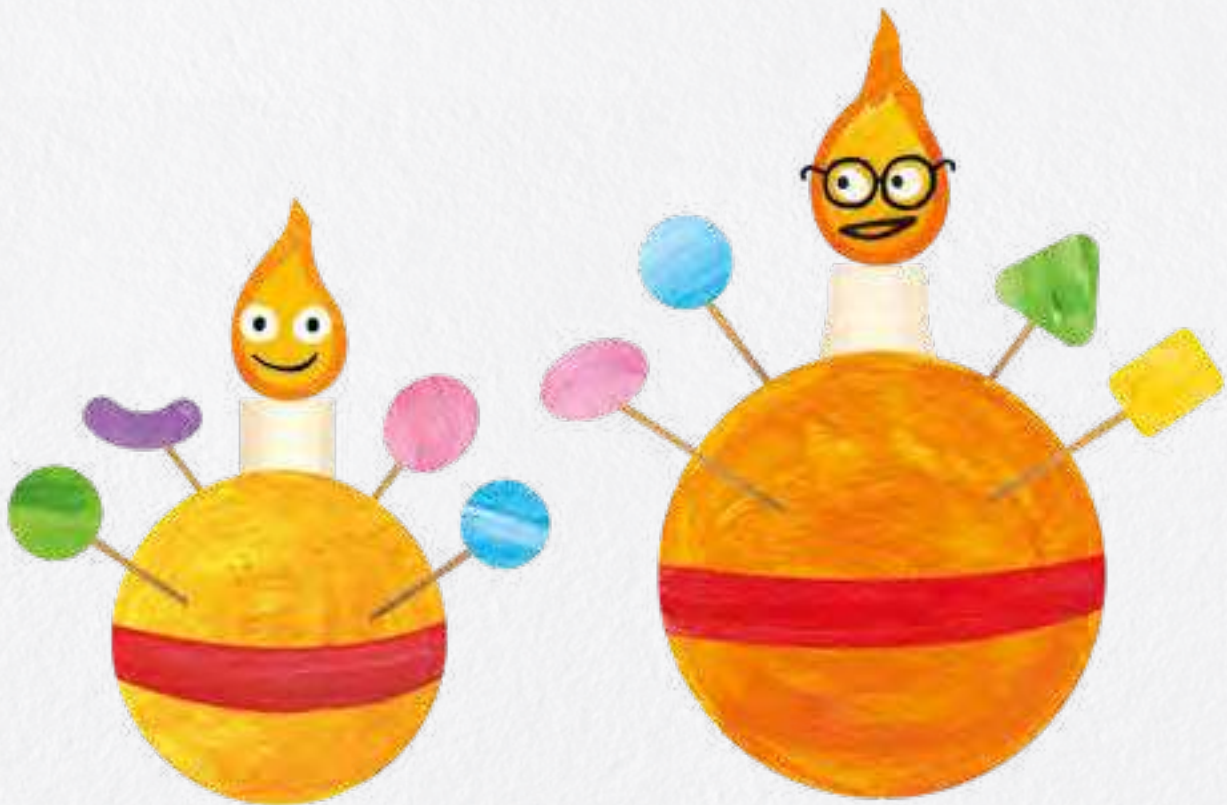


Christingle 2020: Resources for Primary Schools



By Victoria Bush

christingle.org

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Introduction to Christingle and The Children's Society

Christingle is a candle-lit, festive celebration that's perfect for bringing families and communities together. It was first invented by the Moravian church in the 1700s, but the celebration as we know it was introduced to the Church of England by The Children's Society in the 1960s.

The celebration is named after the Christingles that are lit during it. Christingles are made from an orange decorated with red tape, sweets and a candle. They have been part of our history for over 50 years and have helped raise millions of pounds to help this country's most vulnerable children. Each year we ask those who celebrate Christingle to hold a collection to support children and young people in some of the darkest situations imaginable.

The Children's Society

Founded in 1881 by Sunday School teacher Edward Rudolf, for the last 139 years The Children's Society has supported millions of this country's children and restored hope to their lives. We believe in building a society that works for every child, so that they are safe, happy and free to fulfil their incredible potential.

We run vital local services that provide vulnerable children across the country with the support, advice and guidance that they need, and we also campaign to make children's lives better and change the systems that are placing them in danger.

Together with our amazing supporters, we're improving life for children today and working to create a society where every child has hope for their future.



Introduction to this resource

This resource is intended to support your delivery of RE for primary age children. It focuses on the Christian celebration of Christingle, which can be held between Advent Sunday (29 November 2020) and Candlemas (2 February 2021). It supports children's learning about Christianity and Christian celebrations, as well as the work of The Children's Society. You can find further information about Christingle and The Children's Society online at childrenssociety.org.uk

Advice on Covid-19 restrictions

This resource was written before Covid-19 restrictions on schools were introduced. Please feel free to adapt to the context and guidance of your own school. We will give a 'Distance Alternative' at appropriate points which you can use depending on advice at the time of delivery.

