12 DAYS OF CHRISTMAS or 12 DAYS OF WINTER
(vocabulary revision)

Level: any
Young learners, teens, (adults)

The 12 Days of Christmas is a popular Christmas song, and you could teach students the song and sing along. Go to www.lyricstraining.com to find the song with gap-fill activity games for beginners up to ‘expert’. (Use the search function to find the song). Pre-teach some of the more difficult vocabulary first, and use a projector and speakers to complete the activity online.

Another idea is to take just the theme of the song about giving of gifts over the 12 days of Christmas to revise vocabulary, counting and ordinals.

1. Put 12 pictures of vocabulary words or just the words into a bowl or hat. They should be large enough for the whole class to see. In the example below, the teacher is using food vocabulary.

2. Arrange the class into a circle.

3. Start by saying, “On the first day of Christmas, my true love gave to me…” then draw a card and finish the line with the vocabulary word, getting everyone to join in, e.g. “…one red apple.” Pass the hat. The student with the hat draws a card and says what’s on it. Use this for the next verse: “On the second day of Christmas, my true love gave to me two pears and a red apple.”

4. With each pass of the hat, the numbers increase and you count down, e.g.: “Four sweet potatoes, three bananas, two pears and a red apple.”

5. Ideally, you and the students should try to remember each item without looking back at the card!

If you don’t celebrate Christmas in your culture, you can substitute; “On the first day of Winter, I gave my family…”

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