

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

To understand and learn more about what Advent means to Christians and to make an Advent calendar.

CURRICULUM LINKS

Religious education: KS1 1b – to explore celebrations in religion; 1d – to explore how religious beliefs and ideas can be expressed through the arts; KS2 1a – to describe the key aspects of religions; 3i – to understand how religious ideas are expressed in symbols.

Advent

What you need

Thin card or stiff paper for each child; old Christmas cards, glue, sequins and art materials; pencils and felt-tipped pens; copies of 'Making an Advent calendar' photocopiable page 31.

Background

Advent begins on the Sunday nearest to 30 November and is the start of the Christmas season. During this period Christians prepare for the birth of Jesus by planning what gifts they will buy, singing carols, decorating their houses with holly, Christmas trees and Advent wreaths made of evergreen leaves, twigs and branches.

What to do

- Explain what Advent means to Christians and how important the weeks leading up to the festival of Christmas are.
- Ask the children what preparations their families make for Christmas.
- Explain that they are going to make an Advent calendar.
- Photocopiable page 31 shows the basic design. As the season of Advent begins at the end of November, the calendar usually has 24 equal spaces for the days of December, with a larger one for Christmas day.
- Each child will need a piece of stiff paper or thin card. Mark it with 24 small squares and one larger one.
- Ask the children what they can draw and decorate behind each of the doors. Each one of the 25 squares must be decorated with something linked to Christmas.
- They will need 25 squares that fit over each of the drawings. Stick each one down on one edge so that they will open like doors to show the drawing underneath. (These can be standardised sizes and pre-cut.)
- Check that each of the doors opens and decorate the front of the calendar and each of the doors as brightly as possible. Number each of the doors.

**Differentiation**

This is a difficult task and all children will need some help. Check that they can glue the doors down properly. If it is too difficult you could make a class one on a display board with 25 of the children's illustrations covered up and ready to be opened on the correct day.