

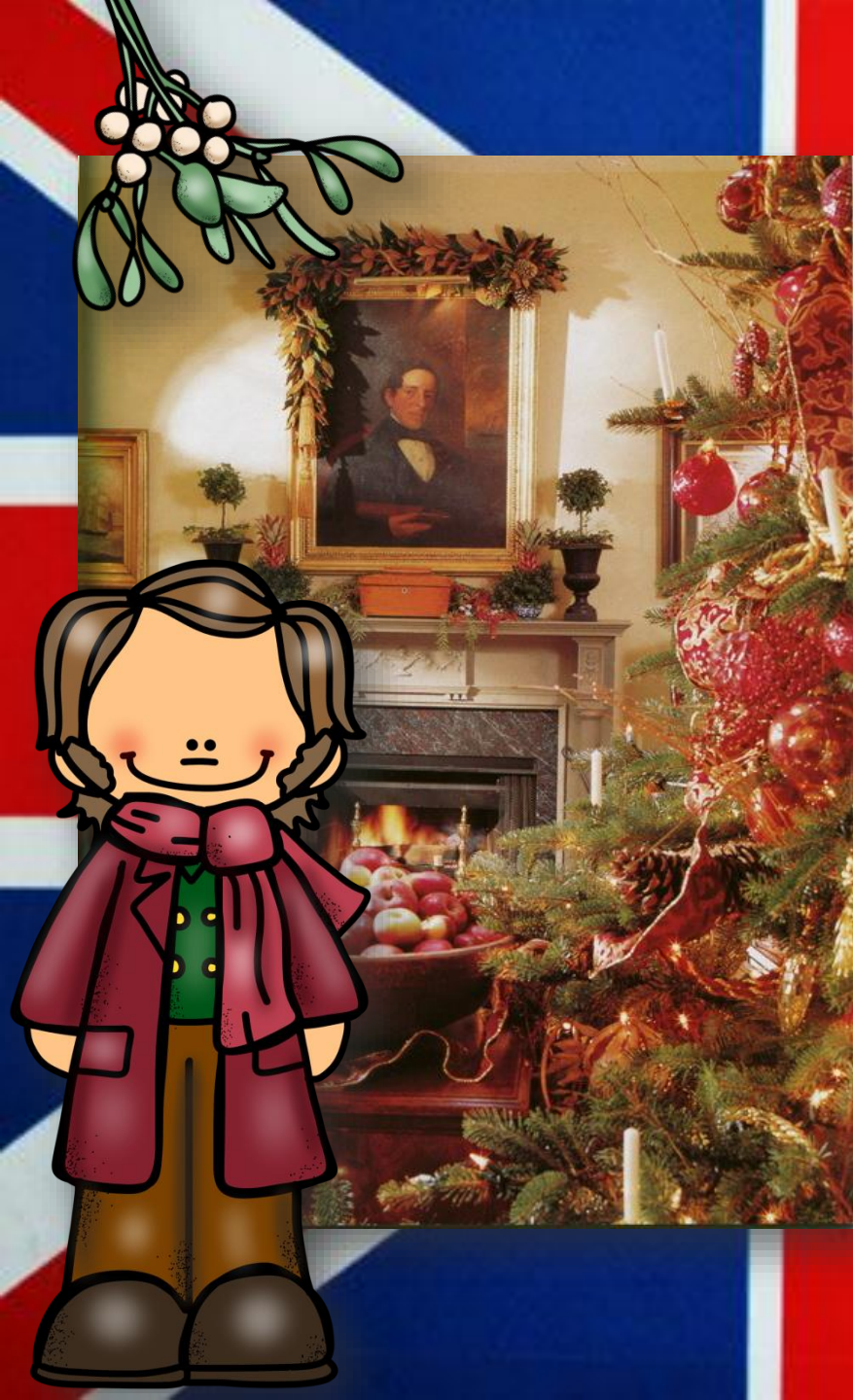
# CHRISTMAS IN ENGLAND



A  
Christmas  
Carol

A K-2 Digital Book for any  
Holidays Around the World Unit





It is usually cold, wet, and foggy in England at Christmas time. But families welcome the warmth and cheer of a Yule log blazing in the fireplace. They decorate their homes with holly, ivy, and other evergreens. Mistletoe or the "kissing bough" is also hung.



Throughout the holidays, carolers go from house to house at twilight ringing hand bells and singing Christmas songs. "The Holly and the Ivy" and "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing" are English favorites. People give the carolers treats, such as little pies filled with nuts and dried fruits.

