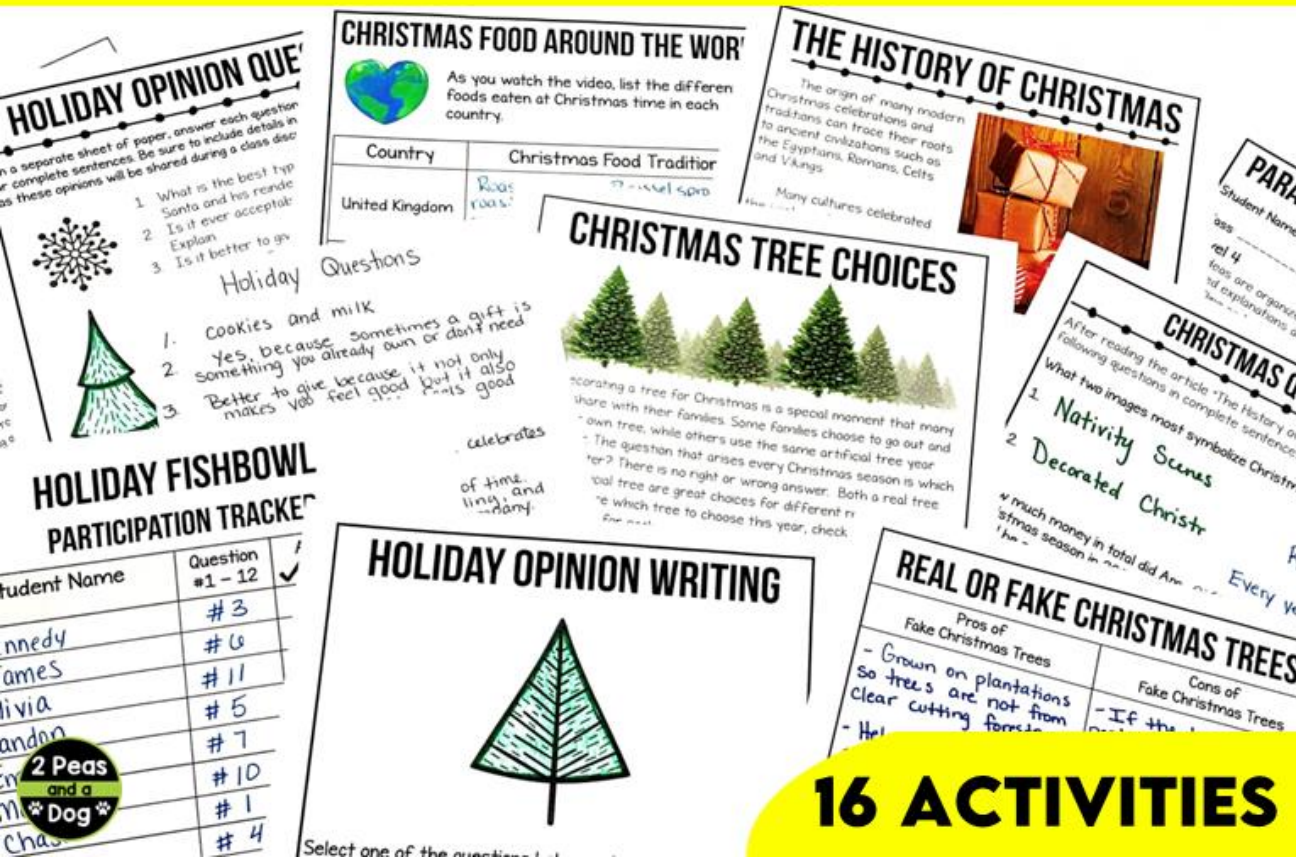


# CHRISTMAS ACTIVITIES

PDF & DIGITAL FORMATS



  
**2 Peas and a Dog**

Middle School Teaching Resources

## RESOURCE INCLUDES

- ✓ 16 Literacy Activities
- ✓ Teacher Instructions
- ✓ Reading, Writing, Listening & Speaking Activities
- ✓ MP3 Audio Files
- ✓ Answer Keys
- ✓ Assessment Options
- ✓ Print & Digital Formats

# WHAT'S INSIDE?



1. 11 Middle School Christmas Activities
2. Global Holiday Celebrations Research Assignment
3. Christmas Truce of 1914 Media Analysis Unit
4. Christmas Writing Prompts
5. Christmas Creative Writing Assignment
6. New Year's Goal Setting Activity and Reflection Sheets



# WHAT'S INSIDE?



## LESSON 1



### Christmas Non-Fiction Article

**Lesson Overview:** Students will read a non-religious article about Christmas.

**Materials Needed:**

- Data projector, computer, internet
- Video:
  - [Bet You Didn't Know: Christmas | History](#) (Preview this video as it may

# LESSON PLANS

- Tea
- 1.
  - 2.
  3. Have students work independently or in pairs to answer the questions.
  4. Discuss the answers as a class or collect the questions as an assessment.

