

And Heaven and Nature Sing!



A Simple Christmas Concert For Young Actors

No musical ability is needed- simply play the backing tracks as the children sing along. The script is on the CD to customize as you wish. The CD also contains songsheets (to make OHP transparencies.) A simple score is also provided free of charge on the CD. Please note that the sheet music is only intended as a rough guide.

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AND HEAVEN AND NATURE SING!

This musical play has four parts so that four classes or groups can take a part each. Younger pupils will probably act parts 1 and 4

We recommend that the entire cast and singers occupy benches close to the stage so that no one needs supervision in a dressing room and the singing is boosted by the presence of all.

Cast:

Part One: Narrator 1, Carol Singers 1, 2 and 3, Other Carol Singers, Mistletoe, Fairy Dancers, Holly, Ivy, Yule Log, Singers. **Songs: Joy to the World, I Saw Three Ships, Deck the Halls, Fairy Dance**

Part Two: Narrator 2, Candle, Wenceslas, Page, Children with Diva lamps, Menorah, Christmas Tree, Robin, Frost, Snow, German soldiers, British soldiers, Singers **Songs: Good King Wenceslas, O Christmas Tree, God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen, The First Noel**

Part Three: Narrator 3, Teacher, Children 1-10, Girl, Shepherd Boy, Night Wind, Angels, Singers **Songs: Oh Come All Ye Faithful, Do You Hear What I Hear? Ding Dong Merrily**

Part Four: Narrator 4, Centurion, Mary, Joseph, Innkeeper and wife, Gabriel, Angels, Shepherds, 3 Wise Men, Singers **Songs: Away in a Manger, Silent Night, Sleep My Little Jesus, Joy to The World**

Props Needed: Part 1: nil Part 2: diva lights, football. Part 3: chair, "Victorian" Christmas cracker containing sweets and a love poem. Stocking containing gold coins. Picture of Santa. Part 4: manger and baby

Costumes may be as simple or elaborate as you wish. Characters such as "Christmas Tree", "Yule Log", "Ivy", "Holly" "Menora" and "Candle" could wear large pictures of their item rather than costumes.

PART ONE

Narrator 1: Welcome to our Christmas concert. We want to tell you all about Christmas. At Christmas, churches have a Christmas service with special Bible readings and carols. Choirs demonstrate their beautiful singing. People go from house to house singing Christmas carols to raise money for charity. Let's meet some carol singers who are singing joyful Christmas songs. **(Enter Carol Singers)**

CD Track 1 *** Joy to the World ***** (Backing Track 15)**
Optional: This song is repeated later, so just sing verse 1

*Joy to the world! The Lord is come! Let earth receive her king.
Let every heart prepare him room
And heaven and nature sing! And heaven and nature sing! And heaven, and heaven and nature sing!
Joy to the world! The saviour reigns! Let men their songs employ
While fields and flood, rocks, hills, and plains
Repeat the sounding joy! Repeat the sounding joy! Repeat, repeat the sounding joy!

He rules the world with truth and grace. And makes the nations prove
The glories of his righteousness
And wonders of his love! And wonders of his love! And wonders, and wonders of his love!*

Carol Singer 1: We are carol singers. We bring a message of joy and happiness.

Carol Singer 2: At this happy time of year we come together to sing songs of hope and celebration.

CD TRACK 2 *** I Saw 3 Ships ***** (Backing Track 16)**

*I saw three ships come sailing in
On Christmas Day, on Christmas Day;*

*I saw three ships come sailing in
On Christmas Day in the morning.*

And what was in those ships all three.....

The Virgin Mary and Christ were there

Pray, wither sailed those ships all three.....

O they sailed into Bethlehem

And all the bells on earth shall ring

And all the Angels in Heaven shall sing

And all the souls on earth shall sing

Then let us all rejoice again

Carol Singer 3: We are here to celebrate the birth of Jesus. But long ago, even before Jesus was born, the ancient people had celebrations and festivals to brighten up the cold dark winter. For instance, they decorated their homes with ivy. **(Enter Ivy)**

Yule Log: I am a Yule Log. The old Norse tradition said it was lucky to burn a log for the full 12 days of Christmas. It had to be a big log. Each year a piece of the log was saved. It was used to light next year's log to bring the family safety and protection. **(Enter Holly)**

Holly: I am holly. People like my shiny leaves and my red berries. I look cheerful in the winter when most plants look dead. The Ancient Romans made me into a wreath to hang on their doors.

