

SPECIAL
FESTIVE
COLLECTION

A
VERY
Disney
CHRISTMAS

COUNT DOWN TO CHRISTMAS
WITH 25 STORIES AND CRAFTS





A
VERY
Disney
CHRISTMAS

First published in the UK in 2021 by Studio Press Books,
an imprint of Bonnier Books UK,
4th Floor, Victoria House, Bloomsbury Square, London WC1B 4DA
Owned by Bonnier Books,
Sveavägen 56, Stockholm, Sweden

bonnierbooks.co.uk

Copyright © 2021 Disney Enterprises, Inc.
Pixar properties © Disney/Pixar

Based on the "Winnie the Pooh" works, by A. A. Milne and E. H. Shepard.
© Just Play, LLC
Plymouth Superbird™; Petty™; FIAT™; Hudson Hornet™
©Volkswagen AG

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be
reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means,
electronic, or mechanical, including photocopying, recording,
or by any information storage and retrieval system,
without permission in writing from the publisher.

Printed in Italy
2 4 6 8 10 9 7 5 3 1

FSC

All rights reserved
ISBN 978-1-80078-113-9

Edited by Ellie Rose
Designed by Rob Ward
Production by Emma Kidd



CONTENTS



1

DECEMBER

CHRISTMAS
LAUGHS

6

MAKE AN ADVENT
CALENDAR
10

2

DECEMBER

THE BEST
PRESENT EVER

12

DESIGN A
CHRISTMAS CARD
16

3

DECEMBER

DUMBO'S
SNOWY DAY

18

LEARN TO DRAW
DUMBO
21



4

DECEMBER

THE SWEETEST
CHRISTMAS

22

BAKE CHRISTMAS
BISCUITS
26

5

DECEMBER

OLAF'S FROZEN
ADVENTURE

28

MAKE AN OLAF
DECORATION
32

6

DECEMBER

THE PERFECT
GIFT

34

MAKE A CHRISTMAS
TREE DECORATION
38

7

DECEMBER

GHOSTS OF
CHRISTMAS PAST

40

WRITE A LETTER TO
FATHER CHRISTMAS
44

8

DECEMBER

MICKY AND MINNIE'S
GIFT OF THE MAGI

46

MAKE A
SNOW GLOBE
50

9

DECEMBER

BELE TO
THE RESCUE

52

CHRISTMAS
TRADITIONS
55

10

DECEMBER

A BIG, BLUE
CHRISTMAS

56

MAKE A
BAUBLE
60

11

DECEMBER

THE WONDERFUL
WINTER TREE

62

DESIGN YOUR OWN
WRAPPING PAPER
66

12

DECEMBER

LADY'S
CHRISTMAS SURPRISE

68

MAKE A
POMPOM
72



13

DECEMBER

THE PUPPIES'
MESSY CHRISTMAS

74

MAKE A CHRISTMAS
WREATH
78

14

DECEMBER

DONALD'S
CHRISTMAS TREE

80

MAKE A MINI
CHRISTMAS TREE
82



15

DECEMBER

NIGHT
LIGHTS

84

PLAY CHRISTMAS
BINGO
88

16

DECEMBER

CHRISTMAS FOR
EVERYONE

90

MAKE
MINCE PIES
94

17

DECEMBER

THE SHADOW
PUPPET SHOW

96

DESIGN A CHRISTMAS
PARTY INVITATION
99

18

DECEMBER

OUR PERFECT
STORMY DAY

100

WRITE A
CHRISTMAS STORY
102

19

DECEMBER

A GIFT FOR
WALL-E

104

MAKE AN ORANGE
POMANDER
108

20

DECEMBER

A PERFECT
PARTY

110

MAKE PAPER
SNOWFLAKES
113

21

DECEMBER

THE CHRISTMAS
FEAST

114

CHRISTMAS TABLE
CENTREPIECE
118

22

DECEMBER

THE RILEY AND
BING BONG BAND

120

MAKE A RUDOLPH
DECORATION
124

23

DECEMBER

MIGUEL AND THE
SECRET RECIPE

126

MAKE A POPCORN
GARLAND
129

24

DECEMBER

A PRINCE'S
DAY

130

CHRISTMAS EVE
CHECKLIST
133

25

DECEMBER

A TOY
CHRISTMAS

134

FUN FOR
CHRISTMAS DAY
138

BONUS ACTIVITY

MAKE A
PAPER CHAIN
140

ACTIVITY
TICKLIST
142



1

DECEMBER

CHRISTMAS
LAUGHS

Mike Wazowski, the green one-eyed monster, was on the Monsters, Inc. Laugh Floor. He couldn't stop looking at the Laugh Meter. It showed all of the laughs the monsters had collected by telling kids jokes. The laughs were turned into energy for the city of Monstropolis.

Monsters, Inc. had always been able to collect enough laughs to make sure the monsters never had to worry about losing power. But with Christmas around the corner, it seemed as if more and more kids were on holiday. That made it harder to collect laughs.

Mike worried there wouldn't be enough power to light the Christmas tree in the city. It was a Monstropolis tradition that everyone looked forward to.

'Come on, monsters,' he called out. 'Think funny!' Mike watched one monster go through a child's wardrobe door. When he came back onto the Laugh Floor, Mike looked at the canister that collected laughs. It wasn't even half full.

Just then, Sulley showed up. The big, furry blue monster was the president of Monsters, Inc. He was also Mike's best friend.

'How's it going, Mike?' asked Sulley.

'Fine, fine,' Mike answered nervously. He didn't want his boss to know they were running short on laughs. 'That Christmas tree will be lit up in no time.'

Mike saw Sulley peek over at the Laugh Meter. 'I bet there are a lot of kids who are—' Sulley started.

'No time to talk, buddy,' Mike cut him off. He guided Sulley towards the door. 'Got to get back to work and collect those laughs.'

'Okay,' said Sulley. 'See you later.'

6

As soon as Sulley left, Mike called out again, 'Let's go, let's go! Collect those laughs! Christmas is just around the corner!'

The monsters worked even harder at being funny and entertaining. One monster even juggled seven plates and spun another plate on his head. The kid watching him broke into giggles and clapped wildly. The laugh canister quickly filled up.

George, a big, furry orange monster, went through another child's door. He sat on a stool next to the little girl's bed, holding a microphone in one hand.

'Hey, is this thing on? Hello?' George said, tapping the microphone. 'Ready to have some laughs? Good. Why did the monster eat a lightbulb?'

'Why?' the child asked.

'He needed a light snack!' George exclaimed, and the little girl roared with laughter. 'Wait, wait! I have more.' He told another joke that sent the child into giggles. On the Laugh Floor, Mike watched the canister outside the door fill up.

'Nice work,' Mike said when George had finished.

'Thanks,' George said. He and Mike looked up at the Laugh Meter on the wall. It was growing steadily, much to everyone's delight.

'We actually might make our goal,' Mike said with a hopeful smile.

All of a sudden, Mike and the other monsters watched in horror as the Laugh Meter began to go down instead of up!

'What's going on? What's happening?' Mike said, his voice growing louder. The laugh wranglers, Smitty and Needleman, weren't sure.

'This has never happened before,' said Smitty, the head wrangler.

'Well, don't just stand there,' Mike cried. 'Fix it!'

The wranglers sprang into action. After a while, they discovered a leak in the laugh tank, where all the laughs were stored.

The monsters on the Laugh Floor were worried. They wondered if all of their hard work had been for nothing.

'Ho, ho, ho!' came a cheerful voice.

Mike looked up and saw Santa Claus walking onto the floor. Then he realised it was Sulley dressed in a Santa suit.

'I'm just getting into the Christmas spirit,' Sulley explained. Then he looked around. 'It looks like I'm the only one. What's going on?'

Mike explained. 'But I've got everything under control, Santa, er, Sulley.'

7

'I'm sure you do,' Sulley replied. 'I'm just going to see if there's anything I can do to help.'

Sulley followed Mike into the basement of Monsters, Inc., where the laugh wranglers were hard at work. Everyone wanted to get the laugh tank fixed as soon as possible and time was running out. The tree-lighting ceremony was only a few hours away!

But the wranglers couldn't agree on how to fix the problem.

'Anything I can do?' Sulley asked.

'One of the pipes that leads into the laugh tank has burst,' explained Smitty. 'We need to tie it off but none of our tools are strong enough to turn the pipe.'

'Hmm...' said Sulley, scratching his head. Then Mike had a great idea. 'Why not actually tie it off?' Since Sulley was so strong, he could bend that pipe right into a pretzel shape!

Sulley was willing to give it a try. Mike stood by his side and coached him.

It worked! The pipe stopped leaking!

Mike and Sulley headed back up to the Laugh Floor. All the monsters congratulated Sulley!

Mike wondered why no one was thanking him. It had been his idea, after all. But there was no time to think about that now. 'We're back up and running!' Mike announced. 'Let's make some laughs!'

All the monsters got to work. They knew they'd have to work extra hard to make up for all of the lost laughs.

Sulley decided to jump in and help. 'Hey, we've only got a couple of hours to get the tree lit,' he said to Mike.

Still dressed as Santa, Sulley went through a child's wardrobe door.

When he came back onto the Laugh Floor, he looked up at the Laugh Meter on the wall. It was increasing, but slowly.

'We've got to make it,' Sulley whispered to Mike.

Finally, the Laugh Meter was back up to the level it had reached before the leak. Sulley looked at the clock on the wall and frowned. It was only thirty minutes until the tree-lighting ceremony.

Suddenly, Sulley had an idea. 'The only way we're going to make our laugh quota is to get some really over-the-top laughs.'

Mike nodded in agreement.

'We need a big one,' continued Sulley. 'We need a special kind of monster. One with perfect timing, star quality, a natural at comedy, a one-eyed sensation.'

Mike realised what Sulley was trying to do. He crossed his arms and shook his head. 'No, Sulley. Absolutely not.'

'The Christmas tree lighting is only half an hour away,' Sulley told him. 'Come on, Mike. The whole city is depending on you.'

That was all Mike needed to hear. 'You're right. Let's do it!' he said. 'But you're coming with me!'

Sulley and Mike went through a door together. Sulley was still dressed as Santa and Mike had dressed up as an elf. To their delight, a little girls' sleepover was going on!

Mike started with some of his best jokes. 'Hey, Sulley, I've got to walk twenty-five miles to get home.'

'Why don't you take a train?' Sulley asked, playing along.

'I did once, but my mother made me give it back!' Mike said. The kids in the room laughed but not as hard as the monsters had hoped. After a few more jokes, Mike realised he'd have to try something else. He picked up the sack of toys Sulley had brought in, but it was far too heavy for him.

'Whoa!' he exclaimed as he tripped. He landed upside down and the sack of toys spilled out around him. He sat up with a doll draped over his head and a toy race car stuck to his foot.

The kids roared with laughter. They begged for more and Mike happily tumbled and tripped for them again.

Mike and Sulley made it back onto the Laugh Floor in time to watch the Laugh Meter hit its limit!

At the tree-lighting ceremony, Mike and Sulley stood proudly in the front of the crowd.

Sulley whispered in Mike's ear. 'You did a great job. Thank you.'

Mike smiled. 'You know what I always say: funny doesn't grow on trees. When you got it, you got it. And I got it.'

Sulley laughed. He was happy Mike had it and shared it. It was going to be a bright Christmas, after all.

MAKE AN ADVENT CALENDAR

Get creative and make your own activity advent calendar!



YOU WILL NEED

- coloured card or wrapping paper
- coloured pens or pencils

- scissors
- coloured ribbon
- string

10



1. Cut out 25 shapes from the coloured card or wrapping paper. You could cut Christmas trees, wreaths, presents, snowmen, stockings or baubles.
2. On the front, write a number from 1 to 25. On the back, write a fun activity to do every day leading up to Christmas Day.
3. Add extra decoration to each card – try adding glitter, stickers or even fresh holly!
4. Ask an adult to hang up the ribbon – you could hang it on a wall or along a bannister.
5. Make a small hole in the corner of each card and thread through string. Hang up the cards, in order, ready to open each day!

ASK AN
ADULT
FOR HELP

ACTIVITY IDEAS

- Make a hot chocolate with marshmallows
- Watch a Christmas film
- Decorate the Christmas tree
- Make a gingerbread house
- Put on a festive play

11

THE BEST
PRESENT EVER

'Hey, Lightning, look at me! Woowooooee!' Mater sledged past his best buddy, Lightning McQueen.

It was winter in Radiator Springs. Christmas was just a few days away and fresh snow blanketed the ground. The two friends were taking turns sliding down a snow-covered hill using Mater's one-of-a-kind junkyard sledge.

'I'm tellin' you, this here's the best sledge in Radiator Springs!' Mater exclaimed.

'I know, you have told me,' Lightning laughed. 'Several times. It has its own headlights, superfast gliders—'

'And built-in bumper tyres!' the friends said together.

'Well, hold your horsepower,' said Mater. 'Because it's gonna be even funner when we take it sledging at Kersploosh Mountain!'

Kersploosh Mountain was a water park near Radiator Springs. For just one day a year, on Christmas, the waterslides were frozen over so that cars could go sledging down the chutes.

'Uh, Mater, there's something I need to tell you,' Lightning looked worried. 'Remember that Russian Ice Racers Cup I told you I'm competing in?'

'Well, sure,' said Mater. 'The one in a few weeks.'

'That's just it,' Lightning said. 'They moved it up to this week. I'm not going to be here for Christmas after all.'

Mater stopped dead in his tracks. 'You're not?'

Lightning shook his head. 'I'm really sorry, buddy. I know I'll miss Christmas at Kersploosh Mountain. But maybe we can do something else when I get back?'

'Yeah... sure thing,' Mater said.

Later that afternoon, Mater pulled into Flo's V8 Cafe.

'Hey there, Mater,' Flo called. 'Want to try a sip of my new eggnog oil? It's guaranteed to fill you up with Christmas cheer.'

'I could use some,' said Mater. 'I'm plumb out of Christmas cheer.'

'Something got you down, honey?' Flo asked.

Mater sighed. 'Lightning won't be home for Christmas. He's in some Rushin' Rice Cup.'

'That's too bad,' Flo said. 'I guess you'll have to celebrate the holiday early.'

'Yeah, celebrate early! That's a good idea!' said Mater. Then he thought for a moment. 'Oh, shoot, I forgot about presents. I've gotta get Lightning something! But what?'

Flo looked thoughtful. 'Hmmm. Well, you're going to miss him while he's away, right?'

'Yeah,' Mater nodded eagerly.

'So how about getting him something for the race, so he knows you'll be thinking of him? Like ear mufflers? Or a snow scraper?'

Mater smiled. 'Or snow tyres! That's a great idea, Flo. I know just where to go!' With that, Mater dashed off.

'Luigi!' Mater yelled as he skidded up to Casa Della Tires. 'I need your help!'

Luigi smiled. 'For you, Mater, anything!'

'Those snow tyres,' said Mater. 'The ones that used to be in your front window. Where'd they go? I need to buy them for Lightning for his Crushin' Dice Cup!'

Luigi's smile faded. 'Ah... I can do anything but that. I'm afraid someone's already bought them. They just left a moment ago.'

Sure enough, outside a big truck was driving away from the shop.

Mater raced after the truck, finally catching up with him at the intersection. Mater explained the situation then pleaded with the truck. 'I need those tyres for my best buddy's Christmas gift. I'll give you anything.'

The truck sighed. 'Sorry, but I've been dreaming of speeding through the snow with these superfast tyres.'

Mater raised an eyebrow. 'Fast, huh? What if I told you I had something that goes even faster than those tyres?'





Curious, the truck agreed to meet Mater at the edge of town. Meanwhile, Mater raced to his junkyard to grab his sledge.

'All right,' Mater said when the two trucks met again. 'I'll bet my sledge is faster going down that hill than you in those tyres. If

I'm right, we'll trade. Deal?'

The truck agreed and soon they were zipping down the snowy slope. Mater zoomed past the truck – and won!

The truck happily traded the tyres for Mater's sledge.

Meanwhile, Lightning was helping Sally decorate the Cozy Cone Motel.

'I feel awful,' he said. 'Mater looked so sad when I told him.'

'Well,' said Sally. 'Do you need to do the race?'

'Huh?' asked Lightning.

'It's not part of your normal circuit,' Sally pointed out. 'I'm sure they'd understand if you didn't go.'

Lightning's eyes lit up. 'You're right. Mater is my best friend. And a trophy is just another trophy. I'm going to withdraw from the race and stay here for Christmas!'

Lightning raced home to call Vitaly Petrov, who was hosting the Russian Ice Racers Cup. Vitaly told Lightning not to worry, he could reschedule the race for after the holiday.

'That works out great. Thanks, Vitaly!' said Lightning.

He couldn't wait to tell Mater the good news. On his way to see his best buddy, Lightning drove past a big sign for Kersploosh Mountain. He suddenly had an idea for the perfect gift...

The next day, Lightning and Mater exchanged gifts.

'Open yours, open yours, open yours!' Mater cried.

'Okay,' said Lightning. 'But, Mater, I have some good news that...' Lightning trailed off as he unwrapped the tyres.

'You got these for me?' he asked, looking up at his friend.

'Yeah!' Mater grinned from mirror to mirror. 'If my best buddy can't be here for Christmas, then he'd sure as heck better win his Blushin' Mice Cup! Do you like 'em?'

Lightning was touched. 'Mater, I love them. But...'

Mater was already ripping open his gift. When he saw the two tickets to Kersploosh Mountain, his eyes grew wide.

Lightning shrugged. 'My race was delayed, so now I can spend Christmas with you, buddy.'

'No way!' Mater exclaimed. 'This is awesome! I can't believe we're going to Kersploosh Mountain on Christmas Day! Now we can take my sledge and... uh oh.'

'Hey, where is your sledge?' Lightning asked, looking around. Mater shuffled nervously. 'Uh, I may have kind of, sort of, traded it to get you them there snow tyres.'

The two friends stared at each other. Then they started laughing. 'Can you believe this?' Lightning exclaimed. 'We thought we were getting each other the perfect Christmas presents but we ended up getting stuff we can't use!'

Mater nodded. 'Yeah, but I'll tell you one thing, buddy, spending Christmas together is still the best present ever.'

Lightning smiled. 'Same here, pal. I wouldn't change a thing.'

Mater looked at the gifts. 'Well, shoot. What are we going to do with four tyres and no race and two tickets with no sledge?'

A twinkle came to Lightning's eye. 'Well, we may not have a junkyard sledge but we do have a junkyard. Mater, didn't your old sledge have bumper tyres?'

Mater bounced up and down. 'Oh, oh! I see where you're going.' He started racing around his junkyard, collecting scraps. 'Dad gum, this is gonna be so cool!'

On Christmas Day, Mater and Lightning sat at the top of Kersploosh Mountain. Beneath them was a new junkyard sledge. Except this one was extra special – it had two seats, flashing Christmas lights, double gliders and extra-large bumper tyres.

'It's Mater's Junkyard Sledge 2.0, with double the sledding fun!' cried Mater.

'You ready for this?' Lightning asked as they teetered on the top of the slide.

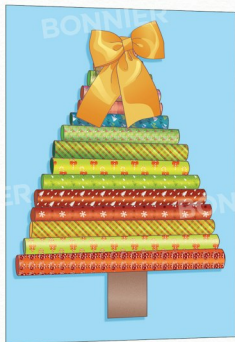
'You bet,' said Mater. 'As long as I've got my good buddy with me, I'm as ready as I'll ever beeeeeeeeeee!'





DESIGN A CHRISTMAS CARD

Use scraps of old wrapping paper to make this card for someone special!



YOU WILL NEED

- scraps of wrapping paper
- scissors
- glue
- brown card
- sheet of coloured card
- coloured ribbon



1. Cut roughly 14 pieces of wrapping paper around 1 cm wide. Each piece should be slightly shorter than the last – these will form your tree.
2. Roll each piece of wrapping paper into a tube and glue to hold together.
3. Cut a rectangle roughly 5 cm by 3 cm from the brown card. This will be the tree trunk.
4. Fold the coloured card in half – this is the base of your card.
5. Glue the tree trunk at the bottom of one side of the card.
6. Then glue each wrapping paper tube above the tree trunk, from the longest to the shortest.
7. Tie the ribbon into a bow and glue to the top of the tree.
8. Write your festive message inside the card!



