

Reflecting on Traditions: A Christmas Investigation with Ellie and Max

Learning objective: To explore the significance of Christmas traditions and understand how different communities celebrate, while developing critical thinking skills regarding cultural practices.

Ellie the elephant is researching the historical origins of Christmas traditions, while Max the monkey is busy calculating the costs of seasonal preparations. Read the descriptions of these six traditions below. Sort them into two categories: 'Religious Significance' and 'Cultural/Social Customs'. Then, use your reasoning skills to answer the questions provided.

Word bank: Advent · Nativity · Midnight Mass · Christmas Crackers · Gift Giving · Christmas Pudding

1. 1. Classify the six items from the word bank into two groups: 'Religious Significance' and 'Cultural/Social Customs'. Justify why you placed 'Gift Giving' in your chosen category. (3 marks)

2. 2. Max has £45.50. He wants to buy 3 boxes of crackers at £4.25 each and 2 puddings at £6.50 each. Calculate the total cost and explain if he has enough money remaining for a £20.00 donation to a charity. (3 marks)

3. 3. Compare and contrast how the 'Nativity' scene serves as a teaching tool for Christians compared to how 'Christmas Crackers' function in a secular social setting. (4 marks)

4. 4. Explain why some families might choose to focus on the 'social' aspects of Christmas rather than the 'religious' aspects. Is it possible for a tradition to be both? (3 marks)

5. 5. What might happen if a community decided to stop all gift-giving traditions? Predict two ways this could change the atmosphere of the festive season. (3 marks)

6. 6. Justify your answer: Do you think traditions are more important for their historical meaning or for the way they bring people together today? (2 marks)

Draw: Draw a 'Tradition Map'. In the centre, draw a symbol of Christmas. In the four corners, illustrate one religious tradition and one social tradition, and label them with a brief sentence explaining their purpose.



Extension challenge: Research a winter festival from another culture or faith (such as Hanukkah, Diwali, or Kwanzaa). Write a short comparative paragraph explaining one similarity and one difference between that festival and the Christmas traditions you have studied today.