

## GO 100 – CHRISTMAS!

All of these craft ideas can be adapted or used with any section, just try them out yourself first to see what preparation you might need to do with your group to make it fit the time or help available. Eg. It might be easier to have already marked and cut out the boxes on card for

Beavers for item 1 to give them a start, and make it safer!

For all craft activities, it is assumed that scissors, glue, sticky tape, pencils, rubbers etc are to hand.

### Advent calendars

#### **Opening windows 1**

equipment needed – 2 sheets of card, craft knife or scissors, old Christmas cards

On the top card mark out 24 boxes and number them / cut around 3 sides of the boxes to form windows / bend back windows and mark their position on the second card / \* cut out suitable pictures from the Christmas cards and stick them onto sheet 2 in the marked places / lay sheet 1 on top and glue around the edges, and maybe a few spots in the centre, making sure not to get it on the window areas / decorate your calendar!

#### **Opening windows 2**

Equipment needed – 2 sheets of card, 1 red 1 green corrugated, craft knife or scissors, old Christmas cards, sequins to decorate.

Cut out a Christmas tree shape from one sheet of card / lay it on top of the second sheet and trace around it / this calendar is designed to let the red card show, so before you mark the windows onto the red card, just slide the top card slightly across and down, so that you see a red border on one side / follow the instructions from \*

#### **Advent clock**

Equipment needed – a paper plate, 2 pieces of card in red and green, a paper fastener, a piece of string about 10cm long

Draw 3 circles inside each other on the plate, each one a little smaller than the one last / the outer ring of the calendar can be decorated as you wish with holly, bells, robins etc / the next ring in should be divided into 7 equal sections (use a protractor to find 51 degree measurements) / write in the days of the week in red / the next circle in should be divided into 24 sections ( 15 degree markings) and numbered 1 to 24 in green / make two clock “hands” from the red and green card about 2cm wide / make a hole in the centre of the plate and in the two hands / push a paper fastener through the holes in the hands and the plate and open it out at the back / fasten the loop of string to the back of the plate at the centre top

#### **Wooden advent**

Equipment needed – a sheet of wood, dark blue and silver paint, 24 small nails or tacks, a hammer, small gifts

Paint the wood in a dark blue and stencil or paint on silver stars when the base coat is dry / Hammer in 24 small nails or tacks randomly on the board / Number above each nail / hang small gifts or sweets on each nail.

#### **Felt pocket advent**

Equipment needed – large piece of felt, strips of felt,

Form the strips of felt into pockets either by glueing or sewing onto the large piece / number the pockets 1 to 24. you could always make the advent into a character (snowman, reindeer, santa etc) by adding features.

**Be sure to give a safety talk both before and after doing anything with candles, it never hurts to repeat a safety warning to anyone!**

## **Candles**

**Advent wreath** ( not particularly a “make”, unless you`re feeling very ambitious!, but it is worth giving the youngsters an explanation)

Explain to the group about advent, and what it stands for.

The circular wreath represents God and his endless love and mercy, the green of the wreath is for newness, renewal and eternal life. The candles represent the light of God coming into the world. The 1<sup>st</sup> candle lit is purple and stands for Hope, the 2<sup>nd</sup>, also purple is for Love, the 3<sup>rd</sup> is rose coloured and stands for Joy. The 4<sup>th</sup> is purple again, and is for Peace. The 5<sup>th</sup> candle is lit on Christmas Day and is white to represent Christs birth. The candles start being lit on the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday before Christmas. The 1<sup>st</sup> week the first candle is lit, the 2<sup>nd</sup> week the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> candle etc. a reminder that something is happening and that there is more to come!

## **Elegant candles**

Equipment needed – long thin taper candles, a small block of “oasis”, double sided foil

Make sure the oasis block is totally flat on the bottom for safety / push the candle into the centre of the oasis block / cut the foil into small squares, then use the end of a thin paintbrush to push the centre of the foil into the oasis surrounding the candle.