DUMBO'S
SNOWY DAY

Dumbo was a very special elephant – with his huge ears, he could soar through the sky like a bird. Dumbo performed in a circus with his mother, Mrs. Jumbo. One chilly day, the circus animals were on their way to a new town. But their train, Casey Jr., was struggling to get through the falling snow. His wheels slid on the icy railroad tracks.

Finally, Casey Jr. decided it was too dangerous to keep going. The train came to a stop and everyone waited for the snow to pass.

Dumbo was happy that the train had stopped. He'd never played in the snow before! He thought it felt awfully strange as he tried to walk through it. The snow pressed against his feet like cold sand.

'You can do it!' said Mrs. Jumbo. She gave him a gentle nuzzle.

Soon Dumbo got the hang of walking through the snow. He liked the *crunch-crunch-crunch* sound he heard with every step.

All morning, Dumbo and his mother played in the snow. They gathered snowballs together with their trunks. They made snow elephants. They even played hide-and-seek! But as Dumbo and his mother explored, they got further and further away from the waiting train.

Suddenly, Dumbo slid down a steep



hill. He called after his mother to follow him. But when she reached the bottom of the hill, Mrs. Jumbo realised she couldn't climb back up!

Dumbo tried to push. He tried to pull. But nothing worked. Mrs. Jumbo slipped farther down the slope towards a steep cliff edge.

'You will have to fly off and get help,' Mrs. Jumbo told him.

So off Dumbo flew, as fast as his ears would take him.

As he soared towards the train, the wind began to blow. It pushed harder and harder against him. The snow stung his eyes and the cold nipped at his toes.

Finally, Dumbo's ears got so cold he couldn't fly. As he waited for the wind to pass, he worried about his mother.

Once the wind died down, Dumbo raced back to the train. Quickly, he gathered all the animals together so that they could help.

'What are we waiting for?' Timothy Mouse cried. 'I've got to save Mrs. Jumbo!'

Dumbo led his friends back to the cliff.

By the time they found Mrs. Jumbo, the windstorm had pushed her even closer to the cliff's edge. The animals knew they had to think of something fast!

'Oh, dear,' worried the giraffe. 'How can we get down there to help?'

Timothy snapped his fingers – he had an idea.

'Everybody line up!' he shouted. He ordered the animals to grab one another's tails. At the front of the line, the ostrich leaned over the cliff to take hold of Mrs. Jumbo's trunk.

'One, two, three, PULL!' Timothy yelled.

The animals worked together, huffing and puffing, pulling and stretching, until Mrs. Jumbo made it safely to the top of the cliff.

'Hooray!' everyone shouted. Suddenly, there was a loud CRACK!

The cliff side gave way and the animals all tumbled down!

'Watch out!' yelled the hippo.

'Yikes!' cried the monkeys.

'Uh-oh!' said the giraffe.





'Help!' hollered the bear.

All of the animals tumbled together and rolled down the hill. Before long, they had become a giant snowball!

'How do you stop this thing?' Timothy shouted as they zoomed along.

The snowball gathered speed until... *Crash! Bang! Boom! Oof!*

The animal snowball hit the bottom of the hill and broke apart!

'Is everyone okay?' Timothy asked as he straightened his hat. Luckily, everyone was fine, just a little dizzy from their unexpected snow ride. All the animals began walking back to

the train. Walking wasn't nearly as fast as riding a snowball, but it

was a lot less scary!

That night, Mrs. Jumbo gave Dumbo a warm bath.

'Thank you for flying to find help today,' Mrs. Jumbo said to her son. 'I'm so proud of you.'

Dumbo smiled and blew a trunkful of water over his head.

'Hey! Don't forget about me,' said Timothy from his teacup bath. 'I helped, too!' Mrs. Jumbo nodded 'You certainly did. Thank you.'

'Aw, gee,' said Timothy. 'It was nothing. Nothing at all.'

Then it was time for bed. Dumbo snuggled up against his mother, and Timothy nestled underneath Dumbo's ear. 'Good night, my darling,' Mrs. Jumbo said softly.

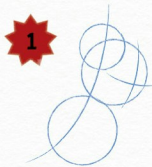
'Sleep tight!' said Timothy.

Dumbo fell asleep right away. Tomorrow he and the circus animals would perform for hundreds of happy children in the new town. But for now, Dumbo was glad to be warm and safe with his mother as the snow fell gently outside.



LEARN TO DRAW DUMBO

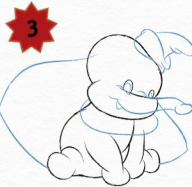
Dumbo may be the smallest elephant under the Big Top but he has a very special talent – he can use his ears to fly! Follow the steps to draw the little elephant.



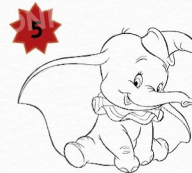
1. Start by drawing two large circles and a smaller circle.



2. Add the guidelines to show where Dumbo's face will go.



3. Remember that Dumbo is a baby, so make sure to give him a rounded body and chubby legs.



4. Add details to your drawing, such as the ruffles on Dumbo's collar and the wrinkles on his knees!



5. Dumbo's skin is a light grey with a hint of blue.

THE SWEETEST CHRISTMAS



One snowy Christmas Eve, Winnie the Pooh looked up and down, in and out and all around his house. He had a tree set up in his living room. It was decorated with some candles in honey pots. Pooh looked at the tree and tapped his head. 'Something seems to be missing,' he said.

He walked over to the window and peered outside. Then he walked back to the tree and thought some more.

Suddenly, a knocking sound startled Pooh. *Rap-a-tap-tap!* He turned towards his front door.

'Maybe whatever it is I can't remember I'm missing is outside my door,' Pooh said.

When Pooh opened the door, he found a small snowman on his front step.

'H-h-he-l-l-l-o, P-Pooh B-Bear,' the snowman said as he shivered.

Pooh thought the voice sounded very familiar. He invited the snowman inside.

After standing beside the fire for a few minutes, the snowman began to melt. The more he melted, the more he started to look like Piglet!

'Oh, my,' said Pooh. He was happy to see his friend where there used to be a snowman.

'Oh, my,' said Piglet. Now that the snow had melted off him, he could see Pooh's glowing Christmas tree.

'Are you going to string popcorn for your tree?' Piglet asked.

'There was popcorn and string,' Pooh admitted. 'But now there is only string.'

Pooh thought some more, wondering if popcorn was what he'd forgotten. But that wasn't it, either.

'Then we can use the string to wrap the presents you're giving,' Piglet said.

Something began to tickle at Pooh's brain. It was the something missing that he hadn't been able to remember.

'I forgot to get presents!' Pooh exclaimed.

'Don't worry, Pooh,' Piglet said. 'I'm sure you'll think of something.'

Soon it was time for Piglet to go home and wrap his own presents. He said goodbye to his friend and went back out into the cold, snowy night.

Pooh stood beside his tree and tapped his head while he thought. Where could he find presents for his friends? It was already Christmas Eve. Was it too late?

He thought some more. He sat down in his cosy chair. Then he got up and had a small snack of honey. He peered out the window and watched the snow fall.

Then he had an idea.

He still didn't know what to do about the presents he'd forgotten. But he knew where to find help.

'Hello!' Pooh called as he knocked on Christopher Robin's door.

Christopher Robin opened the door and smiled when he saw the visitor.

'Come in, Pooh Bear,' he said. 'Merry Christmas! Why do you look so sad on the most wonderful night of the year?'

Pooh was just about to explain about the forgotten presents when something caught his eye. He pointed at the stockings over the fireplace. 'What are those for?' he asked.

'Those are stockings to hold Christmas presents,' explained Christopher Robin.

'But Christopher Robin,' Pooh said, 'what if someone forgot to find presents for his friends? And what if that same someone doesn't have stockings to hang because he doesn't wear any?'

Pooh looked down at his bare feet, then



back up at Christopher Robin.

'Silly old bear,' Christopher Robin said. He took Pooh up to his room. They dug through his drawers until Pooh found seven stockings.

'Thank you, Christopher Robin,' Pooh said. He smiled. He'd picked a stocking for each of his friends to put their presents in: purple for Piglet, red-and-white striped for Tigger, orange for Rabbit, yellow for Eeyore, maroon for Gopher and blue for Owl. And one for him to hang over his fireplace.

He hurried off to deliver the stockings to his friends. As he walked through the Hundred-Acre Wood, he thought about the presents he still needed for the stockings.

'I will get the presents later,' Pooh said to himself. 'The stockings come first.'

Pooh stopped at each of his friends' houses. Everyone was asleep. He quietly hung the stockings where his friends would find them. Each one had a tag that read: FROM POOH.

When Pooh got back to his house, he climbed into his cosy chair in front of a roaring fire.

'Now I must think about presents for my friends,' he said.

But Pooh was tired from finding the stockings and delivering them to his friends' houses. Before he knew it, his thinking turned into dreaming. He was fast asleep.

The next morning, Pooh awoke to a loud thumping noise. Thump-a-bump-bump!

'I wonder who that could be,' he said. He climbed out of his chair and opened the door.

'Merry Christmas, Pooh!' his friends cried.

There on Pooh's doorstep stood Tigger, Rabbit, Piglet, Owl, Eeyore and Gopher. They were each carrying a stocking from Pooh.

Pooh scratched his head. All of a sudden he remembered what had happened the night before. He had fallen asleep before giving presents to his friends!

'Oh, bother,' he said. Then he realised that his



friends were all talking at once. They were thanking him for their gifts!

'No more cold ears in the winter with my new cap,' Piglet said.

'My striped sleeping bag is tiggerific!' exclaimed Tigger.

'So is my new carrot cover,' Rabbit said.

'This rock-collecting bag will sure make work go faster,' Gopher said.

Eeyore swished his tail to show Pooh his new tail-warmer. 'No one's ever given me such a useful gift before,' he said.

Owl told Pooh his new wind sock would help him with the day's weather report.

Pooh looked at his friends. They were very happy with their stockings, even though there weren't any presents in them!

'Something very nice is going on,' Pooh said.

'It is very nice, Pooh Bear,' Piglet said.

'It's called Christmas, buddy bear,' Tigger said. He patted Pooh on the back.

Then Pooh watched in surprise as each of his friends put a honey pot in Pooh's own stocking.

'I don't know what to say,' Pooh told his friends. He was thrilled by their gifts. Honey was his favourite treat!

'Christmas is a wonderful holiday,' Rabbit said. 'Especially when you have good friends to share it with.'

'Yep!' Tigger agreed. 'But I know how we could make the day even sweeter.'

He looked at the honey pot in Pooh's hands. An idea tickled at Pooh's brain.

'Let's all have lunch together,' Pooh said.

He passed out the honey pots his friends had just brought him. 'Christmas... what a sweet day, indeed.'



BAKE CHRISTMAS

BISCUITS

These biscuits might not be made with Pooh's favourite honey but they still make pretty and delicious decorations!



YOU WILL NEED

- 100g unsalted butter, softened
- 100g caster sugar
- 1 egg
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 275g plain flour
- sprinkles
- baking tray
- greaseproof paper
- mixing bowl
- wooden spoon
- rolling pin
- cookie cutters
- knife
- wire rack
- ribbon

ASK AN
ADULT
FOR HELP

1. Preheat the oven to 190°C. Line the baking tray with greaseproof paper.
2. Cream the butter and sugar together into a bowl until pale and fluffy.
3. Beat in the egg and vanilla extract a little at a time until combined.
4. Add the flour and mix to form a dough.
5. Roll out the dough on a lightly floured surface until it is about 1 cm thick.
6. Use cookie cutters to cut biscuits out of the dough. Re-roll any leftover dough until it has all been used.
7. Carefully use a knife to cut a hole in each biscuit. You can cut a larger shape in the middle or a small hole at the top of the biscuit.
8. Add sprinkles to the top of each biscuit.
9. Put the biscuits on a baking tray and bake for 8-10 minutes, or until pale golden brown. Leave to cool on a wire rack.
10. Once completely cooled, carefully thread the ribbon through the hole in each biscuit.



TOP
TIP!

You could make a simple icing by mixing icing sugar, water and food colouring to add more decoration to each biscuit!

5

DECEMBER

OLAF'S FROZEN
ADVENTURE

Olaf burst out of a kransekake, with pieces of the cake falling every which way. 'Surprise!' He shouted.

'Olaf, not yet!' said Anna.

Elsa smiled. 'The surprise holiday party starts *after* the Yule Bell rings.'

It was Arendelle's first holiday season in forever, and the two sisters would be spending it together with their kingdom.

The castle courtyard was filled with festive townspeople. Everyone had been excited as Kristoff and Sven brought in the Yule Bell.

'The Yule Bell signals the start of the holidays in Arendelle!' Elsa told Olaf.

'Okay, now,' Anna whispered.

Bong! Bong! Bong! The bell rang out, and all the villagers cheered!

'Surprise!' Shouted Olaf to the crowd.

And with that, Elsa and Anna flung open the doors to the castle to invite everyone in. But instead of staying for the surprise party, the townspeople started to leave!

'Wait!' Anna said. 'Going so soon?'

One woman replied, 'The Yule Bell rang, so I must get home for my family's tradition: rolling the *lefse!*'

A couple added, 'Our tradition is putting out porridge for the *tomte.*'

Two sisters explained, 'We're baking traditional *bordstabelbakkels!*'



Elsa invited Mr. and Mrs. Olsen to the castle, but they shook their heads.

'Thank you, but Olga and I need to get home to knit socks for our grandchildren.' Old Roy smiled. 'We wouldn't want to intrude on your family traditions.'

With the villagers gone, the sisters needed cheering up. Kristoff serenaded them with his holiday tradition from the trolls, *The Ballad of Flemingrad*. But the song took a strange turn when Kristoff started singing about nostrils.

Then Kristoff revealed another troll tradition: *Flemmy the Fungus Troll!*

'Woah, gross,' said Anna.

'Now you lick his forehead and make a wish!' Kristoff said. Everyone laughed.

Olaf followed the sisters into the bathroom. He couldn't wait to hear what Anna and Elsa's holiday tradition was. 'Do we have any traditions, Elsa?' asked Anna. 'Do you remember?'

'After the gates were closed, we were never together,' Elsa replied. 'I'm sorry, Anna. It's my fault that we don't have a tradition.'

Over the past few months, Olaf had learned a little about why certain events and items were important to different people. And now he understood something new – everyone in Arendelle had a holiday tradition. Everyone except Anna and Elsa.

Olaf ran to the stable.

'Sven! Anna and Elsa don't have a holiday tradition.' Then he had an idea. 'Let's go and find the best tradition Anna and Elsa have ever seen, and we'll bring it back to the castle!'

Olaf hooked Sven to Kristoff's sleigh, and the two immediately set out.

Olaf knocked on the door of the first house they came to.

'What is your holiday tradition?' Olaf asked a young boy and his mother.

'We make candy canes together.' The boy handed



28

29

one to Olaf.

Olaf pulled out his carrot nose and popped in the candy cane. His eyes whirled. 'Ohhhhh, sugar rush!'

The boy stared at Olaf. 'You're supposed to eat it.'

'Eat my new nose? Why would I do that?' asked Olaf.

'Because it's that time of year!' the boy said.

Olaf and Sven stopped at home after home to learn about different holiday traditions.

They loaded all the traditions onto Sven's sleigh, so they could take them back to Anna and Elsa.

At their last stop, Olaf found the entire Oaken family celebrating in the sauna. Olaf thought that was a great tradition... and added a portable sauna to the pile!

But hot coals from the sauna caused problems. The sleigh caught fire and the traditions began to burn! When the sleigh went over a cliff, Sven and Olaf landed on opposite sides of a ravine and the holiday traditions were gone!

Olaf was still hopeful because he had one last tradition, a fruitcake, that he could give Anna and Elsa.

But Sven was worried. He could hear wolves howling in the dark forest.

Back at the castle, Elsa found Anna in the attic.

'What are you doing up here?' asked Elsa.

'Looking for traditions,' said Anna. She had been pulling items out of a trunk filled with her childhood belongings.

'What's in your trunk?' asked Anna.

'Mostly gloves,' said Elsa.

But as Elsa reached inside her trunk, they heard a little bell ring. Elsa lifted out a small box and handed it to Anna. When Anna opened it, she couldn't believe her eyes.

Suddenly, the two sisters heard a kerfuffle outside.

They ran down to the stables, where Sven was trying to tell Kristoff something.

'Olaf is lost in the forest!' said Anna.

'And being chased by hungry wolves!' said Elsa.



The sisters knew they needed to gather everyone and search for Olaf right away.

Anna and Elsa headed into the forest, calling out Olaf's name. Kristoff and Sven were close behind, with a search party of villagers.

'Olaf, where are you?' wondered a worried Anna.

Just when they thought they might never find him, the sisters spotted a carrot sticking out of a snowdrift – Olaf!

Olaf explained how he had lost all the traditions he'd collected for his friends. Even the fruitcake, which had been grabbed by a bird!

'I'm sorry you still don't have a tradition,' the little snowman said.

'Olaf, we do. Look,' said Anna.

She opened the mystery box and showed Olaf what was inside.

The box was filled with sketches Anna had made of Olaf when she was a little girl!

'You're the one who first brought us together,' said Anna.

'And kept us connected when we were apart,' added Elsa.

'Every Christmas, I made Elsa a gift,' Anna continued.

Elsa nodded. 'All those long years alone, we had you to remind us of our childhood.'

'And of how much we still loved each other,' Anna agreed.

'It's you, Olaf. You are our holiday tradition,' said Anna. 'SURPRISE!'

Glowing lanterns emerged from the dark forest. The townspeople were relieved to see that Olaf was safe.

That's when Elsa had a brilliant idea...

Because this was Anna and Elsa's first winter holiday in forever, the celebration needed to be special. With a little help from the villagers, they hosted their big party after all, right there in the forest!

Best of all, Anna and Elsa rediscovered their holiday tradition and a new one was created for Arendelle. All thanks to Olaf.





MAKE AN OLAF DECORATION

Olaf loves learning about different holiday traditions! Include Olaf in your celebrations by making this fun centrepiece for your dinner table.



YOU WILL NEED

- a compass
- a pencil
- white card
- piece of white paper
- glue
- three sticks or straws
- coloured ribbon
- black and orange felt pens



1. Using the compass, draw three circles of different sizes on the white card.
2. Cut out two strips of paper roughly 2 cm by 15 cm and fold them up like an accordion.
3. Glue the sticks or straws to the side of the largest circle and glue one of the folded paper strips in the centre of the circle.
4. Glue the medium-sized circle on top of the folded paper strip.
5. Glue the ribbon onto the medium-sized circle to look like a scarf.
6. Glue three pieces of stick or straw to the top of the medium circle to look like Olaf's hair.
7. Glue the second folded paper strip to the centre of the circle and glue the smallest circle on top.
8. Use the black felt pen to draw Olaf's eyes, carrot nose and mouth. Colour in his nose using the orange felt pen.

TOP TIP!

Try adding glitter or spraying fake snow around Olaf for an extra festive look!

THE PERFECT GIFT



Christmas was just a few days away. Geppetto, the old woodcarver, was busy making toy soldiers and pretty dolls for the boys and girls in the village. There seemed to be more toys than usual to make this year. Geppetto was afraid that he wouldn't get all the work done in time.

Geppetto's son, Pinocchio, was eager to help his father. He knew Geppetto worked harder during the Christmas season than at any other time of the year.

While Geppetto worked day and night to make all the toys, Pinocchio, with the help of Jiminy Cricket, decorated the house for the holidays. Then they put up a tree and strung popcorn on its branches and hung garlands of holly.

This would be Pinocchio's first Christmas as a real boy. He wanted it to be very special.

'Jiminy,' Pinocchio said, 'I want to find the perfect gift for Geppetto. He should have something special. Will you help me?'

'Hmm,' Jiminy said. 'Well, if you ask me—'

'Maybe he would like a new knife to carve with?' Pinocchio said. Then he realised he probably didn't have enough money for that. 'Oh, what about some warm gloves? He could use them when he goes out on cold nights to deliver toys.'

'You know, Pinocchio, I wonder if a better gift would be—' Jiminy began.

'Socks!' Pinocchio cried. 'Or a new hat! Come on, Jiminy, let's go to the shops and see what we can find.' Pinocchio hurried out the door. Jiminy had to run to keep up.

In the shops, Pinocchio looked at socks, warm hats, gloves, scarves and even a warm woollen coat. But everything was too small, too expensive or too

ordinary. Pinocchio wanted to find something special.

By Christmas Eve, Pinocchio still hadn't found the perfect gift for Geppetto. He felt sad.

'What am I going to do?' he asked Jiminy.

