



Your Place - Your Pace

Christmas around the world



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Barry Jones from Casey camp in Antarctica joins the Learning Place's online Christmas chats.

Christmas in the classroom a lesson in diversity

Christmas is coming – so how do you go about celebrating when your class contains children from a number of different cultural backgrounds and religions?

This was the problem The Willows State School teacher Wendy Fayers faced in 2005.

'Christmas activities in the last few weeks of school are usually generic puzzles and craft activities,' Ms Fayers said.

'I wanted more. But the more multicultural my class got, with a range of religions and cultural backgrounds, the more difficult it was to develop a program that would promote cultural understanding, and that would invite all students to participate on equal terms.'

When Ms Fayers heard about the Learning Place's Christmas around the world, she signed her Year 5 class up immediately.

Christmas around the world has been run by Townsville District Learning Place Mentor, Julianne Cervellin, for the past three years.

'In some places, Christmas is not necessarily a religious festival, and many other traditions and festivals are celebrated at this time of year,' Ms Cervellin said.

'I thought that communicating at first-hand with people from other countries and cultures about their traditions would broaden students' perspectives and raise their cultural awareness and acceptance.'

In 2005, The Willows students chatted online with people from the Hindu and Moslem faiths in Britain, and learned about the different festivals people celebrate.

'Some families, with parents of different faiths, celebrated everything!' Ms Fayers said.

'This became much more than a Christmas activity – it developed into an interactive and very interesting social project.'

In 2006, Ms Fayers said, all Year 5 classes at The Willows will participate in Christmas around the world, making it the basis of a school-based Rich Learning Experience for the year level.

Christmas around the world for 2006 will include chats with guests from many cultures and countries, including scientists in Antarctica and rural schools in South Africa.

'Something new for 2006 will be music raps,' Ms Cervellin said.

'Students will be challenged to explore and innovate well-known Christmas carols.'

'My students loved all the activities, especially the chats and forums,' Ms Fayers said.

'But the best thing for me was seeing students who, because of their religion or cultural background, often feel a bit left out during Christmas activities, become enthusiastic and start sharing their own experiences and beliefs. They became the experts!'

Schools can register for Christmas around the world now. For further information, visit the Learning Place website.

TIPS



The CX's Christmas gift to schools: Noah and Saskia!

For Years 7 – 12, this suite of activities accompanies the DVD *Noah & Saskia: who do you want to be?* Search: "Noah & Saskia" or 02965.

TIPS with a Christmas theme:

Learning experience: letter to Santa (02188 v)

Students write a letter to Santa as part of a pre-Christmas unit.

Saving Christmas (w00001)

In this WebQuest students must prove that Christmas is not boring.

More Christmas goodies in the CX resource centre

Select:
Browse by topic > Curriculum topic > Celebrations and events > Christmas

TLF (The Learning Federation) digital resources



Christmas in Kalgoorlie, 1895 (R5506)

Gold prospector posing for a photograph outside his tent to send to friends and family for Christmas.

TLF learning objects



Web designer: dragons: level 1 (L3270)

Students browse jumbled web pages, all connected with dragons, to match material to the type of

website it belongs to: cultural, natural science or Chinese restaurant. They identify features of the texts, eg. opinion adjectives such as 'tasty' that describe restaurant food in a positive way and match up the title, main body text, graphics and animation. One in a series of four objects.

EduSites



Australia's cultural network-Christmas: a multicultural festival

Part of the Australian government website *Australia's cultural network*, this link examines the changing face of Christmas in Australia due to multicultural influences.



Christmas in Italy

This charming site emphasises the religious aspects of the festival but recipes, the Abruzzi pipers, the Epiphany Fairs, pageants, nativity scenes and Midnight Mass are also among the topics discussed.



The Christmas archives

Attractively presented, with old engravings to illustrate, the site is the work of an historian who has specialised in Christmas traditions around the world.

All recipes. Christmas recipes

The site can be searched or browsed using alphabetical or category listings.

It's a small world: an educator's reference desk lesson plan

The lesson, for middle primary students, involves them in learning about pattern recognition, using colours, cutting skills, and ICT using ClarisWorks, HyperStudio and Kid Pix. Students are to study and read about the culture and Christmas traditions of Germany, Sweden, Finland, Mexico, France, England and Hawaii before completing the culminating art project.

Christmas in Australia

Features information on Christmas in Australia and a series of links to sites which expand on specific topics, e.g. churches. Topics include: meals, weather, traditions, cards, carols and door wreaths.

Find these resources in the CX resource centre

<http://learningplace.eq.edu.au/cx/resources/>

Hint: For fast access to the resources above, search using the title in double quotes or the unique code.

RTG Ready-to-go online courses



The changing world

How did events in the past affect the way we live today? This unit explores aspects of Europe during the Dark Ages, then journeys into the times of King Arthur, knights and the Crusades, the Mediaeval Period, and examines social changes. It also covers the Agrarian and Industrial revolutions, which also had massive impacts on today's world. Read the TIP (02308) for more information.



Practitioner investigation

Investigate, reflect on and improve your teaching! Participants undertake a research project investigating their teaching, and deepening their understandings of a range of pedagogy theories including Productive Pedagogies, Multiple Intelligences, and Emotional Intelligence.

Upcoming events
Christmas around the world
 This annual event provides the opportunity to 'chat' and 'rap' online with people from various countries and locations around the world about the culture and traditions of Christmas. Online chats will take place between November 27 and December 4 2006. Visit the Learning Place to register now.