20 teaching ideas for Christmas

1. **Christmas speeches.** Students work in pairs to prepare and deliver a speech which aims to persuade their fellow students that they don’t need more Christmas presents and the money involved would be better spent elsewhere.

2. **‘My best Christmas memory’.** Students write their responses to this statement, related particularly to Christmas time. If helpful you could give some ideas: a special memory with a loved one, a delicious meal, an unexpected gift, etc.

3. **Christmas carols in the news.** Take a Christmas carol and change the narrative into a piece of journalism. Lots of fun can be had with creating headlines. ‘Jingle bells’, ‘While shepherds ...’ and ‘Little Donkey’ work particularly well with this activity.

4. **Christmas titles.** Give your students Christmas titles only and then ask them to write a creative response based on these. You could create your own, or choose from ‘The Christmas Tree’, ‘The Unwanted Gift’ or ‘The Turkey’.

5. **Nicholas was ... 1** Read Neil Gaiman's story available at [www.neilgaiman.com/works/Books/Smoke+%2526+Mirrors/in/197/](http://www.neilgaiman.com/works/Books/Smoke+%2526+Mirrors/in/197/) and ask students to write their own version for another festive figure in a similar clue-dropping style, such as Ebenezer Scrooge, Jack Skellington, the Grinch, an elf, Jack Frost, Mrs Claus.

6. **Christmas gift.** Students imagine what perfect Christmas gift they would buy for a fictional figure, such as those above. They then write a description of it, focusing particularly on how it would be perfect for them. Starting ideas could include a foot spa for Santa Claus or a nice pair of woolly gloves for Jack Frost.

7. **Story chain.** Display (or distribute) five Christmas-related items which students have to connect in a narrative. These could include baubles, holly, a Christmas stocking ...

8. **Nicholas was ... 2** Read Neil Gaiman’s story available at [www.neilgaiman.com/works/Books/Smoke+%2526+Mirrors/in/197/](http://www.neilgaiman.com/works/Books/Smoke+%2526+Mirrors/in/197/) and ask students to experiment with rewriting parts with new nouns, verbs, adjectives, images etc. to alter the mood and tone.

9. **My life in baubles.** Students imagine that they are decorating a Christmas tree with items representing important events from their year. They could then describe what item they would hang on each branch, and why.

10. **Twitter updates.** Students write Santa’s Twitter feed as he travels around the globe on Christmas Eve. It could include comments on the gifts, the weather, the children he sees, hashtags, messages directed at other users, and responses from others, for example.

11. **Drama at Christmas.** Oh no! The Christmas turkey has been eaten by the dog! Ask students to improvise a short drama in which a family makes this discovery, and the steps they take to try to find something for Christmas dinner.
Christmas monologue. Santa Claus often gets most attention at Christmas - but what does Mrs Claus do all day when her husband is out and about delivering gifts? Students write and/or perform a monologue describing her activities, thoughts and feelings on Christmas Eve.

A new toy. Working in groups, students imagine that they are marketing the latest trend in toys for Christmas this year. Ask them to produce a marketing campaign for their chosen trend. It could be based on this Teachit resource for chocolate: www.teachit.co.uk/resources/ks3/speaking-and-listening-trail/reading/chocolate-an-advertising-project/3042

Christmas picture. Get students to imagine they are different characters in a Christmas-themed picture, such as this: fineartamerica.com/featured/the-christmas-hamper-robert-braithwaite-martineau.html Ask them to write about the picture from different perspectives. This could include commenting on what the other characters are doing, which can lead to some great use of humour!

Shopping list. Students take a Christmas character (such as those above) and imagine what might be on their shopping or jobs list to prepare for Christmas. Students could be inventive and create some fictional specialist stores to cater for their needs, such as Santa’s visit to the North Pole Sleigh Maintenance Depot.

Deer tales. Students should imagine that Ruldolph (or any other reindeer) is talking to a newspaper about their lives - as with a celebrity interview. They could either script and perform this interview (as with TV talk shows), or turn it into a broadsheet item.

The 12 days. Using the 12 days of Christmas song as a basis, students write their own lyrics including 12 things they would like for Christmas, or 12 things they would like to do next year, or 12 items for Christmas dinner, or anything similar.

Mystery gift. Students are given slips of paper with a gift they have (fictionally) bought for their partner. Alternatively, they could make up their own: the more outlandish, the better! In pairs, they take turns to ask questions about the other student’s gift to work out what is coming their way. This could also be done as a hot-seating activity if preferred. Possible ideas: a self-filling mug of hot chocolate, a lifetime supply of toilet paper, or a deluxe colour-change rubber duck.

Christmas jumpers. Students should imagine they are designing a Christmas jumper to reflect their personality. They should consider images, words, fabric, logos, embellishments, etc. They could design it first if required. Then they should write a few paragraphs describing how their Christmas jumper embodies who they are. These pictures or descriptions could be shared and students could try to guess who they belong to!

Game of Gnomes. This could be done as either a written or drama activity in groups. Students should imagine that in the fictional Christmas land of Gnomeros, the gnomes are trying to decide who should be their ruler. This could either be approached from the perspective of writing and/or performing campaign speeches, producing campaign materials, having gnomish rap-battles or anything similar.