'Well, I do have this idea,' the cricket said.

'Really?' Pinocchio asked. 'Please tell me!'

Jiminy sat him at the table and handed him a quill pen. 'You want to give your father something he really needs?'

'I sure do,' Pinocchio beamed.

'Write this,' Jiminy said. 'Dear Geppetto, my gift to you is an extra pair of hands and an extra-willing heart. Love, Pinocchio.'

When Pinocchio finished writing, he looked up at Jiminy. 'Now what?' he asked.

'Now you put the note in here.' Jiminy held out a box. Pinocchio dropped the note in. Then Jiminy wrapped the package with bright paper and a big bow.

'Geppetto will be very happy with this gift,' Jiminy said.

'But it's just a scrap of paper,' Pinocchio said. 'What sort of gift is that?'

Jiminy smiled. 'You might be surprised.'

Geppetto took a break from his work to share Christmas Eve dinner with his son. After the meal, Pinocchio gave Geppetto his gift.

'What's this?' he asked.

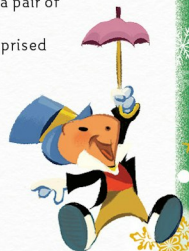
'Your Christmas present,' Pinocchio replied. 'I hope you like it.'

Geppetto untied the bow and tore the wrapping paper away. 'Why... this is the perfect present!' he exclaimed. 'I could use an extra pair of hands in my workshop. How did you know, Pinocchio?'

Pinocchio just smiled. Jiminy had been right, he was surprised at how much joy his gift brought to his father.

'I'm glad to help,' Pinocchio said. 'I can start right now if you want.'

Pinocchio cleared the dinner dishes from the table. He washed them and put them away. Then he went to Geppetto's workshop. He swept up the wood shavings and boxed and wrapped the new toys. He made labels for each



box so Geppetto would know who each gift was for.

When Geppetto set out to deliver the last of the gifts, Pinocchio went up to bed. He was tired after helping his father all night. But he was also very pleased that he made his father so happy. As he drifted off to sleep, he promised himself that he would help out more often.

That night, the Blue Fairy appeared. 'Because you have been so thoughtful this year, I came to grant you one very special Christmas wish,' she said. 'Think carefully about what you want.'

Pinocchio thought about the many things he could ask for. But he still only wanted one thing. 'I want to give Geppetto the perfect Christmas gift,' he told the Blue Fairy. 'Something that he will love forever.'

The Blue Fairy smiled. She knew just what that present should be. 'You are a very kind and loving boy, Pinocchio,' she said. 'I'm sure Geppetto will treasure this gift for years to come.'

The next morning, Geppetto woke up early. He quietly went downstairs to light the fire and make breakfast. He was so happy that Pinocchio had helped him the night before that he wanted to surprise his son. He wanted Pinocchio's first Christmas to be special.

Geppetto went to place his gifts for Pinocchio under the Christmas tree. He had carved a beautiful toy rocking horse and had crafted a playful jack-in-the-box. When he looked at the tree, he paused. Then he gasped.

A puppet that looked exactly like his son hung from the branches. 'My dear Pinocchio!' Geppetto said with a smile.

He examined the puppet. It looked just like a puppet he had made a long time ago. One lonely night, he had made a wish on the Wishing Star that the puppet would turn into a real boy. The Blue Fairy had granted his wish, and that was when Pinocchio the puppet had become his son.

When Pinocchio heard his father, he and Jiminy ran downstairs. 'Merry Christmas!' he shouted.

Geppetto sat in his favourite chair, holding the puppet. 'My gift! How did you make it?'

Pinocchio stared at the copy of the puppet he used to be. He smiled. The Blue Fairy had chosen the



perfect present for his father.

'Puppet Pinocchio was my favourite creation,' Geppetto said. 'Oh, how I've missed him.'

A frown appeared on Pinocchio's face. 'You have?' he asked. 'Have I disappointed you?'

Geppetto laughed. 'Not at all, son. You've been perfect in every way. This toy reminds me how very much I wanted a real son.

He reminds me of how happy I am to have you.'

Pinocchio smiled. He went over to the puppet and looked at it closely. He felt as if he were looking in a mirror – the puppet had the same dark hair and blue eyes he did.

Geppetto stood up and started dancing with the puppet and singing. Pinocchio clapped along. He was thrilled that his father was so happy.

Stopping to catch his breath, Geppetto looked at his son and said, 'No one has ever thought to give me a toy of my own to play with because I'm a toy maker. But you understand how much I love toys, Pinocchio. Thank you, son.'

'See,' Jiminy whispered to Pinocchio, 'I told you that you would be surprised. And now you've been surprised twice!'

Pinocchio nodded as he watched his father dance with the puppet some more. Then he went over and danced beside the puppet that looked so much like him.

Geppetto held out the strings for Pinocchio so he could try to make the puppet dance himself. It was difficult because the puppet was the same size as Pinocchio. But he didn't care. He was happy to share this moment with his father.

A little later, Pinocchio opened the gifts Geppetto had placed under the tree for him. He laughed as the jack-in-the-box popped up, and he rocked the small wooden horse across the floor. But the best present he'd gotten had come from the Blue Fairy. He would never forget the smile on his father's face. He hoped they would share many more holidays just like this one.



MAKE A CHRISTMAS TREE DECORATION

Geppetto makes beautiful toys for children at Christmas.
Use your creative skills to make a decoration for your tree.



ASK AN
ADULT
FOR HELP

YOU WILL NEED

- a compass
- a pencil
- green felt
- brown felt
- scissors
- a needle and thread
- a bead

38

1. Using the compass, draw circles onto the green felt. Make sure to draw lots of circles of different sizes – these will make your Christmas tree.
2. Draw six or seven circles of the same size on the brown felt. These will make your tree trunk.
3. Cut out all of the felt circles.
4. Thread the needle and tie a knot in the end of the thread.
5. Stack the brown felt circles on top of one another and thread the needle through the middle.
6. Carefully thread the needle through the largest green circle so it sits on top of your trunk.
7. Now add the rest of your green circles, working from largest to smallest. The more you add, the taller your tree will be!



TOP
TIP!

Use different shades of green felt to make your tree even more special!

39



GHOSTS OF
CHRISTMAS PAST

It should have been a joyous time. Christmas was coming – Rapunzel's very first Christmas since returning home to the castle. She had spent every Christmas locked away in Mother Gothel's tower since she was a baby.

The castle halls were decked with boughs of holly. The butlers had just chosen the royal Christmas tree. Everyone did their best to spread holiday cheer. Even the crankiest townsfolk were merry.

But in the royal family, one person was not ready for a happy holiday. 'No way. Uh-uh,' said Rapunzel. 'I refuse to celebrate Christmas!'

'What?' cried Flynn. 'Why don't you want to celebrate the most wonderful holiday of the year?'

Rapunzel looked shocked. Flynn was confused until Rapunzel shared her memories of Christmases spent in Mother Gothel's tower.

'You know how it is,' Rapunzel said. 'There's all of that eerie Christmas music. Mother Gothel sang it nonstop at Christmastime. I hate chanting and growling.'

That didn't sound like any Christmas music Flynn had ever heard. But he let Rapunzel continue. 'Mother Gothel also told us the tale of Nicholas, the ghostly Christmas elf – how he creeps into children's rooms on Christmas Eve and steals them away. It kept me up at bedtime!' Rapunzel sighed and shrugged.

'But I guess that's why all kids have trouble sleeping on Christmas Eve.'

'Actually, no!' Flynn said. 'That's not what Christmas is like at all!'

It was clear to Flynn that Mother Gothel had made Christmas sound frightening on purpose. It was just another way she had tried to make Rapunzel afraid of the world outside her tower.

He smiled, taking Rapunzel by the hand. 'You know what?' he said. 'I'll show you what Christmas is really like. Come on!'

Flynn took Rapunzel outside the castle. She seemed unsure and a little skittish, but Flynn reassured her. 'Just look around and listen,' he said. 'Does this seem like a spooky holiday to you?'

They passed a group of children singing Christmas carols. The sound was sweet and soothing. The words were all about hope and joy. It was like no Christmas music Rapunzel had ever heard before.

Just then, a small boy ran up to Rapunzel. He held out a package wrapped with a bow. 'Merry Christmas, Princess Rapunzel!' he said. 'I made this for you!'

But Rapunzel didn't take the gift. Her eyes widened in alarm. 'Trick package! Duck!' she cried, diving for cover behind a low stone wall.

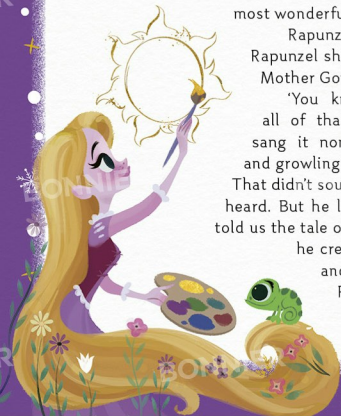
She peeked out warily from her hiding place. Flynn and the children stared at her in disbelief.

'It's not a trick,' Flynn said. 'Just a gift.' He opened the box. Inside was a handwoven crown of evergreens.

Slowly, Rapunzel walked over to him and took the crown. She placed it on her head. 'A real Christmas gift?' she said as if she hadn't heard of such a thing. 'Not an exploding trick package?' She knelt by the little boy and took his hands in hers. 'Thank you so much!'

Next, Flynn and Rapunzel came across a tree-decorating party. Together, the townsfolk were decorating an enormous Christmas tree in the centre of the town square.

Rapunzel pointed towards the top of the tree. 'You need a lot more charms up there,' she advised, 'if you want to scare off the ghostly Christmas elf.'



She picked up one of the ornaments. 'And I'm not sure these charms are anywhere near scary enough.'

Flynn took her aside. 'They're not charms,' he explained. 'They're ornaments. For decoration.'

Rapunzel looked confused. 'Oh. Well, then how do you keep the Christmas elf away?'

Flynn couldn't help laughing. 'Okay, next lesson...'

They went back inside the castle, where Flynn read to Rapunzel from several books about St. Nicholas.

'Oh! We had this one at the orphanage,' Flynn said, holding up a red-and-green book. 'See, St. Nicholas isn't a ghostly Christmas elf. He's a jolly old fellow who travels far and wide on Christmas Eve, bringing gifts to all the boys and girls.'

Flynn showed Rapunzel drawings of a smiling bearded man carrying a sack full of presents. 'Definitely no kidnapping.'

Rapunzel and Pascal looked at each other, marvelling at the idea. And to think of all those Christmas Eves they'd spent huddled together by the fire, too afraid to sleep! 'You mean, children have trouble sleeping on Christmas Eve because they are excited?' she asked.

Flynn nodded. 'That's right,' he said. 'So, now that you know what Christmas is really like, do you think you might be interested in celebrating it this year? For real? For the first time?'

Rapunzel's face lit up. 'Yes!' she replied, and she sprang into action.

For weeks, Rapunzel lived and breathed Christmas, enjoying everything that the holiday season had to offer – everything she had missed out on while living in the tower.

In the castle kitchen, she helped bake dozens and dozens of Christmas cookies.

She learned every word of every Christmas carol she had never heard before.



She decked every undecked inch of hall with garlands and ribbon and, for the first time, she made beautiful, not spooky, Christmas ornaments.

Finally, she wrapped handmade gifts for each member of her family. She could hardly wait until Christmas to see them opened.

By the time Christmas Eve arrived, Rapunzel was exhausted, but very, very happy. Her family gathered to celebrate around their Christmas tree.

Rapunzel's father, the King, proposed a toast. 'For years, our hearts have not felt whole at this time of year, because an important part of them was missing.' He smiled at Rapunzel.

The Queen raised her glass and added, 'But now, for the first time since you were born, Rapunzel, this holiday is a joyful one – for all of us.'

Rapunzel couldn't agree more. Surrounded by her warm, loving family, in front of the crackling fire, she could not imagine a better Christmas.

Rapunzel sighed happily and flopped down next to Flynn on a cosy settee. 'Thank you. For all of this,' she said.

'I should really be thanking you,' Flynn admitted. 'You know, this is my first Christmas with a real family. All those years in the orphanage, I knew what Christmas was supposed to be like, but it somehow never felt that merry. Until now.'

Flynn and Rapunzel sat together in front of the fire, waiting for Christmas to come. But before long, Rapunzel fell asleep.

Flynn smiled. After all those spooky, sleepless Christmas Eves in the tower, Rapunzel had certainly earned a peaceful holiday.

It had been a wonderful Christmas Eve. And there would be many more like it for years to come.



WRITE A LETTER TO

FATHER CHRISTMAS

Rapunzel only learned about St. Nicholas when she returned to her family. Write a letter to St. Nicholas, who also goes by the name Father Christmas!



YOU WILL NEED

- paper
- pens or pencils
- stickers

- glitter
- an envelope
- a stamp



1. Start your letter with 'Dear Father Christmas'.
2. You could begin by introducing yourself and telling Father Christmas your name and age.
3. You could say thank you for any presents you received last year and maybe tell him a fun story from your year.
4. Then you can ask Father Christmas for any gifts you'd like this year – remember to say please!
5. Don't forget to say hello to the elves and reindeer!
6. Decorate your letter with lots of doodles, stickers and glitter.
7. Fold your letter up and put it in the envelope. On the front of the envelope, write Father Christmas's address:
Father Christmas
Santa's Grotto
Reindeerland
The North Pole
9. Finally, stick on the stamp and post your letter!



MICKEY AND MINNIE'S GIFT OF THE MAGI

It was the day before Christmas. The bright morning sun was sparkling on the freshly fallen snow. There was a chill in the air as Mickey and Pluto strolled down the street.

Mickey's coat was old and tattered. His Christmas tree was small. And his pockets were as empty as the stockings hanging in homes all over town, waiting to be filled. But Mickey was happy.

Suddenly, Pluto started to bark. He pulled Mickey over to a shop window. Inside was a beautiful golden chain that twinkled in the morning sunlight.

'That's it, Pluto,' Mickey sighed. 'The perfect gift to go with Minnie's watch.' Mickey reached into his pockets. 'I'm a little short of money right now,' he told Pluto. 'But we're going to make lots of tips today, aren't we?'

Pluto looked doubtfully at Mickey.

'Come on,' Mickey said. 'Let's get this tree to Minnie's. We'll come back for the chain later.'

Meanwhile, at home, Minnie was worrying over a pile of unpaid bills. 'Oh, Figaro,' she sighed, 'how am I ever going to afford to buy Mickey a present?'

Just then, Minnie heard a knock at the door. She quickly shoved the bills in a drawer and raced into the living room.

Minnie opened the front door to find Mickey carrying a tree and playing a happy song on his harmonica.



Minnie giggled. 'Oh, Mickey, when you play the harmonica, my heart sings.'

Mickey brought the tree inside. Then he wrapped his harmonica in an old rag.

'You know, an instrument like that deserves a special case,' Minnie told him.

'I suppose it does,' Mickey said. 'Maybe someday it will have one.'

Mickey asked Minnie what time it was.

'Let's see,' Minnie replied, pulling a string out of her pocket. On the end hung a lovely old watch.

'I bet that would look real nice on a gold chain,' Mickey said.

Minnie took another look at her watch.

'Oh, my goodness! I'm late for work!' she exclaimed.

Minnie quickly put her watch away and headed for the door. But Mickey beat her outside. He and Pluto wanted to drop her off.

Pluto pulled up in front of Mortimer's Department Store. Minnie had made it to work just in time!

Minnie gave Mickey a quick kiss and then dashed inside.

Mickey turned to Pluto. 'Come on, fella, we have work to do!' Together, the pair hurried off.

Unfortunately, dropping Minnie off had made Mickey late for his own job at Crazy Pete's Christmas Tree Farm.

'Merry Christmas, Mr. Pete,' Mickey said when he arrived.

'I'll be merry when I've sold all those ten-footers!' Pete barked. 'Now get to work!'

The day was busier than Mickey had expected. It seemed that many people had waited till the last minute to buy their trees. Even better, the customers were so impressed with Mickey's help that he earned a lot of extra money.

'Hot dog!' Mickey exclaimed. 'Looks like we'll be able to get Minnie that chain for her watch after all!'

Nearby, Pete was trying to convince a poor family to buy an expensive Christmas tree.

'That's all I've got left,' Pete lied. 'You don't want these kids going without a tree now, do ya?'

Over on his side of the lot, Mickey heard Pete. He didn't think his boss was being fair. 'How about this smaller tree?' Mickey called out. 'I found it in the back!'

The children were delighted. 'It's perfect!'

'We'll take it,' their father said. 'Thank you! And Merry Christmas!'

After the family left, Pete was furious. 'I had them on the hook for a ten-foot tree!' he growled at Mickey. 'I'm taking what I would have made off that tree out of your pay!'

And with that, Pete snatched Mickey's money right out of his hand.

'Now get out of my sight!' Pete roared, tossing Mickey and Pluto headfirst into the snow. 'You're fired!'

Across town at Mortimer's, Minnie was busy wrapping Christmas gifts.

'I really want to get Mickey something special this year,' Minnie told her friend Daisy. 'But I can't do it without that Christmas bonus!'

Just then, the phone rang. It was Minnie's boss. He wanted to see her in his office. Minnie put down the gift she was wrapping and raced upstairs.

Minnie was sure she was about to get her Christmas bonus. But when she reached her boss's office, Mr. Mortimer handed her a gift instead.

'A fruitcake?' Minnie said, surprised. She tried to hide her disappointment. 'Thank you, sir.'

'No need to thank me,' Mr. Mortimer replied.

Minnie left his office. 'How am I ever going to get Mickey a present now?' she sighed sadly.

Meanwhile, Mickey sat in the park playing his harmonica. He had lost his job and his money. How could he pay for Minnie's present now?

Then the fire chief heard Mickey playing. The local firemen were putting on a concert to collect Christmas toys for orphans and they needed a harmonica player!

Mickey happily agreed to play for them.

Soon his music was delighting everyone. The listeners were so moved that they donated lots of toys!

'You and that harmonica make a great team,' the fire chief told Mickey when the concert was over.

'She's worth her weight in gold,' Mickey agreed.

His eyes lit up. 'That's it!' he shouted. 'Come on, Pluto! We still have time to get to the shop before it closes.'

The pair borrowed a snowboard and flew through the streets. They made it to the shop just as the shopkeeper was locking the door.

Mickey begged the shopkeeper to reopen the store but the owner just shook his head. He needed to get home to his family.

Mickey sat on the curb and played his harmonica sadly. Touched by Mickey's beautiful Christmas song, the shopkeeper changed his mind about closing his shop. He unlocked the door and let Mickey trade his harmonica for the gold chain in the window.

Later that night, Mickey and Minnie sat in front of the fire with Pluto and Figaro, preparing to exchange gifts. Mickey handed Minnie a beautifully wrapped box.

'I hope you like it!' he told her.

Minnie unwrapped her gift first. 'A chain for my watch!' she exclaimed. 'Oh Mickey, it's beautiful. I love it! But I traded in my watch to buy your gift...'

Mickey slowly unwrapped his gift.

'A case for my harmonica,' he said.

Mickey looked at Minnie. 'I traded my harmonica to get the chain for your watch,' he confessed.

'Oh, Mickey, I can't believe you gave up what means the most to you for me!' Minnie exclaimed.

'Minnie, don't you know you're all the music I'll ever need?' Mickey asked.

'Merry Christmas, Mickey!' Minnie said happily.

Mickey took her hand. 'Merry Christmas, Minnie.'

The couple smiled at each other. It was a Christmas they'd never forget!



MAKE A SNOW GLOBE

Making your own wintry snow globe is easier than you think!



YOU WILL NEED

- jar with screw top lid
- glitter

- small toy or Christmas decoration
- non-water-soluble glue



1. Fill your jar with water, screw on the lid and shake it to make sure it doesn't leak.
2. Remove the lid and dry it thoroughly.
3. Glue your toy or decorations to the inside of the lid and leave to dry completely.
4. Sprinkle glitter into the water and stir it around.
5. Screw the lid back on – make sure it's on tightly!
6. Shake your snow globe and watch the glitter snow fall!



TOP TIP!

If you can find glycerine in the baking aisle of a supermarket, it will help your glitter fall more slowly. Mix two parts water with one part glycerine before adding your glitter.

BELLE TO THE RESCUE



'Mrs Potts!' Belle called, as she walked into the kitchen. 'I found this bag of clothing sitting in the foyer.'

'The master asked me to get rid of his clothes,' Mrs Potts said with a sigh. 'They don't, er, fit him any more.'

