

## Did you know?

### Christmas comes but once a year ...



... and when it comes, it brings good cheer.

Well, that's what the saying claims, but for many people, Christmas and the holiday period can be very stressful. There are the cards to be written, the presents to be bought, the turkey to be stuffed and that's without even thinking about all the other preparation that needs doing. And that's not all...

Did you know that in the UK the amount of waste at Christmas can have a startling impact on the environment? 300,000 tons of card packaging is used; one billion Christmas cards go to landfill instead of being recycled; 270,000 miles of wrapping paper is thrown away – enough to stretch around the world nine times; 6 million Christmas trees are discarded when they could be used for compost. And don't start on waste food! Over two million turkeys, 74 million mince pies and over 17 million Brussels sprouts are chucked in the bin.

Then there is the knotty problem of unwanted presents: what is the correct etiquette? After sending the required thank you letter, then you should re-gift it as soon as possible and give it to someone who really wants it. Or you could donate it to the next school raffle. Or even better, try to sell it online. The number of items for sale after Christmas, described as 'Unwanted Christmas gift' is huge.

The stress, the waste, the cost: why do we bother? Even though being with family members for an extended period can be difficult, many people do enjoy the time spent together and also enjoy the planning and organizing that Christmas affords them. Christmas evokes strong feelings of childhood, which is often a positive association. And there is, of course, the important religious element, too.

So whether you're a Scrooge or a festive fairy, we hope you have a peaceful and enjoyable time over the holiday period.

If you would like to use some festive cheer as a topic in your lesson, then we have provided you with two activities at A2 level. You'll find them in the following **Teacher's notes** and **Worksheet 1 + 2**.

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## Did you know?

### Teacher's notes

#### Winter words (Level A2 and above, 10+ minutes)

- Make a copy of **Winter words** (Worksheet 1), one grid for each pair of students.
- On the board write: *winter* and ask students to write down five words they know connected with winter.
- Have classroom feedback.
- Hand out **Winter words**, one to each pair of students.
- Check students understand all the categories.
- Explain that students are going to play an alphabet game. You give the students a letter and they have to find words or phrases connected to winter beginning with that letter for each category (rather like the German game *Stadt, Land, Fluss*).
- Go through one letter together if necessary: 'P' 1 **p**eppermint tea, 2 **p**otatoes, 3 **p**iano (or **p**laying any instrument or a game) 4 **p**laying ice-hockey, 5 **p**yjamas, **p**ullover 6 **p**ine trees.
- Set the timer for one or two minutes, depending on the ability of your group.
- Award two points to each team who have a unique answer and one point to each team who have the same answer as another team. Remember to be flexible – it's can be challenging!
- Enjoy a few rounds of **Winter words**.

## Did you know?

### Teacher's notes

#### Fun Christmas quiz (Level A2 and above, 10+ minutes)

- Make a copy of **Fun Christmas quiz** (Worksheet 2), one for each student.
- Ask students: *When was the Christmas market in Nuremberg first held?* Give students time to respond. (Answer: **1570**)
- Tell students they are going to do more questions and answers about Christmas in a Christmas quiz.
- Hand out **Fun Christmas quiz**, one to each student.
- Explain there are ten sentences and students should write in the correct word or phrase from the box at the top of the page. There is one word or phrase they do not need.
- Give students five minutes to complete the quiz, circulate and help with any unknown vocabulary. Ask students to check their answers in pairs.
- Check answers together in class. Key: **1** 25<sup>th</sup>, **2** White Christmas, **3** Christmas cards, **4** turkey, **5** Boxing Day, **6** 8 million, **7** spider, **8** Nova Scotia, Canada, **9** snowman, **10** Brussels sprouts. **Unused phrase:** New Year's Eve.
- Ask students if they were surprised by any of the sentences.
- Ask students whether they know what New Year's Eve is – 31<sup>st</sup> December.

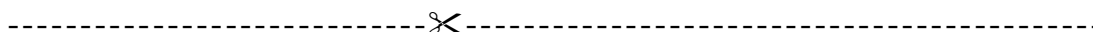
## Did you know?

### Worksheet 1

## Winter words

Think of words or phrases for each category beginning with the same letter:

1	Something you can drink:	
2	Something you can eat:	
3	An activity people enjoy doing inside:	
4	An activity people enjoy doing outside:	
5	Something you wear:	
6	Something that you can see:	



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## Did you know?

### Worksheet 2

## Fun Christmas Quiz

Complete the sentences below using one of the words or phrases in the box. There is one extra phrase or word you do not need.

*8 million*

*25th*

*Boxing Day*

*spider*

*Brussels sprouts*

*Christmas cards*

*New Year's Eve*

*Nova Scotia, Canada*

*snowman*

*turkey*

*White Christmas*

- 1 In the United Kingdom, people open their presents on \_\_\_\_\_ December.
- 2 The best-selling song of all time is \_\_\_\_\_.
- 3 More than 3,000,000,000 \_\_\_\_\_ are sent each year in the United States.
- 4 The traditional meat for Christmas dinner in the United Kingdom is \_\_\_\_\_.
- 5 \_\_\_\_\_ is on 26<sup>th</sup> December.
- 6 In the United Kingdom, over \_\_\_\_\_ Christmas trees are sold every year.
- 7 In the Ukraine and Poland, many people have a Christmas decoration in the shape of a \_\_\_\_\_.
- 8 The biggest exporter of Christmas trees is \_\_\_\_\_.
- 9 The biggest \_\_\_\_\_ ever built was 37.21metres tall.
- 10 In England, \_\_\_\_\_ are one of the most popular vegetables for Christmas dinner.

**Check your answers with your partner.**