

# A Christmas special

Most of us plan a “Christmas special” as our final lesson before the festive season break. Here’s a worksheet and ideas to help you make your Christmas lesson a very special and talkative occasion.

The activities and worksheet on the opposite page are most suitable for classes from B1 level. Start with a simple warm-up activity (see below) and then go on to have a lively Christmas discussion about Christmas then and now.

## Warm up

Tell students they have one minute to write down as many words related to Christmas as they can. (Alternatively you could play a Christmas song and tell students they must stop writing when you stop the music.) Find out who has the most and/or least words: “Who has more than 5/10/15 words?” Invite students to share their most original word with the class. Collect new words on the board.

Now play a variation of “I packed my suitcase”. Start by saying “I’m preparing for Christmas and I need some presents.” Students now take turns around class to repeat the sentence and add another item. Each student must repeat all the

items. Students aren’t allowed to write anything down! Whoever forgets an item or can’t think of a new one to add is out. Now you can continue with the worksheet activity.

## Christmas then and now

Make copies of the worksheet and cut it into cards. You need one card for each student in your class.

Tell students you want them to have a lively discussion about their personal experiences of Christmas then and now, as if they were at a Christmas dinner table. In Part 1 they prepare ideas. In Part 2 they have the discussion.

Hand out one card to each student. Allow students a few minutes to read the information on their cards and take notes. Offer help as required. You could play Christmas music in the background to create a Christmas atmosphere.

After a few minutes tell students to stop writing.

Now tell students to make groups of three, each with a Student A, B and C. Students talk to each other about Christmas then and now using their notes.

End the activity if/when you notice students are running out of things to talk about.

Finally, in class, find out what students talked about. Ask each group to say what they found most interesting in their discussions. As a follow-up you could discuss the following questions with your class.

## Christmas likes & hates

What’s your most/least favourite Christmas... :

- ... TV programme?
- ... song?
- ... symbol?
- ... activity (at home/at work)?

Why?

## Christmas holidays

- Where do you usually spend Christmas?
- Where would you like to spend Christmas? (An exotic location?)
- Where wouldn’t you like to be at Christmas?

Why?

## Alternative Christmas?

- If there was one thing you could change about Christmas and/or the way it is celebrated, what would it be?
- What would you never want to change about Christmas?

Why?

## Christmas shopping and cards

- When/Where/How do you do your Christmas shopping?
- Do you send Christmas cards to anyone?

Who/Why not?

Finally ask students what they are looking forward to the most in the holiday season and wish them all “Seasons greetings!”

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## Student A

**CHRISTMAS THEN & NOW**  
**Xmas presents****Part 1**

*Think about Christmas presents. How have things changed since you were a child?*

Make notes. Here are some ideas to think about:

- Who bought / buys presents for you then and now?
- Who did / do you buy presents for then and now?
- What kind of things were / are you given as presents then and now?
- When do / did you exchange gifts?
- What is the best / worst gift you've ever been given for Christmas?

**Part 2**

*How did you celebrate Christmas when you were a child and how do you celebrate it now?*

*Talk to the others about Christmas using your notes.*

Useful phrases

We (always) used to + infinitive  
When I was a child my parents (always) used to buy us presents.  
Now we (usually) + simple present

Now we (usually) go out together and don't buy many presents anymore.

Don't forget to ask and talk about:

- Christmas food and pastries
- Christmas customs



## Student B

**CHRISTMAS THEN & NOW**  
**Xmas food****Part 1**

*Think about Christmas mealtimes and food. How have things changed since you were a child?*

Make notes. Here are some ideas to think about:

- What did you usually have for your special Christmas meal then and what do you usually have now?
- When did you have your special Christmas meal then and when do you have it now?
- Who made the special Christmas meal then and who makes it now?
- What Christmas pastries did you enjoy then and do you enjoy (or bake!) now?

**Part 2**

*How did you celebrate Christmas when you were a child and how do you celebrate it now?*

*Talk to the others about Christmas using your notes.*

Useful phrases

We (always) used to + infinitive  
When I was a child we (always) used to have sausages on Christmas Eve.

Now we (usually) + simple present

Now we (usually) have a big roast dinner.

Don't forget to ask and talk about:

- Christmas presents
- Christmas customs



## Student C

**CHRISTMAS THEN & NOW**  
**Xmas customs****Part 1**

*Think about Christmas customs. How have things changed since you were a child?*

Make notes. Here are some ideas to think about:

- What made Christmas special for you when you were a child and what makes it special now?
- What is / was your favourite Christmas custom?
- What did you do on Christmas Eve (24<sup>th</sup> December) then and what do you do now?
- What did you do on Christmas Day (25<sup>th</sup> December) then and what do you do now?
- Which Christmas customs haven't changed since you were a child?

**Part 2**

*How did you celebrate Christmas when you were a child and how do you celebrate it now?*

*Talk to the others about Christmas using your notes.*

Useful phrases

We (always) used to + infinitive  
When I was a child we (always) used to put up our Christmas tree together on Christmas Eve.

Now we (usually) + simple present

Now we (usually) decorate our apartment a little but we don't have a tree.

Don't forget to ask and talk about:

- Christmas presents
- Christmas food and pastries