'I'll say,' said Lumiere. 'Not to mention that none of the trousers have a hole for his tail!'

'Luckily, the peddler is coming today,' said Mrs Potts. 'He'll be happy to take them off our hands.'

Belle returned the bag to the foyer, then came back to the kitchen.

Just then, Chip appeared. 'Hi Belle!' he said. 'Would you like to play hide-and-seek with me?'

'I would love to,' said Belle. 'Why don't I count while you hide?'

'... ninety-eight, ninety-nine, one hundred. Ready or not, here I come!' called Belle.

Rat-a-tat-tat. She was interrupted by a knock on the door.

A peddler stood at the door, proudly displaying his goods. Belle looked at the shiny ice skates. 'You have so many lovely items,' she said. 'But we don't need anything today. However I do have this bag of clothing for you,' she told him.

The peddler's eyes lit up. 'You are too kind!' he exclaimed. 'You must take these in return.' He gave Belle the ice skates.



'Now what was I doing?' said Belle, as she watched the peddler leave. 'Oh, my goodness – I was looking for Chip!'

She searched among the books in the library.

She even peered inside the suits of armour in the great hall.

'Come out, come out, wherever you are!' Belle shouted in the ballroom. But her voice just echoed back at her. Chip was nowhere to be found.

'You win, Chip,' Belle called. 'Chip...?'

'May I be of assistance, Mademoiselle?' asked Lumiere.

'I can't find Chip anywhere,' Belle told him. 'I haven't seen him since the peddler – oh, no! He must have been hiding in the bag of clothes I gave away!'

'Come on, Lumiere,' she said. 'We have to find Chip before he's lost forever!'

Belle quickly pulled on her cape and boots. Then, she grabbed her new ice skates and put them over her arm, just in case.

Outside, Lumiere pointed to the tracks the peddler's wagon had left in the snow. 'It looks like he took a wrong turn.'

'That means he's on the castle grounds!' Belle cried. 'There's still time to catch up with him.'

Belle and Lumiere galloped through the snow on Belle's horse, Philippe.

Awooooo! Belle and Lumiere gasped. They knew that sound. It was a wolf! Spooked, Philippe reared up and stumbled off the road into a huge snowbank. Belle and Lumiere went flying!

Once Belle had caught her breath, she grabbed a nearby branch and hoisted herself out of the snow. Next, she rescued Lumiere. Belle pulled and pulled but couldn't budge Philippe. Then, she had an idea! Using her skates like spades, Belle dug out Philippe!

Belle walked up to the tree, grabbed a branch and began to climb, higher and higher. 'I see him up ahead by the lake!' Belle called out triumphantly.

They walked to the lake's edge. 'He's so far away!' Lumiere wailed.

Belle smiled. 'Or is he?' she said.

Belle led them all onto the frozen lake, hoping to go



straight across. But as soon as Philippe stepped onto the ice, there was a sharp crack!

'Philippe is too heavy!' cried Lumiere.

What were they going to do? Belle looked down and saw the answer.

She quickly strapped on her new skates and stepped onto the ice.

'Whoa!' Belle cried, as she tried to keep her balance. But after a moment, she was skating smoothly.

Belle's skates glided over the gleaming ice. The wind whipped through her hair as she sped across the lake, faster and faster.

With her eyes fixed on the peddler, Belle didn't notice a fallen tree until it was almost too late. Luckily, she swerved out of the way just in time!

Finally, Belle reached the other side. 'Monsieur!' she cried, out of breath. 'You took a wrong turn. But first, I think something very dear to me fell into the bag of clothes I gave you. A small teacup with a chip on its rim.'

'All that trouble for a teacup with a chip in it,' said the peddler, shaking his head.

'It's my favourite one!' said Belle. She opened the bag and there was Chip, cosy as could be.

'Great hiding spot, huh, Belle?' he whispered.

'The very best,' said Belle with a grin.



CHRISTMAS TRADITIONS

Christmas is a time for traditions with friends and family. Why not try something new this festive season that you can enjoy year after year?



1

Make a special hot chocolate and watch a Christmas film with your family. A different person could choose the film each year.



2

Choose two old toys you no longer play with and donate them to charity.

3

Decorate a gingerbread house to display in the lead up to Christmas Day.



4

Put on a Christmas concert for friends and family.

5

Start a Christmas scrapbook you can add to every year. You could include:

- photos of you and your family
- your favourite meal
- stories about fun things that happened over the festive period
- the presents you received
- what the weather was like



10

DECEMBER

A BIG,
BLUE CHRISTMAS

'Dad, wake up!' Nemo shouted early one morning as he swam back and forth across their anemone home.

'What is it, Nemo?' asked Marlin, waking in a hurry. 'Are you hurt? Is something wrong?'

'No, Dad,' the little clownfish answered. 'It's just that I have a terrific idea! It's almost Christmas. Could we have a holiday party?'

'Sounds like fun, Nemo,' Marlin said with a yawn. 'But let's wait until after breakfast to start planning.'

Right after breakfast, Nemo and Marlin made a list of friends to invite. It was a long list because they had friends all over the ocean. Marlin wondered how they'd let everyone know in time.

'I can ask Bruce, Chum and Anchor to help spread the word,' Nemo offered. 'No one can say no to those guys.'

Marlin thought it over. Nemo was right. No fish he knew wanted to get on a shark's bad side. 'Well, all right, son,' he said. 'But be careful.'

'I know, Dad,' Nemo said. 'See you later!' he called as he swam off.

Nemo swam as fast as he could to the old shipwreck where his shark friends hung out. 'Hey, Bruce! Guys!' Nemo said when he arrived.

'Check out what the tide washed in,' said Anchor.

'Why it's our little food, I mean, friend, Nemo,' Chum said.

'What brings you out this way, Nemo?' asked Bruce.

The little clownfish told them all about the Christmas party. The sharks were thrilled. They hadn't been invited to many parties. Then Nemo asked them to help tell everyone

about it. 'You can count on us,' Bruce said proudly.

'Thanks,' said Nemo. 'And, guys, we will be counting our guests, too, so remember...'

'Fish are friends, not food,' the four of them said together.

Nemo swam home as fast as he could. His father was swimming back and forth across their anemone nervously.

'We need to plan the menu,' Marlin muttered. 'And then there's cleaning and decorating and—'

'Stop right there, Dad,' said Nemo. 'We're going to need help. I'll be back later with more fins!'

Nemo had made some great friends when he had been captured and put in a tank in a dentist's office.

The whole Tank Gang had eventually escaped and were now living in the ocean. Nemo went to find them and ask for their help with the party.

When Nemo returned home that afternoon, two of his old pals from the Tank Gang were with him.

Deb was a blue-and-white humbug fish. She got to work on the food. But she insisted on keeping the dessert a surprise.

Jacques was a cleaner shrimp. He started to work doing what he did best – cleaning. Soon the anemone was so clean it sparkled.

'It's too bad Flo couldn't be here,' said Deb sadly. 'She does like a party.'

Nemo and Marlin winked at each other. They knew that Flo was really only Deb's reflection in the tank glass.

Next Nemo swam off to find their friend Dory, the regal blue tang fish.

'Do I know you?' Dory asked when Nemo finally found her. Nemo smiled. Dory was the most forgetful fish he knew. All of a sudden, Dory hugged him and said, 'Nemo! I've missed you!'

'Would you like to help us decorate for a party?' said Nemo.

'I love parties,' said Dory. 'At least I think I love parties. I can't really remember if I've ever been to one.'

That afternoon, Dory, Marlin and Nemo worked hard putting up all the decorations. They hung streamers and wreaths and decorated a conch shell Christmas tree.

Meanwhile, the sharks were busy inviting all the guests. Finally, just the sea turtles were left. The three sharks took a ride on the East Australian Current to catch up with them.

56

57



seawater punch. Everyone was gathered around the conch shell Christmas tree having a great time.

'Time to open presents!' announced Marlin. He swam over to the conch tree.

Dory swam around the other guests muttering, 'Where is that present I brought? Wait, did I bring a present? Whose birthday is it anyway?'

All around Nemo, his friends were opening presents and thanking each other. But Nemo was most excited about watching Bubbles open the gift he'd gotten for him. The yellow tang fish was another one of his old friends from the tank at the dentist's office.

'Open it, Bubbles, open it!' Nemo urged.

Inside, Bubbles found a brand-new treasure chest. When he opened the top, a cloud of bubbles came out.

Bubbles giggled. 'How I've missed my bubbles! Thank you, Nemo.'

The little treasure chest was one of the few things any of them missed from their days living in the tank. Nemo had found it on the ocean floor during a trip with his father. He'd known that it was the perfect gift for Bubbles.

After all the presents were opened it was time for some live music.

'C'mon, guys,' Nemo whispered to Pearl, Sheldon and Tad. 'Time to get everyone singing and dancing.'

And they did! The guests all turned to watch as they started to play *We Wish You a Merry Fishmas*. Mr. Ray, Nemo's teacher, sang along loudly. Even the sharks flipped their fins to the beat.

The party really got swinging as the band played more Christmas carols. In between songs, Deb swam over to Nemo. 'Great party,' Deb said. 'Your dad is such a nice guy. Isn't it wonderful being able to travel the big wide ocean to visit friends?'

'You bet, Deb!' Nemo answered. He slapped fins with his friend. 'Fish aren't meant to live in a tank.'

It was getting late and soon the guests began to swim home, calling out 'Merry Christmas' and 'Happy New Year' as they left.

When the last of the guests had gone, Nemo turned to his father and smiled. 'Dad, this was the best Christmas ever.'

'You bet it was,' said Marlin. 'We sure are lucky to have so many good friends. But the best gift of all is spending Christmas with you.' And he gave his son a big hug.

'Hey, shark dudes,' Crush said. 'What's happening?'

'Nemo and Marlin asked us to invite you to a holiday party back at their anemone,' Bruce said.

'Awesome,' said Crush. 'I love to party!'

Squirt popped out from under Crush's back flipper. 'Hey, dudes, can I come, too?'

'Of course,' said Chum. 'Nemo wants all his foods, I mean, friends, there.'

'Cool!' said Squirt.

Back at the anemone, there was only one more detail left to plan. A good party needed great music. That gave Nemo an idea.

Nemo went to see his friends Tad the butterfly fish, Sheldon the sea horse and Pearl the squid.

'Hi, Nemo,' said Sheldon.

'Hi, guys,' Nemo said. 'Guess what? My dad and I are having a holiday party. But we need a band. I thought we could play!'

'Cool,' said Pearl. 'I've been humming *Jingle Shells* all day!'

'Let's practise right now,' added Tad. He grabbed some kelp and started to strum.

Pearl joined in on the sand dollar tambourines. Sheldon kept the beat on the clams.

Then Nemo joined in on the conch shell on the second verse. They practised all afternoon.

'We'll be great!' Nemo said when they finished. They sounded really good. 'See you at the party!'

Finally, the night of the party arrived! Wearing colourful Christmas sea garlands, Marlin and Nemo greeted their guests. Seeing all of his friends together filled Nemo with holiday cheer.

'Welcome to our party,' Marlin said to Crush and Squirt.

'Merry Christmas!' Nemo said to Dory and the sharks.

'Thanks,' said Dory as she swam past. 'I just ran into these guys and they told me there was a party over here tonight. Hey, these decorations look amazing. Who did them?'

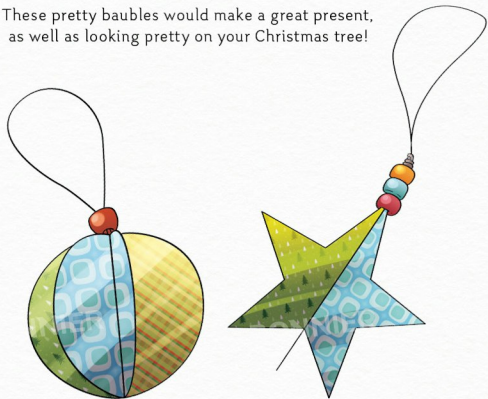
'Dory, you helped me decorate for the party,' Nemo said.

'I did?' asked Dory. 'Wow, I'm good.'

Before long, the party was filled with friends from near and far. Deb's seaweed-and-kelp cake was delicious. There was even a ginger kelp fish decoration on top of the cake. Everyone loved that best of all. The guests washed their treats down with salty

MAKE A BAUBLE

These pretty baubles would make a great present, as well as looking pretty on your Christmas tree!



YOU WILL NEED

- thin coloured card or wrapping paper
- compass
- pencil
- scissors

- glue
- thread
- coloured sequins or beads

60



1. Use a compass to draw eight circles all the same size on different coloured card or wrapping paper. If you use wrapping paper, you might want to stick it to some thin card first so your bauble is more sturdy.
2. Fold each circle in half.
3. Glue a long piece of thread to the back of one of the circles, close to the fold. You'll use this to hang up your bauble.
4. Glue two circles together so two halves are back-to-back, covering the thread.
5. Continue gluing the circles together by their halves until you have a complete bauble.
6. Thread a couple of sequins or beads onto the thread and tie a knot to keep them in place.
7. Make a loop with the thread and tie in place. Your bauble is ready to hang!

TOP TIP!

Cut star shapes from card to make a star bauble!

61



THE WONDERFUL WINTER TREE

Bambi awoke one morning to find the whole world covered in a soft white blanket.

'What is it, Mother?' Bambi asked as he gazed around in wonder.

'This is snow,' replied his mother. 'It means winter is upon us.'

'Snow!' said Bambi. He took a cautious step... and then another... and another. He felt the icy crystals crunch under his hooves. He looked back at the tiny tracks he had made. 'I like snow!'

'Snow is pretty to look at,' his mother told him, 'but it makes winter hard for all the animals.'

Bambi was about to ask her why winter was harder than other seasons. But just then, his friend Thumper came hopping over.

'Hiya, Bambi!' said the bunny. 'Come on! Let's go sliding!' He led Bambi to the pond, which was frozen solid.

Thumper slapped at the ice with his foot. 'Come on! It's all right,' he told Bambi. 'See? The water's stiff!'



Bambi saw his friend, Flower the skunk. 'You want to come sliding?' Bambi called, running over. 'Thumper says the water's stiff.'

But Flower shook his head. 'No, thanks. I'm off to my den. I'm going to sleep through the winter.' He yawned.

'Goodbye, Bambi,' he said.

'Bye, Flower,' said Bambi. Then he spied another friend, a squirrel, scurrying up an oak tree.

'The pond is stiff, Squirrel,' called Bambi. 'Want to come sliding with me?'

'Thanks,' replied the squirrel as he ducked into a hollow in the tree, 'but I have to store nuts for the long winter.' He showed Bambi the pile he had already collected. 'No sliding for me today.'

So Bambi headed back to Thumper and the ice-covered pond by himself.

By that time, Thumper was sliding across the ice with some of his sisters. They made it look so easy. But when Bambi stepped on the ice, he lost his balance right away. His hooves went sliding in four different directions!

'Kind of wobbly, aren't ya,' said Thumper. He laughed. 'Come on, Bambi. You can do it!'

But Bambi wasn't so sure. Sliding across the stiff water wasn't quite as much fun for deer, it seemed, as it was for rabbits. And it also made him hungry. He said goodbye to the bunnies and went back to find his mother.

'Mother, I'm hungry,' Bambi told her.

In the spring, summer and autumn they had been able to find food almost anywhere they looked. But now that it was winter, Bambi could see that finding food wasn't so easy.

There were no leaves on the trees and the grass was covered with snow and ice. The snow was so cold that when he poked through it, Bambi thought his nose might freeze. At last Bambi's mother uncovered a small patch of grass. Bambi nibbled it eagerly.

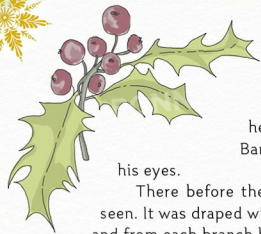
Then Bambi curled up with his mother for a nap. The ground was hard and cold and the wind was chilly. Bambi was grateful to have his mother there to keep him warm.

'Is this why the birds fly south and why our other friends sleep through the winter?' Bambi asked her.

His mother nodded and snuggled even closer. 'But don't worry, Bambi,' she told him. 'Winter doesn't last forever.'

By the end of December, it seemed like there was nothing left in the forest but bitter bark for Bambi to eat. The days grew short and the nights grew long, and throughout them Bambi's stomach rumbled. And





then one day, something truly amazing happened.

Thumper was the first to see it. 'Hey, Bambi!' he hollered. 'Would you look at that tree!' Bambi followed Thumper's paw. He couldn't believe

his eyes.

There before them was a tall pine tree unlike Bambi had ever seen. It was draped with strings of bright berries and yummy popcorn and from each branch hung a ripe, juicy apple. But the most wonderful thing to Bambi was the gold star at the very top.

'Mother!' exclaimed Bambi. 'Look what Thumper found!'

Cautiously, his mother drew closer. 'It can't be...' she whispered. 'It seems almost too good to be true.'

'What is it, Mother?' Bambi asked her.

'The most beautiful tree in the world,' she answered. She smiled down at Bambi. 'What a special gift to have on your first Christmas.'

'Who left it, Mother?' Bambi asked.

'I don't know,' she replied.

'Maybe someone who loves animals,' Thumper said, hopping up and down.

'This is the best gift ever.' He sniffed one of the apples hanging low to the ground.

'Can we share this food with every one of our friends, Mother?' Bambi asked.

'Yeah and with my sisters, too?' Thumper chimed in.

'I don't see why not,' Bambi's mother said. 'Christmas is a time to share what we have with those we love.'

Bambi and Thumper danced happily around the tree. 'Look at all the popcorn and berries!' Thumper cried. 'And look at that star at the tippy top, too!'

Bambi stopped prancing. He looked up at the golden star at the top of the tree. Then he looked up at the sky above him. The sun was just beginning to go down. He knew that very soon, there would be a star twinkling in the sky just like the one at the top of the tree. A gentle hush fell over the clearing.

He danced back over to his mother and took a big bite out of one of the juicy green apples. *Mmm!* he thought. Nothing had ever tasted so good!

Gazing up at the star and at the wonderful winter tree, Bambi could feel a happy, warm glow swelling inside him. There was enough food on the tree to feed all the animals who were hungry. *What a magical gift,* thought Bambi.

Winter was long and hard... and yet wonderful, after all.



DESIGN YOUR OWN

WRAPPING PAPER

Making your own wrapping paper is easy and fun! It's a great way to add a lovely personal touch to presents for family and friends.



YOU WILL NEED

- old sheet
- coloured paper
- christmas-shaped cookie cutters
- pencil
- coloured paints
- paintbrush
- felt-tip pens

1. Cover a table with an old sheet as this could get a little messy!
2. Lay out your coloured paper in front of you.
3. Place a cookie cutter onto the paper and carefully trace around it with your pencil.
4. Repeat the pattern all over your paper – or you could use lots of different shapes!
5. Once you are happy with the design, use your paints to colour in each shape.
6. Leave the paint to dry completely and then you can add extra detail with felt-tip pens.
7. When you are happy with your paper, you can use it to wrap up all your Christmas presents!

DESIGN IDEAS

- A Christmas tree covered in lots of colourful baubles
- A frosty snowman with a carrot nose
- Festive holly with bright red berries
- Presents wrapped in ribbon
- Glittery snowflakes



LADY'S CHRISTMAS SURPRISE

It was the week before Christmas. Tramp and the puppies gathered beneath Jim and Darling's brightly decorated tree.

'You all know what holiday is coming up, right?' Tramp asked, his eyes twinkling.

'Of course, Dad,' Scamp said. He was excited. Christmas was the puppies' favourite holiday. Lots of guests stopped by to wish Jim and Darling a happy holiday.

But the best part was the presents. The puppies got to help choose a special gift for each of their parents. They loved being trusted with two such important surprises.

'Do any of you kids know what your mother would like for Christmas?' Tramp asked.



'How about a steak from Tony's Restaurant?' Annette said.

Tramp shook his head. 'We can do better than that.'

'We need to give her something special,' said Colette, 'to show how much we love her.'

'Why don't you ask her what she'd like?' said Scamp, his voice muffled. He was chewing on a bow.

'We want to surprise her,' Tramp reminded his son. He nudged him away from the presents. 'That's the fun of Christmas.'

'Maybe we'll find something on our walk today,' Annette said. Tramp thought that was a good idea. While Lady was taking a nap, he took the kids into town to look for the perfect present.

