



# with childminders and parents

More creative and fun ideas to support your child's learning that are linked to our theme, **'Countdown to Christmas'**

## Christmas traditions

- Set up a large nativity tableau in a corner of the room using a cardboard box as the stable. Use dolls for characters from the nativity story.
- Save fruit or washing tablet net bags and fill them with ten tiny objects such as buttons or toy animals. Play games involving counting and sharing them out.
- Make a piñata. Cover a blown-up balloon with newspaper strips using flour and water paste. Leave to dry, make a hole, remove the balloon and fill with tiny treats. Seal the hole with tape or more newspaper strips and paste and tie the piñata to a washing line. Hit it with sticks until it breaks.
- Make Christmas tree decorations from little net bags, which are threaded with metallic embroidery thread, then filled with tiny treats and sweets.

## Creative carols

- Experiment with making your own frumenty with porridge and chopped fruit.
- Take the children into a wood or a shop selling Christmas trees so that they can stand next to a tree to smell and touch it. Talk about the anticipation of decorating a tree for Christmas and recall past experiences of this.
- Purchase some cheap jingle bells from a craft shop and sew them to ribbon to create wrist or ankle bells. Have fun dancing and singing Christmas songs with your bells as an accompaniment.
- Discuss how other favourite Christmas songs might affect the senses, for example, 'When Santa Got Stuck Up the Chimney' or 'The Little Drummer Boy'.

## Gifts galore

- Encourage children to write and illustrate a letter to Santa, and take it to a postbox to post.
- Sit down with your children after Christmas and help them to write or illustrate 'Thank you' letters to send to relatives and friends.
- Make edible gifts for Santa and his reindeer, such as fairy cakes iced in red with a white mini-marshmallow on top to represent Santa's hat, as well as carrot-shaped orange biscuits.
- Provide children with a small sack and some tiny wrapped toys to fill it. Leave empty stockings on chairs alongside sleeping dolls so that children visit each chair and fill the stocking from the sack.

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