

Are you looking for a December assignment that's a little different, but still fits right in to curriculum expectations? "Spell a wide range of commonly used words correctly", "Give evidence of an expanding vocabulary in their writing", and "Contribute and work constructively in groups" are just a few of the expectations that you can meet with the assignments you'll find here.

The following three word lists can be used as spelling lists with a difference. They can be given to the class on a Monday, with a dictation planned for the following Monday. They can also be used without any dictation at the end, if that is your style. Give the class one or two of your Language Arts periods to work on them in pairs, or groups, since the assignments lend themselves readily to peer tutoring. Link them to Visual Arts by challenging the students to create their own "Wordart" by working a list word into an illustration in an unusual and visually appealing manner. For instance, they might draw an angel whose body is based in the letter "q". The head and face would be in the round top of the letter, while the "an" on one side, and the "el" on the other side would become the wings. Read that description to them and see if someone is willing /able to sketch it quickly on the board, or on paper. Include yourself in the challenge!

Make a deal with the class, for a little added excitement about the dictation. (Yes, I said "excitement!") The first student who can spell the whole list correctly, (with no second tries) to you before Friday, can give the list to their classmates in dictation on the next Monday, and not have to write it themselves. Let the students work in pairs and give the dictation to each other. They could also do the marking for each other, but with an added fillip – if you scan their marking quickly and find they have mis-marked any word, they will have to write that word a dozen times on the board, in Christmas green or red chalk. Do you have, (or can you find) a poster showing the American Sign Language alphabet? Kids enjoy the challenge of working out how to sign their list words. If the poster is placed on a classroom wall, it lends itself readily to the different learning styles of students. Visual learners love having the words literally put into their hands, and having the students check each other can really help them to learn the correct spellings.

The research and the writing components of these assignments make them into a good source of evaluation opportunities for you. Of course, you can also feel free to adapt them to the needs of your particular class, and present them with your own creative touches.

Enjoy!

JESUS IS THE REASON FOR THE SEASON

**Gabriel Annunciation Emmanuel betrothed donkey
Bethlehem firstborn stable manger swaddling
angels alleluia adoration shepherds flocks**

1. Write the whole list out in your favourite Christmas colour(s).
2. Arrange the proper nouns in alphabetical order.
3. Four words begin with the same letter. Write them in *reverse* alphabetical order.
4. (a) Which words contain two syllables? (b) Which word has the fewest number of syllables?
c) Which word has the most syllables?
5. Write the plural nouns beside their singular forms.
6. Write the singular possessive form of - *stable *angel *shepherd *Gabriel
7. a) Which words have a long-a sound? (b) Which words contain a long-e (c) Which words begin with a consonant blend? (d) Which words have double consonants?
8. (a) What type of word is firstborn? (b) Write two more compound words; one using first and one using born.
9. Similes compare two things with the use of the words "like" or "as". Choose any three words from the list and create a simile for them.
Example: a stable *as warm as* the oxen's breath
10. Use every one of the words in a short retelling of the story of that very first Christmas. Underline each of the list words as you use them. (Remember to write interesting sentences that use good vocabulary!)



Answer Key: **Jesus is the Reason**

- 1) Green or red might be expected, but be flexible in what you accept!
- 2) Annunciation, Bethlehem, Emmanuel, Gabriel
- 3) Annunciation, angels, alleluia, adoration
- 4) (a) betrothed, donkey, firstborn, stable, manger, swaddling, angels, shepherds (b) flocks – 1 syllable (c) Annunciation – 5 syllables
- 5) *angels angel *shepherds shepherd *flocks flock
- 6) stable's; angel's; shepherd's; Gabriel's
- 7) Annunciation, stable, manger, adoration (b) Annunciation, Emmanuel, betrothed, donkey, Bethlehem, (c) stable, swaddling, shepherds (d) Annunciation, Emmanuel, swaddling, alleluia
- 8) *Firstborn* is a compound word. (b) first hand, first born, first rate, etc. * newborn, still born, first born, etc.
- 9) i.e. Emmanuel as gentle as a lamb, angels like shining stars, etc.
- 10) For example:

The Annunciation happened when the angel Gabriel appeared to Mary to ask her to be the mother of God's son. He told her the baby would be called Emmanuel. When Mary and her betrothed, Joseph, had to be counted in the Roman census, they had to travel to Bethlehem, because that was where Joseph was born. Legend has it that Mary rode there on a donkey. Since there was no room at the inn, the couple's child was born in a stable. Mary wrapped her firstborn in swaddling clothes and laid him in a manger. She did not have any other bed for Him. Angels appeared in the sky over the stables, singing alleluia. They spoke to shepherds, who were watching their flocks, and told them of the baby's birth. The shepherds went to visit the baby. When they saw Him, they went down on their knees in adoration.