

Stories to use with your toddler groups

Christmas

Here's the nativity story that I demonstrated when I spoke at the 2013 Playtime National Conference in Tonbridge. The organisers wanted me to do a simple story that anyone could tell. The idea is to introduce the nativity characters and to show that Christmas is a happy time. You could pack some colourful nativity characters or finger puppets in an old picnic basket or a shoebox wrapped in Christmas paper and ask a helper to bring them out at the appropriate moments during the story. After the conference, Lia from Cheam asked me to tell this story at her group's Christmas Celebration. She is going to hand out bags containing the sensory objects mentioned for the children to enjoy during the story with their parents or carers. The older children are going to come along dressed up as nativity characters, and they will sit in the appropriate 'station' (ie Mary's house, Joseph's house etc) around the hall as I tell the story from the middle.

Christmas is a happy time!

Welcome everybody! Christmas is a happy time, so let's clap and sing . .

Christmas is a happy time, a happy time, a happy time,

Christmas is a happy time, a happy time of year!

(To the tune of The Muffin Man)

The Christmas story starts here, at MARY'S HOUSE

(Showing Mary) *Who's this? It's **Mary!** What's she doing? She's sweeping her floor. Swish, swish! Mary's very busy in her house when someone comes to visit her. Who could that be? Let's see . . .*

*Oh, what a surprise! It's the **Angel Gabriel!** (A feather to touch)*

(Comforting voice) *Don't be afraid, Mary.* (Excited voice) *It's wonderful news! You are going to have a baby and you must call him 'Jesus'.*

A baby! I'm so happy! And Mary sings and dances for joy. Let's join in with her . . .

(All) *Christmas is a happy time, a happy time, a happy time,
Christmas is a happy time, a happy time of year!*

JOSEPH'S HOUSE

Mary wants to go and tell someone the happy news. I wonder who that could be? Let's see . . .

(Moving to Joseph's house) *It's **Joseph!***

Joseph, I've got some wonderful news to tell you. We're going to have a baby and we must call him Jesus.

Now Mary and Joseph are very busy getting ready for the baby. But one day they hear someone talking in a very loud voice. Who could that be? Let's see . . .

*It's a **soldier!***

(Stern voice) *Mary and Joseph, you must go all the way to Bethlehem – to be counted.*

(Dismayed voice) *Oh, no! It's a long way to Bethlehem – even on our little donkey. (Grey fur to stroke)*

Here we go clippety-clop, clippety-clop, all the way to Bethlehem.

It's such a long way. Are we nearly there yet?

BETHLEHEM

Yes! Here's Bethlehem at last.

(Worried voice) *But where are we going to stay? It's so crowded. Just look at all the people (gesturing to everyone in the group)*

Joseph knocks on a door.

(All) *Rat-a-tat-tat, rat-a-tat-tat.*

Have you any room?

No room, no room (All shake heads).

Joseph knocks on another door.

(All) *Rat-a-tat-tat, rat-a-tat-tat.*

Have you any room?

No room, no room! (All shake heads)

Joseph knocks on one last door.

(All) *Rat-a-tat-tat, rat-a-tat-tat.*

Have you any room – please?

*Don't worry, Joseph. Someone has room for you. Who could that be? Let's see . . . It's the kind **innkeeper**!*

(Jolly voice) *This is my stable, do come in,*

Because there's no room at the inn.

And Mary lies down for a rest in the prickly tickly straw. (Straw or raffia to feel)

THE STABLE

(Loud whisper, speak slowly) *And that night, in the stable with all the animals, Mary's baby is born. Who could that be? Let's see . . .*

*It's **baby Jesus**! Ahhh!*

Mary rocks him in her arms. Can you pretend to rock a baby?

That's right! Then she lays him on the prickly tickly straw in the manger.

FIELDS NEAR BETHLEHEM

*Out in the fields, the **shepherds** are looking after their sheep. Baa, baa! (Cotton wool to feel)*

Suddenly, they hear beautiful singing. Someone is bringing them happy news. Who could that be? Let's see . . .

Well, blink your eyes! What a surprise! It's the angels, singing (In a joyful voice) 'Jesus is born and he's lying in the manger, Glory to God in the highest!' Let's sing with the angels, shall we . . .

Christmas is a happy time, a happy time, a happy time,

Christmas is a happy time, a happy time of year!

Then the shepherds run, pitter-patter, pitter patter, to go and find baby Jesus.

IN THE EAST

Far away in the east, a new star is shining. Look, look!

*Someone wants to follow that star. Who could that be? Let's see . . .
. It's the three **kings!***

Come along! This star will show us where to bring

Our presents for the baby King!

And they pack their bags with precious gifts to take to baby Jesus.

(Something to smell)

*Jesus was born to be someone's friend. I wonder who that could be?
Let me see . . . it's you and me! No wonder Christmas is such a happy time! Happy Christmas everyone!*

THE END