



## LESSON OUTLINES

These lesson outlines follow the same four themes and will complement the assemblies in this pack.

### Using the online materials

Take time to explore the website so that you are familiar with it and how it works.

[www.londonchristmas.org.uk](http://www.londonchristmas.org.uk)

You will see that there are distinct sections for each theme. When you visit the theme of your choice, you will see a TV surrounded by some presents. The animation will be shown on the TV screen. The comic book is accessed by clicking on one of the presents.

The easiest way to use the materials for these lessons is to connect to the website in the lesson using an interactive white board. Using the website in the lesson will encourage children to go and visit it in their own time and to show their parents what they have done at school.

If an interactive whiteboard is not available in the lesson, or you don't feel confident using one, take in the CD-ROM which contains the same materials. You will need a computer, data projector and sound system to project the animation and comic onto a screen, but many classrooms or school halls will be equipped with these. Or if no technology is available, or you feel most comfortable with familiar story telling, then use the introductory questions, some of the ideas from the comics, the wondering questions and the Chrismons as you see fit.

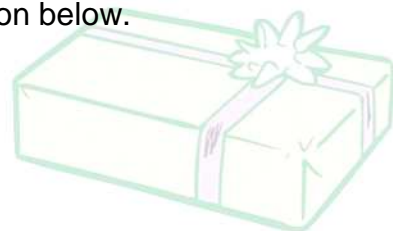
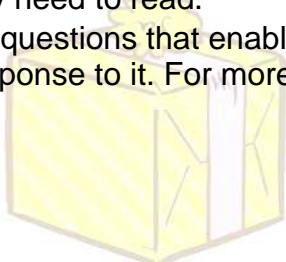
### Be creative!

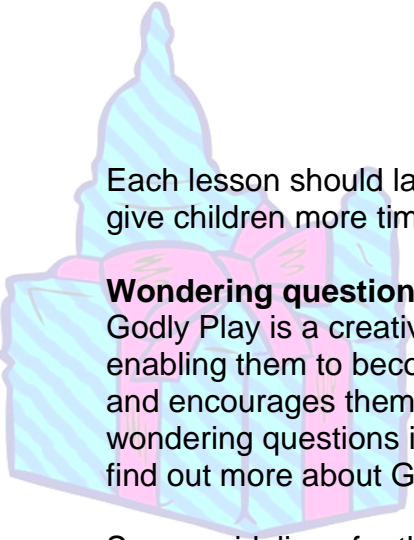
These lesson outlines are suggestions only and are not designed to be prescriptive. Feel free to adapt as much as you want to, to suit your own style of presentation and interaction. Leave out some bits; add other ideas in. The choice is yours.

### Structure of the lessons

We suggest that each lesson has a similar structure which makes them easy to lead, and provides a familiar framework for the children.

- Start with a couple of quick questions to introduce the theme of the lesson. These encourage children to be engaged and shows that their contribution is valuable.
- Show the short animation from the website. This lasts around two minutes.
- Show the comic book on the screen, getting some children to read the parts. This is a fun and visual way of telling the story which includes and engages the children. You can add explanations and asides as you go through. It may help to make a note of which child is reading which part so you can give them a cue as to when they need to read.
- Ask some wondering questions that enable children to explore the story and to value their own response to it. For more on this, see the section below.





Each lesson should last around 30 minutes, although it can easily be extended to give children more time to make Chrismons.

### **Wondering questions**

Godly Play is a creative and imaginative approach to exploring Bible stories and enabling them to become part of our lives. Godly Play invites listeners into stories and encourages them to connect the stories with personal experience. The wondering questions in the lessons are based on the principles of Godly Play. To find out more about Godly Play visit [www.godlyplay.org.uk](http://www.godlyplay.org.uk).

Some guidelines for the wondering questions:

- The questions we have suggested start with three standard Godly Play questions: I wonder what you liked about this story? I wonder what you would change? I wonder what you would leave out and still have enough story?
- The phrasing of these questions means that there are no right or wrong answers. Children are set free to wonder and to think for themselves. Each person's contribution is valuable because it is their own. There should be no sense of children desperately searching to produce the answer that they think you want to hear; they can say exactly what they think.
- Don't be afraid of pauses. Give children time to wonder and to articulate their thoughts.
- Encourage children to listen to what each other is saying. Attentive listening enhances the experience as much as verbal contributions.
- Thank each child for their contribution and value them equally irrespective of how articulate children have been.
- Let every child who wants to, say something. To encourage more contributions use phrase like: 'I wonder what other people think?' If some children tend to try and dominate, thank them for what they have already said, and invite them to let everyone have a turn.
- Many primary schools will have Circle Time where children are used to being asked for their contributions and to express their opinions and feelings. Talk to teachers in your congregation to find out more about how Circle Time works.

