

Epiphany - The star followers find Jesus



SpT1A

Matthew 2:1-12

Aim: to discover how God's gift of Jesus was for everyone all over the world



Tradition has it that there were three star followers and that they were men who probably rode camels. The Bible doesn't actually tell us who or how many they were, but they came because they wanted to worship the new king, saviour of the world, Jesus. They appear to have travelled hundreds of miles and some scholars think that they didn't arrive until Jesus was a toddler.

Their arrival caused a stir though, and a jealous Herod then committed a massacre to protect his kingdom from this child. Jesus and his families had to flee and become refugees in Egypt, but not before the star followers had bowed down before him and offered him their strange treasures



Play 'follow the leader' encouraging everyone to follow you around the room copying the moves that you do as you 'follow the star'. If you can hold a large paper star on a stick above your head.



Pull each of the following items out of a bag one by one and ask everyone to guess what today's story is about: a telescope or binoculars (you can make these out of old toilet roll tubes); a bottle of perfume, a star, and a camel.

The Bible doesn't tell us where the star followers came from but we know it was a long way away and would have taken them a long time to get there. This is why many Christians celebrate Epiphany - the arrival of the star followers - in January.

Read 'A message for the wise men' (p128) using the props as appropriate



- I wonder how long the star followers actually travelled for
- I wonder what Mary and Joseph thought about their strange gifts



Read 'Three Wise Women' by Mary Hoffman.

Check out the ['Gold, Frankincense and Myrrh' activities on our resource hub website](#)



- **Make crowns out of gold card and use coloured foil and plastic from Christmas sweets and chocolates on to decorate them**
- **Get hold of some frankincense and myrrh and allow everyone to have a sniff**
- **Encourage the children to pretend to go on a long journey using hobby horses or trikes impersonating camels!**
- **Put out a sand tray for older children to play journeys through with plastic horses, camels and donkeys (make sure babies can't grab the sand to eat it!)**
- **Decorate star shapes with silver foil**



Imagine how thankful the travellers must have been when they finally found Jesus. Thankful that they had made it safely and that their journey had not been in vain. But most of all they were thankful that Jesus - the long promised saviour of the world - had been born and so they put their expensive presents in front of him with thankful hearts.

Ask everyone to suggest something that they are thankful for.

After each suggestion encourage everyone to mime putting the 'thing/person/experience' down in front of Jesus as you say together 'thank you Jesus'



- **Little donkey**
- **Away in a manger**
- **As I sit quietly**
- **I can wriggle**



Encourage families to look up at the night sky and wonder together what it might have been like to see a bright shining star and know that it meant that Jesus had been born