



Christmas activity file



Here are the top ten Christmas activities 2009

1 Christmas trees

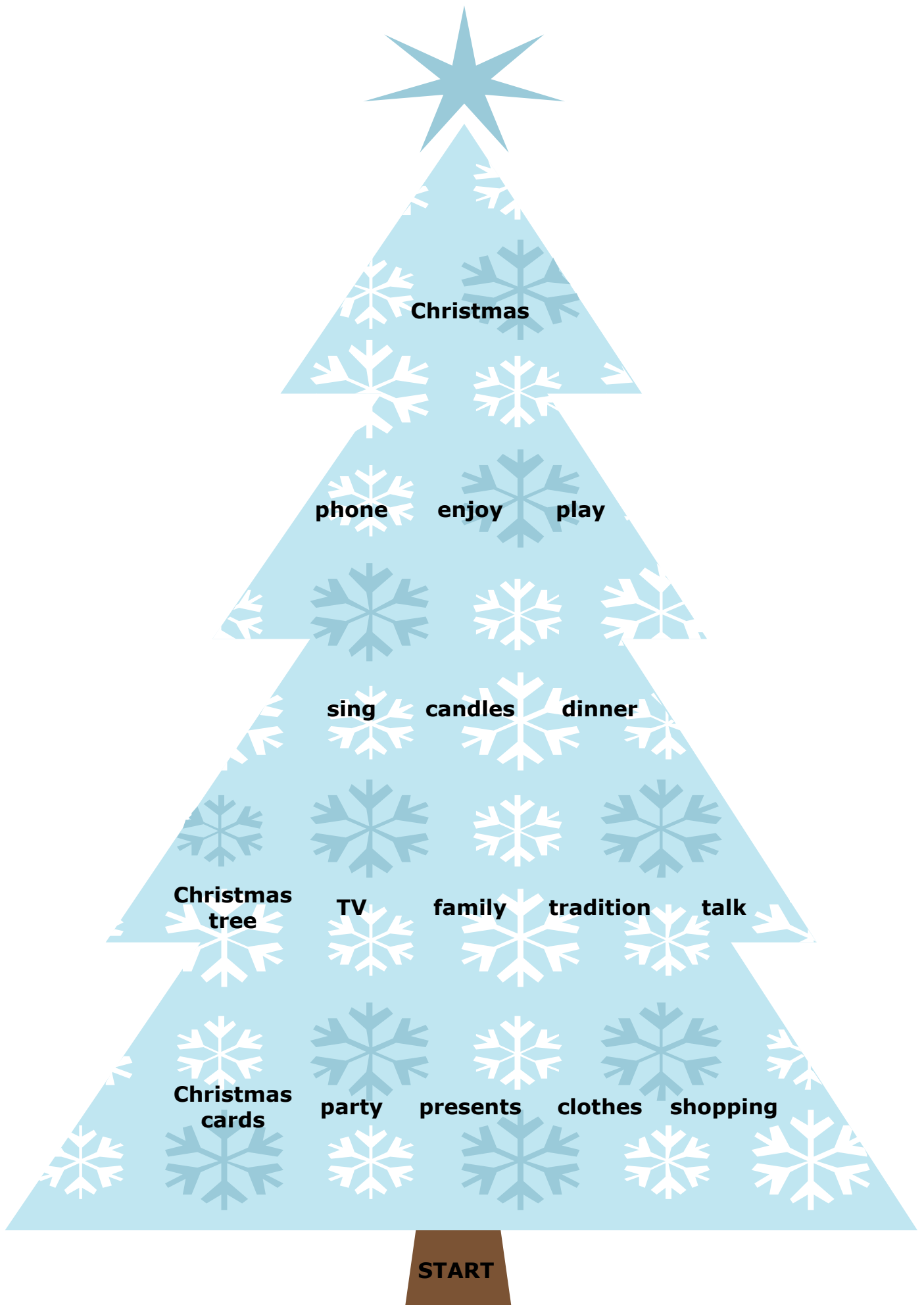
A game to be played in pairs or threes.

Time: approx 10-15 minutes.

This game is for students from the A1:2 to B1 level - the sentences which the students make can be very easy or more complex.

Or you can make a variety of trees, using different prompt words, e.g. *enjoy, eat, drink, sing, phone, visit, make, buy, go, have, watch, get, give, decorate, send*

- Photocopy the Christmas tree below so that you have one tree for each pair of students.
- Each student chooses a small item, e.g. a small coin, a paperclip, etc. for their marker.
- Students play in pairs and place their markers on *Start*.
- They have to reach *Christmas* at the top. There is no winner of this game - the aim is to talk to each other about the way they celebrate Christmas.
- In turns, students move up one level and place their marker on a word. They then have to tell their partner something about their Christmas, using the word in the square. They can choose one word per level.



