

At The Manger: World Nativity Traditions

Educational Activities for 5-8 Grades

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(Plans may be customized for individual use)

Grade	6 - 7
Subject	Social Studies
Topic	The History of the Creche
Lesson Title	Where did the crèche come from?
1. Connections	
Learning Goal	Students will learn the Who, What, Where, When, and Why of the creation of the crèche.
Assessment of Prior Learning:	<p>Students will complete a K-W-L chart (template attached) to identify what they already know, what they want to know, and what they learn from the lesson.</p> <p>Students should be prompted by asking them if they happen to know why the crèche was created or who created it. Students often have a difficult time deciding what they want to know about a topic and may need further prompting.</p> <p>Q: Do you know who created the first crèche?</p> <p>Q: Do you know what kinds of figures were present in the first crèche?</p> <p>Q: Do you know what the first crèche was made out of?</p>
2. Learning Objective(s)	
Learning Objective(s)	Students will be able to correctly identify who created the first crèche, when, where, and why it was created, and of what material, Safter reading " <u>Saint Francis and the First Christmas Creche: The Premier Nativity Scene in a Stable with Live Animals,</u> " by Stella Walsh.
IEP Goal/Objective(s)	Students on IEP's may have a hard time reading texts and locating answers within the text. These students may succeed better with this lesson if it is presented as a read aloud or shared reading with ample time for group discussion
3. Student Grouping	Students may be grouped according to the teacher's preference. The reading may be done individually, in small groups or pairs, but the activity should be completed individually.
4. Methods/ Instructional	Choosing to use a read aloud or shared reading is very beneficial for students. They are provided with a fluent role model when the teacher reads, and given time to practice during their own reading turns.

Strategies	Graphic organizers are a great way to physically demonstrate student learning from either read alouds/shared reading or silent reading. Organizers help students develop their thoughts and put the information they have received into a logical order.
5. Instructional Modifications/ Differentiated Instruction	The only differentiation would be if the teacher chooses to have students read together or on their own.
6. Activities	<p>Graphic Organizer</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Students are each given a blank piece of paper or piece of paper with the outline of a hand. 2. Students either trace their hand on the paper, or use the outline provided. 3. Students use each finger and the palm to identify the Who, What, Where, When and Why of the first crèche. <p>Wrap- Up Bring student focus back together to discuss what was written on the fingers of each hand.</p> <p>Encourage students to revise their hands as needed, correcting wrong information or adding more details they had not thought of.</p>
7. Resources & Materials (including technology)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reading materials - Blank paper or paper with outlined hand - Pens/pencils
8. Assessment/ Evaluation	The teacher should be assessing the students throughout this process. If students are reading aloud, the teacher should be assessing their oral reading skills to determine strengths and weaknesses for further lessons. Students can also be assessed based on their graphic organizers as they display their information.

Grade	5-8
Subject	Language Arts and Religion
Topic	Comparing multiple stories of Jesus' birth.
Lesson Title	The birth of Jesus from two perspectives.
1. Connections	
Learning Goal	Students will have a better understanding of the story of Jesus' birth and be able to compare the writings of Matthew and Luke.

Assessment of Prior Learning:	Students should be familiar with comparing and contrasting. These skills will be used during this study of the gospels of Matthew and Luke.
2. Learning Objective(s)	
Learning Objective(s)	Students will be able to identify similarities and differences between the gospel accounts of Jesus' birth in the books of Matthew and Luke in order to write a compare-and-contrast paper.
IEP Goal/Objective(s)	The IEP Goal/Objective (s) will have to be tailored to the specific student and his/her IEP. Some students may need more time to complete the assignment.
3. Student Grouping	Students will work individually, or in small groups if read aloud/shared reading is used.
4. Methods/ Instructional Strategies	<p>This lesson is an opportune time to review proper note-taking skills. Students will need to keep well-written notes on each version of the birth of Jesus in order to properly write their compare-and-contrast essays. Students should be taught a variety of note taking methods such as the split-page and Cornell methods (see attached worksheets). [Note-taking could become its own mini-lesson within the context of the larger Bible passage comparison lesson.]</p> <p>Students will engage in a close reading of the birth of Jesus as told by gospel writers Matthew and Mark, taking note of significant similarities and differences between the stories. This can be done individually or in small groups.</p> <p>Students will then write individual essays comparing and contrasting the two stories.</p>
5. Instructional Modifications/ Differentiated Instruction	Some students may feel more comfortable reading the material on their own, and others may perform better in groups. The teacher may use his/her discretion in making this decision.
6. Activities	The only "activity" that accompanies this lessons is note-taking, which students may perform in whichever way they feel most comfortable.
7. Resources & Materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bible - Paper and writing utensil
8. Assessment/ Evaluation	Student notes should be collected for formative assessment. The teacher can gain a better understanding of how well students understand the note-taking process, and see which information appears most important to them in a passage. The compare-and-contrast essays may be used for summative assessment purposes, recognizing what was learned by the student.