To get the latest information on Government guidelines around Coronavirus, please visit gov.uk/coronavirus



About the author

Victoria Bush is a part-time primary school teacher with a specialism in Christian ethos and RE. She also runs workshops on creativity at Church Schools conferences and writes materials on RE and SMSC. She is married and has two kids and a mad cockapoo. She leads Thetford Vineyard Church with her husband and is passionate about community and eating together!

Reading it: Bible passages used in this resource

These key Bible passages help Christians understand how God asks them to 'share the light' of love and hope with those around them. All the activities in this pack are designed to help children unpack the meaning of these words and ask questions about their own responses.

Matthew 5.14-16 New International Version (NIV)

14 'You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. 15 Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. 16 In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.'

John 1 New International Version (NIV)

1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was with God in the beginning. 3 Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. 4 In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. 5 The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

Living it: What is Christingle?

- The first Christingle (a candle wrapped in ribbon) was introduced by Bishop Johannes de Watteville of the Moravian Church in Marienborn, Germany in 1747 as a way of explaining to young children the importance of Jesus.
- In 1968, John Pensom of The Children's Society adapted Christingle and introduced the symbol we use today – an orange encircled by red ribbon holding a candle, dried fruit and sweets.
- This became a celebratory event known as Christingle, usually held between Advent Sunday (29 November 2020) and Candlemas (2 February 2021).
- Today, Christingle is celebrated in schools, churches and community groups all around the country. It raises over £1.2 million to help The Children's Society improve life for disadvantaged and vulnerable children, share their voices and let them know that they are not alone.

Connecting it...

- During Advent, Christmas, Epiphany and Candlemas, Christians prepare for and celebrate the arrival of Jesus, whom they believe is God incarnate (God 'in the flesh').
- Christians believe Jesus shows God's love by caring for all people, regardless of who they are. They endeavour to follow his teaching to love God and treat others as you would wish to be treated.
- Christians believe that people need to listen and respond to this message of love in order to bring about the transformation of suffering and injustice.
- The Children's Society works to ensure that the voices of vulnerable children and young people can be heard. We bring hope and optimism back to young people who are suffering, so they can enjoy the bright futures that every child deserves. For over 50 years, donations from Christingle services have helped this country's young people get the care and support that they so urgently need.



Making the links

Early Learning Goals	Communication and language development; personal, social and emotional development; literacy; understanding of the world; expressive arts and design.
Fundamental British Values	Mutual respect for and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.
Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	<p>Spiritual development: Opportunities to reflect on beliefs; developing a sense of enjoyment and fascination about learning about themselves, others and the world around them; use of imagination and creativity.</p> <p>Social development: Using a range of social skills; volunteering and cooperating well; acceptance and engagement with fundamental British values.</p> <p>Cultural development: Understand and appreciate a range of different cultures; participation in cultural opportunities; understand, accept, respect and celebrate diversity.</p>
Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) (SIAMS Inspection Framework 2019)	<p>Strand 7: The effectiveness of religious education.</p> <p>In developing effective religious education, a school must evaluate the extent to which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ RE helps pupils to know about and understand Christianity as a living world faith through the exploration of core theological concepts using an approach that critically engages with text. ■ RE helps pupils consider the impact and connection that Christianity has on Britain’s cultural heritage and the lives of people worldwide. ■ RE gives pupils a safe space to critically reflect on their own religious, spiritual and/or philosophical convictions?

Christingle word bank

- Christingle
- Jesus
- God
- Christian
- Christianity
- Advent
- Christmas
- Epiphany
- Candlemas
- Hope
- Ambition
- Trust
- Love
- Community
- Children
- Voice
- Family
- Darkness
- Light
- Young people



How to make a Christingle

What you'll need

- One orange
- One candle
- A square of foil
- Red tape or ribbon
- Four cocktail sticks
- Selection of dried fruit and sweets
- Pair of scissors

Basic steps

1. Make sure adults supervise young children throughout. Also ensure that long hair is tied back and that everyone keeps a safe distance away from candle flames at all times.
2. Ask everyone to wash their hands before handling the sweets and fruit.
3. Take an orange and fasten a piece of red sticky tape around the middle.
4. Cut a small cross in the top of the orange and lay a square of silver foil (75mm or 3 inches square) over it.
5. Place a candle on top of the foil and wedge it firmly into the orange (the foil should catch the hot wax as it drips).
6. Load four cocktail sticks with a mixture of dried fruits or sweets so that the points are covered and insert around the base of the candle.
7. Store your Christingles upright in a cool place. Don't make them too far in advance as they don't keep for long.



Jamie's Story

Throughout these resources we refer to the story of Jamie*, a real young person helped by The Children's Society. Jamie was bullied throughout school, leaving him feeling isolated and alone. At college, he struggled to talk about how he was feeling and began having anxiety. Today, thanks to help and support from a mental health drop-in service run by The Children's Society, he is a passionate speaker and advocate for mental health awareness.

