

THE BIRTH OF JESUS

English Theme: Family

Reading: Luke 2:1-20. The *italicized bold* questions are in the students' reading books.

Objective: Jesus' miraculous birth shows that he is God. Jesus' coming to Earth is good news for all people.

I. Opening Discussion and Conversation

If this class is not the same as your English class, spend a few minutes making introductions. Let students introduce themselves and tell how many people are in their families. (How many live in their homes?)

Introduce the reading by telling your students that during your reading times you will be reading about a man named Jesus. (His name is not in the day's text.) Today we will be reading about his birth.

- A. How are new babies celebrated in your home? In your country?
- B. What do you know about the events related to your birth?
- C. How are birthdays celebrated in your country?
- D. How is Christmas celebrated in your country? In your home?

Opening discussion ties
English class to reading text.

II. Reading for Beginners

- A. Begin by letting your translator or a student read the text in your students' first language.
- B. Teach the story in simple English sentences to your students:
 1. Write the sentences below on your whiteboard.
 2. Dramatize the sentence while you read the sentence aloud in English
 3. Read the sentence with your students.
 4. Write the next sentence, read it, act it out, read it with your class.
 5. Proceed through all the sentences of the story.
 6. Read all the sentences in unison with the class.

While it is being read, don't be afraid to 'ham it up' a bit – wear a costume, use props, add your own dialog and actions.

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| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>The king said everyone should be counted.</i> 2. <i>Mary and Joseph went to Bethlehem.</i> 3. <i>Mary gave birth to a baby boy.</i> 4. <i>Mary laid the baby in the place where cattle are fed.</i> 5. <i>Shepherds were watching sheep.</i> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. <i>An angel from Heaven said, "I bring you good news."</i> 7. <i>The angel said, "Go see the baby."</i> 8. <i>The shepherds went to see the baby.</i> 9. <i>The shepherds went home full of joy.</i> 10. <i>The shepherds thanked God for what they had seen.</i> |
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Simple sentences for low-level readers.

- C. Assign different students to play the various parts of the story while you read the simplified sentences. If possible have costumes and props available for them.
- D. Order of Events
When students have finished dramatizing the story, give them strips of paper on which you have written the above sentences, and ask them to put the sentences into the right order. These sentences are available at the end of this lesson. When they are finished let them compare their order with the list on the board or in their notebooks. This can be done in pairs or individually. When the story is in the correct order, ask each student to read one sentence aloud.
- E. Distribute paper, colored pencils, crayons or markers so that students can draw pictures of different events in the day's story. If possible, each student should draw a different part of the story – use the sentences in part II-B.
When all are finished ask each student to explain his/her picture, or ask other students to guess what part of the story is shown. Then ask students to put their pictures in the correct order.
- F. If they are able, let students compare the simplified version of the text with the story as given in their New Testaments.
- G. With the help of your translator ask students to answer some of the 'Test Your Understanding' questions. See section III-C. Not all the questions can be answered from the simplified text. You can also discuss the 'Thinking About' questions (IV-A). If you do not have a separate conversation class, use some of the follow-up questions to reinforce the objective of this lesson. See page 19.
- H. Let students work in groups of two or three to complete the crossword puzzle at the end of this lesson, using their New Testaments for reference. You will need to show them where the text can be found by giving the page number, column and paragraph.

III. Reading for Advanced Readers

A. Class Reading

Ask your students to open their New Testaments to Luke 2. Show them where today's reading lesson is located by giving them the page number. Read through the text in unison with the students. Ask students if there are words they do not understand. If no one volunteers, ask different students to explain the more difficult words.

As you prepare to read the text a second time, tell your students that they will need to remember the correct order of events for the next activity. Read the text a second time. This time let each student take a turn reading a verse or sentence. While they are reading, you should pay attention to their reading ability so that you can be ready for part B.

Reinforcement activities to help

B. The Correct Order

students remember the text.

Form groups of two or three students based on similar reading ability. Groups of two are best. Groups of three are acceptable, but there should not be more than 3 in a group – either one student will be left out or the group will sub-divide itself into smaller groups. Let each group move to a place away from the rest of the class. Give each student a copy of the events of the story listed at the end of this lesson

(photocopy as needed for your class). Give the groups 15 minutes to put the events in the correct order by numbering them.

After a group has shown you their completed order of events let them use their New Testaments to check their work. Do not tell them yet if their order is correct or not; let them check their order of events to determine if it is correct.

C. Test Your Understanding

After everyone is finished, bring the class back together, give the correct order of events and ask the following review questions. These questions are in the students' reading book.

