

# CHRISTMAS AROUND THE WORLD

## Calendar Connections Cards

Target Level: grades 3-6

The facts are created at a more advanced level but can easily be used for the entire homeschool family!  
Young children will soak up the information their older siblings are taught while all together.

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# Calendar Connections Cards

In this file you will find a set of mini cards. These can either be cut up for a mini pocket chart calendar, or leave the page whole and add to a [calendar notebook!](#)

You will also find the larger image cards and fact cards – these do NOT print front to back. Print the image cards for your calendar {laminare if possible} and keep the information cards separate on a metal ring or behind the image cards in the calendar. [See the calendar we use here.](#)



## Calendar Connections Supplies





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## 1 Christmas Around the World!

Did you know that other countries celebrate Christmas differently than we do? Maybe you have family that came from one of these countries and have carried on one of the traditions. This month you will learn how different countries celebrate Christmas and also how to say Merry Christmas in their native tongue. So get your maps ready and as you find the countries write "Merry Christmas" in that countries language on a card and pin it to that country.

## 2 China

Christians in China celebrate Christmas by making Christmas lanterns. They carefully cut out three wise men and place them on a circle inside the lantern. They then light a red candle causing the wise men to move in a circle making them look like they are following the star, looking for baby Jesus. They also decorate trees, called "Trees of Light" with paper chains, paper flowers and paper lanterns. They hang muslin stockings and wait for Dun Che Lao Ren (dwyen-chuh-lau-oh-run) which means "Christmas Old Man". Since the vast majority of Chinese are not Christians, most people celebrate the Chinese New Year during the same time, towards the end of January. They make candy from rice flour and sugar and set off a lot of fireworks!

## 3 China

The way you say  
"Merry Christmas"  
in Chinese is  
**Kung Hei Shing Taan**  
(goong-hoh-sheng-than)

## 4 Sweden

In Russia Christmas lasts a month! Celebrating begins December 13<sup>th</sup>, with the Feast of St. Lucia and ends January 13<sup>th</sup> with Tjugondag Knut (St. Canute's Day). On feast day the oldest daughter dresses in a white dress with a red sash and wears a green wreath with seven candles on her head. She then carries coffee and buns to each member in their room. This is to symbolize Lucia carrying food through the dark underground tunnels to Christians hiding from persecution.

On Christmas Eve they wait for a little gnome, known as the tomte, come out from his home under the floorboards or the barn. He carries a sack and leaves gifts for all.

## 5 Sweden

The way you say  
"Merry Christmas"  
in Swedish is  
**God Jul**  
(good yool)

## 6 Germany

Celebrating begins December 6<sup>th</sup>, with St. Nicholas Day. On the eve of Dec. 6<sup>th</sup>, children set out a shoe or boot by the fireplace. During the night St. Nicholas hops from house to house with his book of sins in which all the misdeeds of the children are written. If the children have been good, their shoes are filled with delicious goodies. If not, their shoes are filled with twigs! Christmas Eve is full of excitement! Before the evening feast is the presentation of the tree. Mom has secretly decorated the tree with fruit, candy, cars, trains, angels, tinsel, and lights. The gifts are set under the tree and close by are plates filled with fruit, nuts, marzipan, chocolate and biscuits for each member. A bell is rung, signaling the children to enter. Carols are then sung, the Christmas story read and gifts opened.