This next activity was sent to us by Jane Davison, a VHS teacher in Teltow-Fläming. Thanks, Jane - a lovely activity with lots of possibilities for variations:



2 Pass the parcel

A game to be played by the whole class.

Time: 30 minutes or longer, depending on the tasks on the paper.

Level - A1 - B1, depending on the tasks on the paper.

There's quite a lot of preparation involved in this, but students love this activity and it can fill a whole lesson! You can use this activity for any time of year - I have also used it as an end of term activity. It is a variation on the children's party game.

You will need:

- Lots of wrapping paper (doesn't need to be anything special - pages from newspapers or magazines are ideal, but perhaps use something identifiable for the first layer, which will be the last to be unwrapped.)
- One small prize
- A number of sweets (optional)
- Small pieces of plain paper
- A CD/cassette player with music of your choice

Before the lesson, write a vocabulary question / a general question / a general knowledge question on small pieces of paper – enough for at least one per student. Here are a few examples:

What is the date of Boxing Day?	What's the opposite of cheap?	What are you planning to do on Christmas Day?	Say five words beginning with S.	What's another name for Santa Claus?
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Tip: The next bit is a bit time consuming, so do it whilst watching TV/listening to the radio!

Wrap the 'prize' first, preferably in a piece of paper which you can identify as the last layer.

Keep adding layers of wrapping, but with each layer put in one of the vocabulary / general / general knowledge slips of paper - and a sweet, if you're feeling generous! You should add as many layers as there are students (more if you wish).

During the lesson, get your students to sit in a circle and pass the parcel around the circle whilst the music is playing. Stop the music at intervals. Each time the music stops, the student who has the parcel tears off one layer, keeping the sweet and reading out the question on the piece of paper. The reader can choose a volunteer to answer the question.

NB: You can 'fix' the stops so that each student takes a turn at unwrapping, but when you see the final layer you should look away to allow the final prize winner to be selected by chance.

And this next activity was sent in by Renate Koch, who teaches at the BZ in Nürnberg:



3 Advent activity

A homestudy pre-Christmas activity - resulting in a Christmas quiz which takes about 20 minutes. You can adapt the activity to suit the level of your class.

If you have a list of your students' email addresses, send a small task to the group - one task each day.

It could be a jumbled word (might be one from your last lesson or a Christmas-related word).

It could be a question about Christmas: *When is Christmas Eve?*

It could be a general question about something in their Network book: *In Network Tourist, which countries do Katy and Sam visit?*

They can collect their answers and bring them to the last lesson. In the last lesson, have a class quiz. Read out all the questions so that even students without computers have a chance to write down the answers - and students who have collected their answers can check them and fill in any gaps.

The student(s) with the most correct answers get a small prize.

Horst, a VHS teacher in Hamburg suggests this activity:



4 Christmas dinner

An activity which lasts about 30 minutes for students from the A2:2 level.

- Ask students to think of a guest they would like to invite for Christmas dinner - it could be their grandmother or the president of United States!
- Students work in groups of three and make a list of their guests.
- Then they group must decide the seating arrangements at dinner - who sits next to the President and who sits next to Grandma!
- Then discuss what presents to buy for their guests of honour.
- The menu must then be decided on.
- Finally, they should think of three topics of conversation in case their guests have nothing to say to each other.
- Then they report to the class with the help of the phrases on the board:

Board:

Our guests were:

We sat _____ next to _____ because ...

We decided to buy them the following presents:

And our menu?

We talked about ...

Doris, a VHS teacher from Munich does this activity with her groups each Christmas:



5 Happy Christmas

A 15 minute class or group activity for students from the A2 level.

Board:

I'd like to spend my Christmas in ...

I'd like to spend my Christmas with ...

I'd like to eat ... / drink ... / go to ...

On the 25th, I'd like to ...

And presents? I'd like to get ...

But most of all, I'd like ...

- Ask students to think what their perfect Christmas would be like ...
- Tell them what yours would be like, using phrases from the board.
- Students work in groups and tell each other about their favourite Christmas.

And here's a fun activity from Jane Wilm, who teaches at the VHS in Höchststadt an der Aisch:



6 A White Elephant

This activity can be adapted to suit the level of the class. The example story given is for students at the A2 level. But you can make up your own, simple (or fast and difficult) story depending on the level of language spoken in your class. A good idea for a story is about driving to the language school for the Christmas lesson using idioms, funny expressions, remarks and describing the route and landmarks the class would know - using as many right/left words as possible.

