

ETHICAL & SUSTAINABLE FESTIVITIES!

Adding a Global Dimension to Winter

At this time of year, many schools and youth groups have a very festive and celebratory atmosphere. How about adding a global dimension as well!



FOOD

What are the food miles in my celebration dinner?

Have you every stopped to think how many food miles are involved in putting your celebration dinner together? www.yourclimateyourlife.org.uk/9_buying_thought.html Students could make a comparison between the times when we were able (or forced, as during WWII) to produce virtually all the food and goods we needed and the current situation when we simply import almost everything. Even food that we can grow in one part of the year, we insist on importing so that we can have at any time of the year eg, strawberries in winter.



SUSTAINABILITY

Think about the impact we have on the environment at this time of year:

www.wasteonline.org.uk/resources/InformationSheets/ChristmasRecycling.htm

Contains articles on the impact of Christmas consumption, and tips and ideas on how to cut down on the things you throw away.

www.cat.org.uk/news/news_release.tmp?command=search&db=news.db&eqSKUdataaq=22360&home=0

Centre for Alternative Technology's top ten tips for a green Christmas – like using last year's cards for this year's tags and buying a living tree.



CELEBRATIONS

Research different ways to celebrate Christmas

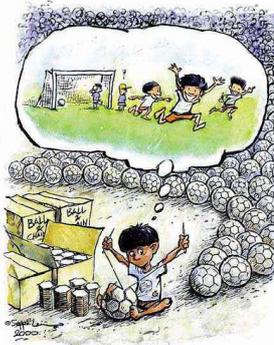


Look at the ways people celebrate Christmas in other parts of the world on websites. www.santas.net/aroundtheworld.htm shows how people celebrate Christmas and also shows how to say "Merry Christmas" around the world.

Don't forget there are other festivals during this season. You can find

information on many different winter celebrations on: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_winter_festivals but please remember, to take some of this with a pinch of proverbial festive salt!

GIFTS



How ethical is that bargain?

You may be really pleased with that bargain you just bought, but why not stop and think why it was such a bargain? Could it be that it was made in a sweat shop in the global south? Are children being exploited in order for you to save a few pounds? Is it a counterfeit? Could it be dangerous?

Seek out ethical and unusual gifts:

Ethical: www.oxfam.org.uk/shop/default.aspx, www.virtualgiftstore.com/index.html or www.ethicalgifts.co.uk/

Sustainable: <http://store.cat.org.uk/> or

www.nigelsecostore.com/

Fair Trade: www.fairtrade.org.uk, www.traidcraftshop.co.uk/, www.fairwindonline.com/, www.fairgift.co.uk/,

[Giving a different gift: http://worldgifts.cafod.org.uk/](http://Giving_a_different_gift:http://worldgifts.cafod.org.uk/), www.oxfam.org.uk/shop/oxfam-unwrapped?ito=1482, www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/en/shop/Pages/online.aspx, <http://savethechildren.sandbag.uk.com/>



Give experience gifts like a trip to a museum, cinema, ice-skating, etc.

Give promise gift tokens to family members and friends using the template on our website:

www.globaleducationderby.org.uk/Resources.aspx?Type=35

Make something yourself: Instead of buying a gift, why not make it yourself! You could make peppermint creams, chocolate dipped shortbread or spiced biscuits (cut into festive shapes). Try your hand at making a tea-light holder, by decorating a clean jam-jar. Use your imagination and get the kids involved - they will love it!

Take a look at this link for more inspiration: www.activityvillage.co.uk/christmas_crafts.htm

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Money-saving festive ideas!

Spread the cost and ease the stress:

Start early and save money! Have a look in the sales after Christmas - and start your gift shopping for next year! Get organised and keep a list of who you need to buy for and how much you want to spend. Stock up on non-perishables when they are on offer, buy freezable items and store in your freezer until the party season. It is a known fact that stress levels rocket at this time of year - planning can be a huge help!



Save your points and vouchers: If you receive loyalty points and vouchers from stores, save these up to off-set the cost of your Christmas!



Free events: Look in the local newspapers and on-line for free events in your area, such as Christmas Crafts or Carol Concerts.

Recycle your old stuff: Consider selling your unwanted items on Ebay or at car boot sales - it is all great recycling and you may make a few pounds too (to buy yourself some "new" items - which you may be able to give as gifts).



Organise a clothes swap party: Instead of buying new party clothes for yourself and your family, organise a clothes swap party, where everyone takes along unwanted items and swaps them for others. You could also take unwanted gifts along and swap them! Or, if you do have a small amount to spend, take your unwanted items to a charity shop and treat yourself to new ones from the shop - you will be amazed at what you can find, and you will be helping out a charity at the same time!



Decorations: Make your own decorations - hang pine cones and sprigs of holly for a more "back to nature" feel. If you want lots of colour, but a change from previous years, why not swap your decorations with a friend! Lots of idea here:

www.activityvillage.co.uk/christmas_crafts.htm

Pantomime on the cheap: If you feel that it isn't Christmas without a pantomime, why not find out whether your local school or amateur dramatics society are putting on a show! It may not be as professional but will be a good laugh and much cheaper!

Secret Santa: An old favourite but great money-(and stress-) saver! Just buy one gift instead of lots! Decide on a set-amount to spend and pick a name out of the hat. You can do this at work, for family or friends!



Money-wise kids!: It can be really difficult to get children to understand the value of money - this is even worse at Christmas! If money is tight, the last thing you want is to get into debt because you can't let your kids down. Explain to your children that gifts cost money - they do not magically appear! Have a few "Santa" gifts, but make sure that they understand that people work hard to buy their presents! (If you want to use the "Naughty List" idea—tell the kids that, if they end up on that list, the presents people have bought for them will be sent to the "Good" kids instead of them!!!). Why not sit down with your kids and get them to help out with the Christmas budget - they can help you out with the calculations!



Love your leftovers: When you eat your meal, put the food in serving dishes instead of dishing up straight to plates. Your family can eat what they want and you can use the leftovers to make another meal or soup—helping your shopping go further! www.lovefoodhatewaste.com has lots of ideas for you!



Cost-cutter party: Instead of booking an expensive night out, gather together at a friends house and ask each person to bring a food dish with them. A wonderful buffet at a fraction of the cost! Don't forget the Fairtrade wine!!!



Banquet on tour!: Another idea, which works really well if friends live close together, is to visit a different person for each course - pre-dinner drinks at Mark's, starter at Anita's, and so on!



Get out the board games: Remember the good old days when the family all gathered around to play a board game or charades? Why not plan an evening of games! If you don't have one, borrow one from a friend or have a look out in charity shops!

"I promise to buy you" ...in the "sales"!: How about writing your children a promise to buy a special gift - and then get it cheaper in the sales! Let's face it, there is usually plenty to do on Christmas Day, and this will give you all something to do after the day!

Thank you letters: It can be a chore but people love to receive a thank you letter, especially from an appreciative child! If your children are very young, you could write out a letter or card for them and ask them to try writing their own name at the end, or enclose a drawing or picture.



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