*Note that this lesson builds upon the Comparison of the gospels of Matthew and Luke

Grade	5 - 8
Subject	Social Studies
Topic	A visual representation of the events leading up to Christ's birth.
Lesson Title	The flow of the Nativity.
1. Connections	
Learning Goal	Students will gain a better understanding of the chronology of the events that culminated in the birth of Christ.
Assessment of Prior Learning:	Students should have already read the nativity stories of gospel writers Matthew and Luke and written a comparison and contrast essay on the two stories. They will now take their knowledge to draw up a succinct flow chart of events on the story they choose.
2. Learning Objective(s)	
Learning Objective(s)	Students will be able to create a visual representation of the story of Christ's birth according to either the gospel of Matthew or the gospel of Luke.
IEP Goal/Objective(s)	Students on an IEP may need to see multiple examples of flow charts and need a little more assistance organizing their thoughts into this new format.
3. Student Grouping	Students will work individually to complete the assignment.
4. Methods/ Instructional Strategies	<p>The teacher should begin by introducing the flow chart graphic organizer. (See attached example.) The teacher should explain the benefits of using a flow chart and how it helps organize thoughts and create a visual representation of information.</p> <p>After this direct instruction, students will be reminded of their previous assignment, comparing and contrasting the gospel accounts of Matthew and Luke. The students will then be allowed to select which account they prefer to work with, and begin creating their flow chart, organizing the significant events of the birth of Jesus.</p>
5. Instructional Modifications/ Differentiated Instruction	The teacher should establish a rubric for the graphic organizers, stating explicitly how many events should be included and how much detail he/she wants to see the students include. These requirements may be altered for struggling students.
6. Activities	Flow Chart Graphic Organizer

	- Students will create their own flow chart to visually represent the significant events leading up to Christ's birth in chronological order.
7. Resources & Materials (including technology)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Paper - Writing utensils - Markers/crayons/colored pencils to enhance the graphic organizer
8. Assessment/ Evaluation	Through the graphic organizer, the teacher will be able to assess student understanding of chronology as well as their understanding of the Nativity story as a whole. The teacher can formatively assess as the students work, pointing them in the right direction and keeping them on the proper path as they go. A formative assessment may be made upon completion of the assignment.

Grade	7
Subject	Social Studies
Topic	Cultural representation through traditional clothing.
Lesson Title	Then and Now: Information Transfer in the Modern Day vs. the Time of Jesus
1. Connections	
Learning Goal	Students will compare how ideas and events were communicated in the past with how they are communicated now.
Assessment of Prior Learning:	Students should already be familiar with the story of the nativity. This lesson will build upon that prior knowledge to compare the traditional story concept to today's modern setting.
2. Learning Objective(s)	
Learning Objective(s)	Students will be able to compare the historical context of the original nativity with today's technology and how communication occurs
IEP	Students on IEP's may struggle with making connections from past to modern-day. A little extra prompting with questions may be just what these students need to get them thinking on the right track.

Goal/Objective(s)	Q: What kind of technology do you use every day? Q: Do you have a cell phone?
3. Student Grouping	This activity would work best in small groups to facilitate group discussion and allow students to scaffold one another through the lesson.
4. Methods/ Instructional Strategies	<p>The lesson will begin by accessing students' prior knowledge. The teacher will facilitate a discussion about technology in today's culture. The students will be prompted to help create a list of the technology they see around them every day. Such a list may include telephones, computers, microwaves, electric billboards, television, coffee pots (if their parents drink coffee), toasters, refrigerators, cars, airplanes, etc. *Students should be reminded that "technology" refers to things other than simply electronic items.</p> <p>After listing today's technology, the discussion will segue into a comparison of how information was transferred at the time of Jesus' birth and how information is transferred in the present day. Students will be prompted to tell how the birth of a child in today's society might be communicated to family and friends.</p> <p>The following video, a modern spin on the Nativity story may be shown: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GkHNNPM7pJA</p>
5. Instructional Modifications/ Differentiated Instruction	The teacher may modify the activity and writing assignment, allowing for students who need extra assistance to have different guidelines such as a shorter writing assignment or more time to work.
6. Activities	<p>Compare and Contrast</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Students will work together to create a T-chart listing modern technologies and their historical equivalents. <p>Writing</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Students will create a written expression of learning. Students will write a short compare-and-contrast essay explaining the differences between the birth of Jesus and a modern-day birth, and how the event would be publicized in today's world compared to how the news was spread at the time of Jesus.
7. Resources & Materials (including technology)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - YouTube Video - Paper and Pencil/Pen
8. Assessment/ Evaluation	The teacher should formatively assess students during whole-class as well as small-group discussions. The compare/contrast t-chart is another formative assessment tool. If the teacher notices blatant misunderstandings while students are constructing their t-charts, he/she can allow for more discussion to redirect student thinking, forming instruction according to student understanding. The student writing that concludes the lesson may be used as a summative assessment

	of what students learned during the lesson. The paper may be looked at for proper spelling/grammar/punctuation.
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*Note that this lesson pairs well with the “Cultural Dress in Nativities” lesson.

Grade	5 - 8
Subject	Social Studies, Science, Language Arts
Topic	Researching and examining the multiple elements of the crèche, from clothing, to animals, to materials, to building structures.
Lesson Title	The multiple focuses of the crèche.
1. Connections	
Learning Goal	Students will perform research on a particular country or region of the world to learn a bit about the country’s history. This will give them a better idea of why crèche’s from this area of the world are designed in particular ways that reflect the country and its people.
Assessment of Prior Learning:	Students should already be familiar with the nativity story and the crèche. They will now focus on a particular country or region of the world to learn more about that specific area and how a crèche would best reflect that region.
2. Learning Objective(s)	
Learning Objective(s)	Students will be able to design and create their own crèche representing a specific country or region of the world through the clothing of the figures, the structure they are placed in, the animals present in the scene, and the materials used for creation.
IEP Goal/Objective(s)	Students on an IEP will need to work with the teacher to develop a plan for research and writing strategies.
3. Student Grouping	Students will conduct research and write individually.
4. Methods/ Instructional Strategies	<p>The teacher should emphasis the importance of nationality. The teacher may direct students to helpful research websites such as the following: http://www.studentsoftheworld.info/menu_infopays.html</p> <p>The teacher should also help students find books in the library. The teacher should review proper in-text citations and bibliography formats.</p> <p>The class should begin by conducting a short class-wide inquiry of the United States. The class as a whole will find information about the U.S. and this will act as</p>