## **Tea light holders – great for using in an act of worship or reflection**

Equipment needed – glass jar, night light, tissue paper or glass paint

If using tissue paper, use pva to paste shapes onto the outside of the jar. Do not be tempted to stick inside, it could catch light. Once the design is finished, paste over the paper to give it a shiny appearance and help the paper to stay flat on the glass.

Using glass paint, either free-hand design on the glass, or take an outline picture, roll it up loosely so that when placed inside the jar it can be pressed against the glass inside making it easier to use the lines for guidance.

*Note* – the jars get very hot once the candle is lit, do not try to move them until they have cooled down.

## **Christingles**

Equipment needed – an orange, a small candle, a candle holder (optional), 4 cocktail sticks, red ribbon or tape, 4 sweets and / or raisins

If you`re not using a candle holder, make a suitable sized hole in the top of your orange to take the candle / wrap a piece of red ribbon or tape around the middle of the orange (like the equator) / put the sweets or raisins onto the ends of the cocktail sticks and push them into the orange around the candle.

This is a one story told, (there are many, but this is my favourite!) to explain it :-

The story goes that a poor family was once going to church for Christmas Mass, but found out that they were required to take a gift. Not having anything to give, the youngest child found an orange. It wasn` t very fresh, but she scooped out the bad bit at the top, and put in a candle to hide the fact that it had been bad! Then she took the red ribbon from her hair, which she loved dearly, and wrapped it around the orange because there was no paper to wrap her gift. She still thought that it looked a bit meagre, so she picked up some dried fruit that her mom had used for cooking, and stuck them into it with a few sticks. Finally at church, as the gifts were presented, she stood to take hers to the front. Some of the other children, and some unkind adults, sniggered at her efforts. The priest, knowing how hard things were for the family, showed great joy on receiving her orange, and asked her how she` d been so inspired as to create such a marvellous tribute to Jesus, our Lord. He told the rest of the congregation that obviously the orange represented the world, and the red ribbon was Gods love enfolding everything and everyone living on the earth. The four sticks stood for the 4 winds and compass directions, and the fruit the good things that we have to eat from around the world. Lastly, the candle that was put there to take away the bad part of the orange, was Jesus who took away our badness and our sins, and the flame his light watching over us all, always. The little girl grew in stature and confidence before his eyes, and the rest of the congregation who had laughed at her were ashamed!

## **Wreaths**

### **Tree hangers**

Equipment needed – old Christmas cards with nativity scenes, circles of paper or card approx. 10cm diameter, a circular card frame with an inside diameter of 8cm, material for border (crepe or tissue paper, foil, stars), about 10cm length of cotton.

Use the frame to select a picture from the Christmas cards / draw around the inside of the frame and cut out the picture / stick the picture to the centre of the circle / decorate the frame with cut out stars, holly leaves, rosette border etc / loop the cotton and tape to the back of the wreath at the top.

### **Curtain ring wreath – for the tree**

Equipment needed – one wooden curtain ring, paint in colour to suit (optional), ribbon or trimming, a bow or similar decorative item, cotton

Paint the curtain ring (optional) / attach ribbon or trim to the top of the ring and wrap the ribbon around the ring till you get back to the top / finish off with a bow / tie cotton to top to allow for hanging

### **Nativity scene wreath – for hanging on doors or walls**

Equipment needed – balsa wood or card strips, fun foam in various colours

Make a ring by using strips of card or wood / cut out foam shapes to represent Mary, Joseph the Babe, a star, hay, trees etc and glue onto the ring to create a nativity scene

### **Ready made wreath**

Buy ready made basic wreaths, and allow the youngsters to design their own, either using natural materials collected on a nature walk, like cones, holly etc fixed with florists wire, or cut out shapes if you prefer. If using holly or mistletoe, remove any berries. Replace them with the red, gold or white painted cotton ends from cotton buds.

