Idea 7 -

The talk was a short one because we aimed it at non-Christians. It involved thinking of the impossibility of Santa Claus then moving onto the so-called 'impossible parts' of the Christmas story, seeing which ones the young people could come up with..

- 1. Mary being pregnant but not having had sex**
- 2. Angels appearing and giving messages from God**
- 3. Mary travelling miles on a donkey when pregnant and not giving birth until they arrived in Bethlehem**
- 4. A mere human being giving birth to Jesus, the Son of God**

From this we brought out the fact that God is way bigger than anything we can imagine and that God chooses to use humans like you and me for his Kingdom and glory. The Bible says that God's ways and thoughts are much 'higher' and 'greater' than ours.

You know what - we only see a small part of the picture in our life. We don't know the future, we don't know what other people are thinking or doing. Often we don't even know what's good for us. But God does! God sees everything because he created everything. He is so much more powerful than us, we can't begin to understand it. I mean, we couldn't create planet earth - or human life - no-one's created the parts that you'd make a plant from even. But God did this and so much more - building together a whole universe that sits together perfectly. Our only response this Christmas is to put Jesus back at the centre of Christmas and at the centre of our lives too.

Idea 8 - Guess the Carol Game

The 'Guess The Carol' Game - you give out a line from a song, they guess the song!

- 1. Where meek souls will receive him, still the dear Christ enters in**
- 2. Be near me lord Jesus, I ask thee/you to stay**
- 3. Suddenly the lord, descending, in his temple shall appear**
- 4. Very God, begotten not created**
- 5. Mild he lays his glory by**
- 6. And through all his wondrous childhood, he would honour and obey**
- 7. He is the source and he the end, let the organ thunder**
- 8. Ye who now will bless the poor shall yourselves find blessing**
- 9. Sorrowing, sighing, bleeding, dying; sealed in the stone-cold tomb**
- 10. Yet what can I give him, give him by heart**

And here are the answers...

- 1. O Little Town Of Bethlehem**
- 2. Away In A Manger**
- 3. Angels From The Realm Of Glory**
- 4. O Come All Ye Faithful**
- 5. Hark The Herald Angels Sing**
- 6. Once In Royal David's City**
- 7. Unto Us A Boy Is Born**
- 8. Good King Wenceslas**
- 9. We 3 Kings Of Orient Are**
- 10. In The Bleak Midwinter**

Idea 9 - Christmas Crossword

The Christmas Crossword - this is taken from a book called 'New Testament Puzzles For All Ages' by Shirley Beegle illustrated by Bill Granstaff (Standard Publishing, Cincinnati). There appears to be no copyright or date. I have searched the internet under the name of the author, publishers and book title and can find no mention - so I have used it on this basis. Please contact me if you have further information.

- [Click for Crossword in Adobe PDF format](#) – Nov 2017. The first page is the crossword, the second has the answers.