Part One

Case study: Jamie's story

At school, Jamie faced bullying from his classmates who would often take his money and force him to buy things for them, 'I was just doing it to keep them off my back and when I joined their school football team they didn't want me in the team. That made me feel really left out. School wasn't a happy place for me.'

Jamie's mental health declined further at college when he began to struggle with anxiety. 'My life circumstances were not great. I kept on leaving classes.'

Part Two

Jamie was referred to CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services), where he began receiving treatment, but he still struggled between these appointments, as he had no one he could rely on or talk to. It was only when he was signposted to The Children's Society by his college tutor that he received the support he needed.



At the easy-access drop-in service for under 25's run by The Children's Society, trained mental health practitioners provide immediate mental and emotional health support for young people, families, and professionals seven days a week.

'Looking back at it, I am glad I got help, because my life was a downward spiral.

When I first came to The Children's Society, I was nervous, because it was a new experience for me. When I'm having a difficult time and I come in and have a chat with someone and I feel better. My favourite thing about the service is talking to other people. I feel like my life would be rubbish if it wasn't there, because there'd be no one to talk to. Young people would be thinking, "Where are we going to go? Because there's not many organisations out there. They close down all the time".

At our service, Jamie was given a safe space where he was able to talk about his emotions and how he was feeling with someone he could trust. He was also given practical support and methods that he could use at home to help him manage his anxiety, and had access to the participatory groups where he could make friends and find support from the other young people who attend.

Nicky, a mental health practitioner, said, 'We work with young people facing a wide range of challenges and no two days are the same. The most common difficulty we see is anxiety, followed by low mood and also young people experiencing a lot of anger. We also see a lot of young people coming in with issues around bullying, both on and offline.

'For Jamie, we offered him an informal and immediate space to drop in to talk about how he is feeling or something that might have happened that same day, as opposed to him having to wait for his next appointment with his care coordinator. Knowing that we are there seven days a week to come in and talk to has been a huge help to him.'



Part Three

Jamie has been coming to The Children's Society drop-in service for three years. Here he has made friends, gained confidence and has somewhere to talk to people about how he is feeling. He also regularly attends various workshops including creative writing and 'Hot Topics', a group where young people who may be feeling isolated can meet others and socialise.

Jamie said, 'Friends are always good to have when you are down. Sometimes having that one person to talk to is really good so you can get your emotions out there like how you are feeling.'

For three years Jamie has also been part of a participatory group for young people who want to give something back to their local community. Here he has deepened his relationship with his peers and is able to speak out on topics he cares about. He is also passionate about raising awareness of the importance of children and young people's mental health and well-being and hopes to be an advocate for those who are experiencing challenges themselves or don't feel listened to.

'I feel like you need a voice because some adults, they don't want to listen to you, because you are young and you don't know what you are saying. I have had good experiences with The Children's Society and college because they are both a very supportive network to me.

The Children's Society has helped and it does help a lot of young people. You can come in and have a chat, and I like it because it gives me a chance to talk to different people. It's important to share your expressions and how you are feeling with other people. It's helped me to talk about my problems.

I've gained a lot of things like confidence and it brings out the best in me. I get to meet new people and gain experience which is really great. For last year's Christingle event, I presented a speech about what the service would do in the future to support young people and they cheered for me.

In the future, I just want to have a stable job and I just hope that the service will continue to help young people and me as well.'

*Jamie's name has been changed in order to protect his identity.



Early Years Resources

Enhanced provision

Early Years children can explore the themes of Christingle through a free-flow play space with a range of activities. Follow their needs and understanding by asking questions and listening to their talk as they play.

You could introduce the Christingle characters (see end of this resource) and laminate them into stick puppets. Children could use these as a method to ask and answer questions in a fun and interactive way. They could practice 'sharing the light' as they touch the flames of each puppet in a chain. They might even make a puppet show in which they share what they have learnt using the voices of the characters.

Distance Alternative:

If Early Years children are working with distance measures in place, then this activity can be adapted into a 'puppet show' with some children leading the action from the front of the room. Other children can share their thoughts from their workspace. The laminated puppets can be wiped down with antibacterial spray if children are to interact with them within their bubbles.

Key themes – What is hope? Who might bring hope? How does light help us feel safe? What jobs do people use light in to help others? Where might I find light in a church? What is the Bible and what words about light and hope might I find inside?