	<p>a model of how the students will conduct research on their own. The teacher should re-emphasize the fact that each country and region has its own distinct culture, which can shape the creation of things such as the crèche.</p> <p>Students should pay particular attention to animals of the country, typical occupations, traditional dress, natural resources, geography, common craft items, and building styles. These should all be incorporated into student research and displayed in the student's crèche.</p>
5. Instructional Modifications/ Differentiated Instruction	
6. Activities	<p>Research</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Students will perform research on their selected country and identify the pre-determined aspects of that country (traditional dress, natural resources, geography, common craft items, and building styles). <p>Project Construction</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Students will construct a crèche representing their chosen country implementing the knowledge they have gleaned from research to make the project as accurate as possible. 2. The crèche may be completed however the teacher/student desires, either through drawing on paper, digital drawings or photographs found through research, or through the creative use of other materials. Encourage the students to use the actual materials they find in their research as much as possible. <p>Writing</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Students will write a research paper about their country, being sure to include a section of how the research they have found would influence a crèche that depicts that country or region. <p>Presentation</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Students should give a short presentation of their writing and projects to their peers and compare their country/region to others from around the world.
7. Resources & Materials (including technology)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Computer/Books (research materials) - Materials for crèche creation
8. Assessment/ Evaluation	<p>The teacher can use both the writing and the physical crèche to assess student learning. Students should demonstrate knowledge of a country's resources and traditions through both their writing and project design. The two should be</p>

	aligned with the research performed. Teachers should be able to easily see the connection between the research conducted and the crèche presented.
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Grade	6
Subject	Social Studies
Topic	Cultural representation through traditional clothing.
Lesson Title	Cultural Dress in Nativities
1. Connections	
Learning Goal	Students will become aware of the traditional dress of many countries.
Assessment of Prior Learning:	Students should already be familiar with the nativity story. They will now be looking at the representation of the nativity, the crèche, with a keen eye towards the attire of the people depicted.
2. Learning Objective(s)	
Learning Objective(s)	Students will be able to create their own crèche representing a specific country through the clothing of their figures.
IEP Goal/Objective(s)	The IEP Goal/Objective (s) will have to be tailored to the specific student and his/her IEP.
3. Student Grouping	Students will work individually.
4. Methods/ Instructional Strategies	The teacher may present this lesson in a number of ways. The students may participate in a webquest, or take a trip to the library to use printed resources. The students will perform research on a specific country to learn about that culture's traditional attire and use the acquired information to construct their own crèche that resembles that country as well as to write a short description of their crèche with an explanation of that country's traditional dress.
5. Instructional Modifications/ Differentiated Instruction	Students with difficulty writing may type their paragraphs on the computer.
6. Activities	Research 6. Students will perform research on their selected country and identify the traditional dress worn by that country.

	<p>Project Construction</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Students will construct a crèche representing their chosen country through the dress of their figures. 4. The crèche may be completed however the teacher desires, either through drawing on paper, using real fabrics, digital drawings, or photographs found through research. <p>Writing</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Students will attach a written paragraph or two to their crèche, explaining the traditional dress of their chosen country and how it has been represented in the creation of their crèche. <p>*And added activity for after the lesson would be for students to line their crèches up in a row for display. Each student is given a paragraph written by a classmate. Students must identify which crèche matches their paragraph description.</p>
7. Resources & Materials (including technology)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Computer/Books (research materials) - Paper/Pen/Pencil/Fabric/Glue (depending on how the teacher chooses to have students create their crèches)
8. Assessment/ Evaluation	The teacher can use both the writing and the physical crèche to assess student learning. Students should demonstrate knowledge of a country's traditional dress through both their writing and project design. The two should be aligned with the research performed. Teachers should be able to easily identify each country.

**Online Research Resources:

<http://library.thinkquest.org/08aug/00927/>

<http://www.costumes.org/ethnic/1pages/ethnolnk.htm>

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Category:Clothing_by_nationality

<http://library.thinkquest.org/C004179/customs.htm>

Grade	5 – 8
Subject	Art, Language Arts, Social Studies
Topic	The way color represents culture and conveys mood.
Lesson Title	The Importance of Color.
1. Connections	

Learning Goal	Students will discuss how colors represent specific cultures as well as convey particular moods.
Assessment of Prior Learning:	The students need not be familiar with the Nativity story itself for this activity. By the 5 th grade, students can recognize and name colors and shapes.
2. Learning Objective(s)	
Learning Objective(s)	Students will be able to identify the various colors and shapes used in a particular crèche and explain the mood created by those colors and shapes as well as any cultural significance associated with them.
IEP Goal/Objective(s)	The IEP Goal/Objective (s) will have to be tailored to the specific student and his/her IEP. All students should be included in this activity. Some may need more prompting and reminding than others. A list of moods/emotions may be helpful.
3. Student Grouping	Students may work alone or with a partner.
4. Methods/ Instructional Strategies	For this lesson, students will need access to a wide variety of crèches to compare color schemes and shapes. (See sources listed on the Bibliography of this curriculum and/or feel free to visit the Roesch Library at the University of Dayton.) Students may conduct prior research about which colors convey which moods, or they may rely upon their own knowledge and the emotions drawn out of themselves. This lesson is a student-driven exploration.
5. Instructional Modifications/ Differentiated Instruction	
6. Activities	<p>Students will be given time to look at a variety of crèches. They should take notes about the colors and shapes of each crèche and how those colors and shapes conveyed a particular mood for the scene.</p> <p>After their initial exploration, students will select one crèche to research. They will conduct their own research on the background of that crèche's country of origin to find information about the relevance of particular colors in that country or any significant meanings of the shapes they found in that crèche. (For example, Native Americans/American Indians frequently use white, red and light blue. This is partially due in part to the materials available to them – berries, etc.)</p> <p>Students should provide a picture of a crèche from that culture which shows the colors and shapes, as well as a short explanation of the significance of these symbolic details.</p>
7. Resources &	- Computer/Books (research materials)

Materials (including technology)	- Paper and writing utensil
8. Assessment/Evaluation	Teachers should observe student research and help guide searches in the right direction. Final products can be summatively assessed and evaluated for quality of research, written composition, and personal emotional accounts.

