

Christmas: A Religious Celebration

B1 | Adults / Teens | Reading + Vocabulary + Discussion | 50-60 minutes

BEFORE YOU READ

Talk with a partner. What religious celebrations are important in your community? What traditions do people follow?

1. Match the words (1-6) with the definitions (A-F).

- | | | |
|-------------|-------|---|
| 1. nativity | _____ | A. an object or image that represents an idea |
| 2. worship | _____ | B. the story of the birth of Jesus |
| 3. service | _____ | C. a state without conflict or violence |
| 4. symbol | _____ | D. the act of showing respect to a god |
| 5. charity | _____ | E. help given to people in need |
| 6. peace | _____ | F. a religious meeting, often with music and readings |

2. Read the article. The bold words are the vocabulary from Activity 1.

1. For Christians, Christmas is a religious celebration of the birth of Jesus. The traditional **nativity** story includes Mary, Joseph, a baby in a manger, shepherds and visitors who follow a star. Churches may show this story in a play or a small display.
2. Many Christians attend a Christmas **service**. They may sing carols, listen to readings and join in **worship**. The details are different in different countries and churches, but the celebration often brings families and communities together.
3. People also use **symbols** to express ideas at Christmas. A star can remind people of the star in the nativity story. Candles and lights may represent hope. Words such as **peace**, joy and goodwill appear in cards, songs and messages.
4. For some people, Christmas is also a time for **charity**. They give food, money or time to help people who need support. In this way, the celebration is not only about remembering a story; it is also about putting its values into action.

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UNDERSTAND, DISCUSS AND WRITE

3. Comprehension. Answer in complete sentences. Use the article to help you.

1. What event does Christmas celebrate for Christians?

2. What might people do at a Christmas service?

3. What can a star symbolise at Christmas?

4. Why do some people give to charity at Christmas?

5. What values are often connected with the celebration?

4. Discuss. Talk in small groups. Give reasons and examples.

- Which symbols are important in celebrations you know?
- Why do communities use songs and stories at special times?
- How can people show charity in a practical way?
- Should religious and secular celebrations be taught separately at school? Why?

5. Homework: Write an explanatory paragraph.

Write 120-150 words about a religious celebration you know. Explain one story, symbol or value connected with it.

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ANSWER KEY AND TEACHING NOTE

Vocabulary matching

1. nativity - B
2. worship - D
3. service - F
4. symbol - A
5. charity - E
6. peace - C

Comprehension answers

1. What event does Christmas celebrate for Christians?

It celebrates the birth of Jesus.

2. What might people do at a Christmas service?

They may sing carols, listen to readings and join in worship.

3. What can a star symbolise at Christmas?

It can remind people of the star in the nativity story.

4. Why do some people give to charity at Christmas?

They want to help people who need support.

5. What values are often connected with the celebration?

Peace, hope, joy and goodwill are often connected with it.

Teaching note

Compare matching answers before reading. Accept other article-supported comprehension answers; discussion and homework answers vary. Discuss customs respectfully, distinguishing religious, cultural and personal traditions.