

## *Exploring the Christmas Story outside. (First-Second Level)*

*Learning intentions:*

*I have heard the Christmas Story.*

*I can retell the Christmas Story.*

*I know it is a story from the Bible and is important for Christians. (I know it is the first story in the New Testament)*

*I have considered why it is important to Christians.*

*I have used the story to explore who Christians think Jesus is. (Angel tells Mary he is God's son. Angel tells Shepherds and Joseph he is the saviour of the world. Wise Men know he is a King. Angels tell Shepherds (and Wise men story reminds us of the prophecy) that Jesus is the Messiah (expected King and deliverer))*

*Session 1:*

- *Story tell.*

*Use the script to tell the story. Read it or memorise it. Use simple props and costumes to get the children involved. (headaddresses/crowns/wings etc can be worn on top of outdoor clothing). Use the outdoor space – walking to a different location when Mary and Joseph go to Bethlehem etc. Give simple stage instructions to help the children act out the story as you read/tell it. Encourage them to make facial expressions reflecting how the characters are feeling as you go along. Repeat the descriptions of who the angels etc say Jesus is as you go along to emphasise them.*

- *Bring me/Make me game:*

*Two minutes on timer. In groups. Using natural objects bring me/make me ... Do as many or as few as you'd like. Choose some easy ones first then introduce the 'thinking' ones. After each one, ask each group to explain what they've made and why.*

- *a star*
- *a baby*
- *a present*
- *a sheep*
- *something they might have needed on their journey*
- *an emotion from the story*
- *your favourite part*
- *what you think is the most important part?*
- *3 things you've learned about Jesus.*

- Something new you've learnt.
- 1 question
- Recap and discussion to finish.  
Give the children whiteboards and ask them to write down how Jesus is described in the story. Explain this will help us to work out together what Christians believe. Give prompts if necessary. What did the angel say to Mary? Etc. Discuss it together. If you still have time you could then get them to write down any questions they have. Take photos of them and use them as a starter activity for the next session.

Leave them with a challenge to choose from -

- Can you find out where Nazareth and Bethlehem are?
- Can you find out how far it is from Nazareth to Bethlehem?
- What is a census? When was the last census carried out in the UK?
- What are gold, frankincense and myrrh?

## Session 2

- An active quiz. True/False or Yes/No. Stretch up if you think it's True/yes, crouch down if you think it's false/no.
- Challenge them in groups to create a trail. The trail must link to the story. Eg a trail of stars or angels. And end with a tableau/picture of a character from the story. Give them whiteboards and ask them to complete their picture by writing down what that character taught them about Jesus. You can provide rectangles of material for them to use as a background to their picture and bibles/copies of the bible passages for them to remind themselves how the various characters describe Jesus. With younger children make it more simple by asking them to create a trail of 3 stars and finish with a picture of their favourite character in the story.
- Explore each other's trails.

Following on from these sessions you could extend their learning indoors using

*the suggestions in:*

- *Going deeper*
- *Trust in the Christmas Story.*