*Note that this lesson pairs well with “The Importance of Angels” lesson.

Grade	5 – 8
Subject	Social Studies and Religion
Topic	Recognizing the roles of angels in Jesus’ birth.
Lesson Title	Angels in the Nativity.
1. Connections	
Learning Goal	Students will learn about the role of angels in the story of Jesus’ birth.
Assessment of Prior Learning:	Students have heard about angels through their previous reading of the birth of Christ, as well as through their research on the types of angels. Now students will narrow their focus specifically to the roles of angels in the Nativity story.
2. Learning Objective(s)	
Learning Objective(s)	Students will be able to identify and name the angels involved in the Nativity and the role they played.
IEP Goal/Objective(s)	The IEP Goal/Objective (s) will have to be tailored to the specific student and his/her IEP.
3. Student Grouping	Students will work in pairs to read the story of Jesus’ birth from the Bible (whichever version and whichever gospel writer the teacher chooses) and identify the angel(s) involved.
4. Methods/ Instructional Strategies	Students will be paired with a partner. The two students will do a small read-aloud of the story of Jesus birth including the preceding events (Annunciation). Together, the students will identify the angels in the story and state how their presence impacted the Nativity story. Specific passages to note:

	<p>Luke 1:26-38 (Annunciation)</p> <p>Matthew 1:18-25 (an angel appears to Joseph)</p> <p>Luke 2:8-27 (an angel appears to the shepherds)</p> <p>Matthew 2:9-16 (an angel warns Joseph to flee to Egypt)</p> <p>Matthew 2:19-21 (an angel sends the holy family to Israel)</p>
5. Instructional Modifications/ Differentiated Instruction	
6. Activities	<p>Think-Pair-Share and Read Aloud</p> <p>- Students will read through the text on their own for homework. The following session, students will be paired to re-read the text out loud with their partner in a Read Aloud. Students will identify the angels in the story and the role they played. Findings will be shared out to the group.</p>
7. Resources & Materials (including technology)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bible - Paper and writing utensil
8. Assessment/ Evaluation	<p>The teacher can listen to student reading during the read aloud to identify strengths and weaknesses in oral reading skills. The students may be asked to have their findings written down to be turned in for formative assessment.</p>

*Important resource for Bible passages and explanations:

http://www.picturesofsilver.com/Teachings/angels_christ.htm

Grade	5 – 8
Subject	Social Studies and Religion
Topic	Recognizing the roles of angels in the Bible.
Lesson Title	The Importance of Angels.
1. Connections	
Learning Goal	Students will learn about various types of angels and the specific roles angels play in heaven and on earth.
Assessment of Prior Learning:	Students have heard about angels through their previous reading of the birth of Christ (the angel Gabriel who announces Mary's pregnancy and the angel who speaks to the shepherds). Students will now gain a better understanding of the

	various types of angels and their roles and responsibilities.
2. Learning Objective(s)	
Learning Objective(s)	Students will be able to identify and name the various types of angels as well as their specific roles and responsibilities.
IEP Goal/Objective(s)	The IEP Goal/Objective (s) will have to be tailored to the specific student and his/her IEP.
3. Student Grouping	Students will work in two small groups, one homogeneous and one heterogeneous.
4. Methods/ Instructional Strategies	<p>This lesson is very student-centered. The teacher will engage the students in a “Jigsaw” activity. Students will be placed in groups. One student from each group will choose a type of or specific angel to research. Students will then form new, homogeneous groups, based upon which angel is to be studied. Students will then conduct research on their specific angel or type of angel. Once research is completed, students will return to their original groups as the “expert” on their specific angel/type. Their findings will be shared with their group members so that all students receive information on each type of angel.</p> <p>The angels and types of angels to be studied may include but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Seraphim - Cherubim - Thrones - Dominions - Powers - Archangels - Angels - Guardians - Messengers - Michael - Gabriel
5. Instructional Modifications/ Differentiated Instruction	
6. Activities	<p>Jigsaw – [See full explanation above.] – Small groups. Students choose area of expertise. New, homogeneous groups formed. Research conducted. Return to original, heterogeneous groups. Information shared.</p> <p>An additional activity would be for students to construct their own angel. The</p>

	following website has detailed instructions for making an a cheesecloth angel: http://www.dritz.com/brands/projects/project_instructions.php?PROJ_ID=25
7. Resources & Materials (including technology)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Computer/Books (research materials) - Paper and writing utensil
8. Assessment/ Evaluation	The teacher can observe student research as they conduct it and guide them along their way as they sift through various sources of information. Teachers may also choose to have students turn in their notes to ensure their participation in the research portion of the activity.

Resources: <http://people.howstuffworks.com/9-types-of-angels.htm>

(Specific Bible passage references to angels) = <http://diskbooks.org/aib.html>

<http://www.catholic.org/saints/angel.php>

Vocabulary Activity Ideas for Acquisition and Review:

1. *“Meeting New Vocabulary”*

Through this activity, students build a close relationship with the word being studied. Students make their own prediction of what the word means, and construct a sentence based on their personal definition of the term. From there, students use a dictionary to find a proper definition, and construct a new sentence based on the dictionary definition of the word. Students also create a drawing or symbol, a physical representation of the word, which helps act as a retrieval cue for processing the new information and accessing it from long term memory later on.

