


## A Teaching House Christmas! – Teacher's notes

Christmas	Pre-intermediate/intermediate/upper-intermediate
Learners will develop reading skills and review/expand their knowledge of Christmas related vocabulary.	Learners will also develop their speaking fluency through summarizing an article verbally and making a spoken presentation.
<p><b>Note to the teacher:</b> Christmas is perhaps the most widely celebrated festival around the world, for religious and not-so-religious reasons. This lesson works best with multi-lingual and multi-cultural groups, but the introduction could be adapted for a mono-lingual group of students from the same country. It starts off with a personalized introduction to the theme where students can exchange information about their personal and national Christmas traditions, if they have any. If you know that a lot of students in your group do not celebrate Christmas, then you could ask them what they know about it from friends, movies, etc. The lesson then moves on to students reading and learning about Christmas traditions around the world, which they share with members of the class. The final activity really gets those creative juices flowing as students get to design their own new Christmas "tradition".</p> <p>Enjoy and happy holidays!!</p> <p>Lizzy</p> 	

### 1) Pre-reading:

Ss discuss these questions, which are on their worksheet

- What is the most widely celebrated holiday in your country?
- Do you / people in your country celebrate Christmas?
- If yes, are your family traditions the same as or different from the rest of your country?
- Are there any similarities or differences between how people in your country celebrate Christmas from the way that people in the USA celebrate Christmas? If so, what are they?

### 2) Vocabulary:

- (OPTIONAL) Have learners brainstorm words they know that are connected with Christmas. If your class is small enough / your board is big enough you could play "pass the pen" for this. Students line up in two teams facing the board. The person at the front writes a Christmas related word then passes the pen/chalk to the next team member in line and then moves to the back of the line. This continues for around 2-3 minutes. The team with the most correct words wins.
- The Ss then match up the words on the worksheet in activity 2 with the definition / picture. During feedback, check that Ss understand and can pronounce the words.

Answer key:

- 1 D
- 2 E
- 3 B
- 4 A
- 5 C

### 3) Reading:

Group A: reads the facts in "A Teaching House Christmas: Reading Worksheet A" and match them to the country.

Group B: reads the facts in "A Teaching House Christmas: Reading Worksheet B" and match them to the country.

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They then compare their answers with someone from the **same** group. You can then hand out the answer key to the appropriate group.

4) Speaking and summarizing.

Ss now work with someone from the **other** group. In their own words, they should tell their new partner about the 3 most interesting facts. They then decide together which tradition they would most like to adopt

Have Ss tell the class and see if they agreed.

5) Speaking and presenting:

Ss should now work together with their group and invent a new Christmas tradition. It could be about:

- Gifts
- Food
- Decorations
- Media
- A traditional event
- Something else that you choose

They should prepare to give a short presentation to the class. They should include

- what the new tradition is
- why it is a good idea
- how it will make Christmas better





You are the CEO of Christmas and you can choose the best new tradition.

## Student Worksheet 1

### 1) Lead-in

- What is the most widely celebrated holiday in your country?
- Do you / people in your country celebrate Christmas?
- If yes, are your family traditions the same as or different from the rest of your country?
- Are there any similarities or differences between how people in your country celebrate Christmas from the way that people in the USA celebrate Christmas? If so, what are they?

### 2) Match the word(s) to the picture/definition.












1) Tradition (n) traditional (adj)	<p>A. Songs that people sing at Christmas.</p> 
2) Nativity scene	<p>B. Pretty objects that people put on walls, windows or trees at Christmas.</p> 
3) Decorations (n-pl) decorate (v)	<p>C. A black material that people often burn for a barbeque.</p> 
4) carols	<p>D. Things that people do regularly that started many years ago, for example, wearing costumes on Halloween in the USA. The adjective describes these customs.</p>
5) charcoal	<p>E. 3D models of the story of the birth of Jesus</p> 

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### A Teaching House Christmas: Reading Worksheet A

3) Match the countries to the traditions:

Australia      The Czech Republic      The USA      Japan      Italy  
Colombia      Spain      Ukraine      Nigeria