The village bustled with shoppers, their carriage wheels carving deep ruts in the snowy road.

The dogs rambled up and down the avenue, looking in all the shop windows. They saw jumpers, cushions, brush and comb sets, bowls and collars. But Tramp knew that none of these things was the perfect gift for Lady. He wanted to find her something special. Something that she would enjoy and that no other dog would have.

Tramp and the puppies kept looking into shop windows and they peeked at the packages people carried. All they needed was one really good idea.

When the sun started to sink in the sky, Tramp turned to the puppies and said, 'We'd better head home now. Maybe we'll find something tomorrow.'

As they crossed the road, Tramp noticed something sparkling in the snow. It was much brighter than an icicle. He turned it over with his paw.

'Holy hambones!' he cried. It was a gold and emerald necklace!

'What a bunch of rocks!' exclaimed Scamp.

'What a good stroke of luck!' remarked Annette.

'Just the right size for Mother!' added Colette.

Tramp smiled and then scooped up the necklace with his mouth. It seemed they'd found the perfect gift. He knew it would look beautiful on Lady.



Suddenly, Tramp dropped the necklace into the snow. It sparkled in the icy crystals. He frowned.

'What's the matter?' Scamp asked.

'This isn't right,' Tramp muttered. Then he looked at his children. 'Sorry, kids, but we have to return the necklace. It's not ours to take.'

'But where would we go to return it?' Colette asked.

'Yeah, it was just here in the snow,' Annette said. 'How would we even find the owner?'

'I say finders keepers!' Scamp cried.

'Come on now, kids,' Tramp said. 'We can take it to the police. They'll know who to return it to.'

With the puppies following, he bounded down the block to the station.

Inside, officers hurried around taking phone calls and writing reports.

'Stay close, kids,' Tramp whispered to the puppies. 'I don't want to lose you in the crowd.'

Tramp trotted up to the front desk, the puppies following behind. He dropped the necklace in front of the policeman in charge.

'What's this?' the officer said as he looked at the dog and then back to the necklace on the desk. He picked up the necklace and looked at the sparkling jewels.

Tramp panted and wagged his tail. The puppies stood eagerly beside him. *Yip! Yip!*

'You found it?' the officer asked.

Tramp nodded.

'Good dog!' he exclaimed.

The policeman took the necklace and began filling out his report while Tramp and the puppies watched.

At that moment, a woman rushed into the station. 'Help!' she cried. 'My



necklace is gone! I'm offering a reward for its return.'

The policeman smiled at the woman. Then he held out the necklace. 'Is this yours?' he asked. He pointed to Tramp. 'This dog found it on the street and brought it here.'

The woman gasped. 'Thank you,' she said. She scratched Tramp behind his ear. 'How can I repay you?'

'Woof!' Tramp looked at the necklace. 'A new collar,' she said. 'That's it!'

She took Tramp and the puppies to the shop next door. Tramp walked up to the counter and picked up a gold collar with green stones that looked just like the woman's necklace.

'I'll take that one,' the woman told the shopkeeper.

On Christmas morning Lady tore open the gift. 'You shouldn't have!' Her eyes sparkled like the green stones.

When Darling fastened the collar around Lady's neck, she pranced around the room as if she were a show dog.

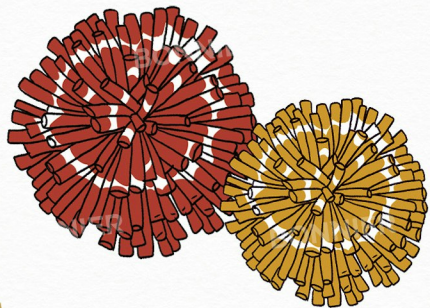
'I love my new collar,' Lady said. 'What a wonderful Christmas surprise! But I love my family even more.' She nuzzled Tramp and each of the puppies.

'Merry Christmas, Mother,' said the puppies. And it was a very merry Christmas, indeed.



MAKE A POMPOM

Make colourful fluffy pompoms of all shapes and sizes!
You could use extra wool and hang them on your Christmas tree.

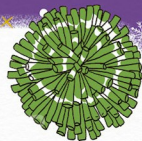


ASK AN
ADULT
FOR HELP

YOU WILL NEED

- cardboard
- pencil

- scissors
- wool



1. Draw two identical circles on to the cardboard – you could trace around a mug or a glass. Carefully cut out the circles.
2. Draw two smaller circles in the middle of each piece – you could trace around a coin or bottle lid. Carefully cut a slit from the outside and cut out the small circle to form two cardboard rings.
3. Holding the two rings together, start wrapping the wool around until the whole ring is covered. Wrap it as many times as you can, you want more than one layer of wool so your pom-pom is big and fluffy!
4. Carefully cut the wool all the way around the outer edge of the circle. You might want to use small sharp scissors for this.
5. Slightly separate the two pieces of card. Tie a piece of wool between the rings – knot it nice and tightly to hold your pom-pom together.
6. Pull off the two card rings and puff up the pom-pom. If you want, you can carefully trim the edges of the pom-pom to make it a little neater and help it to fluff up.

TOP
TIP!

Make pom-poms in different sizes and colours
and use them to decorate your wrapped presents.



THE PUPPIES' MESSY CHRISTMAS



One winter evening, Pongo and Perdita were watching TV with their puppies when a rustling noise in the hallway caught their attention. The puppies jumped off their chairs and ran to the doorway.

They all watched silently as Roger and Nanny hauled a huge tree into the parlour. It was fresh and green and made the room smell like a pine forest.

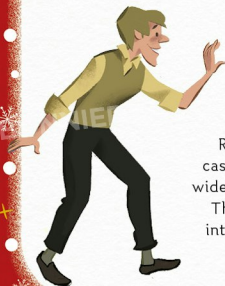
'What's going on?' Rolly asked, turning to look at his mother. 'Don't worry, dear,' said Perdita. 'It's Christmas Eve. This is just the beginning!' 'Chris-mess?' Lucky asked. 'It does look like a mess.' He wagged his tail.

The parlour floor was covered with pine needles, boxes of ornaments, tinsel garlands and strings of small lights.

Anita was waiting in the parlour to help Roger and Nanny. The puppies looked on in awe as their human pets began acting very strangely. Roger hung shiny coloured globes on the branches. Anita was winding a garland around the tree.

When the tree was finished and the room tidied, Roger flipped a switch. The lights and shiny ornaments cast a magical glow about the room. The puppies looked wide-eyed at the tree.

That night, when Pongo and Perdita tucked the puppies into their basket, they told them all about Christmas.



'It's a time when people show their families and friends how much they care for them,' Pongo said. He explained how humans sent cards, baked cookies and fruitcakes and sang festive carols.

'It may sound strange but you'll grow to love the holiday season,' Perdita said. She nuzzled Patch, who let out a yawn.

'Especially the beef bones left over from dinner,' Pongo added.

'Bones?' Patch said, perking up. His father smiled.

'And that's not all,' Perdita continued. 'On Christmas Eve, after everyone's in bed, people sneak presents under the tree.'

'Presents?' all the puppies said at once.

'What kind of presents?' Patch asked. 'Can you wish for them?'

'I'd wish for a new bed,' Lucky said as he climbed into the basket he shared with his brothers and sisters.

'Why do people put presents under the tree?' Pepper asked.

'Christmas is about giving,' Pongo told the puppies. 'People give presents to their friends and family to show how much they love them.'

'I wonder if we will get any presents?' said Rolly.

'Maybe,' Perdita replied. 'Anita gave me a new collar last year.'

'And I got a red ball,' said Pongo.

'I hope someone loves us,' said Penny.

'You are all loved, whether or not there are presents under the tree,' Perdita said. 'Now time for bed. Tomorrow is a big day.'

On Christmas morning, the puppies woke at dawn. They crept into the parlour. Sure enough, there were piles of brightly wrapped packages under the tree.

'We are loved!' Freckles cried.

The puppies dived into the pile of presents. They tossed the packages around and ripped and tore at the coloured paper. 'Christmas is fun!' Rolly exclaimed as he shook some wrapping paper out of his mouth.

Lucky pulled open a box. 'Perfume?' he said and wrinkled





his nose.

Penny dragged a spotted necktie out of some tissue paper.

'What do I need with more spots?'

Freckles held up a lace handkerchief. 'What is this for?' he asked.

Just then, they heard Roger's and Anita's voices in the hallway. The puppies looked at each other in alarm.

'Let's get out of here!' Rolly said. The puppies scampered around the room, hiding behind the sofa, under the chairs and in the folds of the curtains.

The puppies trembled when they heard Roger's footsteps. He stopped in the doorway. 'What on earth?' he said.

Anita walked up beside him. 'Oh, dear!' she cried.

'Perdita, Pongo,' Roger called out. 'Where are you?'

The puppies heard the click of their parents' claws on the wooden floor as they scurried toward the parlour.

When they came into the room, Pongo said, 'Woof!'

And Perdita repeated, 'Woof!'

The puppies looked at each other uncertainly. 'We're in for it now,' Lucky whispered.

Then they heard something very strange. Anita started to laugh. Roger said, with a chuckle, 'Looks like we had some help opening our gifts.'

'Wasn't that kind of the puppies!' Nanny said as she walked into the room and saw the mess of paper and ribbon.

'I wonder where they've gone off to,' Roger said with a twinkle in his eye. 'Here, pups!'

'There are still so many boxes to unwrap,' Anita said, shaking her head. 'I do wish they'd come and help.'

The puppies slowly crept out from their hiding places and gathered around the tree.

Roger pointed to the packages. 'Go for it, boys and girls!'

Yip! Yip! The puppies attacked the presents, tearing



into the bright wrappings and the tangled ribbons.

When the puppies grew tired of rolling around in the wrapping paper, Anita brought out a large basket.

'Sorry we didn't have time to wrap these,' she said. 'But then,' she smiled, 'maybe you've done enough work for today.'

She handed each puppy a squeaky toy.

From the bottom of the basket she pulled out two Christmas sweaters for Pongo and Perdita.

'Anita knitted them herself,' said Roger with pride.

That evening, after Christmas dinner was over, the puppies were still full of energy. They weren't ready to go to bed.

'We like Christmas!' said Pepper.

'We like our toys!' said Rolly.

'We like wrapping paper!' said Patch.

'But remember what we told you about Christmas?' Perdita asked. She nudged her children towards their basket. 'It's a time for giving.'

'It's also about forgiving,' Pongo said gently. 'You were lucky that Roger and Anita weren't upset that you unwrapped their presents.'

The puppies heads drooped a little.

'We're lucky to have two wonderful humans,' Perdita said softly. 'That is the best present of all.'

The puppies raised their eyes to their mother hopefully.

'We are loved,' Penny said. She smiled.

'You are all, each and every one of you, loved,' Perdita assured her children.

'And that's what Christmas is really all about,'

Pongo said as the puppies drifted off to sleep.



MAKE A CHRISTMAS WREATH

Hang this wreath on your front door to welcome friends and family!



ASK AN
ADULT
FOR HELP

YOU WILL NEED

- clothes pegs
- cardboard box
- green paint
- paintbrush
- wire
- coloured beads
- coloured ribbon



1. Pin the clothes pegs around the edge of an old cardboard box.
2. Carefully paint each peg green and leave to dry.
3. Ask an adult to shape the wire into a circle but leave the ends open.
4. Thread a coloured bead onto the wire and then clip on a peg. Repeat this process until the wire is completely covered.
5. Ask an adult to twist together the ends of the wire to hold everything in place.
6. Tie the ribbon into a bow at the top of the wreath to cover the ends of the wire. Don't forget to add a loop to hang up your wreath!



TOP
TIP!

Experiment with different paint colours to make a really unique wreath!

DONALD'S
CHRISTMAS TREE

It was the day before Christmas. Donald had baked cookies and wrapped gifts. Now all he needed was a Christmas tree.

Donald put on his coat and cap and grabbed his axe. 'Come on, Pluto,' he said. 'We're going to find our tree.'

Pluto and Donald went deep into the woods. Donald looked left. He looked right. Then he saw it – the perfect tree. Donald picked up his axe and went to work.

'TIMBER!' Donald cried as the tree toppled over and landed in the snow.

Inside the tree, two chipmunks named Chip and Dale held on for dear life. They lived in the tree Donald had chosen!

'Come on, Pluto,' called Donald. 'Let's take our tree home.'

Donald Duck went home through the woods, dragging the tree behind him. At home, he set up the tree. He hung ornaments on the branches and strung tinsel all over.

'There!' Donald said when the job was done. 'Doesn't that look fine! Now I just need the gifts. You stay here, Pluto. I'll be right back.'

As soon as Donald was out of sight, Chip and Dale left their hiding place. They danced on the branches until the needles quivered. They made faces at themselves in the shiny coloured balls, tugged on the tinsel, twisted the lights and laughed until their little sides shook.

'Grrr,' growled Pluto disapprovingly. But Chip and Dale did not care. Chip just picked off a shiny ball and threw it at Pluto!



Pluto jumped and barely caught it in his teeth.

At that moment, Donald came back into the room. 'Pluto!' he cried. 'Bad dog!' He thought Pluto had been snatching balls from the tree.

'Now be good,' said Donald, 'while I bring in the rest of the presents.'

No sooner was Donald out of sight than Chip and Dale appeared again. *Plunk!* Chip's head went through a coloured ball. Dale laughed and laughed at the funny sight. But Pluto did not think it was funny at all. They were going to spoil Donald's tree!

Pluto growled but the naughty chipmunks did not stop. He knew he had to do something. Pluto got ready to jump.

'Pluto!' cried Donald from the doorway. 'What is the matter with you? If you can't behave, you'll have to go out to your doghouse for the rest of Christmas Eve.'

Just then, up in the treetop, Chip grew tired of wearing his round golden mask. He pulled off the ball and let it drop.

Crash!

'What was that?' cried Donald, looking at the tree.

Dale began to play with the coloured lights, twisting them so they turned off and on. Donald peered among the branches until he spied Chip and Dale.

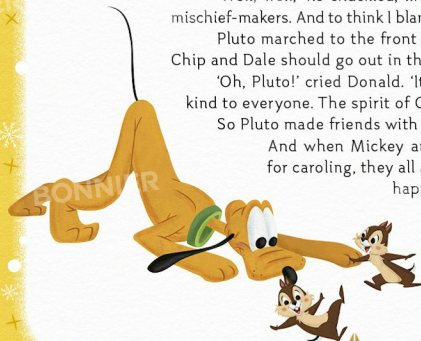
'Well, well,' he chuckled, lifting them down. 'So you're the mischief-makers. And to think I blamed poor Pluto. I'm sorry, Pluto.'

Pluto marched to the front door and held it open. He felt Chip and Dale should go out in the snow.

'Oh, Pluto!' cried Donald. 'It's Christmas Eve. We must be kind to everyone. The spirit of Christmas is love, you know.'

So Pluto made friends with Chip and Dale.

And when Mickey and Minnie came to the house for caroling, they all agreed that this was by far the happiest Christmas Eve they had ever had.



MAKE A MINI CHRISTMAS TREE

This mini Christmas tree is perfect to display in your bedroom!



YOU WILL NEED

- a pencil
- thin cardboard
- scissors
- paint
- a paintbrush
- glue
- cotton wool
- sequins, buttons or beads

82



1. On the cardboard, draw a pyramid with a curved base. Draw a thin flap down one of the pyramid's straight sides and then cut out the shape.
2. Paint one side of the shape green and leave to dry completely.
3. Add glue onto the flap then roll up the cone and glue in place. You might need to hold the cone together for a couple of minutes so the glue can start to set.
4. Rip off small pieces of cotton wool and, starting from the top, glue a spiral of cotton wool around the tree to look like tinsel.
5. Glue on sequins, buttons or beads to add baubles to your tree!



TOP TIP!

Use red, black and white paint to make a Father Christmas decoration!



83

15

DECEMBER

NIGHT
LIGHTS

'I see one! I see one! Pull over, Mr. Fredricksen!' Russell said.

Carl swerved the station wagon to the side of the road.

'Is it a squirrel?' asked Dug as he jumped out of the car.

'Even better!' said Russell. 'According to the *Wilderness Explorer Guide to Flora and Fauna*, it's a Japanese morning glory.'

'Well, I'll be,' said Carl.

They were headed to Sylvan State Park to earn Russell's Better Botanist Badge – his first as a Senior Wilderness Explorer. All he had to do was find and identify ten varieties of wildflower.

'Only nine more to go,' he said as he took a photo of the flower.

Carl looked up at the sky. 'We'd better get moving then. We've got a long drive ahead of us. The wilderness must be explored!'

'Cacaw! Cacaw!' Russell said.

'Ruff!' said Dug.

As they drove, Russell looked at the flowers in his field guide.

'Wow, this book has everything in it,' he said. 'It has sunflowers. It has butterfly milkweed. It has purple wisteria.'

'Does it have a ghost crocus?' asked Carl with a sly smile.

'A what?' asked Russell.

'A ghost crocus,' said Carl. 'It's a legendary flower that blooms only at night. Pale as the moon, glows in the dark, with six silver petals and stars on its stamens. Brave explorers have looked for it for centuries. Most people don't

think it exists, but Ellie swore she saw one once at the very park we're going to.'

'Wow!' said Russell. Then he frowned. 'I don't see it in the field guide.'

'Like I said, most people don't think it exists,' said Carl.

The drive was a long one, so they played I spy to pass the time. 'I spy something big and blue!' said Russell.

'I spy something feathery and brown!' said Carl.

'I spy somethi—SQUIRREL!' said Dug.

When they reached the park, it was already mid-morning. It took a while to find their campsite and to set up their tents. By the time they were ready to hike, it was already midday.

'I spy something tall and yellow,' said Carl.

'I spy something small and orange!' said Russell.

'I spy something grey and dark grey and medium grey!' said Dug.

'I spy something... stinky!'

By the time the sun was setting, they had found ten varieties of wildflower! But Russell couldn't stop thinking about the ghost crocus.

'Please, Mr. Fredricksen,' said Russell as they walked back to the campsite, 'can we look for a ghost crocus?'

'Sorry,' said Carl. 'It's getting late. We have to get back to camp before dark.'

That night, they sang around the campfire, told ghost stories and looked at the constellations.

'All right, it's getting very late. It's time for bed,' Carl said.

Carl opened his tent. He had forgotten all about the ghost crocus.

But Russell hadn't. He couldn't sleep knowing there was another flower he could find and identify. Hiking at night might be dangerous for a Junior Wilderness Explorer, but Russell was a Senior Wilderness Explorer. He knew he could handle it!

'Let's go, Dug,' he whispered. 'We're gonna go fetch something.'

'I love fetching,' said Dug.

The woods were a lot darker than Russell had expected. Maybe Mr. Fredricksen was right. It was very late.



84

85



But then he spotted a soft glow. It seemed to be coming from the back of a cave.

'I spy something pale and glowing,' he said. What he didn't see was the steep drop – until it was too late! He tumbled down into the mouth of the cave.

'Oh, no! Are you okay?' said Dug. Dug didn't hear a response from the cave, so he ran back to the campsite.

Carl awoke to a wet tongue licking his face.

'Master! Master! We were out in the dark looking for the ghost flower and then Russell fell into the cave!'

'What?' cried Carl. 'Quick! Lead me to him!'

Down in the cave, everything was dark. At first, Russell felt alone and afraid. But then he remembered: he was a Senior Wilderness Explorer. 'I can handle this!' he said to himself.

He stood up and saw a glimmer of light. It was coming from around the corner. It looked like moonlight. Was it a way out?

'Russell!' someone cried. It was Carl. He had tied a rope to a tree and was lowering himself down into the cave.

'Look!' cried Dug happily. 'I have fetched my master and brought him back!'

'I'm sorry, Russell,' said Carl. 'I shouldn't have told you that story about the ghost crocus. Honestly, I never believed it myself. Ellie always had a great imagination.'

'Well, I found something anyway,' said Russell with a sly smile.

'Well, I'll be,' said Carl.

Carl, Russell and Dug all looked at the ghost crocus with wonder.

The next morning, Russell, Dug and Carl packed up their things and headed back home.

'The Wilderness Explorers are going to be so excited I found all the wildflowers plus one!' Russell chattered away in the back seat.

'Thank you, Ellie,' Carl whispered with a smile.

NATURE EXPLORER

Russell had to find and photograph ten wildflowers to achieve his Better Botanist Badge. How many of the below can you spot?



- Holly
- Mistletoe
- Poinsettia
- Ivy
- Robin
- Goldfinch
- Blackbird
- Nesting ducks
- Grey squirrel
- Fox

Once you've spotted them all you could make yourself a Nature Explorer badge!

