

ADVENT CALENDAR (LEVEL 3)

HISTORY OF THE ADVENT CALENDAR:

Advent calendars have been used to count the days until Christmas since the mid-1800s. The tradition began in Germany when families made chalk marks on doors or put small religious pictures on the wall to countdown to Christmas. In the early 1900s a man named Gerhard Lang is believed to have printed the first Advent calendar. He based it on one his mother had made for him when he was child. She stuck 24 pictures on a piece of cardboard. Later these little pictures were made into the little doors that we are familiar with today. President Dwight D Eisenhower is credited with bringing the Advent calendar to the United States when he was photographed opening a calendar with his grandchildren.

Today there are Advent calendars of every sort. Many of them have nothing to do with the religious celebration of Christmas. Most of these calendars begin on December 1 and finish on December 24. A religiously themed Advent calendar would begin on the first Sunday of Advent and finish on Christmas Day.

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY LEVEL 3:

Discuss with the children the various types of Advent calendars that are on sale this year.

- Do they or their brothers and sisters have an Advent calendar at home?
- What kind of calendars do they have? Is there a must have calendar this year?
- Look at some calendars online? What seems to be the most popular one?
- What do they think an Advent calendar is used for? Is it just to count down the days until Christmas or could it have another purpose?
- Could it help us to get ready to celebrate the real meaning of Christmas, the birth of Jesus?
- If we were to design a calendar that would help us get ready for the birth of Jesus what would it look like? When would it begin? When would it end?

MAKE AN INDIVIDUAL OR CLASS ADVENT CALENDAR

Use the template Advent Calendar 2016 to help the children make their own individual calendars or you might like to make a bigger version for the classroom. The first week is filled in with activities for each day. They can tick or colour in the box as they complete the activity.

GROUP ACTIVITY

Encourage the children to think of something that they can do for the remaining days to complete the calendar.

- Divide the class into groups and assign each group a specific week on the calendar.
- Ask them to think of activity for each day of the week and appoint a recorder and reporter
- Record the responses from each group excluding any duplicate activities.
- If there are extra activities needed because of duplicates brainstorm with the whole class to fill the blank days.
- Get the class to fill in their individual calendars or fill in the classroom calendar