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English families also send Christmas cards throughout the holiday season. The first Christmas card was posted in England in the 1840's. Over a billion Christmas cards are now sent every year in the United Kingdom.

The day before Christmas is very busy. Everyone wraps presents, bake cookies, and hangs stockings over the fireplace. Then everyone gathers around the tree as someone reads the English classic, *A Christmas Carol*.





After hearing their favorite Christmas story, children write a letter to Father Christmas with their holiday wishes. They toss their letter into the fireplace, so their wishes can go up the chimney and to Santa.



After the children fall asleep on Christmas Eve, Father Christmas comes to visit. He wears a long, red robe, carries a sack of toys and arrives on his sleigh pulled by the reindeer. He fills the children's stockings with candies and small toys.



On Christmas Day, everyone sits down to the mid-day feast and finds a colorful Christmas cracker beside their dinner plate.

A Christmas cracker is a paper-covered tube invented by a London baker in 1846. When the end tabs are pulled, there is a loud crack. Out spills a paper hat to wear at dinner, small trinkets, and a riddle to read to everyone at the table.







The family enjoys a feast of turkey with chestnut stuffing, roast goose with currants, or roast beef and Yorkshire pudding. Brussel sprouts are likely to be the vegetable.



The wassail bowl, brimming with hot, spiced wine or juice, tops off the day's feast. It is said that all quarrels stop when people drink wassail.





After dinner, the family gathers in the living room to listen to the Queen of England deliver a message over the radio and television. At teatime in the late afternoon, the beautifully decorated Christmas cake is served.



The day after Christmas is called Boxing Day. This day has nothing to do with fighting. Long ago, people filled church alm boxes with donations for the poor. Then on December 26th, the boxes were distributed. Now people often use this day to give small gifts of money to the mail carrier, news vendor, and others who have helped them during the year.

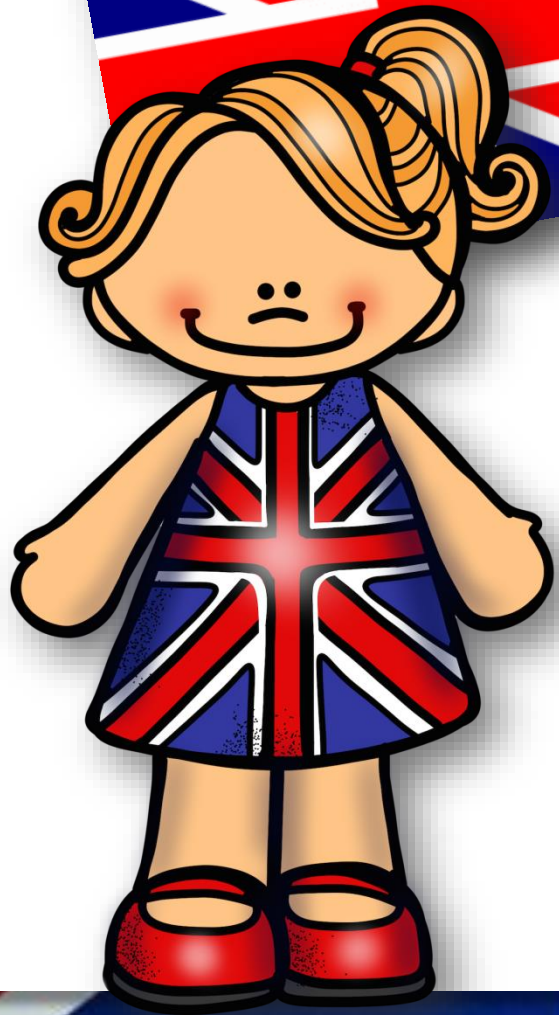


Beginning on Boxing Day, families can enjoy stage performances called pantomimes. This activity originally meant a play without words, or actors who mimed or entertained without speaking. Pantomimes now refers to all kinds of plays performed during the Christmas season.



Familiar children's stories such as "Cinderella" and "Peter Pan" delight young and old alike. In some towns, masked and costumed performers called mummers present plays or sing carols in the streets.





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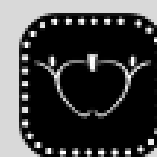
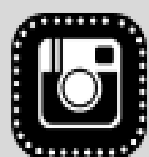
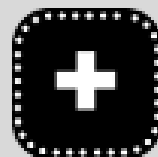
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