TOP TIP!

Don't forget to check Christmas decorations to help spot the plants!

PLAY

CHRISTMAS BINGO

Make these bingo cards to play with your friends and family over Christmas!



YOU WILL NEED

- paper
- pencil
- ruler

- felt-tip pens
- bowl or hat
- buttons or small sweets



1. Use a ruler to draw a grid on your paper four squares across and four squares down. Make as many grids as players.
2. On squares of paper, write down 24 Christmas-themed items that will fill your bingo cards. As well as objects, you could include Christmas films, festive songs, places special to you or festive activities.
3. Write one of your chosen items in each of the squares on your bingo cards – make sure no two cards are exactly the same!
4. Choose someone to be bingo caller. Put all the squares of paper into a bowl or hat and have the caller pull out one square at a time and read it out loud.
5. If you have that item on your bingo card, cover it with a button or small sweet.
6. Whoever covers four items in a row first – either horizontally, vertically or diagonally – shouts out, BINGO! and is the winner.

TOP TIP!

Instead of writing items on your card, you could draw Christmas objects for a more colourful bingo card!



CHRISTMAS FOR EVERYONE



On Christmas Eve, a brave fox named Robin Hood and his bear friend Little John were roasting a goose and some chestnuts over an open fire.

'A true feast!' said Friar Tuck, a badger, when he saw the goose.

'We did our best,' said Little John. 'It wasn't easy to get a bird on Christmas Eve. But good ol' Rob knows where to find things.'

Robin Hood laughed. 'Johnny, you give me too much credit. The goose was a Christmas gift from the Sheriff of Nottingham. He won't miss one little bird. You should see the spread he's got over there.'

Friar Tuck shook his head. 'Doesn't seem right. That old Sheriff gets greedier by the day. By the hour!'

Robin Hood thought about what Friar Tuck had said. When they sat down to dinner with Toby Turtle, Robin noticed everyone looked a little down.

'Something's not right,' said Toby Turtle. Robin Hood nodded. He knew Toby was right, but he couldn't figure out what the problem was either. 'The goose tastes great,' Toby said. 'It's just that...'

'I know what it is, Robin,' Little John said. He looked sad. 'We took the day off to get ready for Christmas. The only thing we stole was—'

'The goose!' Robin Hood cried. He couldn't believe he hadn't thought of all the poor people of Nottingham who didn't have anything to eat this Christmas.

'The poor people of Nottingham don't have anything to eat?' Friar Tuck asked. He felt terrible. All day, he'd gone around to the poorest families handing out small purses full of coins gathered from the collection plate. He hadn't thought to bring a Christmas feast to anyone. A single tear rolled down his cheek.

'A Christmas feast is an important part of the festive season,' said Robin. 'And I think I know where we can find one at this late hour.'

Little John smiled. 'Who deserves a feast the least?' he crowed. He knew exactly what Robin was thinking.

'The Sheriff of Nottingham!' Toby said.

The friends set off through the forest on their sleigh. They were on their way to the sheriff's house. They knew he would have plenty of food to spare.

When they reached the sheriff's home, they peered through the frosted window. Robin gasped at the sight before them.

A Yule log blazed on the hearth. The tree twinkled with candles and gifts were everywhere. Steam rose from the large dining table.

'Look at all those gifts, all that food. I can think of a dozen families who would be grateful for just one item from that pile,' Robin Hood said to Little John. 'I'll go to the front door and distract the sheriff. Johnny, you take the men inside, bring the feast and presents out through the kitchen. Then load up the sleigh.'

Robin disguised himself as a blind beggar and rapped on the sheriff's door. When the sheriff opened the door, Robin said, 'Alms for a poor blind man on this wintry eve?'

'Oh, you beggars! Can't you give it a rest?' the sheriff said. 'It's Christmas Eve and I am trying to eat my dinner in peace.'

The sheriff went to close the door but Robin held it open. 'All the more reason to spare something, kind sir,' Robin said.

'Now wait just a minute there,' the sheriff said. 'Haven't I seen that outfit somewhere before?'

Robin shook his head, but the sheriff lunged forward to grab the beggar and lifted his hat. Then he saw the smiling face of Robin Hood! 'I knew it!' said the sheriff. 'You can't fool the good Sheriff of Nottingham.'

Robin smiled. He had tricked the sheriff plenty of times before. He



wriggled free of the sheriff's grips and ran off.

The sheriff chased Robin into Sherwood Forest. Robin laughed as he ran. He was so quick that the sheriff could hardly keep up!

When Robin had put enough distance between himself and the sheriff, he climbed high into a tree. He carefully crept out onto a thick branch to look out for the sheriff. He knew the evil man wouldn't give up easily.

Robin heard footsteps crunching through the snow. He peered down and watched the sheriff run through the woods calling after him. The sheriff searched for Robin, but he couldn't find even a footprint.

'I'll get you next time, Robin Hood!' the sheriff called as he ran.

Robin chuckled and slid to the ground. He'd outsmarted the sheriff once again.

Meanwhile, Little John and the rest of the men had taken the sheriff's gifts and feast. They loaded their sleigh with brightly wrapped packages, roast turkey and plum pudding. They even took a magnificent Christmas tree.

Little John took hold of the front of the sleigh and started to run. Robin Hood soon caught up with his friends. 'There's no time to waste,' he said. 'The sheriff is mad. We've got to get these gifts delivered before he takes them all back!'

Maid Marian, a kind young fox, and her lady-in-waiting, a cheerful hen named Lady Kluck, passed by the sleigh in their carriage. 'Why, Robin Hood, what a merry surprise!' Marian said, as the carriage pulled to a stop.

Robin bowed low to the ladies. 'Merry Christmas Eve to you, too, Maid Marian,' he said. 'What are you ladies doing out this evening?'



'I've been out delivering baskets to the poor,' Marian said.

'There are so many in need,' said Lady Kluck. 'We've just run out.'

Robin smiled wide. 'It just so happens that I was doing the same thing. Let us share these gifts with you.'

The sheriff's Christmas trimmings were safely tucked into the carriage. 'See you back in Sherwood Forest,' Robin called, as Little John pulled the sleigh off into the woods. He stayed to hand out the food and gifts with Maid Marian. When they finished, they headed for Sherwood Forest to join Little John and the others.

Robin Hood couldn't help but feel that this had been a perfect Christmas. He'd given plenty of food and good cheer to the people of Nottingham. And he had the best gift of all – spending Christmas with Maid Marian.



MAKE MINCE PIES

Impress your friends and family by making your own mince pies!



YOU WILL NEED

- 500 g ready-made shortcrust pastry
 - plain flour
 - cookie cutters
- 250 g mincemeat
 - 1 egg
- icing sugar
- rolling pin
- cupcake baking tray
- teaspoon
- bowl
- fork
- wire rack

ASK AN
ADULT
FOR HELP



1. Preheat the oven to 220°C. Scatter a little flour onto your work surface – this is so the pastry doesn't stick as you roll it out.
2. Roll the pastry out until it is about 3 mm thick. Use the cookie cutter to cut out 12 circles and place them in the cupcake tray.
3. Spoon mincemeat into each base. Don't add too much filling or you won't be able to add a lid.
4. Roll out the leftover pastry and cut out 12 smaller circles to go on top of your mince pies.
5. Place a lid on top of each filled base and gently pinch the edges of the pastry together.
6. Crack the egg into a bowl and beat with a fork. Brush the beaten egg on to the top of each mince pie.
7. Bake the mince pies for 15-20 minutes, or until golden brown.
8. Leave the mince pies to cool on a wire rack and then sprinkle with icing sugar.



TOP
TIP!

Have fun with the tops of the mince pies – try cutting star shapes in the pastry before baking!

THE SHADOW
PUPPET SHOW

One morning as Mulan finished her chores, the Emperor's adviser arrived at her family home.

'Fa Mulan, I bring an official invitation from the Imperial City,' said Chi Fu, presenting a scroll with the Emperor's seal.

'I am humbled and excited to receive news from the palace,' said Mulan.

Chi Fu read the scroll aloud, 'His Excellency, the Emperor, summons you to the Imperial Palace to witness, in his presence, a shadow play performance.'

Mulan beamed at the idea of an Imperial City adventure. Though she had visited during the war, there was so much more of the palace she had yet to explore.

'It would be my pleasure to return to the palace for such an occasion. I can't wait to see the puppets,' exclaimed Mulan. 'Oh, and the Emperor, of course,' she added quickly, remembering her manners.

Fa Li took her daughter's hands in her own. 'I know you will bring honour to our family by being poised and punctual at court,' she said, pressing her favourite magnolia comb into Mulan's palm.

'Mulan will bring honour to us all by being true to herself,' said Fa Zhou. For he knew his free-spirited daughter flourished when she embraced what made her unique.

Grandmother Fa attached Cri-Kee's small cage to Mulan's sash.

'Can't have you going to the palace without a cricket for good luck,' she said with a laugh.

'Thank you, Grandmother,' Mulan said, nodding. Then she mounted her horse and set out on her journey.

When Mulan arrived at the Imperial Palace, she gasped with delight at the sight. 'It's even more breathtaking than I remember,' said Mulan.

Chi Fu frowned. 'Don't stand there and gape all afternoon. We are on a tight schedule. It would do you well to be prompt for tonight's performance.'

Chi Fu led Mulan through the maze of palace hallways before settling on a door. 'You may prepare for the evening's festivities here in the common room,' said Chi Fu. 'And please, Mulan, do not disrespect the Emperor with your tendency for tardiness and turmoil.'

'Tardiness! Turmoil! Ha!' exclaimed Mulan as the imperial attendants pinned up her hair. 'It's as if Chi Fu doesn't even know me. Tonight, I will bring honour to my family by being intelligent, elegant and graceful.'

But just as Mulan spoke, Cri-Kee sprang free from his cage! The lucky cricket scrambled up Mulan's arm, skittered across the room and scouted out the door.

'I'm pretty sure losing a lucky cricket is considered quite unlucky,' said Mulan. 'Which is why I plan to find him,' she announced to the attendants.

Mulan dashed down the hall and into the music room in search of her mischievous travel companion. Much to Mulan's delight, the playful notes of the pi-pa and the paixiao filled the chamber.

But her delight quickly turned into dismay.

'Oh, no,' cringed Mulan. Cri-Kee had climbed up the musician's sleeve and scaled the pi-pa strings. Now he sat on the musician's shoulder, rubbing his wings together and chirping to the beat.

'How can I catch that cricket without disturbing the music?' Mulan wondered, tapping her foot along to the song. The rhythm of the music sparked a solution. 'I could dance my way across the floor towards the cricket.'

Mulan swayed and spun to the music. But just as she reached Cri-Kee, he jumped from the pi-pa to the paixiao and then sped down the palace stairs.

Cri-Kee darted into the imperial study with Mulan close behind. The moment she stepped into the lovely room, Mulan felt its tranquility. It was here where the Emperor composed his official correspondence.

It will bring shame to the Fa name if my cricket disturbs



such peaceful surroundings, thought Mulan.

So she lunged for Cri-Kee as he hopped across the writing table, overturning brushes and upending inkstones in his wake. The clever cricket made a clean escape but Mulan's dress did not.

Mulan chased Cri-Kee into the war room and looked around in a moment of reverence. Having served in the Imperial Army, Mulan understood the importance of this place. This was where the Emperor and his generals strategised their battle plans.

Mulan panicked as Cri-Kee scampered across the hand-drawn maps and flitted about the Emperor's banners.

Then she noticed a suit of armour in the cabinet. Thinking fast, Mulan grabbed the battle helmet, knowing she could use it to catch the impish cricket. She followed Cri-Kee down the hall and swung open the doors to...

The Imperial Theatre!

The Emperor and his guests all turned to look at Mulan. 'So much for grace, punctuality and politeness,' sighed Mulan.

She had dishonoured her family in the presence of the Emperor. And to make matters worse, Cri-Kee had fled behind the screen set up for the shadow play.

But Mulan did not despair. 'I am who I am. I'm not perfect, sometimes clumsy but always determined,' she reflected.

Mulan bowed to the Emperor. Then she marched behind the screen, where she leapt, lunged and spun at Cri-Kee until she finally caught him. The audience laughed with pleasure at the comical performance.

Pleased by Mulan's impromptu show, the Emperor gave her an encouraging smile. 'The night star is most radiant when it is truest to itself,' he mused.

Mulan considered the Emperor's thoughtful words. She understood that her adventures with Cri-Kee had brought pride, not shame, to the Fa name.

As night fell on the palace, Mulan took a seat and marvelled as she watched the real shadow play unfold.

Cri-Kee, however, had other plans...



DESIGN A CHRISTMAS PARTY INVITATION



YOU WILL NEED



- coloured card
- pencil
- felt-tip pens
- scissors
- stickers (optional)
- glitter (optional)

1. Draw the outline of your invitations on the card. You could draw festive shapes like Santa's hat, snowmen, stockings or Christmas trees! Cut out your invites.
2. Write your invitation. Remember to include the name of the person you're inviting, where the party is, what time it starts and ends, and if there are any special dressing up instructions!
3. Sign your name at the bottom of the invitation.
4. Add extra decoration to your invites by using stickers or glitter!



18

DECEMBER

OUR PERFECT
STORMY DAY

One morning, a storm passed over Motunui island. Most people didn't welcome the cold and wet weather. But Moana was not most people.

'We can't work today,' she said to Pua and Heihei. 'So instead, we're going to Gramma's!'

Ever since she was little, Moana had spent stormy days with her Gramma Tala. After all, Gramma Tala was Moana's best friend – and a master storyteller.

Plus, Gramma Tala could always use an extra hand around the house and Moana loved to help. So she, Pua and Heihei hurried over.

Drenched by the rain, Moana, Pua and Heihei slid into Gramma Tala's fale with a crash!

'Now that was an entrance,' laughed Gramma Tala as she went in for a hug.

'Wait, we're soaked,' Moana warned.

But Gramma Tala didn't mind. 'Good thing rain is water and water dries,' she said. 'Now, get settled. I have a new story about a storm. I've been waiting for the perfect day to share it with you.'

Everyone settled in and Gramma began to speak. But Moana couldn't focus. She heard a *drip... drip... drip...* Moana looked up and spotted a small hole in the ceiling.

'Gramma, you have a leak,' interrupted Moana. 'Let me fix it for you.'

But Gramma Tala waved her off. 'Never mind that old leak. We learned to live together a long time ago.'

Moana tried her best but she couldn't ignore the puddle forming on the floor. *Gramma cannot patch this leak on her own*, Moana thought to herself.

But I can. If I'm quick, she might not even notice I was gone. With that, Moana climbed up to the ceiling.

When Moana had finished, she slid back down and landed – plo – plo – right in front of Gramma.

Gramma Tala laughed. 'Thank you, Moana. No leak is safe from you,' she said with a playful nudge. 'Now, can I get back to my story?'

Moana nodded in reply.

Gramma Tala was just gearing up, when clap... crackle... BOOM! Lightning flashed and thunder roared.

The weather frightened Pua, who jumped sky-high and crashed into a pile of Gramma Tala's prized storytelling tapa.

'Oh, Gramma. Your tapa!' cried Moana. She rushed to clean up the mess, but Gramma Tala insisted Moana stop.

'The tapa can wait,' Gramma Tala said. 'Come and sit. I'm finally getting to the good part!'

Moana took a seat and Gramma Tala continued.

Outside, the wind howled and the fale's woven curtains flapped wildly. Not only that, Heihei had wandered outside and the wind was blowing him around like a tumbleweed! Moana's eyes were locked on the swirling bird.

With a final whoosh, Heihei reentered the fale, somersaulted across Gramma Tala's floor... and landed safely in Moana's lap.

Just then, Moana noticed that Gramma Tala had stopped talking.

In that moment, Moana's heart sank. 'I'm sorry, Gramma,' she said. 'I keep getting distracted when all I really want is to spend time with you.'

Gramma Tala pressed her nose against Moana's and Moana took Gramma Tala's hands in hers. 'One more time,' Moana said. 'And I promise, I am listening.'

Then, once again, Gramma Tala began her story. And Moana soaked up every word.

Outside, the storm continued. But inside, nothing could dampen Moana and Gramma Tala's perfect stormy day.



100

101

WRITE A CHRISTMAS STORY



Gramma Tala loves telling Moana stories – get into the Christmas spirit by writing your own festive story. Use the story prompts to help you get started!

YOU WILL NEED

- paper
- colouring pens or pencils
- stickers
- glitter
- a pen or pencil

CHARACTERS

- Father Christmas
- A snowman
- A Christmas elf
- A magical reindeer
- A gingerbread man
- A Christmas fairy
- Enchanted animals



OBJECTS

- Presents
- Candy canes
- Mince pies
- Christmas tree
- Chimney
- Christmas list



SETTINGS

- Your home
- The North Pole
- Santa's workshop
- School
- A magical winter land



STORY STARTERS

Once upon a time, in an ordinary house on an ordinary street, there lived a young boy with a magical secret...

It was Christmas Eve and Santa's elves were worried – there was a problem with their present machine and it was almost midnight!

On a frosty winter night, a carrot-nosed snowman blinked. 'Where am I?' he wondered.



TOP TIP!

Once you've written your story, why not add some colourful illustrations?

A GIFT FOR WALL·E

WALL·E and EVE peeked over the top of a pile of rubbish. The humans were acting very strangely. What were they up to now?

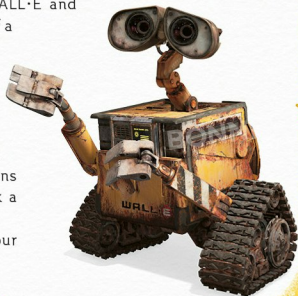
They saw two men stringing small coloured lights along a rusty iron fence. Another set up a plastic statue of a fat, white bearded man in a red suit, red hat and black boots. A woman propped up a fake silver tree and decorated it with shiny red and green glass balls. Now that people had returned to live on Earth along with robots, they were always doing something that surprised WALL·E and EVE. But even for humans they were acting very strangely.

Weirdest of all, the Captain from the *Axiom* was singing in a loud, joyful voice!

WALL·E and EVE listened to the words carefully. Confused, they looked at each other. Rudolph? A glowing nose? They thought Rudolph must be a kind of robot, like WALL·E and EVE. But neither of them had ever heard of a reindeer-bot before!

WALL·E and EVE snuck closer to where the humans were working. They called their bot friends over. While all the robots watched curiously, the humans hung a green circle with small red dots on a shopfront. More of the humans started singing. One small girl even shook a silver ball.

Some of the robots had seen behaviour



like this before, when they were living on the spaceship, *Axiom*. It seemed to happen every twelve months. They had never been able to figure it out.

WALL·E looked closely at the humans. He tried to figure out what made this so different. Then he put his little metal finger on it. The humans looked happy! Most of the time on the *Axiom* they had looked tired and bored. But there was something about what they were doing right now, here on Earth, that made them very happy.

If it made the humans so happy, WALL·E thought that maybe it would make the robots happy, too!

For hours, the robots studied the humans. They stored what they had seen in their computer brains. Next they set out to copy the humans.

Some of the bots picked up rubbish that the humans had used: bits of tinsel, fake holly and scraps of brightly coloured paper.

The light bots collected hundreds of strings of lights. WALL·E already had a couple in his trailer. He'd always thought they were pretty and EVE loved them.

The bots draped WALL·E's trailer with lights. When the electricity was turned on, the lights shined so brightly they looked like a supernova.

M·O hung up old socks on the other wall. He had no idea why anyone would want to put socks on the wall. But if the humans were doing it, so would he!

Vacuum-bot sucked up boxes and boxes of packing peanuts. Unfortunately, he also vacuumed up a nose full of dust. 'Ahhhh-chOOOO!' he sneezed. Little white peanuts floated down from the air, coating the floor like a blanket of snow.

WALL·E and EVE roamed the grounds outside the trailer looking for more things to use. WALL·E went one way, EVE went the other.

EVE picked up a piece of shiny metal. She found some scraps of wrapping paper. She stored them inside her chest cavity. Suddenly, she heard two humans talking. One of them was the Captain.

'I just love Christmas, don't you?' the other human said. 'The lights, the





decorations, the cookies, the presents. Christmas is my favourite time of year!

Christmas! What a lovely word! EVE rolled it around in her mind. It sparked all her circuits. Was this the name for what the humans were doing?

She stopped to listen more closely to what they were saying.