2. *“4-Fold Vocabulary”*

In this activity, students are given strips of paper. Each strip of paper is folded into four sections. In the first section, the student writes the new word. In the second section, the student writes the definition of the term in their own words. In the third section, the student draws a picture or symbol to represent the word. In the 4th section, the student writes a sentence with the word based on their definition.

After completing the strips, the students cut apart the sections and put them in an envelope. The words are reviewed by having student reassemble the word rows. Students can trade rows/envelopes with others.

3. *“Word Map”*

A word map is a graphic organizer for vocabulary. It consists of eight boxes. The centermost box contains the word itself. Above the word, a second box is used for writing the definition of the word, answering the question “What is it?” To the right of the word itself, three smaller boxes are drawn, each branching out from the word, used to place either a word or picture that answers the question “What is it like?” Directly beneath the box with the vocabulary words are three rectangular boxes the give examples of the word.

This is a great way to have a visual representation of the vocabulary word. The downside is that these organizers take up a lot of time when used for a long list of words.

4. *“Bluff”*

Students are divided into two teams. A vocabulary term is defined by the teacher. Those that know the answer stand. Those that don't and wish to "bluff" the answer can stand, too. A student is called on to give the definition. If correct, the number of points of students standing is awarded (or deducted if the person called doesn't know the answer).

4-Fold Vocabulary

Word	Definition	Picture	Sentence
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Oven	kitchen appliance used for baking or roasting		We baked cookies in the oven.
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Name _____

Date _____

Meeting New Vocabulary

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Word

Drawing Or Symbol For Word

Predicted meaning of word: _____

Based on that meaning, use this word in a sentence:

Definition from dictionary:

Based on the dictionary's meaning, use this word in a sentence:

Word Map

What is it?
(write the definition)

The Birth of Jesus according to gospel writers Matthew and Luke:

Matthew 1:18-2:23

New International Version (NIV)

Joseph Accepts Jesus as His Son

¹⁸ This is how the birth of Jesus the Messiah came about^[a]: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be pregnant through the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹ Because Joseph her husband was faithful to the law, and yet^[b] did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly.

²⁰ But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, “Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. ²¹ She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus,^[c] because he will save his people from their sins.”

²² All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: ²³ “The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel”^[d] (which means “God with us”).

²⁴ When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took Mary home as his wife. ²⁵ But he did not consummate their marriage until she gave birth to a son. And he gave him the name Jesus.

Matthew 2

The Magi Visit the Messiah

¹ After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi^[e] from the east came to Jerusalem ² and asked, “Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him.”

³ When King Herod heard this he was disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him. ⁴ When he had called together all the people’s chief priests and teachers of the law, he asked them where the Messiah was to be born. ⁵ “In Bethlehem in Judea,” they replied, “for this is what the prophet has written:

⁶ “‘But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,
are by no means least among the rulers of Judah;
for out of you will come a ruler
who will shepherd my people Israel.’^[f]”

⁷ Then Herod called the Magi secretly and found out from them the exact time the star had appeared. ⁸ He sent them to Bethlehem and said, “Go and search carefully for the child. As soon as you find him, report to me, so that I too may go and worship him.”

⁹ After they had heard the king, they went on their way, and the star they had seen when it rose went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was. ¹⁰ When they saw the star, they were overjoyed. ¹¹ On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. ¹² And having been warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their country by another route.

The Escape to Egypt

¹³ When they had gone, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream. “Get up,” he said, “take the child and his mother and escape to Egypt. Stay there until I tell you, for Herod is going to search for the child to kill him.”

¹⁴ So he got up, took the child and his mother during the night and left for Egypt, ¹⁵ where he stayed until the death of Herod. And so was fulfilled what the Lord had said through the prophet: “Out of Egypt I called my son.”^[a]

¹⁶ When Herod realized that he had been outwitted by the Magi, he was furious, and he gave orders to kill all the boys in Bethlehem and its vicinity who were two years old and under, in accordance with the time he had learned from the Magi. ¹⁷ Then what was said through the prophet Jeremiah was fulfilled:

¹⁸ “A voice is heard in Ramah,
weeping and great mourning,
Rachel weeping for her children
and refusing to be comforted,
because they are no more.”^[b]

The Return to Nazareth

¹⁹ After Herod died, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt ²⁰ and said, “Get up, take the child and his mother and go to the land of Israel, for those who were trying to take the child’s life are dead.”

²¹ So he got up, took the child and his mother and went to the land of Israel. ²² But when he heard that Archelaus was reigning in Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. Having been warned in a dream, he withdrew to the district of Galilee, ²³ and he went and lived in a town called Nazareth. So was fulfilled what was said through the prophets, that he would be called a Nazarene.

Luke 2

New International Version (NIV)

The Birth of Jesus

¹ In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. ² (This was the first census that took place while^[a] Quirinius was governor of Syria.) ³ And everyone went to their own town to register.

⁴ So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. ⁵ He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. ⁶ While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, ⁷ and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them.

⁸ And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. ⁹ An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰ But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. ¹¹ Today in the town of David

a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. ¹² This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.”

¹³ Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying,

¹⁴ “Glory to God in the highest heaven,
and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests.”

¹⁵ When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let’s go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about.”

¹⁶ So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger. ¹⁷ When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, ¹⁸ and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them. ¹⁹ But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart. ²⁰ The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told.

²¹ On the eighth day, when it was time to circumcise the child, he was named Jesus, the name the angel had given him before he was conceived.

Jesus Presented in the Temple

²² When the time came for the purification rites required by the Law of Moses, Joseph and Mary took him to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord ²³ (as it is written in the Law of the Lord, “Every firstborn male is to be consecrated to the Lord”^[b]), ²⁴ and to offer a sacrifice in keeping with what is said in the Law of the Lord: “a pair of doves or two young pigeons.”^[c]

²⁵ Now there was a man in Jerusalem called Simeon, who was righteous and devout. He was waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was on him. ²⁶ It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not die before he had seen the Lord’s Messiah. ²⁷ Moved by the Spirit, he went into the temple courts. When the parents brought in the child Jesus to do for him what the custom of the Law required, ²⁸ Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying:

²⁹ “Sovereign Lord, as you have promised,
you may now dismiss^[d] your servant in peace.