### **Chrismons**

Chrismons are a type of Christmas tree decoration. The name comes from a conjunction of the words Christ and monogram. They have Christian symbols on them, usually in the liturgical colours of Christmas – white, gold and silver. You could give the children time to make Chrismons at the end of each lesson. These could be put on a Christmas tree while the advent candle for each week is lit at the end of each lesson. The Chrismons will be a reminder to the children of what they have explored during the session.

### **To make Chrismons**

You will need:

- circles of white paper around 10cm across
- pens or pencils for the children to use
- a hole punch





- scissors
- string or gold or silver ribbon used in wrapping presents.

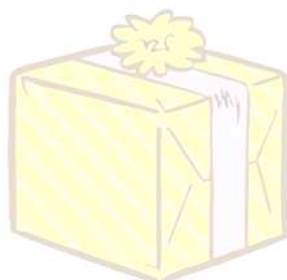
Invite children to draw the appropriate picture on their paper circle for the week you are covering.

Week one – angels and doves  
Week two – donkey and Joseph  
Week three – crown and sheep  
Week four – stars

Punch a hole at the top of each Chrismon and use the string or ribbon to make a loop to hang it on the Christmas tree.

### Some drawing tips

- The angels can be simple figures with wings and a halo.
- Four-legged animals are quite difficult for children to draw, so they may find it easier to draw a donkey's head with long ears.





## LESSON OUTLINES

### Week one – Messages from God

#### Introductory questions

- What are some ways that we can send messages to each other? Let's see how many we can come up with.
- How do you know when a message is important and that you need to listen to it?

#### Show the animation

Click on the TV screen to show the animation. It shows some amusing suggestions for how people might have sent messages in 'Ye Olden Days' and introduces the theme.

#### Show the comic

Provide a link to the comic. 'There are lots of different ways we can get messages across. We're going to explore how God sent messages to some people over two thousand years ago.'

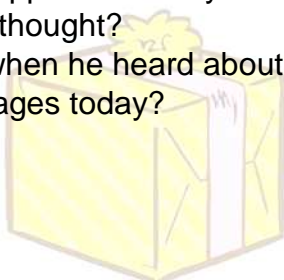
Invite children to come up and read the parts in the comic, frame by frame. We suggest that you read the captions or narration parts so that you can move the story along, and give cues to the children for when they should speak. Feel free to add explanations and asides that add to the story. You will need to recruit people to read these parts:

Priest 1  
Priest 2  
Priest 3  
Priest 4  
Zech  
Angel  
Santa  
Mary  
Liz  
Onlooker  
Joseph

#### Wondering questions

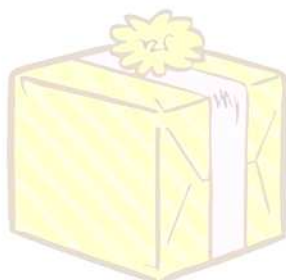
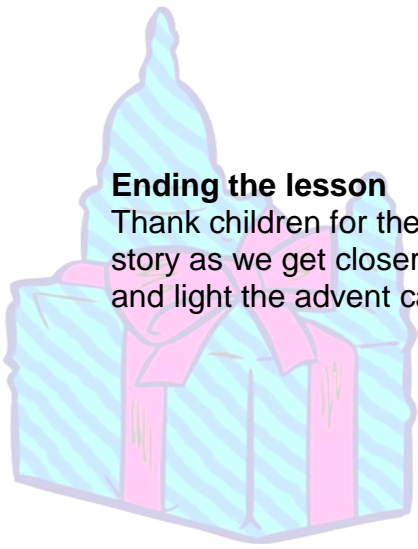
I wonder...

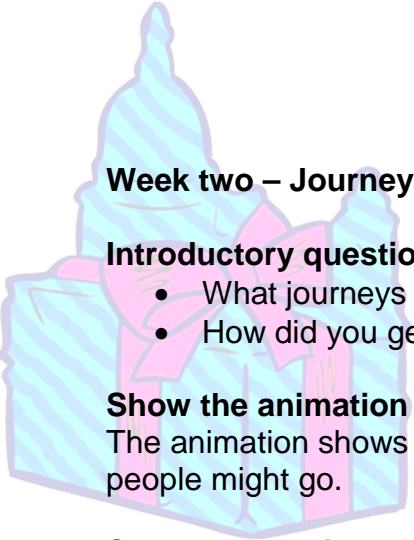
- ...what you liked about the story?
- ...what you would change in the story?
- ...what you would leave out and still have enough story?
- ...what would have happened if Mary had said no?
- ...what Mary's family thought?
- ...what Joseph said when he heard about the angel?
- ...if God sends messages today?



**Ending the lesson**

Thank children for their contributions. Encourage them to keep wondering about the story as we get closer to Christmas. You may like to add the Chrismons to the tree and light the advent candle to finish the lesson.





## Week two – Journeys

### Introductory questions

- What journeys have you been on? Who has travelled the furthest?
- How did you get to school this morning?

### Show the animation

The animation shows ways to travel in 'Ye Olden Days', reasons to travel and where people might go.