***** **CD Track 3: Deck the halls with boughs of holly** ***** (Backing Track 17)

Deck the halls with boughs of holly, Fa la la la la, la la la la.

Tis the season to be jolly, Fa la la la la, la la la la.

Fa la la la Fa la la la

Fa la la Fa la la Fa la la

Deck the halls with boughs of holly, Fa la la la la, la la la la.

2 Don we now our gay apparel

Sing the ancient Yule tide carol

*3 See the blazing log before us,
Strike the harp and join the chorus.*

*4 Follow me in merry measure,
While I tell of Yule tide treasure,*

*5 Fast away the old year passes,
Hail the new, ye lads and lasses,*

*6 Sing we joyous, all together....
Heedless of the wind and weather....*

Holly: My friend mistletoe is brought indoors for good luck. **(Enter Mistletoe)** They say that when people meet under the mistletoe they will be friends for a long time,

Mistletoe: I am Mistletoe. I grow on apple trees. Long ago, people believed I had magical healing powers. The ancient Druids used me as a plant of peace. Enemies would meet under clumps of mistletoe and settle their quarrels. Nowadays, people hang me over their doorways. It is supposed to be good luck to be kissed under the mistletoe.

Narrator 1: Some people believed that fairies lived in evergreen trees during the winter. On the shortest day they had a festival. They would bring branches of greenery into their homes to protect the fairies from the cold winter. That's why some people put a fairy on the top of their Christmas tree. Legends say that the fairies held festivals of their own and came out to dance to chase the winter away. **(Enter Fairies)**

***** **CD Track 4: Fairy Dance** ***** (Backing Track 18)

Join the fairy ring! Come and sing with us!

*Join the fairy ring! Throw some magic dust!
Round and round and round we go! Round and round and round we go!
Round and round and round we go! Round and round and round we go! (Repeat all) (Exit all)*

PART 2

Narrator 2: Because Christmas is in the winter time, the weather can be cold and frosty. We show kindness to the birds and leave food for them. **(Enter Robin, North Wind, Frost and Snow)**

Robin: Some birds go to a warmer place for the winter, but I stay here. You will see lots of robins like me on Christmas cards.

North Wind (to Robin) I am the North Wind! Powerful and Mighty! Find shelter or I will freeze your bones!

Frost: I am the cold cold frost! Fly to your barn or I will freeze your blood!

Snow: I am the snow! Take cover in your nest or you will die of cold.

All, with vocal sound effects: *The North wind doth blow and we shall have snow,
And what will poor robin do then, poor thing?
He'll sit in a barn and keep himself warm
and hide his head under his wing, poor thing. (Repeat)*

(Exit Robin.) (North Wind, Frost and Snow stand at rear of stage joining the next song with vocals and gentle movements)

Narrator 2: Christmas is a time of kindness, compassion, generosity and goodwill. Here's a well known story, where a very rich man helped a very poor man at Christmas time:

(Enter King Wenceslas and Page Boy): CD TRACK 5: Good King Wenceslas (Backing Track 19)

ALL: *Good King Wenceslas looked out on the feast of Stephen
When the snow lay round about deep and crisp and even
Brightly shone the moon that night though the frost was cruel
When a poor man came in sight gath'ring winter fuel*

KING: *"Hither, page, and stand by me, If thou know'st it, telling
Yonder peasant, who is he? Where and what's his dwelling?"*

PAGE: *"Sire, he lives a good league hence underneath the mountain
Right against the forest fence by Saint Agnes' fountain."*

KING: *"Bring me flesh and bring me wine. Bring me pine logs hither.
Thou and I will see him dine. When we bear him thither."*

ALL: *Page and monarch forth they went. Forth they went together.
Through the rude wind's wild lament and the bitter weather*

PAGE: *"Sire, the night is darker now. And the wind blows stronger.
Fails my heart, I know not how, I can go no longer."*

KING: *"Mark my footsteps, my good page. Tread thou in them boldly.
Thou shalt find the winter's rage freeze thy blood less coldly."*

ALL: *In his master's steps he trod where the snow lay dinted
Heat was in the very steps which the Saint had printed
Therefore, Christian men, be sure wealth or rank possessing
Ye who now will bless the poor shall yourselves find blessing. (Exit all)*

(Enter Christmas tree)

Christmas Tree: At Christmas Time, many people decorate their home with an evergreen tree, just like me! To Christians I am a sign of never-ending life because my leaves are always green. People like to decorate me with tinsel, stars, baubles and candles. **(Enter Candle)**

Candle: I'm Candle. When it's dark, my light reminds people that the light and warmth of Spring will return soon.

