

Christmas Presents.

Preamble

This is a one off assembly for Christmas.

It is assumed that traditional songs will be built around this assembly core.

The focus of this assembly is on the gifts that the wise men brought to the infant Jesus.

Preparation

Obtaining chocolate gold bars, spray perfume and incense sticks.

Ken Coulter & Jen Robertson: March 2008.

Rationale	At this time of the year there are many presentations of the Christmas story. This assembly attempts to simply help understand the meaning of the Christmas gifts and to give an opportunity for pupils and staff to reflect on who is important.
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Title	Christmas Presents
Aims	To help pupils reflect on the purpose of the gifts given and what was being said through them.
Stage	P 1 - 7
Objectives	1] At the end of this pupils will have experienced sense of mystery and been given opportunity to respond to the challenge. 2] At the end of this pupils will be able to give reasons for the three gifts at the stable.
Link with ACfE	Confident individuals: secure values and beliefs.
Is this part of a series	no
Introduction	Present activity
Stimulus/ stimuli	Story from Matthew chapter 2. 1 - 12.
Guided Reflection	comment
Response & Possible Next Steps	Time of quietness followed by scripted words to consider the importance and how to express value to whom is important.
Evaluation (a)	Discussion with pupils
Evaluation (b)	RO team discussion
Evaluation (c)	Observation of pupils during the event

Introduction

Pictures of presents that might be given this Christmas. Pupils have to suggest who they might be for. Examples could be:

Perfume	Woman
Electric razor	Man
Doll	Girl age?
Playstation or similar	(interesting answers)
DVD of girl film	Girl age?
Bike	Either gender?
Chocolates	Grandmother
Baby Book	baby
Puppy	(interesting answers)
Skateboard	skater

What presents would you take a baby that had just been born?
Suggestions of nappies, talcum powder, baby food, etc.

Today we are going to think about the story of the first Christmas when Jesus was born and some people who brought him presents.

The Story

Divide the pupils into grouped areas for different noises. Have a member of each group to come to the front to lead their group. The seven noises are: Moos; cluck cluck; e-aws; baaahs; crying; singing; growling.

Rehearse the noises. After rehearsal start the noises one at a time. Keep them going until all are making the noises and then on a clear prearranged signal they are to be quiet.

The first Christmas was a noisy time. Jesus was born in a stable and his first bed was a feeding trough called a manger. A manger was where the food for the animals was placed. There may well have been cows (moooo) chickens Cluck cluck) and donkeys (e-aw). The shepherds may have brought some sheep (baaaah). Inside there was the sound of baby crying (crying noises). Outside there were angels singing (choir group singing a few lines of a Christmas song)

While this noise was going on the sound of other animals began to be heard. Camels. Camels make a growling groaning rumble of a noise.

From the camels came men who very rich. Suddenly everyone was silent (signal) get the seven leaders at the front to sit down.

No-one had ever seen men who were so rich before. What were they doing here in a dirty stable in Bethlehem? They had come on camels; very expensive. Their clothes were the best that could be made; the cloth was exquisite. Everyone and all the animals bowed their heads quietly because everyone knew these were very important people, even more important than celebrities. They were not from round here. They had travelled a long way.

One of them spoke. He spoke as a man who was used to being listened to. No-one dare speak. Maybe no-one had breathed either? "We have followed the star" he

said. We have come from the east to see the baby who is the King of the Jews. The baby who will be God's special messenger."

Then they knelt down in the dirty stable and pulled out the present they had bought.

One brought out some gold. Hand out chocolate gold bars to the seven.

One brought myrrh. Myrrh is a kind of perfume. Spray round some cheap perfume.

One brought some incense (sometimes called frankincense). If allowed, light the incense sticks to begin to create a smell in the room.

There were no nappies, no talcum powder, and no toys, nothing that you would bring to a new baby.

But everyone there knew these presents had a meaning.

- Gold was a present for a King. The three men believed that the new baby was going to be a kind of King.
- Myrrh was perfume that was put on dead bodies to help them smell nicer. The three men believed his death was going to be very special and important.
- Incense was what you gave to God. The three men believed he was God.

They had travelled to worship God.

Guided reflection

This is thinking time. Who is the most important person, people or things for you? Maybe for some of us like the wise men it is God. Like the Proclaimers they had travelled five hundred miles and five hundred more just to be there. This was the most important being in their lives. They came to worship. For who or what would we walk five hundred miles and five hundred more for this Christmas? Do we worship this person or thing? Who really is the most important person for you? Do they deserve your thankful love? When you stop and think, who is there for you?

Response and Next Steps

Perhaps for you and your family, Christmas is about God. We are going to be quiet and listen to a few words. If you are happy with them say quietly inside at the end amen. Possibly you don't know what to think. Then stop and be thankful for all the fun and good things of this time of the year. Maybe talk and thinking about God is not something you re used to or you want to believe in. Then stop and be quietly thankful fro all the special events at this time of the year. However we are here; let us also decide that we are going to a special deed for the important person or people in our lives this Christmas.

Thank you that the world and the universe are so big, so much bigger than us and so full of wonderful people, beings and things.

Thank you that in our lives there are people who are important.

Help us to enjoy their company this Christmas time

Help us to say thank you to them and show how much they matter to us.

Amen.