A week or two before your last lesson, ask your students to bring in a beautifully wrapped dust collector, something they find useless but someone else may find useful, it can be inexpensive or humorous, something they've had hidden at the back of the cupboard - never used but too good to throw away! A White Elephant! Remind them in the lesson before the last lesson. (Of course not all students will remember so you should go into your attic and find a few extra White Elephants to take to class.)

- Collect the White Elephants and add any of your own to make up the numbers.
- Ask your students to sit in a circle.
- Hand out the White Elephants and tell your class they are going to listen to a story.
- When they hear the word *right*, they should pass the parcel they are holding to the person on the right. When they hear the word *left*, they should pass the parcel they are holding to the person on the left.
- Read your right/left story to the class and have lots of fun passing the white elephants from the right to the left and back again.
- The parcel they have in their hands at the end of the story is theirs to open.

Example story for the A2 level.

Everyone loves Christmas, **right**? Children, teenagers, mums and dads and grandparents. Yes, that's **right** ... we all love Christmas. But preparing for Christmas is a lot of work. You must go shopping and find the **right** presents for people. You must buy a Christmas tree and decorate it. You must bake biscuits. You must invite the family. And suddenly, there's no time **left** - it's Christmas Eve? When is Christmas Eve? Yes, that's **right** - on December 24th. In England, Christmas Day is on the 25th of December. Last year I got into a **right** mess! I did my Christmas shopping in town and I had lots presents in lots of bags. I got on the bus and I wanted to buy a ticket. Then I realised - I'd **left** my purse in the last shop I was in. I was in a **right** panic! I got off the bus and ran **right** back to the shop to find where I'd **left** my purse. I didn't really think I would find it - but there it was!! On the counter, **right** where I had **left** it. Thank goodness there are still some honest people **left** in this world, right?

A VHS teacher from Hannover offers us this idea:



7 Ideal presents

This pairwork activity can be done with groups from A1:2 level and takes about 30 minutes.

- Ask your class to think of someone they have to buy a present for this Christmas.
- Ask them to copy this form onto a piece of paper and fill in the information about the person.

Name: _____

Male: _____ Female _____

Age group:

0-10 _____ 11-20 _____ 20-35 _____ 35-50 _____ 50-65 _____ 65 _____

Hobbies / Interests:

- Collect the papers.
- Students work in pairs.
- Give one form to each pair and they should discuss ideas for a present for this person on the form.
- After a few minutes, stop the activity and ask individuals to read out the name of the person and their personal details and say what suggestions they could make for a present.
- The person who wrote the form can say whether the present would be suitable or not. If not, the class should make other suggestions.

Juliet from Augsburg recommends this activity:



8 Christmas presents

A class activity for students from the A1:2 level. It takes about 15 minutes.

- Write the word CHRISTMAS on the board, vertically.
- Ask students to call out as many ideas for Christmas presents as they can, starting with words beginning with C, then move onto H, then R, etc.
- You can list the words on the board.
- Then ask if anyone can see an ideal present on the board for any of their friends.

Another activity from the Network Team:



9 Christmas cards

A game for small groups from the A2 level. It takes about 30 minutes.

Preparation You will need one set of cards for each group. Copy them and cut them up into single cards to make one set.

A perfect present for a male teenager would be ...	The best present I've ever received was ...	The way I would like to spend Christmas would be ...	The thing I like best about Christmas is ...	At Christmas, when I was a child, ...
Last year at Christmas, I ...	The most difficult person for me to buy a present for is ...	At Christmas, on television, ...	I think Christmas shopping ...	What I'd really like for Christmas is ...

- Ask students to work in groups of three or four.
- Give one set of cards to each group and they should put them face down on the table.
- In turn, a student picks up a card and reads it to the group, completing the sentence on the card.
- The student then returns the card to the bottom of the pack.

And finally a favourite from Joanne in Berlin:



10 Christmas anagrams

This pairwork activity can be adapted to suit any level and can be played for 5 minutes or 15 minutes.

Tip: For weaker classes, have a selection of familiar Christmas words written on separate papers which you can hand out for them to rearrange into anagrams

- Write the word Christmas on the board, but with the letters in the wrong order: **RISSMATCH**
- Tell the students that the letters are muddled and ask what the word is. When someone guesses: *Christmas*, tell them they're going to make some more muddled words - anagrams.
- Ask students to write down three words which they associate with Christmas. Go round the class quickly to check the words.
- Ask students to write the three words on a piece of paper - but to muddle the letters.
- Collect the papers.
- Students work in pairs and are given a paper with three anagrams on it. They must write down the three words.