



Session Three

COME ALONG, CHRISTMAS!

THE WONDERFUL WISE MEN FOLLOWED THE STAR



“After Jesus was born, some wise men from the east came to Jerusalem.”

MATTHEW 2:1 (ICB)

Our prayer is that these ideas will allow toddler groups to make the most of our biggest opportunity in the year to introduce families to the good news of Jesus Christ. We hope there are enough great ideas here for you to find the two or three that best suit your group.

The first Christmas story

When telling a story to children, get as close as you can to memorising it so that you can make eye contact and have your hands free to gesture and hold the props. Perhaps write a few critical words or phrases on a card as a prompt or put this script beside you. Practise doing it three times beforehand, and enough of it will stick in your memory! The precise words do not matter. Just tell the story as well as you can.

You will need:

- Supermarket bag with a few random items in it
- Saucepan
- Toilet roll or soap
- Picture of the wise man from our downloadable graphics pack
- Star on a stick (so you can hold the stick and keep the star a few feet away). Use a cardboard star or make a star shape from a wire coathanger wrapped in tinsel.
- Small rucksack packed full for an adventure. No one will see the contents.
- Picture of the stable from our downloadable graphics pack
- Wrapped present

(Depending on the size and location of your group, you could start with a short game of 'Follow my leader' where the walking children follow you on a circuit of the seated group, copying your actions)

Children often follow their parents wherever they go... (hold up the supermarket bag) around the supermarket, (hold up the saucepan) into the kitchen, which is hard when they need to cook or (hold up the toilet roll or soap) even go into the toilet! Children go wherever their parents go.

(Show the picture of the wise man). That first Christmas, there were wonderful wise men, always thinking and looking, studying the stars. They lived far away from where Jesus was born. (Hold up the star on a stick). One day they saw a new star. It was moving! So they packed their bags (put on the rucksack) and set out to follow the star.

(Follow the star as you walk slowly around the group. Keep talking as long as you keep walking! Do the children want to follow you, as they did at the start?) Wherever the star went, they followed. They traveled for ages and ages. They were far from home but they didn't stop following the star. Wherever the star went, the wonderful wise men followed.

The star led them to Jesus. (Hold up the wrapped present) They knew he was their king, so they gave gifts to him of gold, frankincense and myrrh: Amazing gifts fit for a king. (Kneel down or bow. Get the children to do the same. Make it fun) They even bowed down and worshiped him. That is not the normal way to say, "hello" to a child! But Jesus was not ordinary.

Jesus is God's promised king. He is still the king worth searching for. That's why we're still celebrating that first Christmas all these years later.

Well done for listening so well.

Yummy fun

In our bible story today the wise men saw a new star in the sky and followed it to the King. Make your own crown to munch as you remember who the star pointed to.

What to make

Toast crown because Jesus is the promised king

What you need

- ☑ Bread cut into crown shapes. (You could use a crown cookie cutter).
- ☑ Cream cheese (or houmous as a dairy-free option)
- ☑ Vegetable/fruit pieces to decorate (eg raisins, cucumber, apple or strawberry)
- ☑ Toddler knives
- ☑ Plastic plates
- ☑ Bowls to hold decorations



Instructions

- Toast the bread
- Spread cream cheese/houmous onto the toast.
- Add fruit/veg to decorate.

Allergy advice

Gluten, dairy

Safety considerations

Choking hazard. Hot toast.

Photo time!

Set up a photo area, with simple props and backdrop where children can dress up as a wise man and snap a photo to show the rest of their family at home.

Character	Props	Dress up	Backdrop
Star	Star on a pole	<u>Star costume</u>	Dark blue sheet with silver foil stars on it
Wise man	Present, telescope	Cape	

"I dressed up as a wise man. I followed a star to meet the king."

Making it shiny

The wise men saw a new star in the sky and followed it to find the new King, Jesus. Make your own night sky and add in a wise man to follow the new star.

What you need

- ☑ Gold/silver star stickers - one big star per child, lots of smaller stars
- ☑ Black paper
- ☑ Wise man picture printed and cut out (see cut out on page 5)
- ☑ Glue

Instructions

- Before the session, print out the wise man and stick him onto the black paper.
- During the session, the children stick on the stars.



Sing it out

If you're used to singing with your group, you know that it's not about the quality of your voice. It's all about the energy and simple actions you use to engage the children. Together you will make a joyful sound pleasing to God! This song has a verse for each of the sessions, so it is an excellent way to look ahead as well as remembering the story so far.

On that very first Christmas - Colin Buchanan

Mary and Joseph go to Bethlehem
Bethlehem
Bethlehem
Mary and Joseph go to Bethlehem
On that very first Christmas



**Hold reins. Rise up and down
as if you are riding a donkey!**

The baby Jesus born that night
Born that night
Born that night
The baby Jesus born that night
On that very first Christmas



Rock a baby in your arms.

The wise men come to worship him
Worship him
Worship him
The wise men come to worship him
On that very first Christmas



**Bow down and
worship Jesus.**

The shepherds told that the king is born
The king is born
The king is born
The shepherds told that the king is born
On that very first Christmas



**Put hands on your
head like a crown.**

The angels singing 'Glory to God'
'Glory to God'
'Glory to God'
The angels singing 'Glory to God'
On that very first Christmas



Jazz hands up high!

Mary and Joseph go to Bethlehem
The baby Jesus born that night
The wise men come to worship him
The shepherds told that the king is born
The angels singing 'Glory to God'
On that very first Christmas



All the above!