### **Christmas Log**

Find a suitable sized branch and cut into logs. Decorate using natural materials. If the young people are capable (probably Scout age and up), under supervision, of course, allow them to drill a hole for a candle. Decorate with natural materials, spray snow, baubles etc

### **3-d Christmas tree**

equipment needed – green card, ribbon

using the template, cut out two trees from the card / fold both trees in half lengthways / in one tree make a slit up the centre line from the bottom - up to half way up the tree / slit the other tree from the top downwards down to halfway / decorate both sides of each tree / when completely dry, slide the two trees together / put a small piece of ribbon or cotton through the top to hang. If make from stiffer card, they can be free standing

## **Nativities**

**Nativity scene** – traditionally, children were allowed to add pieces of straw to the manger in the run up to Christmas, one piece for every good thing that they did! This reminded them to be as well behaved and helpful as they could, now there's a thought!

Equipment needed – a shoe box, old Christmas cards depicting the stable scene, odd strips of card, straw

Stand the shoe box on its side /glue straw to floor of the stable/ cut out the cards to make separate characters / make slits up from the bottom of the characters, and slits in the centre of the card strips from top to bottom to about 1/2 way / slide the strips of card into the slits in the characters to make them stand

Alternatively, make dolly peg, modelling clay or salt dough characters and place in your nativity scene

## **Christmas cooking**

### **An edible gingerbread Nativity**

Use this recipe for making gingerbread stars, crescents or trees if the thought of cutting out the figures is too much!

Templates attached on separate sheets

350g / 12oz plain flour

5ml / 1 tsp bicarbonate of soda

30ml / 2 tblsp ground ginger

15ml / 1 tblsp ground cinnamon

2.5ml / ½ tsp ground cloves

For caramel – 125g (4oz) caster sugar

125g / 4oz butter

175g / 6oz soft light brown sugar

60ml / 2 tblsp golden syrup

1 egg

30ml (2 tsp) water

To decorate – twiglets or shredded wheat, Demerara sugar for sprinkling, icing sugar, glaze icing, food colourings, toffees or flat sweets

1. cut out templates for the stable and figures. Line two baking sheets with non-stick baking parchment. Preheat oven to 190C (375F) mark 5
2. sift the flour with the bicarbonate of soda and spices into a large bowl. Rub in the butter until the mixture resembles fine breadcrumbs. Stir in the sugar.
3. warm the syrup very slightly and beat in the egg. Cool slightly, then pour onto the flour mixture. Beat with a wooden spoon to a soft dough. Bring together with your hands and knead until smooth. Cut off one third of the dough, wrap in cling film and reserve.
4. on a lightly floured surface, roll out the other piece of dough to a 5mm (1/4 inch) thickness. Using the stable templates and a sharp knife, cut out each shape. Carefully transfer to the baking sheets, straighten any edges and chill for 15 mins. Knead the trimmings into the reserved dough, re-wrap and chill to make the figures later
5. bake the stable pieces for 8 –10 minutes or until golden brown. Leave to cool and harden for 10 mins on the baking sheet, then transfer to a wire cooling rack to cool completely
6. to make the caramel, dissolve the sugar in the water in a heavy based pan over a low heat, then boil to a pale caramel. Immediately dip the bottom of the pan into cold water to stop the cooking process. Use this caramel to join the edges of the stable together and to cement it to a cake board. Join the roof to the stable. Stick twiglets or shredded wheat to the roof, if liked.
7. using templates, cut out figures and carefully place on baking sheet. Bake as before, checking after 8 mins. Cool as before. Use remaining dough to make biscuits.
8. decorate the figures. Allow decoration to dry before placing in stable. Use toffees or sweets and a little icing to cement the base of each figure to the board

### **Nursery Punch**

Orange juice

Ginger ale

cinnamon

slices of orange, apple, lemon etc

just mix it all together!

**Christmas Cards** Many card kits are available now from many outlets, some very cheaply! Take a look at them to see if they inspire you!

### **The Christmas gift**

Equipment needed – an A5 sheet of thin card or thick paper, a piece of bright wrapping paper 7cm x 4cm, thin curling ribbon.

Fold the sheet of paper or card in half with fold at the top / measure in about 4cm from each side along the bottom front of the card and cut two slits 4cm long/ stick the piece of wrapping paper onto the flap formed / cut lengths of ribbon and stick to the wrapping paper to look like a present / draw two simple figures of a man and a woman (Mary and Joseph) kneeling either side of the present / fold open the flap, and lightly mark the edges on the inside page with a pencil /open up the card and draw a picture of Jesus in the manger in the pencil marked area / write inside above the crib “the Greatest Gift of All”.