'Yes,' said the Captain slowly. 'But don't forget, Christmas isn't about things. That's just what Buy-n-Large wants us to believe. It's about giving, not just getting presents. It's about showing your friends and family that you care.'

The Captain's words hummed inside EVE. Robots didn't have family but they did have friends. And she had one friend who meant more to her than any other – WALL·E. He had come to save her when she was on the ship. He had given her his spare parts. He had cared for her and watched over her. She needed to show him that she appreciated him.

But what kind of a present would do that?

EVE roamed far and wide. She searched and searched. She found many pieces of junk. None of them were quite right. Then, far from WALL·E's trailer, her gaze locked on the perfect present.

Two days later, it was Christmas Eve. The bots had prepared a celebration just like the humans. Some of the smaller bots were stirring with excitement. The umbrella bot wore a pointy red hat with a white pompom on top.

The robots beeped out the words to the songs they had heard. They didn't always understand the human words so they made up some of their own.

While all the bots were celebrating the holiday in their own high-tech way, EVE pulled WALL·E aside. She held out a present wrapped in pretty patterned paper.

WALL·E looked surprised. 'Ee-vah?' he asked.

EVE nodded.

WALL·E turned the present this way and that. He admired how the shiny

paper shimmered in the coloured lights. He was so busy looking at the present that he almost missed EVE motioning to him.

Open it, EVE signalled.

WALL·E carefully unwrapped the present. He folded up each scrap of paper and laid it on the ground next to him. Finally, he pulled away the last piece.

WALL·E held a little evergreen tree in his hands, a miniature Christmas tree.

The longer version of EVE's name was Extra-terrestrial Vegetation Evaluator. She had been trained to find plants and was drawn to this little tree. She knew that WALL·E, with his kind ways and big heart, would take care of this present, this living thing, better than anyone.

WALL·E and EVE went outside. Together they dug a hole in the earth and planted the Christmas tree. WALL·E placed a shiny silver star on the top.

WALL·E and EVE looked at the tree. The star twinkled brightly. It reflected the light from the real stars shining in the night sky, far above.

EVE reached out her hand. WALL·E took it.

'Ee-vah,' he said. Now he understood why humans liked Christmas so much.



MAKE AN ORANGE POMANDER

These pretty decorations are really easy to make and smell delicious!
Place them around the house in the lead up to Christmas.



YOU WILL NEED

- an orange
- cocktail stick or skewer
- cloves
- glue (optional)
- star anise (optional)
- coloured ribbon (optional)

108



1. Use a cocktail stick or skewer to carefully make holes in the skin of the orange. You can make holes randomly, or design a pattern for your pomander – spirals, lines or circles always look great.
2. Carefully push a clove into each hole to create your pattern.
3. If you like, add a little glue to the bottom of a star anise and stick to the top of your orange. This will add to the lovely smell of the pomander!
4. You could also wrap a coloured ribbon around the orange. If you create a loop, you can even hang the pomander from your Christmas tree.
5. Display your finished pomander on a shelf or as a centrepiece for your Christmas table.

ASK AN
ADULT
FOR HELP



109

20

DECEMBER

A PERFECT PARTY

Cinderella and her prince sat before a roaring fire. Christmas was coming in a few days, and Cinderella was excited.

'Let's throw a party!' she suggested to the Prince.

'What a splendid idea!' he replied. 'How can I help?' Cinderella smiled. 'Just leave everything to me,' she said.

The next day, the princess began to decorate.

'May we help, Cinderella?' Jaq and Gus asked.

'Of course!' she replied. 'Let's start with the grand staircase.' The mice were tying some bows when a spool of ribbon began to unwind and roll down the banister. Gus hopped aboard. It was just like a sleigh ride – without the sleigh!

When Cinderella and her friends finished the staircase, they moved on to the rest of the castle.

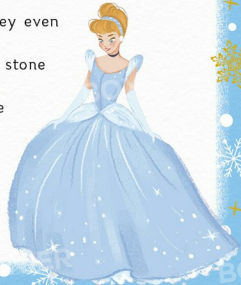
Jaq and Gus helped the princess put garlands over the windows in the ballroom.

They tied sprigs of holly over the doorways. They even hung stockings by the fireplaces.

Finally, Cinderella and her friends moved to the stone patio where Cinderella planned to hold her party.

'Won't our guests be chilly out here?' the Prince asked.

'I'm sure it will be fine,' Cinderella replied. 'Besides, what could be more magical than celebrating under the stars?'



110



'I like stars. They're twinkly,' Gus said as he nibbled on a popcorn garland.

'Gus!' Jaq scolded. 'You're supposed to be hanging decorations, not eating them!'

Later Cinderella went to the royal sewing room.

When Prudence, the head of household staff, peeked in, she saw the princess sewing a handkerchief.

'Why don't you ask the royal seamstresses to do that?' Prudence suggested.

'I'm making presents for our guests,' Cinderella said. 'It's so much more personal if I do it myself.'

On Christmas Eve, the royal chef came to speak with Cinderella. He wanted to know what he should cook for the party.

'Not a thing,' Cinderella replied.

Later Prudence saw her in the storeroom filling baskets with fruit, ears of corn, and different kinds of cheese. She was appalled.

Back on the patio, Cinderella laid out the food.

'Hmmm,' she said. 'Something's missing – but what?' Suddenly, Cinderella's fairy godmother appeared.

'My dear, you need a centerpiece,' she said. Waving her magic wand, she turned a water pitcher into an ice sculpture!

'Now everything is perfect for our holiday picnic!' Cinderella exclaimed.

When Cinderella left to change her gown, the Fairy Godmother slipped into the banquet room. 'Oh, no,' she said, looking at the decorations Cinderella and the mice had hung. 'This will never do for a royal ball.'

The Fairy Godmother waved her wand. Instantly, an elaborate feast appeared. She waved her wand twice more, and the court musicians appeared, ready to play.

'Now, that's more like it,' the Fairy Godmother said.



111

When Cinderella and the Prince walked past the banquet room, the princess couldn't believe her eyes.

Just then, Prudence rushed in. 'Where are your guests?' she asked Cinderella.

'My party isn't being held in here,' Cinderella told her.

'Then what is?' Prudence asked.

Thinking quickly, the princess said, 'A Christmas party in honour of the royal staff. Would you please tell the others?'

'What a wonderful surprise!' the housekeeper exclaimed.

Cinderella opened the patio doors. 'Merry Christmas!'

A chorus of chirps, barks and whinnies answered her. All of Cinderella's animal friends had gathered for her party.

'Happy Christmas, Cinderelly!' Gus shouted.

'Merry Christmas,' Jaq said, correcting him.

Cinderella's animal friends loved the meal she had prepared.

Afterward, it was time for presents! There were new feed bags, cosy blankets and stylish mouse-sized outfits. Jaq loved his new jacket so much that he wouldn't stop looking at his reflection.

Later the Prince and Cinderella danced underneath the stars. When they stopped, they realised they were alone.

'Oh, my! Look!' Cinderella cried. Their animal friends had gone inside and were with the staff. Delighted that everyone was getting along, Cinderella and the Prince joined them.

It was the most unusual – and the merriest – Christmas celebration the kingdom had ever seen!



MAKE PAPER SNOWFLAKES

All you need is some paper and scissors to make beautiful snowflakes!

YOU WILL NEED

• squares of
coloured paper

• scissors

1. Fold the paper in half diagonally to make a triangle.
2. Fold the paper in half again from one corner to the other to make a smaller triangle.
3. With the flat edge towards you, fold the corners in so they meet in the middle to make a kite shape.
4. Cut the point from the bottom of the paper so you have a triangle with three straight edges.
5. Cut shapes into each side of the triangle to create your snowflake pattern. Be careful not to cut all the way across.
6. Carefully unfold the triangle to reveal your unique snowflake! Repeat the process with different coloured squares to make more snowflakes.

TOP TIP!

Carefully make a small hole in the top of your snowflake and thread through string so you can hang up your creation!

21

DECEMBER

THE CHRISTMAS FEAST

Princess Tiana and Prince Naveen were celebrating their first Christmas together. Tiana had invited their family and friends to her restaurant for a Christmas Eve feast. She wanted Naveen to share in the traditions she knew and loved.

'We might need to buy more ornaments,' Tiana said.

'As long as they're fit for a princess!' Naveen replied. That week he had helped Tiana decorate her restaurant, make centrepieces and put up a tree – but there was still more work to be done.

Tiana needed to buy ingredients for Christmas Eve dinner. So she and Naveen headed to the market.

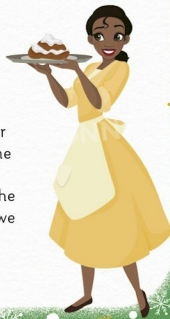
'I can't wait to taste the feast you're going to make,' Naveen said. 'With my help, of course!'

'Well, we need quite a few things,' Tiana said. 'Let's see. First we should get the vegetables.'

Tiana carefully looked through all the produce at the vegetable stall. She wanted to make sure she had all the freshest ingredients for their Christmas feast.

Next was the butcher shop and then they stopped for some eggs and cheese. Finally, all Tiana needed was some powdered sugar for her famous beignets.

'I think we'll have to make another trip,' said Naveen as he struggled with a tower of parcels. 'How many people are we cooking for?'



'My mother, Charlotte, Big Daddy, your parents and our friends from the town and the bayou. We'll be serving as many people as want to join us,' Tiana said happily. 'After all, the more the merrier!'

Tiana spent the next few days cooking and baking with Naveen by her side.

'For someone who didn't know how to chop a mushroom, you've become quite an expert,' Tiana told Naveen.

'You taught me everything I know,' Naveen reminded her.

When darkness fell on Christmas Eve, all the food for the banquet was finally ready.

'Before our guests arrive, I have a surprise for you,' Tiana announced, handing Naveen his coat.

'Where are we going?' he asked.

'You'll find out soon enough,' Tiana answered mysteriously.

'Just a hint?' Naveen pleaded. But Tiana simply smiled silently.

Tiana walked Naveen to the riverside and, together, they paddled a canoe into the bayou. As they turned a corner, Naveen's surprise came into view: there were huge bonfires burning alongside the river.

'The fires are for Papa Noël,' Tiana explained.

'So he can find his way in the sky?' asked Naveen.

Tiana laughed. 'Papa Noël doesn't use a sleigh. He travels in a pirogue. That's a flat-bottomed canoe, pulled by alligators.'

'I hope he leaves the gators outside when he delivers the presents!' Naveen exclaimed.

Fog rolled in, and Tiana and Naveen paddled towards home. The folks along the river pointed excitedly at the couple's canoe. Through the mist, all they could see was the couple's red blanket.

'Look!' the river folk shouted. 'It's him!' They thought Tiana and Naveen's canoe belonged to Papa Noël! All around them, people jumped into their boats and paddled behind the canoe, hoping to catch a glimpse of the mysterious visitor.

When the bayou folk paddled out of the fog, they found Tiana and Naveen standing on the dock.

114

115

'Have you seen Papa Noël?' someone asked.

'We haven't, but since you're in town, would you join us for dinner? There's plenty to share!' Tiana said.

'Thank you,' said one of the travellers. 'I guess we don't mind if we do!'

By the time Tiana and Naveen reached Tiana's Palace, guests were starting to arrive.

Tiana greeted Naveen's parents and her mother, Eudora. She welcomed her best friend, Charlotte, and her friend's father, Big Daddy La Bouff.

'Some of the guests are saying they saw Papa Noël on the river,' Charlotte said. 'Do you suppose that's him there?'

Tiana looked up and saw an elderly man in a red suit with the other guests. She was curious, but she had to finish cooking and put on her party dress.

In the dining room, Tiana's alligator friend, Louis, handed out parcels of sugared fruits and candy. Each box was wrapped with shiny purple paper and topped with a beautiful golden bow.

One woman was especially excited to see Louis. 'It's one of Papa Noël's alligators!' the woman said. Louis gave her a wide, toothy smile. It was nice that none of the guests were afraid of him!

Soon, Tiana and Naveen brought out the food.

'Dinner is served!' Tiana announced. Everyone cheered when they saw the table full of food. There were pots of Tiana's delicious gumbo, turkey with chestnuts, roasted ham, grits, yams, vegetables and soufflés.

The guests heaped their plates high and dug in. Tiana smiled. There was nothing she liked better than friends enjoying her cooking. Some of the guests ate second, third and even fourth helpings!

After everyone had eaten, Naveen and Louis played jazzy versions of their favourite Christmas carols. Tiana invited her guests to dance to the music.

As the band finished off another toe-tapping tune, Tiana realised she had forgotten to serve dessert! Quickly, she ran to the kitchen and filled a cart with custards, cakes and



beignets. The cart was so full that Tiana could barely open the kitchen door.

'Let me help you with that, my dear,' said a white-bearded gentleman. He helped Tiana push the cart into the dining room. As Tiana ducked back into the kitchen, she realised the man looked just like Papa Noël!

Tiana hurried back to the dining room but the man had already vanished. Just then, Naveen walked up. 'What a wonderful dinner!' he exclaimed. 'The food! The music! The people! It's all so...'

'Wonderful! It is Christmastime in New Orleans.' Then Tiana spotted the man in the red suit. 'Do you think that's Papa Noël?'

Before Tiana could investigate, Naveen led her onto the dance floor. 'Stranger things have happened,' he said.

Tiana grinned. She was delighted that Naveen's first New Orleans Christmas was going so well – for her, that was magic enough.



CHRISTMAS TABLE

CENTREPIECE

This centrepiece is the perfect finishing touch for any Christmas table. Make it just before dinner so the holly doesn't get too wet!



YOU WILL NEED

- sprigs of holly
- glass vase
- water

- floating tea lights
- coloured ribbon



1. Choose some sprigs of fresh holly – try and pick ones that have lots of red berries.
2. Carefully place the holly in your vase.
3. Fill the container with water until it is about three-quarters full.
4. Gently place the tea light into the water so it floats on the surface.
5. Finish your centrepiece by wrapping a ribbon around the vase and tying into a bow.
6. Ask an adult to light the candle just before you're ready to eat!

ASK AN
ADULT
FOR HELP



22

DECEMBER

THE RILEY AND BING BONG BAND



Riley and her imaginary friend Bing Bong loved making music together. They would play and sing for hours. Riley was good at many instruments and nobody could play a nose

like Bing Bong.

The Riley and Bing Bong Band was Joy's favourite! But the other Emotions weren't such big fans.

Anger thought the music was way too loud. He always covered his ears.

Fear kept a close eye on the instruments. One wrong move and Riley could poke her eye out with the drumstick or swallow the kazoo!

Sadness only liked the minor chords, of course.

And just the sight of Bing Bong playing his nose made Disgust cringe.

One day, after playing some new tunes, Riley and Bing Bong took a break.

'We should go on tour!' said Riley.

'Great idea! Where should we go?' asked Bing Bong.

'How about Australia?' said Riley. 'We can play for the kangaroos!'

'But how will we get there?' asked Bing Bong.

'We can take our rocket!' said Riley.

'Woohoo!' exclaimed Joy. 'A new adventure!'

'Australia is far away,' said Sadness. 'We'll get homesick.'

Fear gathered information on Australia. 'Koalas,



120



wallabies... goannas! Look at those claws! And what's a platypus? It has poison in its feet!'

'Ugh! Poisonous feet? I can't... I just can't,' said Disgust.

Anger brightened when he saw a picture of kangaroos boxing. 'Do they really box? I'm liking this!'

'We're going to Australia,' announced Riley to Mum and Dad.

'Be back for dinner,' said Mum. 'I'm making my famous mashed potatoes.'

'Don't forget there's a big ocean between Minnesota and Australia,' said Dad.

Riley whispered to Bing Bong. 'We'd better bring our armbands.'

'It's not a big ocean, it's a GIGANTIC ocean!' screamed Fear as he and the other Emotions looked at a map.

'Awesome!' sang Joy.

'Yeah, great. Salty air and humidity...' Disgust rolled her eyes. 'Frizz City.'

'Ohh,' groaned Sadness. 'What if we get lost out there?'

'We could always become pirates!' Anger said.

Riley and Bing Bong packed up everything they needed.

'It's going to be a long trip,' said Bing Bong.

'We'd better bring lots of snacks,' said Riley.

Then they climbed into the rocket and prepared for lift-off. Riley turned to Bing Bong. 'Okay, co-pilot. Ready to check all systems?'

'Check,' said Bing Bong, pointing at the controls. 'Check, check and... check!'

'Activating rocket booster,' said Riley. 'Mission Control, all systems are go!'

Riley and Bing Bong began the countdown. 'Ten, nine, eight, seven, six, five, four, three, two, one...'

BLAST OFF! But nothing happened. Riley and Bing Bong were confused.

'Of course!' said Riley. 'The rocket can't fly without fuel!' Riley and Bing Bong smiled at each other.

Once again, they prepared for takeoff. But this time, they were really ready.

Riley and Bing Bong began to sing their special song. 'Who's your friend who likes to play?'



121

The rocket answered back, binging and bonging. Then it rumbled and roared as it flew out of the window!

Joy sang along as the rocket shot up into the sky.

Sadness watched Minnesota disappear into the distance. 'Goodbye, home,' she said.

'I feel sick,' said Fear, nervously clutching a paper bag.

Disgust wrinkled her nose. 'If you're going to barf, it'd better not be near me.'

'Aren't we there yet?' asked Anger.

As they soared over the ocean, Riley and Bing Bong saw a shark, a sea turtle, a walrus and penguins. So far, this was the best trip ever!

Excited, they started talking about all the things they would see in Australia.

'Dad said koala bears eat gum trees. Do you think they can blow bubbles?' said Riley.

Suddenly, Bing Bong noticed the water was getting closer.

'Are we landing?' he asked.

Riley and Bing Bong screamed as the rocket fell towards the big, blue ocean!

Riley grabbed the radio. 'Mission Control, we have a problem!'

'It's over!' shouted Fear, hiding his head inside the paper bag.

'I knew it,' said Sadness.

'The fuel,' said Joy. 'We were so busy being excited, we forgot to sing!' She plugged in an idea bulb.

'We have to sing!' shouted Riley.

'I'm so scared! I can't remember the words!' said Bing Bong.

'Sing the song! Sing the song!' shouted Anger.

'Sing, or we'll smell like seaweed!' yelled Disgust.

Riley shouted out the words as the rocket sputtered.

Bing Bong joined her, and the two sang louder and faster than ever before.

'Who's your friend who likes to play?

Bing Bong, Bing Bong!

His rocket makes you yell "hooray!"

Bing Bong! Bing Bong!



The rocket skimmed the surface of the ocean and then lifted back into the air! Riley and Bing Bong kept singing as the rocket soared. Soon they could see land.

'Australia!' shouted Riley.

The Emotions cheered.

'We made it?' Fear asked, stunned.

The creatures Down Under welcomed Riley and Bing Bong with big smiles.

'Play us a tune, mates,' said a koala.

Riley and Bing Bong played all of their songs and the crowd went wild.

Suddenly, a familiar smell drifted through the air.

'Mum's famous mashed potatoes,' Riley whispered to Bing Bong. 'It's time to go home.'

The two played one last song. Then they said goodbye to their new friends and rocketed back to Minnesota.

'It's nice to be home,' said Sadness.

'It would be nice not to have helmet hair,' Disgust said.

'And you wonder why I say hair is overrated?' said Anger.

'Sure, it's nice to be home, but travelling is so cool!' said Joy.

'I beg to differ,' said Fear. 'I like staying right here in good ol' Minnesota. No more trips for this guy.'

'So... how was playing in the band in Australia?' asked Dad.

'It was great!' said Riley. 'Tomorrow we're going on another trip – to play for the penguins in Antarctica.'

'Yes!' Joy shouted.

'Nooooooooooooooooo!' Fear screamed, as he fainted onto the floor.



MAKE A RUDOLPH DECORATION

Rudolph lights the way for Father Christmas on Christmas Eve.
Make this decoration to welcome the reindeer to your home!



YOU WILL NEED

- one large paper plate
- one small paper plate
- brown paint
- paintbrush
- brown card
- pencil
- glue
- scissors
- red pom-pom
- two googly eyes
- dark brown or black felt-tip pen



1. Paint the underside of the two paper plates with brown paint and leave to dry completely.
2. Use a pencil to trace around your hand four times on the brown card and then cut them out.
3. Glue the small paper plate to the bottom of the large paper plate to make Rudolph's head.
4. Glue two of your cut out hand shapes on the left side of Rudolph's head and two on the right side to make antlers.
5. Glue the red pom-pom at the top of the small plate to make Rudolph's bright nose! You could make your own pom-pom – see pages 72-73.
6. Glue two googly eyes to the large plate and use a felt-tip pen to draw Rudolph's smiling mouth.