### Show the comic

Link to the comic: 'The Christmas story includes a journey. Let's find out who had to make it, where they had to go and why they had to go there.'

Invite children to come up and read the parts in the comic, frame by frame. We suggest that you read the captions or narration parts so that you can move the story along, and give cues to the children for when they should speak. Feel free to add explanations and asides that add to the story. You will need to recruit people to read the parts of:

Reader

Roman soldier

Joseph

Crow

Modern-day climber

Mary

Joe

Innkeeper

Professor

Smelly animals(!)

### Wondering questions

I wonder...

- ...what you liked about the story?
- ...what you would change in the story?
- ...what you would leave out and still have enough story?
- ...what might have happened if Joseph and Mary had refused to go?
- ...what the story would be like if the innkeeper had a spare room?
- ...what it would be like for a family in London today who had no home for their baby?

### Ending the lesson

Thank children for their contributions. Encourage them to keep wondering about the story as we get closer to Christmas. You may like to add the Chrismons to the tree and light the advent candle to finish the lesson.





## Week three – Jesus, God’s gift to the world

### Introductory questions

- What’s the best present you have ever received?
- What makes a really good present?

### Show the animation

The animation shows different gifts God gives people including his greatest gift, Jesus.

### Show the comic

Link to the comic: ‘At the heart of the Christmas story is the birth of a baby, Jesus. Let’s find out more about why he was born.’

Invite children to come up and read the parts in the comic, frame by frame. We suggest that you read the captions or narration parts so that you can move the story along, and give cues to the children for when they should speak. Feel free to add explanations and asides that add to the story. You will need to recruit people to read the parts of:

Crying baby

Child

Joe

Mary

Inspector – will need to read in a French accent! You may want to give a demonstration

Shepherd with big nose

Shepherd 1

Shepherd 2

Petrified shepherd

Short shepherd

Angel

Sheep

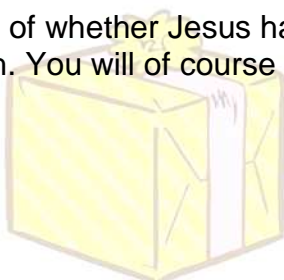
### Wondering questions

I wonder...

- ...what you liked about the story?
- ...what you would change in the story?
- ...what you would leave out and still have enough story?
- ...what you would have called the baby?
- ...if the name was important?
- ...if Jesus had any other names?

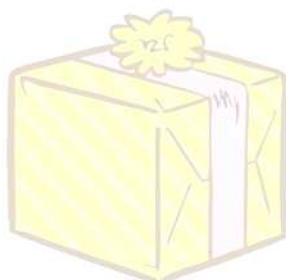
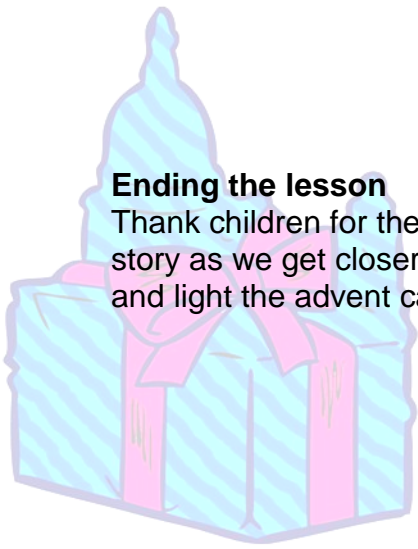
### Musical addition

To help answer the question of whether Jesus had any other names, you could play a clip from Handel’s Messiah. You will of course need a CD and CD player for this.



### Ending the lesson

Thank children for their contributions. Encourage them to keep wondering about the story as we get closer to Christmas. You may like to add the Chrismons to the tree and light the advent candle to finish the lesson.





## Week four – Visitors and gifts

### Introductory questions

- Who has been to visit a new baby? What was it like?
- What present did you take for the baby?

### Show the animation

The animation explores the visit of the wise men and the gifts they brought.

### Show the comic

Link to the comic: 'Lots of us love giving and getting presents at Christmas or at other festivals. Let's find out about the presents that Jesus was given when he was born.'

Invite children to come up and read the parts in the comic, frame by frame. We suggest that you read the captions or narration parts so that you can move the story along, and give cues to the children for when they should speak. Feel free to add explanations and asides that add to the story. You will need to recruit people to read the parts of:

Shepherd

Wise man 1

Wise man 2

Wise man 3

Santa

Herod

Religious bod.

### Wondering questions

I wonder...

- ...what you liked about the story?
- ...what you would change in the story?
- ...what you would leave out and still have enough story?
- ...if you would follow a star?
- ...what presents you would take?
- ...why they gave such strange presents?

### Ending the lesson

Thank children for their contributions. Encourage them to keep wondering about the story as we get closer to Christmas. You may like to add the Chrismons to the tree and light the advent candle to finish the lesson.