Tradition	Country
Example: Christmas-related tourist attractions, such as the Rockefeller Center Christmas tree  and animated department store windows are heavily visited by tourists from all over the world	Example:  The USA
1. Eating KFC around Christmas is a national tradition.  Its chicken meals are so popular during the Christmas season that the restaurants take reservations months in advance.	
2. While Christmas decorations may be put up as early as the beginning of November, the unofficial start of Christmas takes place on December 7 or "Day of the Candles", when cities and towns often decorate their streets with so many lights that they become "tunnels of light". 	
3. In some parts of this country, on the night of January 5 <sup>th</sup> ,  <i>la Befana</i> , a good witch, is thought to ride the night skies on a broomstick, bringing good children gifts and candy, and bad children charcoal or bags of ashes.	
4. Two major sporting events traditionally take place on the day after Christmas Day in this country: a famous cricket match  , and a famous yacht race 	
5. During the meal, shiny paper "Christmas crackers" are pulled.  These contain a paper hat, a toy and a really bad joke.	
6. The Christmas meal cannot begin until the children see the first star in the eastern evening sky. 	
7. Fish soup  and breaded roasted carp with special homemade potato salad are traditional dishes for Christmas dinner.	
8. A special nativity scene,  which often includes a special figure of a man using the bathroom, is displayed in many homes, churches and stores.	
9. At Christmas parties in this country, people sometimes throw money in the air  and other people try to catch it. Sometimes money is stuck onto the sweaty foreheads of people who are dancing.	










All "facts" taken from Wikipedia. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christmas\\_worldwide](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christmas_worldwide) First accessed 11/14/2013

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### A Teaching House Christmas: Reading Worksheet B

3) Match the countries to the traditions

Lebanon      The Philippines      The USA      Finland      Japan  
Denmark      Mexico      Spain      Serbia      Brazil

Tradition	Country
The Christmas and holiday season begins around the end of November with a major shopping  kickoff on Black Friday, the day after the holiday of Thanksgiving.	Example:  The USA
1. People plant seeds, like beans and lentils in cotton wool,  and water them every day. By Christmas time, the seeds have grown and people use them to decorate nativity scenes.	
2. A declaration of peace is read aloud on the radio and any crimes committed on Christmas eve or Christmas day are given double the punishment 	
3. Over nine days, groups of people go from door to door in their town and sometimes are invited inside homes to participate in the breaking of a piñata filled with candy  .	
4. People eat a type of Christmas cake which consists of a white sponge cake covered with cream and decorated with strawberries. 	
5. In some cities there are decoration contests, when judges go to houses to look at the decorations, inside and outside of the house and decide which is the most beautiful house.	
6. St. Nicholas  visits children in schools or at public events. They have to read a short poem or sing a song to get sweets or a small gift.	
7. The country is famous for celebrating the world's longest Christmas season. People start singing Christmas carols  as early as September 1st.	
8. Gifts  are given on the three Sundays before Christmas. First by children, next by women and lastly by men.	
9. Special advent TV shows  are shown everyday for the first 24 days of December leading up to Christmas.	

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- 4) Now share the three most interesting facts with someone from the other group.

Decide which tradition you would like to adopt.

- 5) Now work together with your group and invent a new Christmas tradition. It could be about:

- Gifts
- Food
- Decorations
- Media
- A traditional event
- Something else that you choose

Prepare to give a short presentation to the class. You should include

- what the new tradition is
- why it is a good idea
- how it will make Christmas better

The CEO of Christmas (your teacher) will choose the best new tradition.

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Key:

### 3) Reading: Worksheet A:

Example – The USA

- 1) Japan
- 2) Colombia
- 3) Italy
- 4) Australia (The Boxing Day Test Cricket match and the Sydney to Hobart Yacht race)
- 5) The UK
- 6) Ukraine
- 7) The Czech Republic
- 8) Spain
- 9) Nigeria

### 3) Reading: Worksheet B:

Example – The USA

- 1) Lebanon
- 2) Finland
- 3) Mexico
- 4) Japan
- 5) Brazil
- 6) Germany
- 7) The Philippines
- 8) Serbia
- 9) Denmark