Imaginative and Role play	<p>People who bring hope: Costumes associated with people whose jobs involved light (paramedics, lighthouse keepers, airport handlers, ushers, puppeteer, camera operator etc). Ask children wondering questions about how their help and light brings hope to people.</p> <p><i>Distance Alternative: Have a dress-up day with these costumes.</i></p> <p>Being in a Christian church: Artefacts and clothing you may find in a Christian church around Christmas eg nativity scene, electronic candles, crosses, bibles with bookmarks in at the key verses noted in the introduction, stained glass window pictures etc.</p> <p><i>Distance Alternative: Have a dress-up day with these costumes.</i></p>
Small World Play	<p>Sources of light: Lighthouse, puppet theatre, nativity set (including people and animals), model of a church. Build a domino run and talk about the impact one piece can have on another – this helps children understand the importance of individual choice.</p> <p><i>Distance Alternative: Children can do the domino run in a small group and watch the effect. Plastic tiles can be dipped in antibacterial solution to clean.</i></p>
Creative/Messy Area	<p>Making a paper Christingle: Coloured paper, tissue, foil sequins, glitter glue, pens, pencils, paint, cocktail sticks, candles for wax drawing, ribbon, oranges.</p> <p><i>Distance Alternative: This activity is still viable just working with individual equipment in their own space.</i></p>
Mark-Making Area/ ICT Opportunities	<p>Sharing the light: Use sponges loaded with white paint to print rectangular candle shapes on black paper. Talk about how the paint can last from one print to the next. Then print the yellow flame shape on the top of the candle print with another sponge. Point out that the sponge has to be refilled with paint. For Christians, they have to refill with God’s love before they give more away, but when they do they can keep giving and giving!</p> <p><i>Distance Alternative: This activity is still viable just working with individual equipment in their own space.</i></p>
Books and Listening Area	<p>‘The Dark, Dark Night’ by Christina Butler and Jane Chapman</p> <p>‘The Dark’ by Lemony Snicket</p> <p>‘The Owl who was Afraid of the Dark’ by Jill Tomlinson</p> <p>‘The Monster who art Darkness’ by Joyce Dunbar and Jimmy Liao</p> <p>‘The Lighthouse Keeper’s Lunch’ by Ronda Armitage</p> <p><i>Distance Alternative: Sharing books via a projector on the large screen using photos of the pages or a visualiser works well here.</i></p>
Reflection Area	<p>‘I wonder...?’ questions about Christingle, Advent and Christmas</p> <p>‘I wonder...?’ questions about Christianity and churches</p>

- I wonder...what does the light of the candle represent?
- I wonder...how do I feel in the dark?
- I wonder...why some people go to church for Christingle services?
- I wonder...why there are so many candles in churches around Christmas?
- I wonder...why do many people have Advent calendars?
- I wonder...why some people call Jesus 'light of the world'?
- I wonder...why it's important for Christians to get together for services?
- I wonder...why Christingles have been made for so many years?

Key Stage 1 Resources



Finding a way in...

Sharing the light

ASK: Has anyone ever felt alone and hopeless? 'Hopeless' means feeling like you are in a dark tunnel and you cannot see a light at the end of it. You feel sad and confused and often alone, and it can feel like nothing is ever going to change.

LISTEN: Hear and acknowledge children's experiences of these feelings.

Look together at 'Jamie's Story' Part One, adapting the language as fits your children. You could explore this through some freeze frames, thought-tapping (placing a hand on the character and speaking out their thoughts or words) the different characters of Jamie, the bully and Jamie's mum to explore what each person might be thinking or feeling.

Helping others to share the light

Using the Christingle characters (template 1) as puppets, children can act out the scene below, then come up with their own hopeful solution where Little Chris can help his friend Jamie.

The Scene

Little Chris comes home from school and seems upset. He says to Mum 'My friend Jamie was really sad today. I found him crying in a corner on the playground. I don't know what's wrong'.

Mum Christingle asks Little Chris 'Had anything happened to make him sad?'

'I didn't see, but I think that one of the boys on the football team has been picking on Jamie', Little Chris replies.

Mum and Dad look at each other with concerned faces.

What might happen next?

After the children have shared their ideas, summarise Parts Two and Three of Jamie's Story, explaining the purpose and work of The Children's Society. Children can act these parts out too if it helps them connect with the support process.

Thanking those who share the light

Explain that one of the ways in which Christians try to share the light of God's love is by supporting the work of charities such as The Children's Society. Explain that The Children's

Society works to help to light up the lives of young people who are in difficult situations. Children just like Jamie.

Set the children a challenge: tell them that they need to come up one thing they can do to share their own light with their family or friends.

They may like to:

- Raise funds for The Children's Society: Teachers can order candle-shaped collection candles for their class free at christingle.org/resources
- Make a commitment to do one thing this week to help out someone at home, at school or in the local community who usually helps us out. Pupils could record this in a diary account or through photographs.

Activity

Sharing the Light: Hope in the darkness

Use the Christingle characters on the cut-and-stick sheet at the end of this resource (template 2) to create a bright and hopeful design. Design it as an image which you can look at when you are feeling lonely and isolated like Jamie did, or you can share it with a friend who is feeling hopeless. You could even make it into a greetings card and write an encouraging message inside. Make sure you stick on the web address of The Children's Society so you can find help for yourself or a friend if they need it.

Key Stage 2 Resources

Finding a way in...

'Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate. Only love can do that.' Martin Luther King Jr.

Display the quote by Martin Luther King Jr. Bring out a torch and darken the room as much as possible. Ask one of the pupils to explain the quote using the torch as a prop.