## ANSWER KEY

Note: Students may also come up with other pros and cons for each tree.

Pros of Real Christmas Trees	Pros of Fake Christmas Trees
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The smell makes your home smell like Christmas the entire holiday season.</li><li>• When you buy a tree from a Christmas tree farm, you are providing jobs to Christmas tree farmers.</li><li>• Most trees come from tree farms and are not cut down from natural</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Artificial trees can be reused each year, which makes them cost-friendly.</li><li>• They also come in various sizes and colours.</li><li>• Putting up or taking down an artificial tree is very simple.</li><li>• Many artificial trees also come pre-lit,</li></ul>
Real Christmas Trees	Fake Christmas Trees
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Not reusable, so you must buy a new one each year.</li><li>• The sap can make your fingers sticky, making it difficult to decorate.</li><li>• Shedding tree needles and an improperly cared for tree can pose a fire risk.</li><li>• Lots of maintenance – picking up needles and watering the tree daily.</li><li>• If the tree farm has a pest problem, then the trees are sprayed with pesticides to deter the pests. These pesticides can be harmful to human health.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• They are not biodegradable like real trees. Trees end up in landfills because they cannot be repurposed or recycled.</li><li>• Older artificial trees can also contain PVC and lead, which release toxic chemicals during production and can harm your health.</li><li>• Many artificial Christmas trees are crafted from PVC, a type of plastic considered among the less environmentally friendly options.</li><li>• PVC trees can release toxic fumes during a fire.</li></ul>



# WHAT'S INSIDE?



## THE HISTORY OF CHRISTMAS

When people think of Christmas, two images might come to mind: the religious Christmas symbolized by the nativity scene or the commercial Christmas symbolized by the beautifully decorated Christmas trees in shopping malls.

Christmas is celebrated in North America and other parts of the world. This holiday has two meanings:

1. For some people, Christmas is a deeply religious holiday marking the birthday of Jesus.
2. For others, Christmas is a time to spend with family, eating, and exchanging gifts.

### The Cost of Christmas

In 2010, a survey found that Canadians planned to spend \$600 on Christmas gifts.<sup>1</sup> In 2023, a survey found that Canadians planned to spend \$1,347 - that's an increase of more than 116 percent!<sup>2</sup> With Thanksgiving and Halloween just having passed and Valentine's Day on the way, that is a lot of money to spend on one holiday!

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.cbc.ca/news2/pointofview/2010/12/christmas-shopping-how>  
<sup>2</sup> <https://toronto.ctvnews.ca/canadians-are-planning-to-spend-less-this-holiday>  
<sup>3</sup> <https://vancouver.citynews.ca/2023/02/15/canadian-holiday-overspending/>  
<sup>4</sup> <https://www.history.com/topics/christmas/history-of-christmas>



## CHRISTMAS TREE CHOICES

Decorating a tree for Christmas is a special moment many share with their families. Some families choose to go out and pick their tree, while others use the same artificial tree year after year.

The question that arises every Christmas season is which tree is better? There is no right or wrong answer. A real tree and an artificial

Real trees are also great for the environment because they are biodegradable, which means they can be composted and turned into soil or recycled into wood chips.

The production of artificial trees involves manufacturing processes that use energy and resources. Real trees generally have a lower environmental impact during production, especially if they are sourced locally.

### Pros of a Real Christmas Tree

Buying a tree each year can be expensive since they are not reusable. When trying to decorate a real tree, the sap can make your fingers sticky, making it difficult to decorate.

Shedding tree needles is not something most people enjoy about real Christmas trees. Both the tree and its needles can pose a fire hazard, but a real Christmas tree can also be a fire hazard if they are not cared for properly. Caring for a real tree means picking up needles and watering the tree daily.

If the tree farm has a pest problem, then the trees are sprayed with pesticides to deter the pests. These pesticides can be harmful to human health.

Christmas tree farms have a cycle of planting and harvesting - when one tree is cut, another is planted.

## CHRISTMAS QUESTIONS

After reading the article "The History of Christmas," answer the following questions in complete sentences.

What two images most symbolize Christmas in people's minds?

How much can you spend on a Christmas tree?

What are the pros and cons of spending money on a Christmas tree?

Which ancient civilizations did modern Christmas traditions come from?