### **Santas washing line**

Equipment needed – an A5 sheet of card, thin string, tiny pegs from craft shops, felt in red white and black.

Fold the card in half so that the folded edge is at the top / cut Santas clothing out from the felt (red coat, trousers and hat, white pants, black socks / stick a length of string along the length of the card to represent the washing line / hang Santas clothes to it with the pegs.

### **3-d trees**

equipment needed – an A5 sheet of red card, green paper, small decorations for the tree

Fold the red card in half / Take the length of green paper fold it in half, open it out / fold the two edges into the middle / fold the edges back out again to touch the folds on the outside / turn the thing totally over / fold the edges into the middle / when you open it out it should look like a concertina or fan / fold it up again and place it on the table in front of you with the edges of the paper on the left / use this edge as a centre line to draw a half Christmas tree shape / cut it out / put glue on both sides of the cut out shape and stick it inside the red card

### **Cracker cards**

Equipment needed – a piece of card 42cm x 10cm, ruler

Lightly mark 5 lines on the card 7cm apart / fold the edges out to the second and 4th lines / then fold the folded edges into the centre to make the card almost, but not quite, like a fan (there should not be a fold down the centre line) /

### **Designer-look Christmas tree card**

Equipment needed – a5 sheet white card, green shiny card

Fold the white card in half / mark a triangular shape on the green card and cut out / cut the green card tree into 3 or 4 slices with wavy edges / with fold of the white card running down left hand side, start with the top of the tree and glue it near the top, leave a small gap and glue the 2<sup>nd</sup> slice of tree / continue in this way until your designer tree is complete.

### **Glass jars**

#### **Sweet jar**

Equipment needed – glass jar with lid, glass paint in red and white, a strip template for candy sticks.

Make a template of lots of jolly red and white candy canes going this way and that / roll loosely and drop inside a suitable jar / paint on the white canes first /when dry, add the red stripes.

#### **Snow storms – easy, but might take 2 weeks to allow for sealant to set**

Equipment needed – glass jar with screw on top, a small Christmas figure, sealant

Use sealant as a glue to fix the figure to the inside of the lid / leave to set / put 2 tablespoons of glitter into the jar, fill up with water / put sealant around the inside of the lid and screw back onto the jar /shake and stand the jar on its lid.

## **Paper chains and garlands**

### **Crisp wrapper chains – easy and tasty too!**

Equipment needed – crisp wrappers made from foil

Cut the empty wrappers into 2cm strips across the bags / snip some of them through to use as links, fastening the cut edges as you go with tape.

### **Cup garlands -**

Equipment needed – any sort of disposable cup (either ready patterned or plain), string, darning needle or thin crochet hook

Bodge a hole in the bottom of the cups / decorate the cups with scraps of paper, foil, glitter etc / thread onto string with the darning needle or thin crochet hook, putting the cups bottom to bottom (!), and open end to open end.

### **Popcorn garlands – a throwback to Victorian England**

Equipment needed – popcorn, cotton and needle

First, pop the popcorn kernels and leave to cool / thread the needle and make a large knot at one end / push the needle through the popcorn / you could paint the popcorn if you want, but make sure it doesn't get eaten! / use to decorate your Christmas tree.

### **Cut paper chains 1**

Equipment needed – coloured paper (off a roll is best), or join strips together with tape.