Narrator: Many religions have a festival of light in which candles are burned.. **(Enter Menorah)** Hanukkah is the Jewish Festival of Lights. Long ago there was a great battle against the Syrians. The Jews won but when they went back to their temple, they found that the Syrians had allowed their sacred light to go out. They re-lit the lamp but only had oil for one day. The miracle of Hanukkah is that the oil lasted 8 days until more oil arrived.

Menorah: I am a special candelabra called a menorah. I can hold nine candles. One of them is used to light the other candles and the other eight stand for the eight days that the oil kept burning.

Narrator: Diwali is a Hindu light festival. Diwali means “array of lights.” It celebrates the triumph of light over darkness. It is one of the most important celebrations in India. **(Children with diva lights enter from both directions)** To celebrate Lord Rama’s return to his kingdom after a 14-year exile, people decorate their homes. There are fireworks in the streets. They give out sweets and light thousands of lamps and candles. **(Children with diva lights exit)**

Candle: Christian churches have Advent Candles which are lit one at a time on the four Sundays before Christmas. And of course, in the olden days, Christmas Trees were lit by candles. **(Enter singers)**

***** CD Track 6: O Christmas tree! ***** (Backing Track 20)

1 O Christmas tree! O Christmas tree!
O tree most fair and lovely!
O Christmas tree! O Christmas tree!
O tree most fair and lovely!
The sight of thee at Christmastide
Spreads hope and gladness far and wide
Oh Christmas tree, O Christmas tree
O tree most fair and lovely!

2 O Christmas tree, O Christmas tree!
You stand in verdant beauty
O Christmas tree, O Christmas tree!
You stand in verdant beauty
Your boughs are green in summer’s glow
And do not fade in winter’s snow
O Christmas tree, O Christmas tree!
You stand in verdant beauty

3 O Christmas tree, O Christmas tree!
How laden are your branches
O Christmas tree, O Christmas tree!
How laden are your branches
Your silver star does glisten bright
Reflecting all the candlelight
O Christmas tree, O Christmas tree!
How laden are your branches

4 O Christmas tree, O Christmas tree
You fill all hearts with gaiety
O Christmas tree, O Christmas tree
You fill all hearts with gaiety
On Christmas Day you stand so tall
Affording joy to one and all
O Christmas tree, O Christmas tree
You fill all hearts with gaiety

***** CD Track 7: God Rest Ye Merry, Gentlemen ***** (Backing Track 21)

1) God rest ye merry gentlemen
Let nothing you dismay
Remember Christ our saviour
Was born on Christmas day
To save us all from Satan’s power
When we have gone astray
Oh tidings of comfort and joy.....

2) From God our heavenly father
The blessed angel came
And unto certain shepherds
Brought tidings of the same
How that in Bethlehem was born
The son of God by name
Oh tidings of comfort and joy.....

3) Fear not said the angel
Let nothing you affright
This day is born a Saviour
Of the pure virgin bright
To free all those who trust in him
From Satan’s power and might
Oh tidings of comfort and joy.....

4) And when they came to Bethlehem
Where our dear Saviour lay
They found Him in the manger
Where oxen feed on hay
His mother Mary kneeled down
And to the lord did pray
Oh tidings of comfort and joy.....

(Exit all)

Narrator 3: Christmas is traditionally a time of peace, goodwill and forgiveness. Look what happened on Christmas Eve during the First World War. At midnight on Christmas Eve 1914, the Germans stopped firing their guns at the British troops. A German brass band played Christmas carols. On Christmas morning, the German soldiers came out of their trenches, calling "Merry Christmas". **(Enter German soldiers)** The British soldiers climbed out of their trenches and shook hands with the German soldiers. **(Enter British soldiers)** Then they played a friendly game of football. They gave each other presents of cigarettes and brandy, and they sang carols and songs.