1. *What happened while Mary and Joseph were in Bethlehem?*
2. *Who came to the shepherds?*
3. *Where did the shepherds go?*
4. *Why did Mary and Joseph have to go to Bethlehem?*
5. *In what kind of place was Jesus born?*
6. *Why did Mary put Jesus in the place where cattle were fed?*
7. *What did the angel tell the shepherds?*
8. *What did all the angels do?*
9. *What did the shepherds say when they saw the baby?*
10. *What did the shepherds do after they saw the baby?*

IV. Thinking About What We Have Read

Use this part to reinforce the lesson objective: *Jesus' miraculous birth shows that he is God. Jesus' coming to earth is good news for all people.*

Be sure your class understands that his birth was not Jesus' beginning, only his beginning of life on earth as a human person.

- A. Ask one or more of the following questions. Write them on your whiteboard.
 1. How do you think Mary felt about giving birth to her first baby in a stable, which may have been a cave? What concerns may she have had? (She may have been concerned about lack of medical help, cleanliness, too cold, etc.)
 2. Why do you think God sent the angels to tell the shepherds first?
 3. How did the emotions of the shepherds change during their encounter with the angels? Why?
 4. What was Mary thinking while the shepherds were telling what happened?
- B. If you will not have a separate conversation class, use some of the follow-up questions to reinforce your lesson's objective. See page 19.
- C. This would be a good story to put into drama form and act out for another class or for an evening program. One student can be narrator, reading the text as written. Other students can play various roles, making up dialog as they wish.
- D. A crossword puzzle review of this lesson is in the students' books. It is also on the last page of this lesson. If you are not using student books, photocopy as needed. Let low-level readers use their New Testaments for reference.

Order of Events for beginning readers

For use with part II-D.

Photocopy this page and cut into five sections for students to put into correct order.

The king said everyone should be counted.

Mary and Joseph went to Bethlehem.

Mary gave birth to a baby boy.

Mary laid the baby in the place where cattle are fed.

Shepherds were watching sheep.

An angel from Heaven said, “I bring you good news.”

The angel said, “Go see the baby.”

The shepherds went to see the baby.

The shepherds went home full of joy.

The shepherds thanked God for what they had seen.

The Birth of Jesus (Luke 2:1-20)

Put these events in the correct order according to the text.

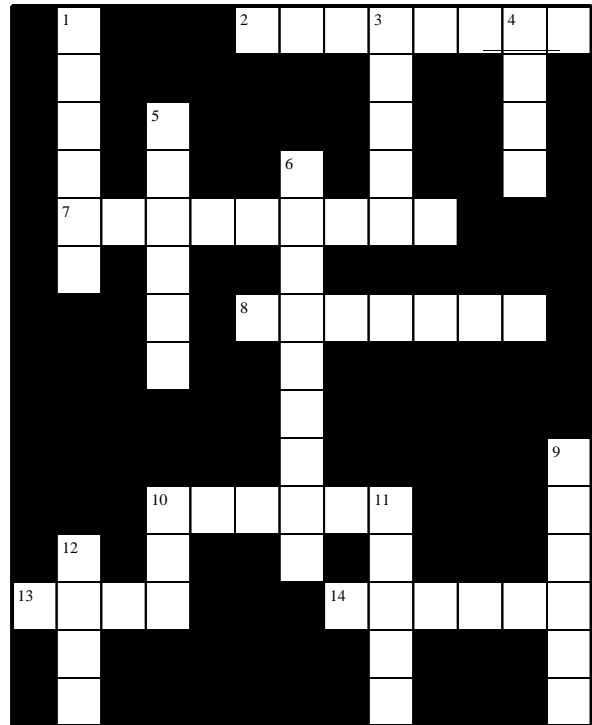
- a. ____ The angel said, “Do not be afraid. I bring you good news.”
- b. ____ The baby was laid in the place where cattle eat.
- c. ____ Mary and Joseph could not find a place to sleep.
- d. 1 Caesar said everyone’s name should be written in the ‘Book of Nations’.
- e. ____ An angel came to the shepherds.
- f. ____ Joseph and Mary went to Bethlehem.
- g. ____ The shepherds thanked God for what they had seen.
- h. ____ The shepherds went to Bethlehem.
- i. ____ Mary gave birth to the baby.
- j. ____ The shepherds told what the angel had said about the child.
- k. ____ Shepherds were watching their sheep.
- l. ____ The shepherds found the baby lying in the place where cattle are fed.
- m. ____ Many angels said, “Peace on earth among men who please God.”
- n. ____ The shepherds said, “Let us go to Bethlehem.”
- o. ____ The shepherds found Mary and Joseph.