MIGUEL AND THE
SECRET RECIPE

'The time has come, niños, to make Mamá Imelda's famous tamales. And this year, I'm going to teach you how,' Abuelita said to her grandchildren as they walked through Santa Cecilia.

'Is the secret recipe written down, Abuelita?' Miguel asked.

'I'm one hundred percent sure I remember it,' she said.

'Can you and your primos go to the carniceria to buy the meat?' Abuelita then turned to Abel. 'I need your help getting the masa and I will go home and soak the corn husks.'

In the Land of the Dead, Mamá Imelda clapped her hands. 'I always look forward to this time of year,' she said to her husband, Héctor, and her twin brothers, Felipe and Oscar. 'We get to see our family in the Land of the Living.'

'And we get tamales,' Tío Óscar added.

'But they aren't what they used to be,' Tío Felipe said. 'I wonder if the recipe was so secret that no one remembers it!'

'I know I wrote it down,' Imelda said. She looked at an image of Abuelita. 'Ay mijita, you can't go by memory alone. You must find the recipe.'

Héctor had an idea. 'Do you know where your mamá's tamale recipe is back in the Land of the Living?' he asked his daughter, Coco. 'I want to find it to make Día de Muertos as special as possible.'

'Yes,' Mamá Coco said. 'Elena and I memorised



the recipe and we followed it by heart. But I didn't want to lose the original. I put it inside the frame that holds Tío Felipe's photo for safekeeping, because tamales were always his favourite. It's on the ofrenda every year for Día de los Muertos.'

'Dante and Pepita, I need your help,' Héctor said to the two spirit guides. 'I have a very special mission and I only trust the two of you to get it done. Can you figure out a way to get Mamá Imelda's tamale recipe to Abuelita?'

When Dante and Pepita emerged in the Land of the Living, it was as a normal dog and cat. But even though they looked different, their mission was still the same.

Dante and Pepita ended up in the ofrenda room of the Rivera family. But when they looked at the photos, they couldn't tell the twins apart. Pepita knocked down one frame.

It broke open just enough that they could see there was no recipe inside. Dante tugged on the ofrenda cloth and the second frame tumbled towards the floor.

At that moment, Miguel came into the room. 'What happened?' he asked as he picked up the frames.

Pepita raised her paw and laid it on one. Miguel looked closely at the frame and saw a yellowed piece of paper inside.

Miguel, Dante and Pepita met Abuelita as they entered the courtyard.

'What have they done now?' Abuelita asked.

Miguel held out the piece of paper. 'They helped me find this!'

'Mamá Imelda's tamale recipe!' said Abuelita. 'Just like I remembered it.'

'Um, Abuelita?' Miguel said. 'Don't you use baking soda and not baking powder?'

His grandmother glanced at the paper. 'Oh, I guess there is a slight difference. Maybe we should try it the way it was written,' she said.

'I know we're all used to the tamales we've been eating for years,' Abuelita said to her family as they gathered together. 'But this year, we will make Mamá Imelda's real recipe.'

The Riveras chatted as they worked. Together, the adults and the children made the recipe that would continue on through the history of their family.





As the tamales were placed in the pot to steam, Miguel looked at Abuelita and smiled. 'It almost feels like Mamá Imelda is here with us.'

The next day, on Día de los Muertos, the Rivera family gathered at the cemetery to celebrate their ancestors. Among the items they brought were Mamá Imelda's famous tamales.

'I am so excited to leave all this food for our family,' Benny said as he and Manny set down the platter.

'I wonder if anyone will even notice the difference in the tamales,' Abuelita said.

The Dead Riveras were thrilled to see their living relatives and their favourite foods.

'Have you tried the tamales?' Tío Óscar asked. 'They seem... different.'

'They are perfecto! Just like Mamá Imelda's!' Tío Felipe said.

'Hmm,' said Mamá Imelda as she looked at Coco, Hector and the two animals. 'I think I might know why.'

'These tamales are tantalising, Abuelita – the best we've ever had,' said Tía Carmen.

'I had more than one,' said Papá.

'You had more than two,' said Mamá.

'Don't worry Abuelita. Yours were delicious, too,' Miguel said.

'Gracias. I think the tamales turn out special every year because we always help one another make them,' Abuelita said.

'Ah, mijita,' Mamá Imelda said, overhearing Abuelita's words to Miguel, 'you've never forgotten that the love each person adds when they help one another is the most important ingredient. And that is the heart of every Rivera recipe.'



MAKE A POPCORN GARLAND

YOU WILL NEED

- needle
- strong thread
- scissors
- plain popcorn

1. Pop your popcorn following the packet instructions and leave to cool. It's best to leave your popcorn out for 24 to 48 hours before stringing as fresh popcorn can break quite easily.
2. Pass a strong thread through your needle and tie a fat knot at one end.
3. Carefully push the needle through the centre of a piece of popcorn and move it to the end of the string.
4. Keep adding popcorn, one at a time, pushing to the end of the string.
5. Once you've reached a length you are happy with, tie another fat knot at the end of the string to keep the popcorn garland together. Your popcorn garland is ready to hang – try stringing it across a window or around your tree!

TOP
TIP!

If you use microwave popcorn, remember to buy the kind without butter and salt.

ASK AN
ADULT
FOR HELP

A PRINCE'S
DAY

It was early morning at Pride Rock. Simba and Nala couldn't wait to go out and play. 'Let's go down to the river!' Nala said loudly.

'Shhh,' Simba whispered. 'We have to be quiet or Zazu will hear us.' But it was too late. Zazu had been on the lookout for the young prince.

'Ahh! There you are, Simba,' Zazu said, landing in front of Simba. 'Come along. We have a busy day of training ahead of us.'

'But Nala and I were about to go down to the river!' Simba complained.

'Nonsense,' Zazu said. 'As a prince you have certain responsibilities, young sire. And we can't keep them waiting.'

'Bye, Simba!' Nala said. 'Have fun at prince school! Maybe we can go to the river tomorrow.'

'Not if Zazu has anything to say about it,' Simba grumbled, watching as Nala bounded away.

Zazu led Simba down to the watering hole, where the animals of the Pride Lands were taking turns drinking water.

'Part of a ruler's responsibilities is solving disputes between his subjects. A perfect example is the watering hole! Each animal needs to have a turn to drink,' Zazu explained. 'See that herd of antelopes? They have been here too long. It's the rhinos' turn!'

'You! You there!' the bird said, yelling at the antelopes.

Simba listened for what felt like hours as Zazu talked on and on to the antelopes.

Finally, the lion cub saw a chance to escape. A herd of giraffes was leaving the watering hole. If he could sneak out with them, he might still have time to

play with Nala!

Just when Simba thought he had gotten away, Zazu landed in front of him. 'And where do you think you're going?' Zazu demanded.

'Come on, Zazu. We've been at the watering hole for hours. Can't I go play with Nala?' Simba asked.

But Zazu refused to let him go. 'A prince's job is never done!' he insisted. 'Onward to our next stop!'

Zazu led Simba back to Pride Rock, where Mufasa was listening to his subjects' concerns.

'A king must listen to all the other animals,' Zazu explained. 'You can learn a lot from your father.'

Simba tried to pay attention. He listened as Mufasa advised the elephants to find new grazing grounds. He listened as the zebras worried about the upcoming rainy season.

But soon the lion cub was just as bored as he had been at the watering hole. He started to fall asleep.

'Young sire!' Zazu yelled, angrily pecking Simba awake. 'Were you paying any attention at all?'

Simba yawned, shaking himself awake. He looked around. The other animals were gone. Mufasa must have finished for the day. 'Um, I heard some of it?' Simba replied.

Frustrated, Zazu flew up in the air. 'Come along, Simba. We aren't finished yet,' Zazu said.

Simba slowly followed as the bird led him away from Pride Rock. Soon they were walking past the river where Simba and Nala had planned to play that day.

Simba looked for his friend, but he didn't see her.

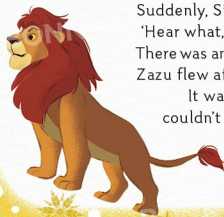
Suddenly, Simba heard a yell. 'Did you hear that, Zazu?' he asked.

'Hear what, Simba?' Zazu said.

There was another yell. 'That!' Simba said, running towards the river. Zazu flew after him.

It was Nala. She had fallen into the fast-moving river and couldn't get out!

'Hurry, go get my father!' Simba ordered Zazu.





The bird flew away in search of Mufasa but Simba knew there wasn't time to wait. Nala needed him now!

Simba looked everywhere for a way to get to his best friend.

Finally, he saw a long tree branch on the shore of the river.

'Nala! Grab on!' Simba yelled. He grabbed the tree branch in his mouth and moved it over the river. Nala reached out and grabbed the branch just in time!

Simba pulled the branch back and dragged Nala out of the river. She was safe!

'Simba? Simba!' Mufasa called, running to the river.

'Here, Dad!' Simba said, panting. 'It's okay! I got Nala!' Relieved, Mufasa and Zazu gathered the cubs and started back to Pride Rock.

'Zazu, Nala, can you give me a moment with Simba?' Mufasa asked. Simba was worried. Was Mufasa angry at him for not paying attention to Zazu?

'Zazu told me about your day. I know that you want to play with your friend but Zazu was trying to teach you important lessons about what it means to be king,' Mufasa said.

'What did you learn at the watering hole?' Mufasa asked.

'That the rhinos follow the antelopes?' Simba replied.

Mufasa laughed. 'No, that you have to be fair as a ruler and make sure all your subjects are treated equally,' he said. 'And Zazu brought you to Pride Rock to show you that a leader must be wise as well. But the last lesson you taught yourself.'

'I did?' Simba said.

'Yes, my son. You rescued Nala and showed that a ruler must be brave. I am very proud of you, Simba.'

Simba smiled up at his father.

'Now,' Mufasa said, 'I think there may just be enough time for you and Nala to play before dinner.'

Simba smiled and bounded off to find Nala.

'He'll make a good king someday, sire,' Zazu said, landing on Mufasa's shoulder.

Mufasa smiled. 'Yes, he will.'



CHRISTMAS EVE

CHECKLIST



It's almost Christmas! Look at the list below to make sure you're ready for the big day.

CHECKLIST FOR CHRISTMAS EVE

- Wrap your presents
- Read a Christmas story
- Watch a festive film
- Go for a walk and look at Christmas lights
- Put out your stocking

Before you go to bed on Christmas Eve don't forget to leave out a treat for Father Christmas and his reindeer!

FOR FATHER CHRISTMAS

- mince pie or Christmas biscuit
- glass of milk

FOR RUDOLPH AND THE REINDEER

- bowl of water
- carrot sticks





25

DECEMBER

A TOY
CHRISTMAS

'Take that!' Andy said in Woody's voice. 'You're spending Christmas in jail!' He put Hamm the piggy bank into an old shoebox with slits cut into the sides.

Andy was playing in his room with his toys. In one hand he held Woody the cowboy. In the other was Buzz Lightyear the space ranger.

'You'll be seeing bars for a long, long time,' Andy added in Buzz Lightyear's commanding tone.

Andy's mother came into the room and sat down on the bed. 'Andy, I have a surprise for you,' she said. 'You know Christmas is coming up. And this year for your big present... we're going to the Grand Canyon!'

Andy dropped Woody and Buzz on the floor. He jumped up and down. 'Hooray!' Andy said. 'That's the best present ever! Can I take Buzz and Woody?' He picked up his two favourite toys.

'I think it's better if you leave them here,' his mother said. 'You'll be so busy you won't have any time to play. Now come on. We have a lot to do to get ready.'


The moment the door shut behind Andy and his mother, the toys came to life. Buzz sat up. Woody straightened his cowboy hat.

'All right!' Rex the dinosaur said as he came out from under the bed. 'The trip is Andy's big present this year. That means no other toys to take our places!'

'I was worried Andy was going to get a video game,' Hamm added. All the toys started talking at once.

'Hold on a minute,' Woody said. He walked to the centre of the room. 'Sure, it's great that there aren't going to be any new toys to replace us. But did you think about what else this means? It means Christmas without Andy.'

134



Everyone got quiet. Christmas without Andy? Why, Christmas without Andy wouldn't seem like Christmas at all! RC's fender drooped sadly. Slinky Dog hung his head. Even the Green Army Men looked glum.

Buzz Lightyear walked over to Woody. 'Andy will be gone, but that doesn't mean we can't have Christmas. We'll just make it a toy Christmas!'

Woody looked at the other toys around him. He forced a smile onto his face. 'Buzz is right,' he said. 'We'll have a great Christmas this year.'

But deep down, Woody knew it couldn't happen. It was true that they could have their own Christmas. But without the kid who loved them all, it wouldn't be much fun at all.

After Andy and his family left on their trip, the toys started getting ready for Christmas. They had a lot to do. They made decorations, practised singing songs and looked for presents for each other.

'Psst, Woody, over here,' Jessie hissed loudly. Woody found her hiding behind a stack of books. 'Look what I found,' she said proudly. She held up a red bandana.

'Jessie, Bullseye has been looking for his bandana for months!' Woody said. 'I know,' Jessie grinned. 'It's going to be a great present for him.'

'Come sing some Christmas carols,' Wheezy the penguin called to Woody. 'All right,' Woody said. He thought maybe the songs would put him in the Christmas spirit.

Wheezy grabbed Mike the tape recorder, and as the music began, his high squeaky voice dropped to a deep baritone. First he belted out a rocking rendition of *Santa Claus Is Coming to Town*. Then he glided into a jazzy *Frosty the Snowman*. But when Wheezy started crooning *Blue Christmas*, Woody had to move away. It made him think of how sad he'd be without Andy.

'Catch you later, Wheezy, Mike,' Woody said with a tip of his hat.

Wheezy and Mike continued to sing as Woody walked off. He was glad his friends were in the holiday spirit. But he couldn't stop thinking about how much he missed Andy. He went over to the other side of the room.

'Hey, Woody, want to help us decorate?' Slinky Dog asked. 'Watch this.' He gave Woody a poke in the ribs, then yelled, 'Hit it!'

135

In a flash, two Aliens bounced super high and draped a string of red and green buttons along the edge of the bookcase.



'Pretty neat, Slink,' Woody said with an approving nod.

'And nice job, Sarge,' he called to the army commander and his troops. They were hanging shiny silver jacks that looked like 3D snowflakes around the room.

'We've got a Christmas tree, too,' Slinky Dog told him. He pointed to a tree made entirely of cotton balls. Red and green hair ribbons were wrapped around it and tied into a bow at the top. There already were presents under the tree. They were wrapped in shiny paper and topped with colourful bows.

'Looks like it's a white Christmas,' Sarge said.

Woody smiled a little bit. He was impressed that all the toys were working together to make Christmas a happy holiday.

Woody kept track of the days on the calendar in Andy's room. Finally, it was the big one, 24th December. Christmas Eve.

Hours passed with secrets and whispers and before long, it grew dark outside. The toys all gathered together to celebrate the holiday, but Woody held back. He was thinking of Andy.

'Hey there, Sheriff,' Buzz said. 'Why so down? It's a beautiful night out there and... it's Christmas Eve!'

'I don't know, Buzz,' Woody said. 'It's just not the same without Andy.'

'You're right,' Buzz said. 'It's not the same. But you have other friends besides Andy. Come on.' He put his arm around Woody's shoulders.

Woody and Buzz walked by Bo Peep. She was reading a Christmas story to the newest toys, the ones who had never had a Christmas before.

Bo winked at Woody. Lo and behold, Woody's heart felt a little lighter.

Then Buzz led Woody over to the Christmas tree. Etch A Sketch stood by the tree, a roaring fire drawn on his screen. Nearby, someone had set up the wooden blocks to spell out MERRY CHRISTMAS.

'Get the lights, Sarge!' Buzz shouted.

The sarge saluted and turned out the lights.

'Here's a little thing I like to call Christmas magic,' Buzz said.

He pressed the laser button on his right arm and a beam of light shot out

onto the wall. He pressed the button again and again and again. It was so quick that his finger became a blur. He moved the lights around – to the right, the left, up, down, left, down, right, up. The light pulsed around the dark room, making a show of dancing snowflakes, sugarplums and lots and lots of toy dolls, trains and teddy bears.

Woody's jaw dropped and his eyes grew wide. 'Wow, Buzz,' the cowboy said. 'That's really great! I didn't know you could—'

His sentence was cut off by a jolly 'Ho, ho, hrrroar!' as RC rolled into the circle. RC was decorated to look like a sleigh. And following behind him was Rex with a white cotton beard and a red sock hat.

'Sorry about the roar,' Rex said, even though no one had been scared. 'Sometimes I forget I'm Santa Claus, not a fierce bone-crunching carnivorous dinosaur!'

Rex went to the Christmas tree. He picked up presents to give to each and every toy. Bullseye was thrilled to have his bandana back. Mr. Spell got brand-new batteries.

'Your speaking was getting a little slow there,' Slinky Dog pointed out.

Buzz got a Star Command four-way outer space signal interceptor. His friends had put it together out of a small cardboard box, some sequins from an old doll's dress and lots of duct tape.

'Thanks, guys!' he said. 'It's just what I always wanted!'

One of the dolls gave Jessie a dress. Hamm's present was a quarter.

'Woohoo!' he shouted. 'That's as good as twenty-five pennies! Five nickels! Two dimes and a nickel! I'm feeling flush!'

And then Bo Peep pulled Woody over and gave him a big kiss. He turned as red as the Christmas lights. 'Aw shucks, Bo,' he said.

Woody looked at his friends. Buzz was right. Christmas without Andy wasn't better or worse. It was different. Spending time with people, and toys, you loved was what Christmas was really all about.

'Hey, Buzz, Woody, everyone!' Slinky Dog yelled from the edge of the bed. 'Check this out!' He pulled the window curtain aside. Outside, snow drifted down.

'It's a white Christmas!' he shouted. 'Merry Christmas, everyone!'

Woody smiled. 'Merry Christmas,' he replied.

FUN FOR

CHRISTMAS DAY

It's Christmas Day! Here are some ideas for fun games and activities you and your family can play.

PLAY CHARADES

Have everyone write down five to ten charades on a piece of paper. They could be names of books, films, songs or musicals. Put them all in a bowl and take turns acting them out. Remember – no talking allowed!

GUESS THE CELEBRITY

Write a celebrity's name on a post-it note and stick it to the forehead of another player. They have 20 questions to guess which celebrity they are!

HUM THE CHRISTMAS TUNE

Take turns humming a Christmas song or carol while everyone else guesses!

138

ALPHABET GAME

Choose a letter of the alphabet and a category, for example, the letter A and food. Everyone takes a turn saying an item that fits both criteria, for example, apple or avocado. The first person who can't think of an item loses!

FESTIVE JOKES

Ask everyone to tell a funny Christmas joke – here are a couple of examples!

What happened to the elf who ate Christmas decorations?
They got tinsel-itis!

What goes, 'Oh, oh, oh!?'
Father Christmas walking backwards!

What did one Christmas tree say to another?
Lighten up!

GUESS THE DRAWING

Have everyone write down five to ten objects, animals or people on a piece of paper. Put them all in a bowl and shuffle them up. Split into teams – each team will take a turn drawing their chosen item while their teammates guess. Set a timer for one minute for each turn.

139



BONUS ACTIVITY

MAKE A PAPER CHAIN

Paper chains are a great way to cheer up an empty room in the run up to Christmas!



YOU WILL NEED

- coloured paper or scraps of wrapping paper

- glue
- scissors



1. Cut strips of paper roughly 2 cm wide by 20 cm long. The number of strips you cut will determine how long your paper chain will be – around 30 is a good number but you can make your chain as long or short as you like!
2. Make a circle with one strip of paper and stick the ends together with glue.
3. Take another strip of paper and pass it through the circle. Glue the ends of the strip together so you have two connected circles.
4. Now take a third strip, put it through the second circle and glue the ends together again. This is how you make your paper chain!
5. Continue the process until you have used up all of your paper strips – you can stop early if you'd like a shorter chain, or cut more strips to make it longer!
6. Once you're happy with the length of your chain you can hang it up!



TOP TIP!

You could use your paper chains to decorate your Christmas tree!



Use this page to count down to Christmas and keep track of all the fun, festive activities. Have you done them all?

