

# Parent Page December 2015



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## It's a Small World: Christmas Traditions and Customs

Christmas is the most widely recognized holiday worldwide and yet there are many diverse ways to celebrate. Why not share some of the traditions from other countries and cultures with young children? It is a fun way to emphasize commonality while respecting diversity. You may also wish to add the celebrations, traditions and customs of other other religions and cultures into your curriculum.

### "Merry Christmas" in Many Languages

Listen to "Merry Christmas" in different languages.

Spanish.....Feliz Navidad  
Danish.....Glaedelig  
Italian.....Buone Fesle Natalizie  
French.....Joyeuz Noel  
Dutch.....Vrolyk Kerstfeast  
German.....Froelich Weihnacten  
Polish.....Boze Narodzenie  
Turkish.....Yeliniz Kitu Oslum

**Christmas in Italy** Epiphany is the day for children. In this country folklore tells of Befana, who was a woman who failed to go with the wise men. She is now looking for the Christ child and delivers gifts for all the young children. On Epiphany Eve the children empty their pockets for treats. Naughty children receive ashes or a birch rod.

**Christmas in Poland** For Christmas Eve supper, they have 12 meals. One of the meals is carp prepared in different ways. No meat is served. There is an extra place setting for unexpected guests. This country has a custom that after supper the children open presents. Then the entire family attends a midnight mass. Christmas day is reserved for visiting family and friends.

**Christmas in Mexico** Christmas festivities and traditions begin with Las Posadas, nine consecutive days of parties and candlelight processions. The Pinata is a common part of many parties. Most Mexican homes decorate with a nativity scene. On Christmas Eve at midnight, bells whistles and fireworks mark the anniversary of the birth of Christ. Families then attend "Misa de Gallo" or "Mass of the Rooster."

**Christmas in Germany** The day of celebration is on December 6th, St. Nicholas Day. Children place a shoe or boot by the fireplace. During the night, St. Nicholas, the patron saint of children, goes from house to house carrying a book with a record of the misdeeds of the children. If they have been good, he fills the shoe or boot with delicious goodies. If they have not been good their shoe is filled with twigs. Parent usually decorate the Christmas tree and place presents under it. The tree is not seen by the children until Christmas Eve. Then carols are sung, sometimes sparklers are lit, the Christmas story is read and Christmas gifts are opened.

From: [www.childcarelounge.com](http://www.childcarelounge.com)

### Peppermint Play Dough

1 cup of flour ~ 1/2 cup of salt~2 tbs of cream of tartar~1 tbs of oil~ Green Food Coloring ~ 1 cup of boiling water ~ 10 drops of Peppermint Essential Oil

**Directions** Mix all ingredients except the boiling water together into a large mixing bowl. Add the boiling water and mix well. Stir well until the mixture is well combined – you may find you will need to knead it. This stores really well in an airtight container too.

### **Santa's Coming!**

(To the Frere Jacques)

Santa's coming, Santa's coming  
Can you hear? Can you hear?  
Jingle Bells are jingling, we  
are happy singing  
Christmas Bells, Christmas  
Bells



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