³⁰ For my eyes have seen your salvation,

³¹ which you have prepared in the sight of all nations:

³² a light for revelation to the Gentiles,
and the glory of your people Israel.”

³³ The child’s father and mother marveled at what was said about him. ³⁴ Then Simeon blessed them and said to Mary, his mother: “This child is destined to cause the falling and rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be spoken against, ³⁵ so that the thoughts of many hearts will be revealed. And a sword will pierce your own soul too.”

³⁶ There was also a prophet, Anna, the daughter of Penuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was very old; she had lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, ³⁷ and then was a widow until she was eighty-four.^[e] She never left the temple but worshiped night and day, fasting and praying. ³⁸ Coming up to them at that very moment, she gave thanks to God and spoke about the child to all who were looking forward to the redemption of Jerusalem.

³⁹ When Joseph and Mary had done everything required by the Law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee to their own town of Nazareth. ⁴⁰ And the child grew and became strong; he was filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was on him.

The Boy Jesus at the Temple

⁴¹ Every year Jesus' parents went to Jerusalem for the Festival of the Passover. ⁴² When he was twelve years old, they went up to the festival, according to the custom. ⁴³ After the festival was over, while his parents were returning home, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem, but they were unaware of it. ⁴⁴ Thinking he was in their company, they traveled on for a day. Then they began looking for him among their relatives and friends. ⁴⁵ When they did not find him, they went back to Jerusalem to look for him. ⁴⁶ After three days they found him in the temple courts, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. ⁴⁷ Everyone who heard him was amazed at his understanding and his answers. ⁴⁸ When his parents saw him, they were astonished. His mother said to him, "Son, why have you treated us like this? Your father and I have been anxiously searching for you."

⁴⁹ "Why were you searching for me?" he asked. "Didn't you know I had to be in my Father's house?"^[f] ⁵⁰ But they did not understand what he was saying to them.

⁵¹ Then he went down to Nazareth with them and was obedient to them. But his mother treasured all these things in her heart. ⁵² And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man.

Source: Online Bible. New International Version.

Website: <http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Luke%202&version=NIV>

Saint Francis and the First Christmas Creche

The Premier Nativity Scene in a Stable with Live Animals

By: Stella Walsh

October 24, 2008

Saint Francis of Assisi, who was devoted to following Jesus, is credited with creating the first Christmas Nativity scene to commemorate the Christ's birth at Bethlehem.

This patron saint of animals, ecology, peace, and Italy had such a deep love for The Lord that one Christmas he felt inspired to recreate a nativity scene in a stable, complete with live animals.

Saint Francis of Assisi

According to The Franciscan Archives, the year of Saint Francis' birth is not certain - it is believed to be either 1181 or 1182. However, it is known that he was born at Assisi in Umbria, Italy to a wealthy cloth merchant, Pietro di Bernardone.

Francis was originally named Giovanni. However, his father, arriving home after his birth, changed his name to acknowledge the family's growing connections to France.

During Francis' youth, when he wasn't at work in the family business, he spent considerable time at leisure, carousing with his friends. However, after attempting to begin a military career, he was held prisoner for about a year, and fell ill. During this time, he experienced a spiritual conversion, making Jesus the center of his life. He continued to strengthen this change of heart throughout his early twenties.

With his passion for Jesus becoming more and more evident to those who knew him, Francis soon developed a large following. He eventually became the founder of the Franciscan Order. He lived a life devoted to simplicity and following the teachings of Christ.

Francis of Assisi died on October 3, 1226, and was canonized by Gregory IX on July 16, 1228. Besides his great passion for Jesus, Saint Francis is well-known for his love of, and communion with, nature. Many believe he reached sainthood while still living.

The First Christmas Creche

Three years before Francis died, he was taken with the idea of celebrating the birth of Jesus by reenacting the scene in a stable, complete with a manger, people, and live animals. As was Francis' way, he threw himself into the event with great passion, attempting to fully express his great love for his Savior.

And so, at Greccio, Italy, on Christmas Eve in 1223, Francis created a nativity scene, which amazed all who were present. On that cold night, he was joined by the townspeople and friars in celebrating mass in a stable, with Francis himself chanting the Holy Gospel.

This Christ-centered event, filled with enormous joy and thanksgiving, set in motion the tradition of using a nativity scene for decoration during Advent and Christmas.

The Importance of Vocabulary Acquisition and Accompanying Vocabulary Lists:

Vocabulary acquisition is important for all students. Vocabulary should be integrated into other lessons and not stand alone. It is easier for the student to acquire new words when they are used in context and not simply a stand-alone list, unassociated with current, prior, and future learning.

According to the Ohio Department of Education’s English Language Arts Benchmarks for Reading in grades 4-7 students should:

- Use context clues and text structures to determine the meaning of new vocabulary.
- Apply knowledge of connotation and denotation to learn the meanings of words.
- Use knowledge of roots and affixes to determine the meanings of complex words.
- Use multiple resources to enhance comprehension of vocabulary.

The following lists of words come from readings included in the curriculum packet and should be used alongside lessons which utilize these readings. Each list can be presented however the teacher sees fit, but a list of vocabulary activities has been attached for convenience.