The correct order of events

- d 1. Caesar said every person’s name should be written in the ‘Book of Nations’.
- f 2. Joseph and Mary went to Bethlehem.
- c 3. Mary and Joseph could not find a place to sleep.
- i 4. Mary gave birth to the baby.
- b 5. The baby was laid in the place where cattle eat.
- k 6. Shepherds were watching their sheep.
- e 7. An angel came to the shepherds.
- a 8. The angel said, “Do not be afraid. I bring you good news.”
- m 9. Many angels said, “Peace on earth among men who please God.”
- n 10. The shepherds said, “Let’s go to Bethlehem.”
- h 11. The shepherds went to Bethlehem.
- o 12. The shepherds found Mary and Joseph.
- l 13. The shepherds found the baby lying in the place where cattle are fed.
- j 14. The shepherds told what the angel had said about the child.
- g 15. The shepherds thanked God for what they had seen.

The Birth of Jesus (Luke 2:1-20)

1. Peace on earth among men who ___ Him.
2. Jesus' birth is ___ ___ for all people.
3. Joseph was from the family of ___.
4. Mary was to be Joseph's ___.
5. He ordered all people to be counted.
6. Jesus was born in this town.
7. They were watching their sheep.
8. The shepherds ___ God for all they had seen.
9. The ___ told the shepherds of Jesus' birth.
- 10 across. Mary was going to become his wife.
- 10 down. The angels brought news of great ___.
11. Mary hid the words of the shepherds in her ___.
12. The shepherds went to look for this.
13. She gave birth to the baby Jesus.
14. Jesus was placed where these are fed.



CONVERSATION FOR: THE BIRTH OF JESUS

1. Opening

Open with introductions. Be sure everyone in this group knows each other. Have the students tell about themselves and their families. Tell the class about yourself and your family. Show pictures of your family to your class.

2. Agree Or Disagree

Write the following statements on the whiteboard prior to class:

- a. Children should leave home only after they are married.
- b. Old people should be encouraged to live in retirement homes with people their own age rather than with their families.
- c. Families should not have more than two children.
- d. Children should always obey their parents.
- e. Children should always ask parents for permission to marry.
- f. Children should pay rent to parents when they get a job.
- g. The members of a family should live close together.
- h. Family life is less important today than it was in the past.
- i. Parents should give their children spending money. Children should help with work around the house.

Start with questions related to the English lesson

Break the class into groups of two or three students. Have the groups decide with which statements they agree and with which statements they disagree. They should modify any statement with which they disagree so that the statements represent the opinions of the group.

Share their responses with the class.

3. Marriage

Ask the students questions about marriage in their country.

- a. How old are people usually when they get married?
- b. How long is the engagement time?
- c. Who pays for the wedding?
- d. What happens in the ceremony?
- e. How do the bride and groom dress?
- f. How do you choose your spouse?
- g. What makes a 'good' marriage?

These questions move the discussion towards the reading lesson.

4. Transition Questions

Use the following questions to move from discussion about their families to conversation related to the Reading/Bible lesson on The Birth of Jesus.

- a. Where in your country do people go to have babies? To a hospital? Stay at home? Someplace else? How long do they stay? Or do other people come to the mother's home to help?
- b. How are births announced in your country? In newspapers? Telephone?
- c. What was it about the birth of Jesus that most excited the shepherds?

5. Reading/Bible Follow-up Questions

This discussion time lets you bring up questions so students can think about the spiritual implications of the reading text.

Use these questions to focus student thinking on the application of the Reading/Bible lesson to their own lives: *Jesus' miraculous birth shows that he is God. Jesus' coming to Earth is good news for all people.*

Do not force your beliefs on your students. You can word your questions in such a way that they will not be offensive to students who are not Christians: "If Jesus is God, what do you think his childhood was like?" (Question C below)

Do your students know who and what you mean by 'God'? To your students, God may be non-existent, a block of wood on a shelf, or one of many forces with which they must contend. Before you proceed to the follow-up questions take time to talk about who the God of the Bible is. Then proceed to the questions.

- a. What kind of parents were Mary and Joseph?
- b. How does Jesus' birth give us evidence that he is God?
- c. What do you think Jesus' childhood was like, knowing that he was God?
- d. Why is it important that God (Jesus) came to earth and lived as a person just like we live?
- e. The angels said that Jesus' birth was good news for all people. Why was Jesus' birth 'Good News' for all people? (If you did not talk about Jesus' birth being 'Good News' in the Reading/Bible class now is a good time to talk about it.)
- f. Do you think God has a plan or purpose for your life like he did for Mary and Joseph?