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<p>7</p> <p><b>Germany</b></p> <p>The way you say “Merry Christmas” in German is <b>Fröhliche Weihnachten</b> (fro-li-ch-eh vhy-na-ch-ten)</p>	<p>8</p> <p><b>Mexico</b></p> <p>The main Christmas celebration is called Los Posadas (the lodges). This refers to the journey of Mary and Joseph to Bethlehem and their search for a place to stay. Processions begin nine days before Christmas (it's thought that's how long the actual journey lasted). Family and friends divide into two groups, the pilgrims and the inn keepers. Pilgrims travel from house to house asking for lodging and are refused until they come to a house where an alter and Nativity scene have been set up. Here the pilgrims are admitted with great rejoicing. A traditional prayer is spoken and the party begins. Sweet breads and drinks are served and children attempt to break a piñata filled with fruit, candy and peanuts.</p>	<p>9</p> <p><b>Mexico</b></p> <p>The way you say “Merry Christmas” in Spanish is <b>Feliz Navidad</b> (feh-LEES na-vee-DAHD)</p>
<p>10</p> <p><b>Congo</b> (Africa)</p> <p>Christmas is more of a religious celebration. Most people won't have gifts. Christmas Eve is very important with the churches having huge musical evenings (with five or six choirs) and ending in a nativity play. These plays last a very long time. They begin with the story of creation in the Garden of Eden and end with King Herod sending soldiers in search of the baby Jesus. The birth of Jesus is timed as close to midnight as possible – meaning the play doesn't usually end until close to 1 A.M.! And after the play is more singing until dawn! Then the Christmas service begins at 9 A.M. with more singing. Christmas day most families try to eat a better meal than normal and is usually spent quietly (maybe sleeping!).</p>	<p>11</p> <p><b>Congo</b> (Africa)</p> <p>The way you say “Merry Christmas” in Swahili is <b>Sikukuu ya Kuzaliwa Kristo</b> (see-koo-koo yah koo-zah-lee-wah kree-stow)</p>	<p>12</p> <p><b>Saudi Arabia</b></p> <p>Islam is the only accepted religion in Saudi Arabia. All non-Muslim religious activities are prohibited. Christians gather together in homes and act out the Christmas story with songs. On Christmas Eve they hold a ceremony with one of the children reading the Christmas story from an Arabic Bible while the rest of the people hold lighted candles. They then light a big bonfire of thorns. When the fire is out and the ashes are cold everyone jumps in the ashes three times and makes a wish.</p>





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<p><b>13 Saudi Arabia</b></p> <p>The way you say “Merry Christmas” in Arabic is <b>Miladun Said</b> (mee-lah-doon sah-yeed)</p>	<p><b>14 France</b></p> <p>In France nearly every home has a nativity scene, or crèche. The crèche is created with little clay figures called santons (san-toons). The children make them and continue adding to the scene each year. Before the children go to bed they place straw shoes by the fireplace. Père Noël (Father Christmas) travels around with his companion, Le Pere Fouettard. This man dressed in black reminds Père Noël of just how each child has behaved during the past year. If they have been well behaved they receive small toys, candy and nuts in their straw shoes.</p>	<p><b>15 France</b></p> <p>The way you say “Merry Christmas” in French is <b>Joyeux Noël</b> (Zwah-YUH noh-EHL)</p>
<p><b>16 Hawaii</b></p> <p>Poinsettias and white orchids grow wild in Hawaii and are picked and used as decorations for the holiday. The ukulele is played during the Christmas pageant at church on Christmas Eve. After the pageant a luau (banquet) is held on the beach! They roast a whole pig in a deep charcoal pit and eat poi (Poh-ee) paste with their fingers! They end the evening by building a big bonfire and singing Christmas carols.</p>	<p><b>17 Hawaii</b></p> <p>The way you say “Merry Christmas” in Hawaiian is <b>Mele Kalikimaka</b> (MAY-lay kah-LEE-kee MAH-kah)</p>	<p><b>18 Brazil</b></p> <p>Instead of decorating with Christmas trees, Brazilians set up a presepio (pre-SEP-ee-ooh), a nativity scene. They start with life-sized figures of Mary, Joseph, and baby Jesus and then add shepherds, sheep, cows, and camels. They continue decorating with sailboats, airplanes, and electric trains. They add the modern things to show the Christ child all the new things they have learned about since He was born. On Christmas Eve they wrap food and toys in white paper and ribbon. They take the gifts to church and lay them at the foot of baby Jesus in the presepio. These gifts are given to those that are less fortunate. Papai Noel (Father Noel) is the gift giver in Brazil. Tradition says he lives in Greenland and wears silk clothing since Christmas comes during the summer!</p>



