Handy Advent Wreath

EYFS/ALN Advent activity

For this activity you will need:

- Sheets of paper or thin card
- Pencils
- Green paint
- Paintbrushes
- Shallow paint tray (optional)
- Scissors
- Glue
- Sheet of backing paper
- Candle templates on pg.2

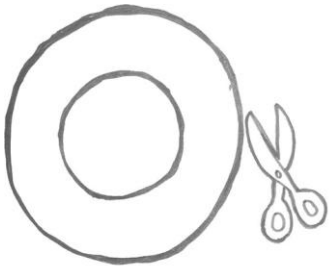
Advent wreaths help us to prepare for the birth of Jesus at Christmas. Advent wreaths are circular, made of evergreen leaves, and have four candles around the edge. We light one of these candles each Sunday in Advent. By the time we have lit the fourth candle, we'll be just days away from Christmas day, which is Jesus' birthday!

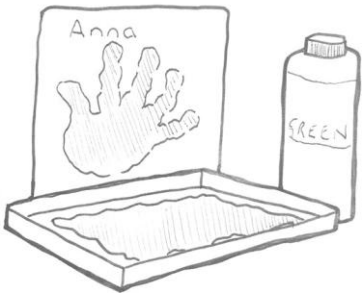
Birthdays are always special, but Jesus is God's Son and that makes his birthday very special. So special that, all around the world, people will be celebrating the day that Jesus was born.

When Jesus grew up, he made sure to tell us that all people are special. God made us all unique and precious. It doesn't matter if we look different or live in different places; Jesus taught us that God the Father loves us all the same, and that we should love one another as brothers and sisters.

Today we are going to work together to make a very special Advent wreath for our class made with all our handprints. Our Advent wreath will remind us that we are all precious to God and we are all wonderfully different. It will also help us to prepare for Christmas Day, and remember that Jesus came into our world to show us how we can love one another and work together. Let's think of some ways we can use our hands to do that now. *Possible responses: waving to people, shaking hands, playing, holding hands, comforting someone, helping someone up if they have fallen.*

Instructions - Steps 1 & 2 take place prior to the class activity





1. Taking a large sheet of thick paper and draw a large circle, approximately 40cm diameter. Cut out the shape.
2. In the centre of your cut out shape draw another circle, approximately 20cm diameter. You should be left with a large ring.
3. Provide each pupil with a sheet of thick paper or thin card. Ask pupils to write their names at the top of the page.
4. Invite pupils to make a handprint using green paint. They can either paint the palm side of one hand or press their hand in a shallow tray of green paint, then print onto paper. Alternatively, pupils can draw round their hands and colour in with green paint or crayons.
5. Leave the hands to dry, then cut around the hand shape. Once cut out, write pupils name on the back.

6. Return handprints to pupils (this provides another opportunity to discuss how God made each one of us unique and precious). Invite children to come forward and attach their handprints to the Advent ring using glue. You may need to overlap the prints.

7. Once all handprints have been attached, leave the wreath to dry.
8. Once dry, place your *Handy Advent Wreath* in your prayer corner
9. Cut out the four candle templates below. If possible, print on purple paper (the liturgical colour of Advent), or colour the candles purple. *Traditionally, the candle for the third Sunday of Advent is pink. So, if colouring by hand, why not take the opportunity to be liturgically precise!*
10. Add one candle to the wreath each Monday following the start of Advent. Liturgically, Advent always begins on the fourth Sunday before Christmas day.

Fundraising Ideas

Mission Together is the Catholic Church's official children's charity for overseas mission. With your help we provide life-changing aid around the world in whatever form it's needed. That could be funding a school feeding programme, a generator for a children's home, or medical aid for remote villages. Mission Together projects support all children, regardless of background or beliefs. Fundraising is a brilliant way to involve school, home, and parish. Below are a few seasonal ideas.

Please ***share your*** fundraising events with us @MissioUK, adding the hashtag #missiontogether

Winter disco: why not donate the proceeds from your school disco to Mission Together this year? Or if that's not possible, hold a sweetie stall or prize stall at the event to raise money for children around the world.

Carol Singing: either organise a group to visit houses in the neighbourhood (with teacher / parental supervision) and sing carols for donations or organise a carol concert at your church or school. Collect donations or ticket money for Mission Together. You could use our sing-along carols for rehearsals. Find here missiontogether.org.uk/sing-with-mission-together/

Christmas crafts: get the whole school involved in making and selling ornaments, wreaths, biscuits, and any other Christmassy gifts and treats you can think of. Donate the proceeds to Mission Together

Helping angels: encourage children to take on extra chores at home, for a donation to Mission Together.

Carol concert or Nativity play: These are much loved Christmas events often with many people keen to attend, ask visitors to make a donation towards Mission Together to share the love of Christ at Christmas with children overseas..

Family fun evenings: in colder weather and darker evenings, indoor events rule! Why not host a pupil disco, beetle drive, bingo night or race night at your school? You can use old horse race videos for people to place bets on, or even use wind-up toys or counters and dice to create races. Sell snacks and drinks to boost your fundraising.