In pairs or threes, ask pupils to come up with a scenario where there is 'darkness' in terms of unhappy or evil situations. Support with ideas eg bullying, debt, stealing, lying etc. Can they create two contrasting endings – one where the problem is 'solved' with more darkness and one with 'light' ie love, kindness etc? You could display the 'fruits of the spirit' verse to help children understand these features of 'light'.

'But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.' Galatians 5.22-23 (NIV)

Read Jamie's Story Part One together (see above). On whiteboards children note down the 'darkness' that Jamie was facing. Then read Part Two. What light could he begin to see to give him hope? Who shared the light of hope with him?

What do Christians believe about Jesus as light of the world...?

Christians are people who choose to live their lives as Jesus did. They aim to make choices every day which bring light and hope and love into the world. They read their Bibles and pray to know Jesus and understand what God wants them to do. They also are filled with his love, just like the Christingle candle being lit, so the light can be passed on.

Using a large cut-out of a Christingle character (templates 3 and 4), ask children to act out these key beliefs about God's light as another reads out the text.

1. It is a creative light: 'All things came in to being through him' – the sweets and fruits added to the Christingle are a symbol of creation, and creation owes its existence to the light of the world.

Hold up the Christingle's orange and ribbon body. As the words are read out, add on the fruits and sweets sections.

2. It is an everlasting light: 'The darkness did not overcome it': the life and light of Christ are stronger than the deepest darkness and can never be extinguished.

Attach the flame onto the top of the candle.

3. It is a generous light: God's love is shared with the world through the light of Christ. We are called to share the light that can bring everyone to fullness of life. (adapted from text by Martyn Payne for the 2019 Messy Christingle resource).

Walk around the room, touching the candle onto the outstretched finger of each child – symbolically lighting their 'candles'.

What do Christians believe about churches sharing Jesus' love with the community around them?

Ask pupils to consider the following questions:

- What impact do Christian communities have on local communities?
- How do Christian beliefs about the Jesus as light of the world look in the 'real world'?

Contact some local churches and ask them to share their practical, real-life stories of sharing Jesus' love – either by email or through a face-to face visit into school. You could look on their websites if they don't have a visitor available and search for anything they are involved with in the local community.

Churches may host foodbanks, provide street pastors, provide shelter for those without homes or welcome packs for recently arrived refugees. Consider a range of Christian denominations (eg Church of England, Roman Catholic, Methodist, Quaker etc). You might like to point your class towards the national work of The Children's Society (childrenssociety.org.uk)

Activity

Sharing the Light

Using Template 5, create a 'Christingle hope' card. This transforms a simple line-drawing into a bright and colourful card to share the light with someone else. The surprise reveal brings a little burst of light and joy!



Template 1: Christingle character stick puppets



Template 2: Christingle cut-and-stick sheet

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Children's
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Christingle