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<p><b>19</b></p> <p><b>Brazil</b></p> <p>The way you say "Merry Christmas" in Portuguese is <b>Feliz Natal</b> (feh-LEES nah-TAHL)</p>	<p><b>20</b></p> <p><b>Sri Lanka</b></p> <p>In Sri Lanka only about 7% of the population is Christian. For Christians in this country Christmas starts December 1<sup>st</sup> when firecrackers are set off at dawn! Children make paper chains of green, yellow, blue and red paper and hang them on their Christmas trees. They also take some chains to their church and hang them on the "Tree of Life" – their Christmas tree at church. On Christmas morning, while it is still dark, they light torches and walk down to the Christmas sunrise service. Fireworks light up the sky and they read the Christmas story while the sun rises over the hills.</p>	<p><b>21</b></p> <p><b>Sri Lanka</b></p> <p>The way you say "Merry Christmas" in Tamil is <b>Kirusmas Vazphuphal</b> (KROOZ-ma FAR-too-dal)</p>
<p><b>22</b></p> <p><b>Norway</b></p> <p>Presents are brought to children by Nisse, a small gnome. Children leave a type of rice porridge for Nisse. If they don't he may play tricks on them! This rice porridge is also eaten on Christmas Eve as a meal at lunch (with butter, sugar and cinnamon) or as a dessert at dinner (with whipped cream mixed in!). If you find an almond in your portion you are given a pink or white marzipan pig.</p> <p>In some parts of the country, children dress up as a Christmas story character such a wise man or shepherd and sing carols from house to house while carrying white paper stars on poles.</p>	<p><b>23</b></p> <p><b>Norway</b></p> <p>The way you say "Merry Christmas" in Norwegian is <b>God Jul</b> (good yool)</p>	<p><b>24</b></p> <p>For unto us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.</p> <p>Isaiah 9:6</p>





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And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks by night. An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified.

But the angel said to them,  
"Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people.

Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you;  
he is Christ the Lord."

Luke 2:8-11

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## Egypt

Only about 15% of the population in Egypt is Christian. Christmas Day is celebrated January 7<sup>th</sup>. Christians fast for 40 days before Christmas (in this case they don't eat any meat products except for fish). This is called "The Holy Nativity Fast". During this month they sing special praise songs on Saturday evenings in preparation for the Sunday service.

The gift bringer in Egypt is named Baba Noël (Father Christmas).

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## Egypt

The way you say  
"Merry Christmas"  
in Egyptian is  
**Mboni Chrismen**  
(Ma-bon-ee Kris-men)

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## Italy

In Rome, canons are fired from the Castel St. Angelo on Christmas Eve to start the holiday season. People fast for 24 hours and break the fast with an elaborate Christmas Feast. Small gifts are given on this day. The main gift giving event takes place on January 6<sup>th</sup>, or the feast of Epiphany. This is a celebration of the when the Magi visited the Christ child. Children anxiously await a visit from La Befana, who brings gifts for the good children and punishment for the bad! It is said the Magi asked for food and lodging and she refused, so they left. After a while she changed her mind and went to look for them, never to find them. La Befana, which means Epiphany, now continues to search for the Christ child, giving gifts on Epiphany just as the Wise Men did.

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## Italy

The way you say  
"Merry Christmas"  
in Italian is  
**Buon Natale**  
(Bwohn Nah-TAH-lay)

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## Russia

Russians celebrate Christmas Day January 7<sup>th</sup>. The date is different because they use the old "Julian" calendar for religious celebrations. Christmas Eve is celebrated with a special meal including vegetable pie and beetroot soup and ends with Vzvar, a sweet drink of dried fruit and honey boiled in water. It is a drink traditionally present at a birth, so it is representing Jesus' birth. They then go to midnight services.

New Years Day is when Father Frost, or Ded Moroz, brings presents to the children. He is always escorted by his granddaughter. On New Years Eve the children hold hands and make a circle around the tree and call for Ded Moroz. When they appear the star and other lights on the tree light up!



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## Russia

The way you say  
"Merry Christmas"  
in Russian is  
**S'Rozhdestvom Khristovym**  
(z'roh-DESHT-vohm  
KRIS-too-vim)