

Around the World with Santa Claus

Learning Objectives: Students will:

1. Discover Christmas customs from different countries around the world
2. Create a puppet show to display their knowledge of Christmas customs.
3. Locate specific countries on a world map.

TEKS: SS 3.12 (B), 5.23 (C), LA 3.2 (B), 3.3 (D), 4.5 (C), 5.4 (B), 5.5 (C)

Materials Needed: world map, craft sticks, colored construction paper, markers, scissors, books or internet sites about Christmas customs around the world, such as www.christmas.com/worldview, www.santas.net, www.the-north-pole.com, www.santaclaus.com

Vocabulary: customs, tradition

Teaching Strategy:

1. Introduce activity by asking students to tell about the Christmas customs of their family, especially pertaining to Santa Claus.
2. Remind students that different countries have different Santa Claus traditions.
3. Divide students into groups of three or four. Each group will be assigned a different country to research. (Students will easily find interesting information on Christmas customs in Brazil, France, Sweden, Russia, Spain, Germany, Mexico, Netherlands, Australia, and others.)
4. Students will discover the following facts about the Christmas traditions of their assigned country.
 - a. What Santa Claus is called (St. Nicholas, Father Christmas, etc.)
 - b. When gifts are given
 - c. How Santa gets to the homes of children (sleigh, horseback, etc.)
 - d. What helpers Santa has, if any, such as elves.
 - e. How to say “Merry Christmas” in the language of the country.
 - f. Any other interesting Christmas tradition (food, decorations, songs)
5. Each group will prepare a simple puppet show for the class. The puppet show will demonstrate their understanding of the appropriate Christmas customs. They will make a Santa puppet, perhaps some children, Christmas trees or other decorations, animals, if appropriate for that country, and/or Santa’s

helpers. The script of the puppet show should tell about how and when Santa delivers gifts to children in that country. The more facts that are incorporated into the script, the better the grade should be for the project.

6. Simple puppets should be made from craft sticks and construction paper.
7. Students should be prepared to locate the country on a world map and repeat the “Merry Christmas” greeting in that language.
8. When all groups are prepared, allow each group to present their puppet show to the class. When all groups have finished, allow one student from each group to go to the wall map, locate their country, and say “Merry Christmas” in the language of the country.

<p>Gifted and Talented Extension: Each student will be given an individual world map on which to locate the countries as the puppet shows are presented. Students will write the name of the country on the map and draw a Christmas icon, representing some custom from the country, on the map.</p>