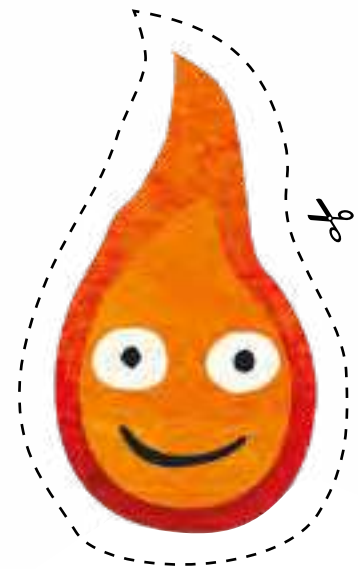
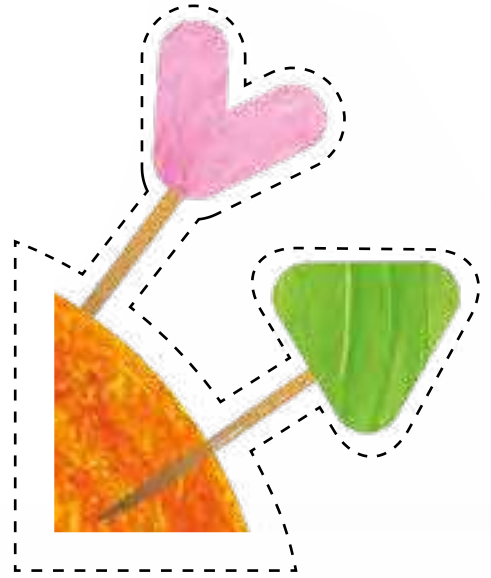
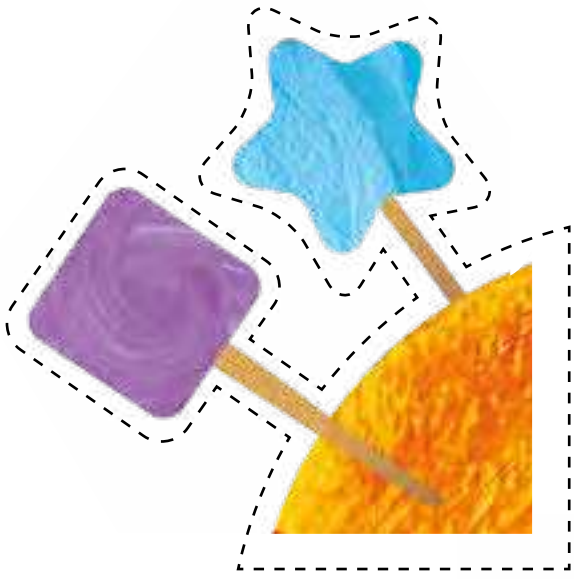
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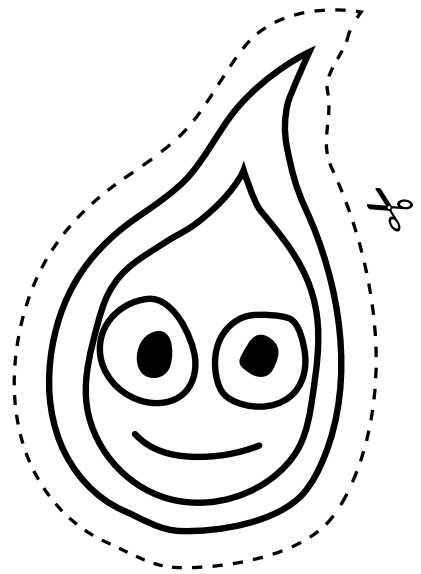
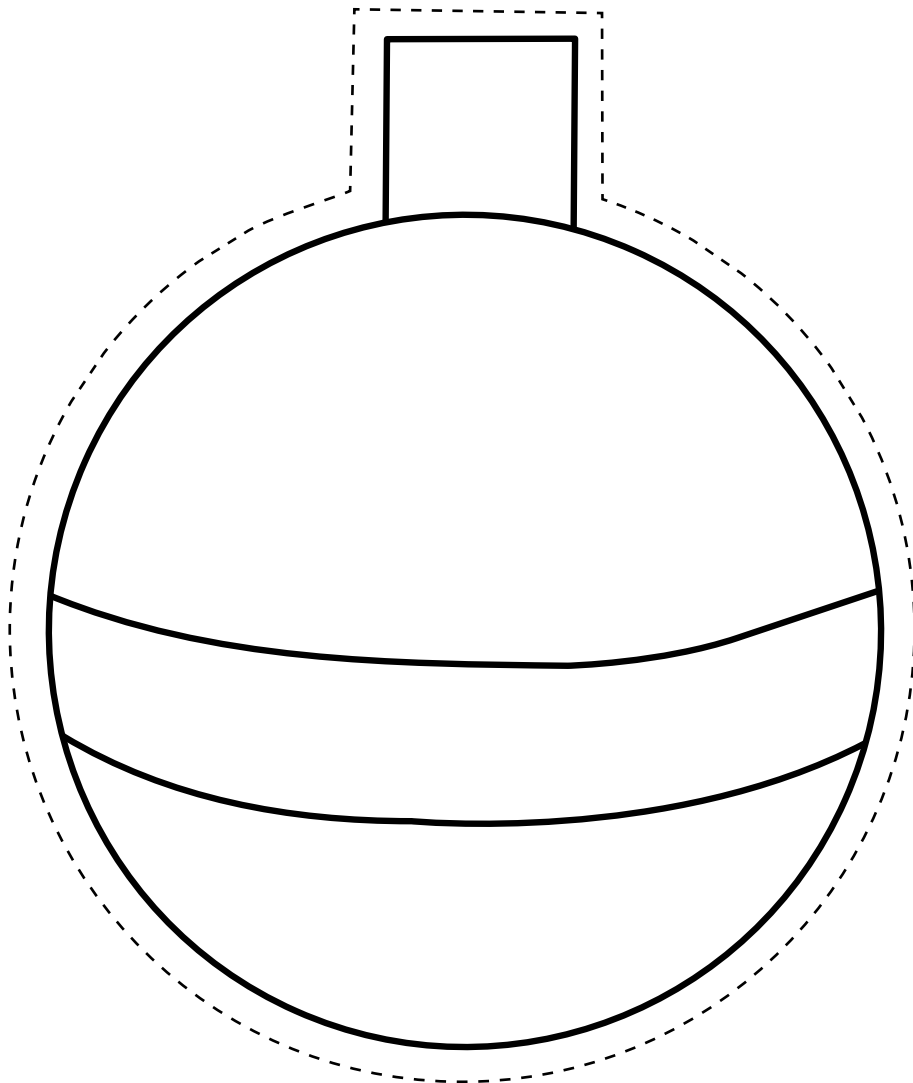
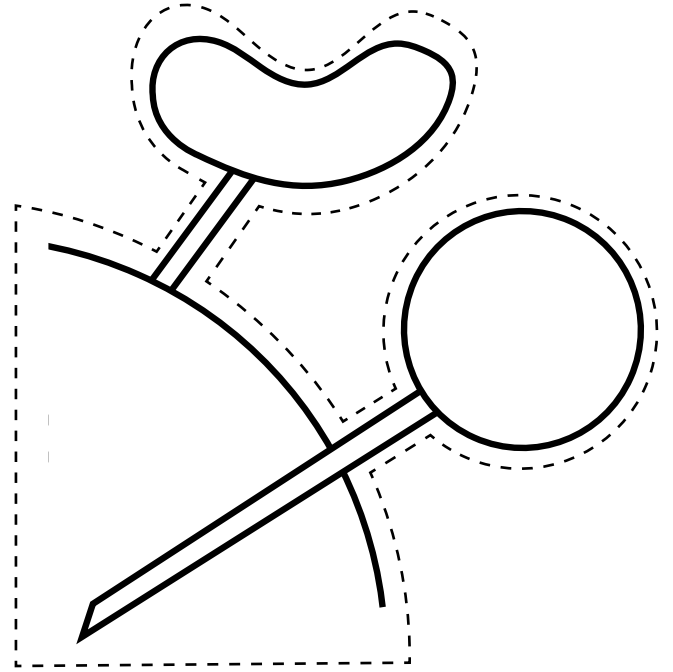
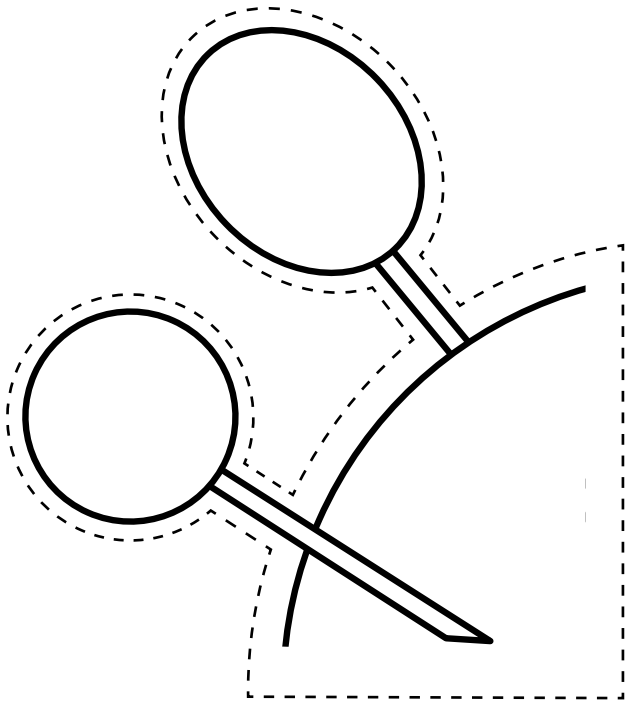
Christingle