## REAL OR FAKE CHRISTMAS TREES?

Pros of Real Christmas Trees

Pros of Fake Christmas Trees

# POST-READING ACTIVITIES

# WHAT'S INSIDE?



## "1914": Sainsbury's Christmas Advertisement

Describe the setting of this video in detail.

What Christmas carol do the trenches? What language is th

How do th

Explain what happened after t  
the trenches and put his hanc

## Media Types Reflections

Working in partners, use the charts below to share your thoughts on the various media types explored during our lessons on The Christmas Truce. Be prepared to share your thoughts with the class.

### Media Type: Songs

# MEDIA LITERACY

**Media Type Opinion:** Which media type did you enjoy the most and why?

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## Global Celebrations

Celebration Name

Cultural and/or Religious Affiliation

- Bandi Chhor Divas
- Boxing Day
- Chinese New Year
- Christmas
- Diwali
- Eid al-Fitr: Feast of Breaking the Fast

- 
- 
- 
- 
- Leap Year
- New Year
- Omisoka
- Réveillon
- Rosh Hashanah
- Québec Winter Carnival
- 

## Oral Presentation Success Criteria

### Level 4

- Level 3 criteria fulfilled
- Clear understanding of the topic
- Props (if possible)

# GLOBAL HOLIDAYS

- Formal body language (no slouching or fidgeting)
- Be prepared
- Knowledge of content

### Level 2

- Quiet voice
- Presentation not prepared
- Lack of interest, enthusiasm, or eye contact
- Minimal content knowledge

### Level 1

- Additional teacher support required to achieve success

# WHAT'S INSIDE?



## HOLIDAY OPINION QUESTIONS

**Instructions:** On a separate sheet of paper or the template provided, answer each question below in dot jot form or complete sentences. Be sure to include details in your responses, as these opinions will be shared during a class discussion.



1. What is the best type of reindeer?
2. Is it ever acceptable to receive gifts from people you don't know?
3. Is it better to give or receive gifts?
4. What is your favourite holiday?
5. Should we have more holidays?
6. Should we have fewer holidays?
7. Should we have a holiday during December? Explain.
8. Some stores start decorating for Halloween and November in October. Should we wait until November to start decorating? Do you agree?
9. Do you think people should celebrate the holidays, or is it okay to not celebrate?
10. What is your favourite Christmas tradition?

## LET'S WRITE A STORY

1. Read the story starter below.
2. Write the next line to the story starter. Then, write your initials in the box next to your line.
3. Each person writes another line and puts their initials in the box beside their line.
4. Pass the paper around until all the lines are full. Then, pass the paper back to the original author.

**Story Prompt:** It was a normal school day until an elf appeared in our classroom and ...

**WRITING PROMPTS**

## PARAGRAPH WRITING ASSESSMENT

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Class: \_\_\_\_\_

### Level 4

- Ideas are organized into paragraphs with detailed explanations
- Spelling and grammar is correct

### Level 3

- Ideas are organized into paragraphs with three reasons, concluding
- There are a few spelling and grammar mistakes that do not detract from the paragraph

### Level 2

- Ideas are organized into paragraphs
- Several spelling and grammar mistakes

### Level 1

- Ideas are not organized into paragraphs, one sentence, three reasons, or

Feedback:

## CREATIVE WRITING ASSESSMENT

Criteria	Mark
Writing Criteria	Worth 25 Points
<input type="checkbox"/> Writing flows	/10
<input type="checkbox"/> Writing uses the correct voice for the chosen role.	/10
<input type="checkbox"/> Correct spelling and grammar	/5
	Points
	/5
Total Points	/50
Final Mark	%

**ASSESSMENT OPTIONS**

Feedback:



# WHAT'S INSIDE?



## IDEAS FROM THE CAT

New Year Resolutions Ideas From Simon's

**Task:** Select 3 of the suggested new year's resolutions from the video and write down how you could make those work for you.

Resolution Idea

How To Make This Work For

## Group Discussion Prompts



## WISHES FOR 2024



for 2024 is .....

CHS

What was your biggest academic achievement last year? Why?

What book should other students in this grade need to read? Why?

What was the best study strategy you used last year? Give an

What was your biggest non-academic achievement last year?

# NEW YEAR'S GOAL SETTING & REFLECTION SHEETS

you find the most helpful with school work last year? Why?

time-wasting habit? How can you change this habit?

What new skill would you like to learn this year? Why?

What are some habits that successful students use regularly?

How can you use more growth mindset focused language in your daily life? Provide some examples.







# LESSON FORMATS



**PDF**

✓ Individual & Whole Unit



**DIGITAL**

✓ Google Slides

**RESOURCE CAN BE USED IN-PERSON OR ONLINE**