

COUNTDOWN TO CHRISTMAS WITH OPERATION NATIVITY!



“All I want for Christmas is for everyone to read this book.”

A.F. Steadman, author of Skandar and the Unicorn Thief

“A gorgeous, heartwarming story full of hope, humour and love. The perfect gift for Christmas.” Hannah Gold, author of The Last Bear

When Oscar and Molly rush outside to investigate a crash in the night, they're not expecting to find a dazed Angel Gabriel wandering around their grandparents' back garden. And they're certainly not expecting to find themselves in a race to save Christmas.

But if they don't track down a missing shepherd, wise man, donkey and the actual Mary and Joseph, who've all crash-landed in Chipping Bottom, not only will Christmas cease to exist, but they will too.

OPERATION NATIVITY IS ON

Use this pack to countdown to Christmas with your class! Each week, read a section of the book and use the discussion questions to dive further into the story. Then carry out the suggested activities to help everyone get excited for Christmas!

We would love to see your class enjoying Operation Nativity! We have suggested some video content you could record each week, or you can share clips of your class reviewing the book and carrying out the activities.

YOUR CLASS COULD BE ONE OF THE FIRST TO READ JENNY PEARSON'S NEW BOOK

Share any videos with us at marketing@usborne.co.uk or tag us on X @Usborne for the chance to feature on our social channels and to win early copies of Jenny Pearson's next book, publishing in February 2024!

Please gather consent from parents/guardians.
This pack includes permission forms.
For full terms and conditions,
visit bit.ly/operation-nativity



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WEEK ONE: OPERATION SAVE CHRISTMAS BEGINS

Reading: Pages 5-84

Discussion Questions:

- Oscar says, “people will always believe different things and I actually think that’s okay.” (p. 8) Can you think of anything your friends believe that you don’t? Do you agree with Oscar?
- What does Oscar think is the most important thing about Christmas? Discuss what you think are the most important things.
- There are a lot of fun characters in the story. Who is your favourite and why? Can you think of fun traits or traditions that your family have?
- When Oscar first finds Angel Gabriel, he struggles to believe he’s an angel because, “once you’ve made up your mind that something isn’t real, it’s easy to dismiss the evidence” (p. 59). How do you think you would react if you found an angel in your garden?
- How does Molly help Oscar realise the truth about the angel? Discuss how people’s different perspectives can help us see things differently.

Activity: Decorate your classroom

It’s time to start decorating for Christmas! Dig out your decorations and get the whole class involved in making the classroom feel festive. Using the snowflake activity sheet, children can create their own decorations too.

Video: To me, Christmas means...

We would love to know what your class love about Christmas! Let us know what your favourite things about the festive season are and what is important to you at Christmas.



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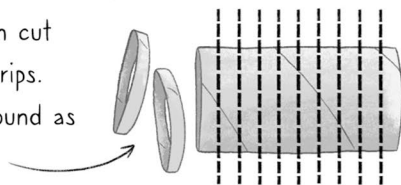


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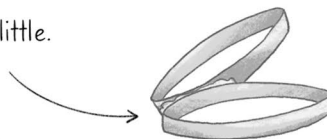
Snowflake Decoration

Oscar's family make paper snowflakes to decorate the church for their nativity performance. Try making your own – you'll need a long cardboard tube, glue and thread.

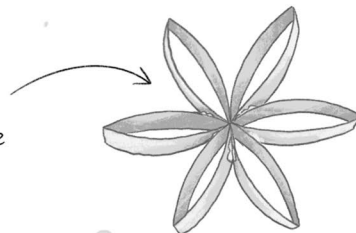
1. Press the tube flat then cut off twelve loop-shaped strips. Each one needs to be around as wide as your finger.



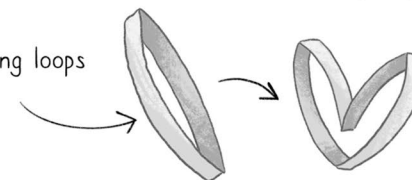
2. Open out six of the loops a little. Glue two together, like this.



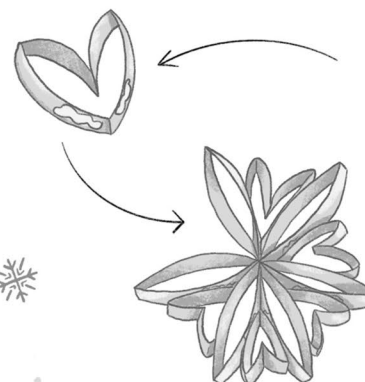
3. Glue on four more, so it looks like a snowflake. Let the glue dry.



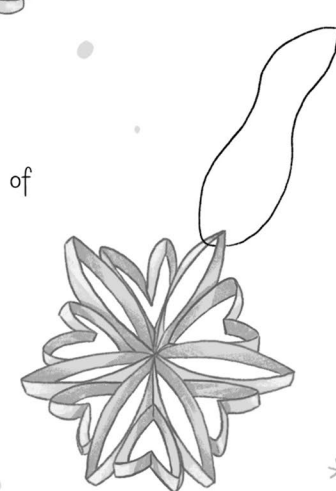
4. Fold all the remaining loops in half, like this.



5. Glue both sides of each folded shape onto the snowflake. Let it dry.



6. Tie thread through one of the loops to hang it up.



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WEEK TWO: A GIFT FIT FOR THE SAVIOUR OF THE WORLD

Reading: Pages 85-169

Discussion Questions:

- Oscar doesn't tell any of the adults about Angel Gabriel as he says, "Grown-ups are very short-sighted about that sort of thing." (p. 89) What do you think he means here?
- Why do you think the nativity play is so important to Grandmother?
- Oscar is starting to get a bit panicked about saving Christmas in time. If you were in his position, what would your plan be?
- Fenella tries to act as if she isn't upset about Grandfather being ill – what other things do people do to disguise their emotions?
- How is Oscar's attitude towards Christmas changing as the story goes on?

