Christmas cards activity – any level

One Christmas tradition in many countries is the sending of Christmas cards. Some people nowadays send e-cards, but traditional paper cards are still very popular. The cards show winter scenes, religious scenes or commercial Christmas scenes such as Santa Claus, Frosty the Snowman or Rudolph the red-nosed reindeer.

In this activity, students learn about the types of things Christmas cards say and then create their own cards.

Instructions for the teacher

1. If possible, collect a variety of Christmas cards and hand them around the classroom. Alternatively, download some Christmas card images from the internet like the examples below from Shutterstock.com. The aim of this lead-in is to get students to think about images associated with Christmas and the kinds of messages that people send at Christmas.

   Elementary – What can you see in the picture?

   Pre-intermediate and above – What can you see in the picture? Is it a good picture for Christmas? Why/why not?

   Intermediate and above – Ask students to think about the picture. Is it humorous? Traditional? Commercial? Religious? Artistic? Who is the likely audience for the card? What kind of message would you expect to find inside?
2. If you are using real cards, get students to write the messages from inside on the board. Otherwise, brainstorm some messages like the ones below:

- Merry Christmas and Happy New Year
- Wishing you a very merry Christmas.
- Happy Holidays
- Happy Christmas
- Season’s Greetings
- Warm wishes for a happy Christmas
- Have a holly jolly Christmas
- Peace on Earth, good will towards men

Make sure students understand the vocabulary of the greetings.

3. Ask students to think about what they want to write in a Christmas card. Do they want a funny message or a serious one? Ask them to find or create a picture they would like to use on their card (or bring in some pictures for them to use).

**Elementary**: Give students the sentence frames, I wish you… I hope you… and ask them to finish the sentences. They should write more than one sentence if possible. For example, I wish you a warm Christmas. I hope you have a happy holiday.

**Pre-intermediate and above**: Hand out the worksheet below. Ask students to match the sentence beginnings and endings. Ask students to use a similar sentence structure to write their own cards. The cards don’t have to be serious. Students can write funny cards, too.
Christmas cards worksheet

Match the beginnings and endings of these Christmas card messages.

1. Christmas is a time for a. for being together.
2. This Christmas may you b. giving, loving and sharing
3. Here’s c. your fire is warm and your family is near.
4. It’s the season d. good wishes and love.
5. I hope that e. enjoy the message of hope, love, and peace on earth.
6. May your f. true meaning of Christmas fill your heart with blessings
7. I’m sending you g. wishing you the happiest Christmas ever.
8. May the h. heart be light and your blessings many

Use the beginnings above and write some of your own endings below:

Christmas is a time for
This Christmas may you
Here’s
It’s the season
I hope that
May your
I’m sending you
May the
Create your own Christmas card like the one below.

Christmas is a time for family and friends. It is when we can appreciate the love in our lives and our many blessings. May the true meaning of Christmas fill you with peace, love and happiness. I’m sending you my warmest wishes for a happy Christmas.

Love, ________________

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**Delivering the Christmas cards – any level**

When your students have made their Christmas cards, you can use this activity in class to deliver the cards.

1. On small cards or strips of paper, write some sentences based on the language they have been learning during the term. For example:
   - John ________ 2 brothers and a sister.
   - Mary _____ pizza but she doesn’t like soup.
   - Tim and Stacey ________ watch a movie tomorrow night.

   Write one sentence for each student in the class.

2. Get some envelopes for their cards.

3. On the envelopes write the answers to complete the sentences. For example
   - has got
   - likes
   - are going to

   Make sure there is only one correct answer for each sentence.

4. In class, put the envelopes on the tree, or on a table. Your students will like looking at all the cards and they’ll be curious about the words on them.

5. On the day you deliver the cards, give each student a card or strip of paper with the sentence. Tell them to get the card that completes their sentence correctly.
1. Play the traditional song “The 12 days of Christmas” for your class.

2. Give them this short text about the song. Ask them, “Can you remember all the verses?”

   **The 12 Days of Christmas**

   “The Twelve Days of Christmas” is an English Christmas carol. The 12 days in the song are the 12 days that begin with Christmas Day, December 25, and end on January 6, when the three kings saw the baby Jesus for the first time.

   The song is from 1780. It was originally a chant without music. The song was also a memory game for children. The leader said a verse, each player repeated the verse. Then, the leader added another verse. The game continued until a player could not repeat all the verses.

3. When your students have learned the song, challenge them to change the lyrics. For example:

   - On the first day of Christmas my teacher gave to me …
   - On the first day of Christmas my father gave to me …

4. Divide your class into pairs. Give each pair a day and ask them to consider the gift for that day.

5. Get the whole class together. Have each pair sing their part. As the song progresses, each pair adds their verse and the other pairs repeat theirs.
A Christmas wreath – young learners

Your students can make a personalised Christmas wreath for their classroom.

1. Give each student a green piece of construction paper. You can use different shades of green.

2. Ask them to put their left hand on the paper and to trace it with a pencil.

3. Then, ask them to cut the shape of their hand. For very young learners, you may want to cut for them.

4. You can ask your students to write a Christmas message, one word for each finger. Younger learners can simply write their name.

5. Take their “hands” and glue them together to make a Christmas wreath, like the picture.

Thanks to Sílvia Barreto for the photo of the Christmas wreath.