Template 3: Christingle character



Template 4: Christingle character



Template 5: Christingle card instructions

What you need:

- Our printable template (5a and 5b)
- White card
- Coloured card
- Clear plastic (empty lamination pouches that have been put through the heater work well)
- Permanent markers
- Felt tips
- Scissors
- Glue
- Stapler

Optional: Stickers for decorating the frame

Video tutorial: [youtube.com/watch?v=8r7-RgE1v1I](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8r7-RgE1v1I)

Step 1

On the page with the design, cut out the two rectangles, following the outer line.

Step 2

With the sheet that has the frame and another rectangle, first cut out the frame (along the outer edge).

Step 3

There is a rectangle within the frame (marked with a full line) – you need to cut out that rectangle.

This is how the frame part of your magic reveal card should be looking.

Step 4

Also cut the long rectangle shape (along the full line).

Step 5

Fold along the line.

Step 6

Fold along all dashed lines on the frame. It's important to make the folds as crisp as possible.

We usually use a craft stick to help with that, running it across the folds.

Step 7

Take the rectangle (without the design) that you printed on white paper and fold along the dashed line. Both folds should be facing the same side as shown on the image.

Step 8

With the paper positioned as it's on the picture (back of the paper down, folds up), apply the glue along the thin folded parts (both left and right).

Step 9

Place inside the frame, as shown on the picture. The folded part of the white paper goes under the folded part of the frame. Press down the blue part and also apply glue over the blue part.

Step 10

Close the card, press down for the glue to set. You might want to press it down with a book while you continue with other steps.

The picture below shows roughly how your magic reveal card frame should look by now – it has two pockets – one below the white paper and one above (with the frame opening).

Step 11

Take the rectangle with the design and place it on top of the clear plastic (or under it). Use it as a template to make the same shape in clear plastic.

Trim the plastic a little bit to make it a bit thinner and shorter than the design on paper.

Step 12

Place the plastic on top of the design (align on the top) and place both the paper with design and foil between the folded rectangle and staple all the things together.

Step 13

Grab your permanent marker and trace the thicker lines that appear on the design on the clear plastic.

Step 14

Lift up the plastic and colour the design.

Step 15

This is the important part to make the magic happen! You need to slip the card with the design behind the white paper on the card frame...

And the clear plastic on top of the white paper (between white paper and the open part of the frame).

