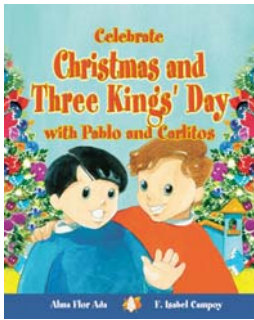


# CELEBRATE CHRISTMAS AND THREE KINGS DAY LESSON PLAN FOR GRADES 3-6



Book/Text Set:

*Celebrate Christmas and Three Kings Day with Pablo and Carlitos / What are Christmas and Three Kings Day?*

by Alma Flor Ada and F. Isabel Campoy

**Content Overview:** In the fiction story, Carlitos writes a letter to the Three Kings requesting many presents. Later, he sends additional letters asking for presents for his brother Pablo instead, because his brother has been teaching him to ride a bike. Carlitos's kindness brings him a big surprise on Three Kings Day. The non-fiction section describes the similarities between Christmas and Three Kings Day and tells how these holidays are celebrated throughout the world.

## Materials and Preparation

- chart paper and markers
- white paper for drawing and writing
- construction paper
- assorted books about Christmas and Three Kings Day

## Standards Covered

### NCSS Social Studies Strands

- I. Culture: a, b, c
- II. Time, Continuity, and Change: b, c, f
- III. People, Places, and Environments: b
- IV. Individual Development and Identity: c, d, e, f, g, h
- V. Individuals, Groups, and Institutions: b

### National TESOL Standards

- Goal 1: To use English to communicate in social settings. Standards 1, 2, 3
- Goal 2: To use English to achieve academically in all content areas. Standards 1, 2, 3
- Goal 3: To use English in socially and culturally appropriate ways. Standards 1, 2, 3

NCTE/IRA English Language Arts Standards: 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12

## Vocabulary

F: manger / several / scold / letter / bunch / presents / station  
camels / disappointed

NF: common / nativity / act out / recite / beneath / wise / figures  
carnivals / spectacular / bought / handmade / ornament

**Pacing Guide** 3 days; 45-60 minute sessions, plus optional extensions

## Reading and Activities

### DAY 1

#### **Explore the Topic: Christmas and Three Kings Day / Generosity**

Generate a discussion about giving and receiving. Ask students to recall times when they may have asked for and received special gifts, and also times when they may have given presents to someone special. Introduce the concept of generosity as the willingness to give to others. Then ask students to think about times when they may have given a present to someone else instead of asking for one themselves.

Create a matrix to show the similarities between Christmas and Three Kings Day. On a piece of chart paper, create three columns. Label the center and right-hand columns “Christmas” and “Three Kings Day.” In the left-hand column, write the following words to create a table: *dates, decorations, activities, people, animals*. Leave extra rows for other categories that may come up in discussion. Invite students to tell what they know about these two celebrations and to write their responses in the appropriate cells. Review the information with students and leave the chart posted.

#### **Vocabulary Introduction**

Start a vocabulary list. At the top of a piece of chart paper, write the words “Christmas” and “Three Kings Day.” Then write the vocabulary for the fiction section in column format. Read the words aloud with students and ask volunteers to offer definitions or use the words in sentences. As students respond, add to their responses as appropriate for clarification.

#### **Fiction Read-Aloud & Discussion**

In this session you will read aloud only the fiction story, *Celebrate Christmas and Three Kings Day with Pablo and Carlitos*. Before reading the story, show students the cover and have a volunteer read the title aloud. Ask students to make inferences about the relationship between the boys in the cover illustration.

As you read, focus on Carlitos’s letters to the Three Kings and why he revises his requests for presents. Discuss with students Carlitos’s reward for showing good character and ask them to make and share any personal connections. Stop as necessary to have students help you use context to define words that are unfamiliar. Use a globe to show students the locations of Persia (Iran), Arabia (the Middle East), Africa (specifically, Ethiopia), and Bethlehem (Israel/Judea) to identify the origins and destination of the Three Kings.

When the story is finished, ask students to retell the main points of the story. Ask the following questions, using the illustrations in the book whenever appropriate to help students with their responses:

<b>Beginning</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Point to Carlitos's letter. Name some things he asks for.</li> <li>2. How does Pablo help Carlitos?</li> <li>3. Why is Carlitos so surprised on Three Kings Day?</li> </ol>
<b>Intermediate</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Why is Carlitos writing a letter to the Three Kings?</li> <li>2. How do Carlitos's letters change?</li> <li>3. Tell about the gifts Carlitos receives for Three Kings Day.</li> </ol>
<b>Advanced</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Tell about Carlitos and Pablo's conversation while Carlitos is on the bicycle.</li> <li>2. Explain why Carlitos's letters keep changing.</li> <li>3. If you were Carlitos, how would you feel on Three Kings Day and why?</li> </ol>

Review the similarities matrix. If students have any new information, have them add their own responses to the chart.

## DAY 2

### Vocabulary Activity

Review the words on the vocabulary list by having students reread, define, and use them in sentences. Add the vocabulary words for the non-fiction section to the list. Ask volunteers to read the words aloud, offer definitions, and use them in sentences. Add to student responses as appropriate to define each word. Tell students they will hear these words in the next story.

Show students the cover of *Celebrate Christmas and Three Kings Day with Pablo and Carlitos* and ask a volunteer to recap the story. Tell them that you are now going to read them a story that gives more information about Christmas and Three Kings Day.

