



CHRISTMAS PEOPLE

IJ2-7

Theme/Value

Inclusion/Invited

Notes:

Intro

Appendix B

How does it feel to be invited to a party?
What have you been invited to? How were you invited?

Game

Appendix B

Guess who's invited

Story

Ref: Matt 2:1-12; Luke 2:8-20
Christmas People poem - Appendix A

- Look at picture. Who was invited?
- How were they invited? How did they feel?
- Gifts brought
- Who is welcoming who?
- Shepherds and Magi - who they were
- We are all invited to celebrate Jesus' birthday

Reflection
Appendix B

It's Jesus, who is He to you?

reaches out, welcomes everyone, arrives quietly, invites,
is worshipped and celebrated... ?

Song suggestion

Heaven Invites You to a Party! - Graham Kendrick

Prayer

**Thank you for sending Jesus into the world as a new-born baby.
Thank you that every one of us gets an invitation to celebrate
Jesus' birthday this Christmas. Please help us to include
everyone, just like you did at the very first Christmas, in the joy
and celebrations that surround your coming into the world.**

Equipment

4 envelopes

Suggested Entry Music

Heaven Invites You to a Party!
Graham Kendrick



Appendix A: Story

Christmas People

*Spoken in the rhythm to the poem 'Twas the Night Before Christmas.
Show the picture as the poem is being read*

'Twas the night before Christmas, and all through the land,
Not a person was ready, for what God had planned.
The Stable was busy, Joseph tending to Mary with care,
In hope that the baby Jesus would soon be there!

The Shepherds were huddled up warm by their fire,
Not expecting at all the appearance of a surprise choir!
The Angels sang with such passion and joy,
So that the Shepherds raced to find this special baby boy!

When back in Bethlehem there remained a bright shining star,
And a caravan of camels bringing VIPs from afar.
They all came to seek out and worship this new baby King,
The Shepherds and the Magi bowing down to God's offspring.

I wonder how Mary and Joseph felt that first Christmas morning,
Did they even realise that something wonderful was dawning?
It's Jesus – the baby reaching up from the manger,
Quietly arriving to be the new king and world changer!



Appendix B

Introduction How do you feel when you're invited to something? It's exciting being invited to a party. What have you been invited to? Whether it's your friend's birthday party, a Royal Coronation party or it might be your family's annual Christmas party. Whatever kind of party it is, they all have one thing in common – people come together to celebrate. They celebrate something good – a new King being crowned, a new job position, a birthday or a wedding. Whatever the celebration you're joining in on, it begins with the invitation!

Notes:

Game: I have yet to send my last few invites to my make-believe Christmas party this year! The problem is I've addressed the envelopes and stuck them down but forgotten to write the name on!! If I show you the envelope and address, then could you try and guess who the invitation is for?

Envelope 1: 32 Windsor Gardens, London. (Bear paw print) *Paddington Bear*

Envelope 2: Motunui, Polynesian Islands. (Flowers & leaves) *Moana*

Envelope 3: Mouston, Calisota, USA. (Mickey's famous head and ears) *Mickey Mouse*

Envelope 4: The Hollowed Tree, 100 Acre Wood. (Honey pot) *Winnie-the-Pooh*

Reflection:

Q: Who was invited to this special Christmas Party?

Q: How were they invited?

Q: How do you think they felt about being invited?

Q: How would you have responded to the angels' invitation?

As we look at the picture, what do we see? *List who is in the picture.*

We see very different kinds of people all coming to celebrate the birth of a baby.

But it doesn't really look like a party does it? Well, not the parties we're used to... no balloons, dancing or feasting. But what we do know is that the invited guests did bring gifts to celebrate the birth – the Shepherds brought their best lambs and the Magi brought gold, frankincense and myrrh.

Who is welcoming who, I wonder? Can you see how the baby Jesus is reaching up... is he wanting a cuddle or is he welcoming the world to his birthday party?

Are the Shepherds coming to welcome the new baby or is Jesus welcoming the Shepherds – the poor, the not-liked-very-much, the forgotten-about – to his special celebration? And the Magi – are they finally ending their very long, tiring search by following the star and finding the promised newborn King? Or is Jesus helping them to find HIM...their source of joy, faith and hope? I wonder what you think?

We are all invited to celebrate the birth of Jesus this Christmas Day. Whoever we are, and whatever our party looks like - whether we have a cake, or a decorated tree or presents, or none of these. I wonder how you could make sure people feel included this Christmas? We can be assured that everyone of us is invited and welcomed by Jesus, the new king and world changer, to his birthday party.



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