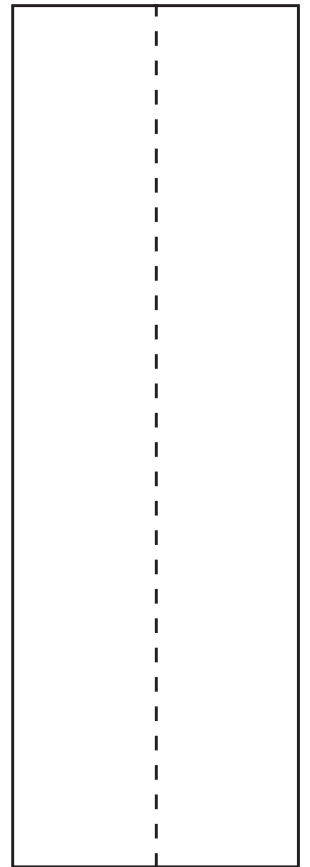
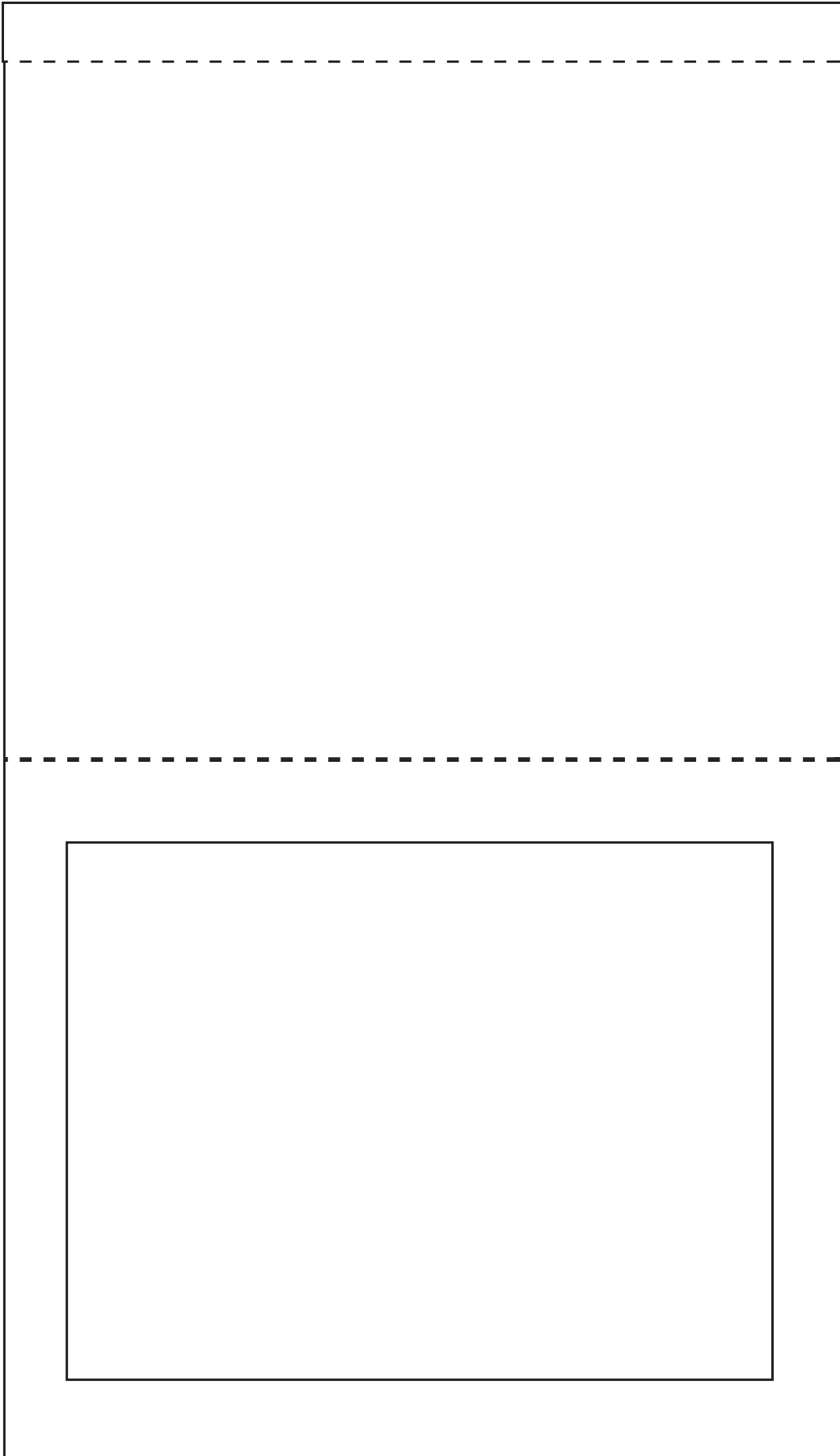
Push the card in until it fits snugly.

If the card gets stuck you might want to trim it on the sides a little. Push and pull the card a few times, to loosen it up – it should run smoothly after a few uses.

Wonderful! You just made a magic reveal card!



Template 5a: Christingle hope card



Template 5b: Christingle hope card