Activity: My Christmas Wish List

Use the following activity sheet and ask your class to fill out their wish list. It doesn't just need to include physical presents. Are they wishing for snow this Christmas? Or perhaps they're wishing for a fun day with their family. Ask them to draw some of the items on their list too.

Video: My Christmas Joke

We want to hear your best Christmas jokes! Will they make us laugh? We'll start with one...

What do you call an old snowman?

Slush!



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MY CHRISTMAS WISH LIST

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WEEK THREE: ALL SYSTEMS GO!

Reading: pages 170-254

Discussion Questions:

- **Does Balthazar give Gabriel good advice? (p. 172-173)**
- **Oscar's mum says that making the biscuits together made them taste better. Do you think she's right? Can you think of activities that are better when done with friends and family?**
- **Balthazar and Gabriel do not fit in in Chipping Bottom. What things do they do that would stand out? How do they add to the humour of the book?**
- **Grandfather helps to reassure Oscar when he says, "I can tell you are the type of person who can achieve anything if they put their mind to it." (p. 206) How does this help Oscar?**
- **Oscar says Christmas is all about "being together and celebrating a magical time of the year when us kids can believe in the impossible." How has this changed from the beginning of the book? Has your opinion on Christmas changed too?**

Activity: Christmas Crafting

Get your class thinking about presents they could make for their friends and family this year. Start by decorating Christmas cards! Cut out the card template and decorate them using pens, paint, tissue paper or anything else you have.

Video: The funniest scene is...

What is your favourite scene in the book? We would love to know which characters have had the most giggles in your classroom!



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CHRISTMAS CARD

Cut around the dotted line and decorate your own Christmas card.



Fold here



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WEEK FOUR: THE CHRISTMAS WE SAVED CHRISTMAS

Reading: pages 255-341

Discussion Questions:

- **When Oscar thinks about life being good, he thinks about his family practising for the nativity together (p. 297). Discuss memories you have that make you believe life is good.**
- **Gabriel says that sadness and joy cannot exist without each other (p. 298). Do you agree with this?**
- **Oscar asks Gabriel for a favour (p. 299). How does this scene make you feel?**
- **Grandfather tells his grandchildren that each of them will “carry a little part of me inside. No one is ever truly gone, when there are people around to remember them” (p. 328). Do you agree with this?**
- **The story ends with a mixture of joy and sadness. Discuss how the book made you feel.**

Activity: Christmas Poem

Ask the class to write their own poems about the joy of Christmas. The poems could be titled either 'Christmas is...' or 'Christmas makes me...'. Ask them to explore how the book made them feel about Christmas.

Video: Operation Nativity is complete!

Now you've finished the book, we would love to hear your reviews. How did the story make you feel? Who was your favourite character? What was the best scene?



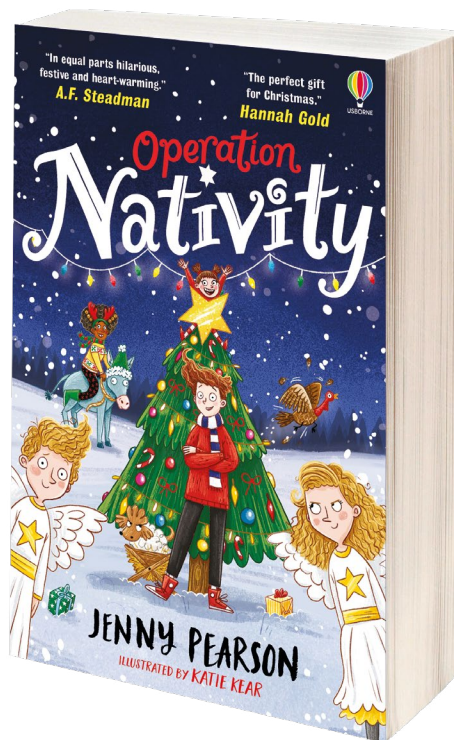
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THANK YOU FOR USING THIS ACTIVITY PACK!

We hope you have enjoyed reading *Operation Nativity* and counting down to Christmas with Oscar and Molly.



Don't forget to send us any videos of you enjoying the book and the activities for the chance to feature on our social media and WIN early copies of Jenny Pearson's next brilliant adventure, publishing in February 2024.

Email your videos to us: marketing@usborne.co.uk

Competition closes on Friday 15th December.
Any videos sent to us may be shared online.
For full terms and conditions please visit bit.ly/operation-nativity



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OPERATION NATIVITY VIDEO COMPETITION 2023

Consent Form

For the attention of the parent / legal guardian of the student:

I give consent for my child to take part in Usborne's Operation Nativity competition. I understand that by taking part my child will contribute to and appear in audio visual material that may be published by both my child's school and Usborne.

I understand and agree that the photographs, film and sound recordings of my child may be available on the internet.

I understand and accept that the photographs, film and sound recording may be combined with other images, text and graphics.

I consent for photographs, film and sound recording of my child to be used on Usborne's website, YouTube channel, Facebook, Instagram and X.

Name of Student:

Name of School:

Name of Parent/Guardian:

Contact Number of Parent/Guardian:

Signature of Parent/Guardian:

Date:

Please return this consent form to your child's school



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