***** CD Track 8: The First Noel ***** (Backing Track 22)

*The First Noel, the Angels did say
Was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay
In fields where they lay keeping their sheep
On a cold winter's night that was so deep.
Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel Born is the King of Israel!*

*Shining in the East beyond them far
And to the earth it gave great light
And so it continued both day and night.
Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel Born is the King of Israel
(Exit all)*

They looked up and saw a star

PART THREE

Narrator 3: And now we take you into a modern classroom where a discussion about Christmas is taking place. **(Enter teacher with chair. Enter group of ten children who sit in a circle around the teacher)**

Teacher: Good afternoon class! **(class reply)** It's time to tell everybody what you have found out about Christmas

(Child 1 and 2 stand)

Child 1: We found out about mince pies. People celebrate Christ's birthday with a pie containing spices from his native land- cloves, cinnamon and nutmeg.

Child 2: In the olden days, mince pies had meat in them as well as dried fruit.

Child 1: When you make mince pies, stir the mixture in a clockwise direction, like this **(demonstrate)** otherwise you will have bad luck.

Child 2: If someone offers you a mince pie, it is bad luck to refuse it!

Child 1: When you eat your first mince pie of the season, you should make a wish!

Child 2: Did you know that mince pies should always be eaten in silence?

(Child 3 and 4 stand)

Child 3: We found out about "Boxing Day". The day after Christmas day is called Boxing Day.

Child 4: About 800 years ago, an alms box was put in every church to collect money for the poor. On Boxing Day, the money in the box was given to poor people. **(Sit. Teacher thanks them)**

(Child 5 and 6 stand. Child 6 has an old-fashioned Christmas Cracker containing a sweet and a love poem)

Child 5: We found out about Christmas crackers. They were invented by Thomas Smith in 1846.

Child 6: (Holds up cracker) Here's one just like it. Let's pull it. **(Pull cracker, discover sweet and poem)**

Child 5: Oh! There's no bang! And no paper hat! And no toy! But there is a sweet, and a joke.

Child 6: Let me read the joke. **(Reads)**

*"You're in my thoughts and in my heart
Everywhere I go
On Christmas Day I'd like to say
I really love you so"*

Yuk, that's not a joke!

SECTION OMITTED HERE! - THIS IS ONLY A SCRIPT PREVIEW

Girl: What can I do? I cannot marry because I have no money. And because I have no money, I will be sold as a slave. But I want to be free! What can I do? What can I do? **(Hangs stocking up)**

Child 8: St. Nicholas climbed the roof of her house and dropped a purse full of money down the chimney. The purse landed in the girl's stocking which was drying by the fire.

Girl: (Finds money) Is my washing dry? Look what I've found! It's gold! It's a miracle! I am saved! **(Exit)**

Child 7: Saint Nicholas is Sinta Klaas in Dutch. A lot of Dutch people went to live in America a long time ago, and the name Sinta Klaas became Santa Claus. And to this day, children believe that Santa Claus comes down the chimney to leave presents in their stockings. **(Sit. Teacher thanks them.)**

Teacher: (Holds up picture of Santa) This is what we think Santa looks like. In 1822, an American called Clement Clarke Moore told us what Santa was like in a famous poem called "The Night Before Christmas"

Child 9: He was dressed all in fur from his head to his foot,
And his clothes were all tarnished with ashes and soot;
A bundle of toys he had flung on his back,
And he looked like a pedlar just opening his sack.
His eyes how they twinkled! His dimples how merry!
His cheeks were like roses, his nose like a cherry;
His droll little mouth was drawn up like a bow,
And the beard on his chin was as white as the snow.

Child 10 The stump of a pipe he held tight in his teeth,
And the smoke it encircled his head like a wreath.
He had a broad face, and a little round belly
That shook when he laughed like a bowl full of jelly.
He was chubby and plump,--a right jolly old elf--
And I laughed when I saw him, in spite of myself.

Narrator 3: Christmas is the one time of the year when we try to be the sort of people Jesus wants us to be. We give gifts to each other to show our love for each other and to celebrate our love for Jesus. We will now sing some popular carols. (Teacher and Children 1-10 are joined by more singers if available)

*******CD Track 9 O come, all ye faithful** *****(Backing Track 23)

O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant,
O come ye, O come ye, to Bethlehem.
Come and behold Him, born the King of angels;
O come, let us adore Him, O come, let us adore Him,
O come, let us adore Him, Christ the Lord.

Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation;
O sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!
Glory to God, in the highest;

O come, let us adore Him, O come, let us adore Him,
O come, let us adore Him, Christ the Lord. (Enter Night Wind, Lamb and Star)

*******CD Track 10 Do You Hear What I Hear?** *****(Backing Track 24)
(Sung by all, with actions by Night Wind, Lamb, Star and Shepherd boy)

Said the night wind to the little lamb,
"Do you see what I see?"
"Do you see what I see?"
Way up in the sky, little lamb,
"Do you see what I see?"
"Do you see what I see?"
A star, a star, dancing in the night
With a tail as big as a kite
With a tail as big as a kite

2 Said the little lamb to the shepherd boy,
"Do you hear what I hear?"
"Do you hear what I hear?"
Ringing through the sky, shepherd boy,
"Do you hear what I hear?"
"Do you hear what I hear?"
A song, a song, high above the trees
With a voice as big as the sea
With a voice as big as the sea
(Enter shepherd boy and King)

3 Said the shepherd boy to the mighty king,
"Do you know what I know?"
"Do you know what I know?"
In your palace warm, mighty king,
"Do you know what I know?"
"Do you know what I know?"
A Child, a Child shivers in the cold
Let us bring Him silver and gold.
Let us bring Him silver and gold

4 Said the king to the people everywhere,
Listen to what I say!
Listen to what I say!
Pray for peace, people everywhere!
Listen to what I say!
Listen to what I say!
The Child, the Child, sleeping in the night
He will bring us goodness and light.
He will bring us goodness and light.

*******11 Ding Dong Merrily on High******* (Backing Track 25)

Ding Dong Merrily on High
In heav'n the bells are ringing:
Ding dong! verily the sky

Is riv'n with angels singing.
Gloria, Hosanna in Excelsis!

*Ding Dong Merrily below!
The steeple bells are ringing!*

*And i-o-i-o-i-o
The priest and people singing
Gloria, Hosanna in Excelsis! (Exit all)*

PART FOUR

Narrator 4: We have talked about Christmas customs and now it is time to tell you the story of the very first Christmas, over two thousand years ago. **(Enter Mary, kneeling)** One evening, in the town of Nazareth, as Mary was praying, an angel named Gabriel appeared. **(Enter Gabriel)**

Gabriel: Do not be afraid. Mary. God is pleased with you. You will have a baby and call him Jesus. **(Exit)**

Narrator 4: An angel told Mary's fiancé Joseph the news, and asked him to care for Mary and the special baby. **(Enter Joseph)** Mary and Joseph loved each other very much and soon they were married. Soon it was time for the baby to be born, but there was bad news from the emperor. **(Enter Centurion)**

Centurion: Hear ye! Hear ye! By order of our great emperor Augustus, all people must return to the where they were born to be counted and pay their taxes. **(Exit Centurion)**

Narrator 4: Joseph and Mary had to travel to Bethlehem. Mary rode on a donkey but it was a long hard journey. It took several days for them to reach Bethlehem. The streets were crowded with other people who had come to pay their taxes. There was nowhere to stay. The inns were full, with five or six travellers in every room. It was getting late. Joseph knocked at another door. **(Enter Innkeeper and wife)**

Innkeeper: (grumpily emerging) Who's that knocking on my door? It's late! Oh, no! Not more travellers!

Innkeeper's Wife: There's no room here! Go away! We've already got five or six in every room!

Narrator 4: The innkeeper saw how desperately tired Mary was and took pity on her and showed them to his stable.

Innkeeper: (brings manger) I have no rooms left....but you can sleep in my stable if you wish. My animals will help keep you warm.

Narrator 4: Mary and Joseph were very grateful. They filled a manger with hay to make a crib ready for baby Jesus. During the night, in the soft glow of a lantern, in the little town of Bethlehem the Holy baby Jesus was born.

END OF SCRIPT PREVIEW

CD TRACK LISTING: Tracks 1-14 have vocals.

Tracks 15-28 have no vocals

01 and 15 Joy to the world
02 and 16 I Saw Three Ships
03 and 17 Deck the Halls with Boughs of Holly
04 and 18 Fairy Dance
05 and 19 Good King Wenceslas
06 and 20 O Christmas tree!
07 and 21 God Rest Ye Merry, Gentlemen
08 and 22 The First Noel
09 and 23 O come, All Ye Faithful
10 and 24 Do You Hear What I Hear?
11 and 25 Ding Dong Merrily on High
12 and 26 Away in a Manger
13 and 27 Silent Night
14 and 28 Sleep my little Jesus