### Non-Fiction Read-Aloud & Discussion

Before reading, review the similarities matrix and remind students that more information can be added after the reading.

Open the book to pages 16–17 and have a volunteer read the section title aloud.

Read the story, *What are Christmas and Three Kings Day?* As you read, stop as appropriate to define and discuss any words the children may not know. Point out the calendar and have students make note of the amount of time between Christmas and Three Kings Day and that they are two aspects of the same celebration. Focus on the use of lights in decorations and the giving of presents for both celebrations. Point out that in families where Three Kings Day is celebrated, children often wait until that day to receive their gifts.

When the read-aloud is finished, have students discuss the information by answering the following questions:

Beginning	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. When are Christmas and Three Kings Day?</li> <li>2. What are some Christmas and Three Kings Day activities?</li> <li>3. Who do children write letters to asking for presents?</li> </ol>
Intermediate	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. When and where are Christmas and Three Kings Day celebrated?</li> <li>2. Describe some things that people do to celebrate Christmas and Three Kings Day.</li> <li>3. Who might bring presents to children on Christmas and Three Kings Day?</li> </ol>
Advanced	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What are Christmas and Three Kings Day?</li> <li>2. Describe some activities that people enjoy on Christmas and Three Kings Day.</li> <li>3. Why do you think children write letters to the Three Kings asking for presents?</li> </ol>

Review the similarities matrix and add additional information learned in this reading.

### **DAY 3**

#### **Vocabulary Review**

Have students use the [Christmas and Three Kings Day Vocabulary worksheet](#).

As students finish, allow time for them to browse and read additional picture books about Christmas and Three Kings Day, or other related books. After reading, review the similarities matrix again and add any new information.

#### **Writing Activity**

Tell students they will be writing individual informational picture books about Christmas and Three Kings Day, using information from the similarities matrix. Explain that each page of their books will have two equal parts, one for Christmas and another one for Three Kings Day. Also tell them that each page will include both writing and illustrations.

Write the following prompts on the board:

**On Christmas...**

**On Three Kings Day...**

Give an example of related information about the two celebrations that might go on one page, such as "On Christmas, we leave cookies for Santa. On Three Kings Day, we leave grass for the camels." Model the writing on the board, showing that both statements would be written on the same page. Ask students to give more examples.

Review the informational matrix and remind students to use it as a resource for creating their pages. Review the vocabulary list too. Ask students for any additional words they might need in their writing. Add related words to the vocabulary list and write any unrelated words on the board. Tell students they can ask for more words as they work.

Make sure students understand that both statements will go on the same page and both will have related illustrations. Allow students to choose whether to use full or half sheets of white unlined paper for their pages, and to decide for themselves how they want to arrange the sentences on the papers. They can make as many pages as they want, depending on how many differences or similarities they can find between Christmas and Three Kings Day, so some students may have more pages than other students in their finished books.

As students finish their work, instruct them to staple the pages into construction paper covers to make the books. Tell them to add a title and illustration to the cover. Have students share their writing with each other.

## Extensions

### Writing

Write to the prompt: "It's better to give than to receive." Discuss the benefits of giving to others.

### Art

Design your own wrapping paper. Make stamps out of cardboard or cut sponges. Use tempera paint to stamp designs onto tissue paper. Create complex patterns such as spiral or radiating patterns using several colors.

### Music

Learn and sing the song, *The Twelve Days of Christmas*. Read the lyrics and listen to the music online at [http://www.dltk-holidays.com/Xmas/midi/twelve\\_days.htm](http://www.dltk-holidays.com/Xmas/midi/twelve_days.htm).

### Mathematics

Learn about and work with all the different types of triangles: equilateral, isosceles, scalene; right, obtuse, acute. Measure, cut, and create a design using every type of triangle, using only white and gold paper. Make a map of your design with labels for all the triangles. Learn how to identify different types of triangles: <http://www.factmonster.com/ipka/A0876325.html>

### Science

Do some research on gold, frankincense, and myrrh. Find out what they are, what makes them valuable, and why the Three Kings might have chosen them as gifts for Baby Jesus.

### Social Studies

Start or participate in a toy drive at school to donate toys to needy children.

Research Arabia, Persia, and Ethiopia (Africa), the places from which the Three Kings came. Make travel guides to show what you learned.

## Technology

Make and print out your own word search using vocabulary words:

<http://www.armoredpenguin.com/wordsearch>

Learn some interesting facts about gold, frankincense, and myrrh:

gold: <http://www.amnh.org/exhibitions/gold/eureka/funfacts.php>

frankincense: <http://www.scents-of-earth.com/frankincense1.html>

myrrh: <http://www.botanical.com/botanical/mgmh/m/myrrh-66.html>

Look at, analyze, and compare paintings depicting “The Adoration of the Magi” by different artists:

<http://www.abcgallery.com/religion/adorationmagi.html>

Create a camel and rider silhouette cut paper design. Get directions for cutting and painting the silhouette:

<http://www.dltk-kids.com/animals/mcamel.html>

## Creative Reading

Share this book with your students using Alma Flor Ada’s Creative Reading methodology based on the principles of Transformative Education. [Suggested questions](#) to initiate the dialogue are provided for Beginning, Intermediate, and Advanced levels as well as self-assessment tools for [teachers](#) and students, in both [English](#) and [Spanish](#).

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