

# Christmas Countdown

This countdown offers a variety of fun ways to spend time together as a family celebrating the birth of the Savior! The activity cards cover a hidden nativity picture, and as you do each activity and remove the card, you slowly reveal the hidden picture. There are two options – one has 24 activities, one for each day in December before Christmas. The other has 16 activities, for those who don't want the stress of making sure to do an activity every single day. There is no prescribed order for the activities – you just choose the one that fits best into that day. Blank cards are also supplied in case you want to substitute some activities of your own.

## How to Make Your Countdown

- ★ Gather supplies.
  - You will need:
    - An 8x10 picture frame
    - A printout of a nativity picture (choose a favorite of your own, or print the one on the website)
    - A printout of the activity cards
    - Poster tape, sticky tac, etc.
    - Scissors
- ★ Cut the nativity picture to 8x10 and frame it.
- ★ Cut out the activity cards and attach them to the front of the glass in the picture frame, covering the nativity picture.
- ★ Display somewhere in your home!

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## Activity Guide

### Nighty-Night Sheep Game:

Mark an 18x18 inch "pen" on a smooth floor. Give each player 60 seconds to fan 12 marshmallow "sheep" into the "sheep pen" within 60 seconds, using a pizza box or square of cardboard.

### Follow the Star Game:

Players pretend to be the wise men, searching for the newborn King of the Jews. Print clues (prophecies) about the birth of Jesus and cut into strips. Hide the paper strips in various parts of the house, turn off some lights, and guide the players with a flashlight (bright star) as they search. Once all the clues have been found and read, guide them on a search for a hidden baby Jesus.

### Christmas Snack Idea:

Make a nativity snack mix and relate each item to something about the Christmas story.

- Cinnamon Chex (hay)
- Pretzels (angel wings)
- M & M's (manger)
- Animal crackers (animals in the stable)
- Mini marshmallows (sheep)

*What other ideas can you come up with to add to your mix?*

### Printables:

- Coloring pages (under the coloring pages tab at [www.ripplingbrooks.com](http://www.ripplingbrooks.com))
- Charades cards
- Pictionary cards
- Nativity Scavenger Hunt
- Postcards
- Gratitude stationery

## Follow the Star Clues

Jesus will come from the tribe of Judah (Genesis 49:10)

Jesus will be a descendant of King David (Jeremiah 23:5-6)

Jesus will come as a baby (Isaiah 7:14)

Jesus will be born in Bethlehem (Micah 5:2)

## Christmas Charades

Print and cut out cards, then fold each one in half and put in a bowl. Divide players into teams; teams take turns choosing a card and acting it out (using no words or sounds) for the other team to guess.

An angel appearing to the shepherds	A new king is born!	Traveling to Bethlehem	No room in the inn
Following a star	Shepherds watching their flocks	Searching for a King	An angel appearing to Mary
Wise men giving gifts to Jesus	Baby Jesus in a manger	Anna and Simeon meet Jesus at the temple	Wise men before Herod
The animals in the stable	Shepherds find baby Jesus	Mary visiting Elizabeth	Mary wrapping Jesus in swaddling clothes
Shepherds telling everyone the good news!	Sheep	City of David	Caesar's decree that all the world should be taxed

## Christmas Carol Pictionary

Print, cut, and fold cards, then put in a bowl. Divide players into teams. One player from the first team chooses a card and draws pictures until their team guesses the correct carol, then continues with as many carols as they can complete in one minute. Teams alternate play until all the cards are gone.

O Little Town of Bethlehem	Silent Night	Away in a Manger	Go Tell it on the Mountain
Do You Hear What I Hear?	I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day	I Wonder as I Wander	Rise up Shepherd and Follow
It Came Upon a Midnight Clear	We Three Kings of Orient Are	What Child is This?	Angels we Have Heard on High
O Holy Night	Still, Still, Still	The Birthday of a King	There's a Song in the Air
Who Is He in Yonder Stall?	Thou Didst Leave Thy Throne	One Small Child	Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus



# Nativity Scavenger Hunt



Read Luke 2:7

Find something similar to what Jesus' bed was meant to hold.



Read Luke 2:7

Find something like what you think Mary wrapped Jesus in.



Read Luke 2:8

Find something soft and fuzzy like the animal mentioned here.



Read Luke 2:8

Find something the color of the sky before the angels visited the shepherds.



Read Luke 2:10-11

Find something that tells good news. What was the angels' good news?



Read Luke 2:12

Find a sign. Signs tell where to find things or remind us what to do. What was the shepherds' sign?



Read Luke 2:15

Find something the shepherds would have worn or used as they traveled to meet Jesus.



Read Luke 2:19

Find something the shape of where Mary kept all her memories of the night Jesus was born.



Read Matthew 2:1-2

Find something (not on this page) the shape of what the wise men followed.



Read Matthew 2:3

Find or draw something to represent who Herod was.



Read Matthew 2:8

Find something you would use on a search. What were the wise men searching for?



Read Matthew 2:11

Find something the color of one of the wise men's gifts.

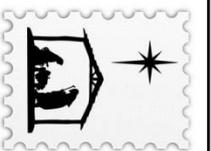




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