Vocabulary for “Saint Francis and the First Christmas Creche: The Premier Nativity Scene in a Stable with Live Animals” by Stella Walsh

1. Commemorate
2. Ecology
3. Nativity
4. Merchant
5. Acknowledge
6. Conversion
7. Carousing
8. Evident
9. Canonized
10. Friar

Vocabulary for “The Importance of Angels” lesson

1. Seraphim
2. Cherubim
3. Thrones
4. Dominions
5. Powers

6. Archangels
7. Angels
8. Guardians
9. Messengers
10. Michael
11. Gabriel

Vocabulary for “The Importance of Color” lesson (To advance student vocabulary beyond “happy,” “sad,” etc.)

1. Jubilant
2. Awe
3. Adoration
4. Elation
5. Zeal
6. Revulsion
7. Scorn
8. Spite
9. Anguish
10. Dismay
11. Dejection
12. Distress

Vocabulary for “The History of the Nativity” lesson

1. Mary
2. Joseph
3. Magi
4. Frankincense
5. Myrrh
6. Gold
7. Manger
8. Inn
9. Shepherd
10. Bethlehem
11. Nazareth
12. Nativity
13. Creche
14. Stable
15. star of Bethlehem

*Accompanying vocabulary worksheet can be found at this web address:

http://homeschooling.about.com/od/holidays/ss/nativityprint_2.htm

"5 W Hand"

Directions: Trace your hand below. Each finger represents one of the 5 W Questions (Who, What, Where, When, Why). On each finger, answer one of the W's about the birth of Christ. In the center, on the palm, answer the one H question.

Who? – Who was involved in this event? Who was affected by it?

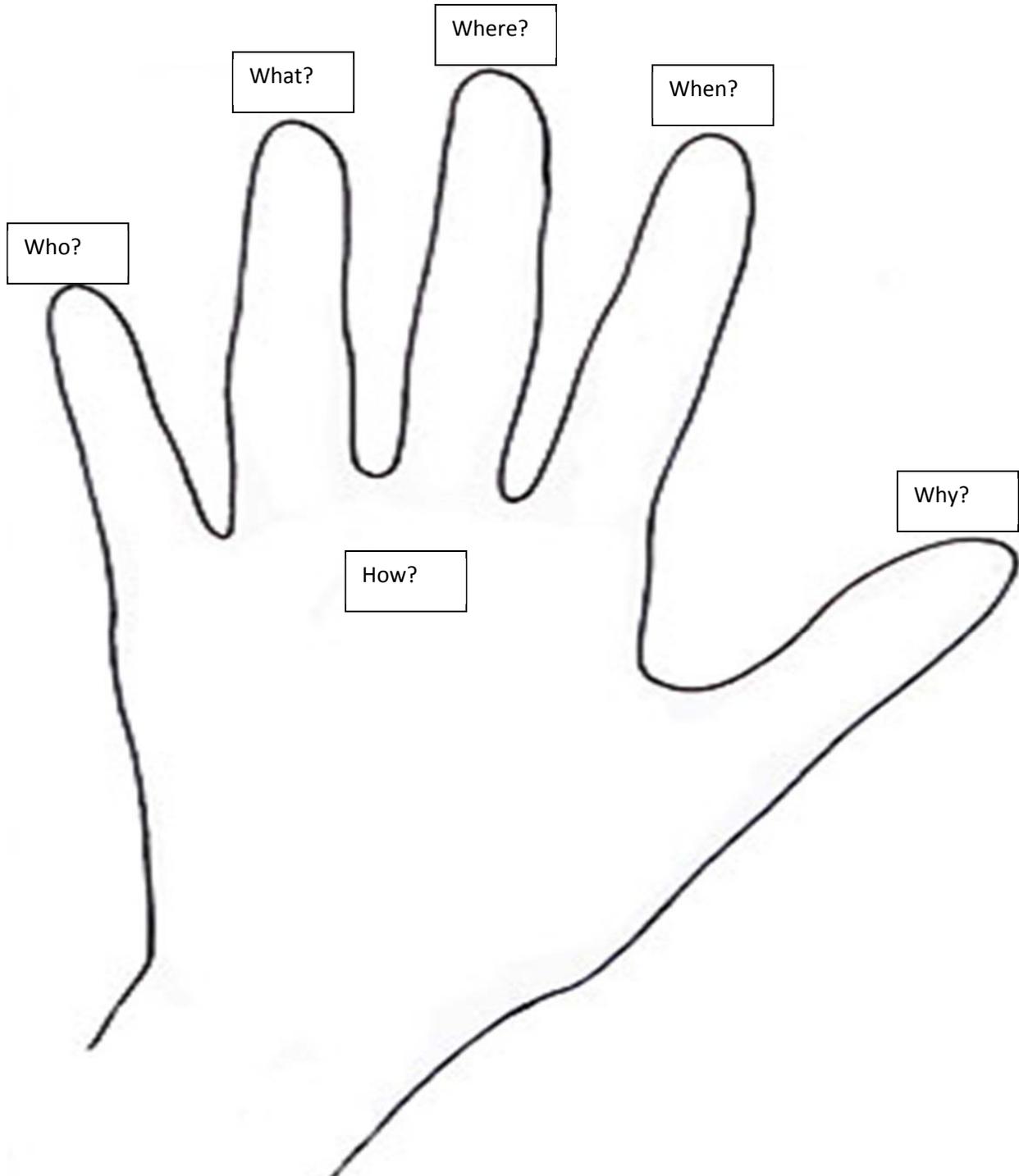
What? – What was the event? What was the purpose? What was happening that led to the event?

Where? – Where did the event take place?

When? – When did the event occur?

Why? – Why did the event take place?

How? – How did the event occur? How did people find out about the event?



Bibliography and Useful Resources

PRINTED TEXTS:

Brown, Denise L. *Christmas, the Story of the Nativity*. London: Sheed and Ward, 1946. Print.

This book breaks down the story of the nativity into manageable sections - The Annunciation, The Visitation, The Nativity, The Shepherds are Told, etc. - using Biblical stories. Some junior high students may struggle with the writing style and vocabulary.

