

## Teaching and exploring the Christmas Story outside. Early level

### Learning Intentions

- I know the Christmas story is in the Bible.
- I know the Christmas story is a special book for Christians.
- I can tell you the characters in the story and what happened to them.
- I know Christians believe Jesus' dad is God.
- I can ask questions about the story.

### Outline of session

1. Introduce the story. Tell the children it's from a book called the Bible. It's a special book for Christians. (Get them to repeat the words Bible and Christians to help them remember)
2. Ask for volunteers to be Mary and the Angel. Give them simple costumes (that fit over outdoor clothing) or props. Help them (and all the children) act out the story as you tell it. (see bold parts)

"Mary was a young girl. One day she was looking after her house, sweeping the floor and washing the dishes. Suddenly an angel appeared. Mary was frightened. The angel said "Don't be afraid. You're going to have a baby. God will be his daddy." Mary was confused but the angel said "God can make anything happen"."

Tell the children that Mary married Joseph (get a volunteer to be Joseph). The government wanted to know how many people there were in the country. They all had to go to special places to be counted. Mary and Joseph went to Bethlehem. We're going to pretend travel to Bethlehem now. It was a long time ago – how do you think they travelled? Help the children learn they would have walked. Then encourage them to follow a trail of footprints (laminated pictures) to another story telling area. Mary and Joseph can lead the way.
3. Once you are all settled again. Restart the story. "In Bethlehem Mary and Joseph needed somewhere to stay. They knocked on a door, but the person said no. They knocked on another door, but the person said no. Etc. Until They knocked on another door, this person pointed and said "you can sleep in my stable with the animals". And that's where Mary

had her baby (hand her a doll) in a stable with sheep and chickens and donkeys.”

4. Now ask for some volunteers to be shepherds and sheep. And more angels if you have lots of children. Dress them up/give them props.

“In a field there were some shepherds and sheep. Suddenly the sky was very bright, they had to cover their eyes. The shepherds were frightened. When they looked they could see an angel. The angel said “a special baby has been born. He’s going to save the world. Go and find him”. Then there were lots more angels. The Shepherds were amazed. They ran to find baby Jesus in the stable.”

5. Get some volunteers to be the Wise Men. Ask them to help you pretend to spot a star in the sky. Tell the children the Wise Men followed the star to find baby Jesus. Help them follow a trail of stars round in a circle back to the ‘stable’. Tell the children the Wise Men gave Jesus special presents because they knew he was a King.

Now you could:

1. Give the children some pictures from the story and ask them to peg them onto a washing line in the right order.
2. Ask the children to find nativity figures which you’ve hidden in their outdoor area. As they come back together, ask them to tell you who their character is and what they did in the story.
3. Encourage them to use natural objects to create a picture from the story. Ask them about their picture.
4. Talk together, asking them what they’d like to know about the story. Think together how they could find out the answers.
5. Ask them simple questions from the story, encouraging them to jump up and down for yes, or jog on the spot for no.
6. Challenge them to create their own trail of stars for others to follow. They could use natural objects or your laminated stars.