Cut out strips of coloured paper 15cm wide / using scissors, make cuts along one side of the paper, 12cm long and 12cm apart / on the other side of the strip make more cuts in the middle of the first lot / pull the paper gently to open out the chain

### **Cut paper chains 2**

Equipment needed – same as above

Cut out strips of paper 16cm wide / fold in half along the length of the paper / make cuts along one side of the paper 6cm long and 12cm apart / make more cuts on the other side in the middle of the first, 6cm long and 12cm apart / unfold carefully and gently pull apart

### **Tissue paper garlands**

Equipment needed – lots of small tissue paper circles, card

Start by cutting 2 pieces of circular card the same size as the tissue paper circles / use one circle and glue the first piece of tissue to it, leave it on one side to dry / place a piece of tissue paper on the table and put tiny dabs of glue at north, south, east and west on it / place another tissue on top / put a dab of glue in the centre of this circle / place another on top / then dab n,s,e,w again / continue in this way, alternating centre and n,s,e,w, / when your garland is long enough, put the cards on front and back, being sure to match the pattern.

*Note* – it's important to make sure that 1) only one piece of tissue is picked up at a time (otherwise it falls apart!) and 2) only a tiny dab of glue is used, otherwise the tissue gets saturated and it gums all together. I found using a matchstick end was best to apply glue.

## **Christmas tree decorations**

### **Polystyrene Santa figure**

Equipment needed – 4inch polystyrene coving, card circles (size of 2p), white fluffy wool  
Cut slices of coving about 2cm thick / paint with pva up to about 2/3 up / sprinkle glitter over bottom 1/3 / wind fluffy wool around middle 1/3 / draw or paint Santas face onto the circle and stick onto woolly section / colour top 1/3 red with felt pen / thread cotton through with a needle to hang

### **Angels**

Equipment needed – semi circles of white card or doiley, semi circles of gold card, thin florists wire, stapler

Form the white semi circle into a cone shape and staple to secure / attach gold semi circle to back with flat edge uppermost / form a length of florist wire into a small circle (use your finger) and twist the ends together to keep the shape / push the ends of the wire down through the hole at the top of the cone and secure with a piece of tape inside the cone / bent the wire circle over so that it forms a halo

### **Peg figures**

Equipment needed – a spring peg, foam sheets, sticky fixers

Design your figure (I used a circular shape for all mine, using the top of a plastic cup to draw around) / cut out and use as a template to transfer the design to the foam sheet / cut out and reassemble your pieces sticking them with PVA glue / attach sticky fixers to the peg, peel off the backing and press onto the back of your figure / leave to dry

### **Foil icicles**

Equipment needed – 2cm wide strips of foil about 30cm long, a wooden spoon, pencil or dowelling, Needle and cotton

Wrap each foil strip around the handle of a wooden spoon or pencil / slide out the spoon and attach cotton to hang

### **Foil spirals**

Equipment needed – double sided foil, needle and cotton

Cut circles about 9cm wide from the foil / using a pencil, draw a long spiral line, starting from the centre of the circle and going round and round until you reach the outer edge / start at the edge cutting along the line / thread the cotton through the centre of the circle and make a loop to hang  
Make larger ones to hang from the ceiling.

### **Foil snowballs**

Equipment needed- silver foil, needle and cotton

Cut out 12cm x 12cm squares of foil / gently scrunch them into loose round balls / make a knot in the end of a length of cotton and push the needle through from one side of a foil ball to the other / make a loop in the cotton to hang

Use this idea, too, to make garlands of foil snowballs, just keep adding balls to your cotton instead of stopping at one!

You could also use this idea using brown tissue, paper bag or crepe paper, colour black dots on it and glue a white paper “splat” to the top to make a Christmas pudding!

### **Foil cones**

Equipment needed – double sided foil or thick kitchen foil

Cut a circle of foil about 30cm across / fold the circle in half / then fold it twice more - into thirds / working with the folded foil, make cuts across from one edge about 2cm apart and stopping 1cm from the opposite edge / flip over and do the same again making your second lot of cuts in-between the first lot / open out very carefully / thread cotton through the centre with a needle and make a loop / holding the loop, pull the edges of the cone down (carefully!)

*GIFT FROM A CHILD*

*This is a very special gift,  
That you can never see,  
The reason it's so special is  
It's just for you from me.  
Whenever you are lonely  
Or even feeling blue,  
You only have to hold this  
Gift and know I think of you.  
You never should unwrap it,  
Please leave the ribbon tied,  
Hold it close to your heart,  
It's filled with love inside.*