Burke, Sean P. *Infant of Joy: Christmas Cribs from around the World*. Hong Kong: Maryknoll House, 2006. Print.

This is a wonderful picture book. Each page contains a photograph of a creche with either a quote or Bible passage beneath it. The country of origin is also printed beneath the photograph.

Govan, James L. *Art of the Crèche: Nativities from around the World*. London: Merrell, 2007. Print.

This is book based around one man's creche collection. He breaks the creches into groups based around the costumes worn, flora and fauna represented, musical expressions, and many more sub-categories. Descriptions of where the creche came from, information about the creator, and the materials and background are all included.

Lalor, Brian, and Frank McCourt. *The Encyclopedia of Ireland*. New Haven: Yale UP, 2003. Print.

This was a useful source for finding information on Ireland such as the traditional dress and occupations of the Irish.

Piña, Leslie A., Lorita Winfield, and Ramón Piña. *Nativity: Crèches of the World*. Atglen, PA: Schiffer Pub., 2000. Print.

This is a great book for comparing visual elements of the crèche. Each page contains two photographs of crèches with a short description of the country of origin and materials used.

Sacred Heart Cathedral. Rochester, NY, 2005. Print.

This is a picture book. Each page contains 2-3 images of creches and a short description of each containing the country of origin and a blurb about its creation and the materials used.

WEBSITES:

http://homeschooling.about.com/od/holidays/ss/nativityprint_2.htm

This is an excellent website where I found a nativity vocabulary worksheet, complete with fill-in-the-blank statements and a word bank at the bottom.

<http://www.englishclub.com/vocabulary/festivals-christmas.htm>

This website contains an excellent list of Christmas vocabulary terms, both religious and secular. Words

and definitions are provided in alphabetical order.

http://www.indexmundi.com/argentina/natural_resources.html

This website is a succinct list of Argentina's natural resources. It would be an easy reference source for students doing background research for creating their own Argentinian creche.

<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/3165.htm>

This website contains excellent and extensive information on Austria.

<http://www.cs.iupui.edu/~umurthy/India/resource.html>

This website details the natural resources of India.

http://www.israelmybeloved.com/channel/his_land/section/natural_resources

This website provides extensive information about Israel, from the geography and its natural resources to maps and background information on the country's formation.

<http://russian-crafts.com/links.html>

This website lists information for a variety of Russian crafts. Some give instructions for your own creation, and others lead to links with pictures and places to buy.

<http://www.visual-arts-cork.com/ancient-art/african.htm#sculpture>

This website gives a great deal of information on African art and sculpture.

<http://www.travelchinaguide.com/intro/arts/>

This website provides a list and description of many Chinese crafts.

http://www.chinainfoonline.com/Chinese_Arts_Crafts.htm

This website gives extensive information about Chinese crafts.

<http://www.uniquenativity.com/>

This website is an excellent source of nativity images.

<http://site.outdora.com/blog/history-nativity-scene-world-home-1909.html>

This website provides information about the creation of nativity scenes, to obscure nativity scenes and the elements of a traditional crèche.

<http://www.thehistoryofchristmas.com/ch/nativity.htm>

This website provides a very student-friendly version of the story of the birth of Christ.

<http://www.stcharleschristmas.com/nativityscene.htm>

This website provides a very short description of the history of nativity scenes.

<http://www.holylandtreasuresonline.com/Store/Content/ResourceArticle/-3/1/20.html>

This website provides a fairly lengthy piece explaining the history of the nativity scene, with

information on nativity scenes in over a dozen countries.

<http://www.hispanic-culture-online.com/christmas-nativity-sets.html>

This website talks about nativity scenes in Hispanic traditions.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GkHNNPM7pJA>

This is an excellent video that takes the story of Christ and modernizes it completely. Information is spread via the internet - Facebook, Twitter, E-mail, etc. If Jesus were to be born in our time, this could feasibly be how the story would play out.

<http://stella-walsh.suite101.com/st-francis-and-the-first-christmas-creche-a74671>

This website provides a brief history of the nativity scene and the tradition of the creche.

<http://library.thinkquest.org/08aug/00927/>

This is a website about traditional clothing around the world, with specific attention to Egypt, England, Japan and the Philippines.

<http://www.costumes.org/ethnic/1pages/ethnolnk.htm>

This website provides links to information on traditional dress in various countries and regions.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Category:Clothing_by_nationality

This wikipedia website has an extensive list of links to traditional clothing in a very large number of countries.

<http://library.thinkquest.org/C004179/customs.htm>

This website has short paragraphs about traditional dress in various countries, broken down by continent.

<http://www.biblegateway.com>

This website is a great online bible resources. Simply choose a Bible, type in a Bible book and verse numbers and find the passage instantly.

http://www.studentsoftheworld.info/menu_infopays.html

This website has an interactive map for choosing a continent and country that will bring you to information regarding that country's climate, geography, national anthem, and demographics.

<http://people.howstuffworks.com/9-types-of-angels.htm>

This website provides thorough information about the 9 types of angels and their roles.

<http://diskbooks.org/aib.html>

This website gives information about specific types of angels as well as detailing where these angels are mentioned in the Bible.

<http://www.catholic.org/saints/angel.php>

This is an excellent website about angels, providing quick links to information about what angels are, where they are found in the Bible, prayers to angels, specific angels, etc.

http://www.picturesofsilver.com/Teachings/angels_christ.htm

This website tells about the important role angels played in the birth of Jesus.

<http://www.cobbk12.org/cheathamhill/lfs%20update/vocabulary%20and%20word%20walls.htm>

This website provides important information for teachers regarding the acquisition of vocabulary in students.

<http://teachnology.com/forum/showthread.php?t=3721>

This is a list of activities for students to learn vocabulary.