

Holidays Around the World: A Winter Journey

Subject: Social Studies, Arts & Crafts

Grade Level: 1st Grade (Age 6)

Time Allotment: 2 days, 15-20 minutes of guided instruction each day, plus optional independent activity time.

Overall Project: My Holiday Passport

This two-day lesson centers on creating a "Holiday Passport." This passport will be the project you can use for her end-of-year review. Each day, Mirabelle will add "stamps" (drawings) for the countries and holidays she "visits."

General Materials List (for both days)

- **For the Passport:** 3-4 sheets of plain paper, 1 sheet of colored construction paper (for the cover), stapler, markers, crayons, or colored pencils.
- **Visual Aids:** A globe or world map (physical or online, like Google Earth).
- **Technology:** Computer or tablet to show the PowerPoint and/or YouTube videos.
- **Your Resources:** "Winter Holidays Around the World" or "Winter Traditions Around the World" PowerPoint, "Christmas Listen and Color" worksheet.
- **Book Suggestions (Optional - from Library):**
 - "A World of Cookies for Santa" by M.E. Furman: A delicious way to see different traditions.
 - "Walk This World at Christmastime" by Debbie Powell: Beautiful illustrations with flaps to lift.
 - "Tree of Cranes" by Allen Say: A story about Christmas in Japan.
- **YouTube Video Suggestions (Optional):** Search for short, animated videos (2-3 minutes) like "Hanukkah for Kids," "St. Lucia's Day for Kids," or "What is Las Posadas?" Preview them first to ensure they are age-appropriate.

Preparation Before Day 1:

Create the "Holiday Passport" booklet. Fold the plain paper in half, place the colored construction paper on the outside as a cover, and staple the folded edge to make a book. On the cover, write "Mirabelle's Holiday Passport." Label the inside pages: "Sweden," "Germany," "Mexico," and "Australia."

Day 1: A Journey to Sweden & Germany

Today's Learning Objectives: By the end of this lesson, Mirabelle will be able to:

- Identify Sweden and Germany on a map.
 - Describe one winter holiday tradition from each country (St. Lucia's Day and decorating gingerbread houses).
 - Draw a picture representing each tradition in her passport.
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Introduction (5 minutes - Hook & Objectives)

What to Say: "Hi Mirabelle! Christmas is almost here, and it's so exciting! Did you know that kids all around the world celebrate special holidays in winter? Some are like Christmas, and some are totally different! For the next two days, we are going to be world travelers. We are going to take this special passport and 'visit' different countries to see how they celebrate. Today, we are going to find out about two special traditions in two countries in Europe called Sweden and Germany. Are you ready to go on an adventure?"

What to Do: Show her the blank passport you made. Have the globe or world map ready.

Body (10 minutes - Content & Practice)

I Do (Mom demonstrates): First Stop, Sweden!

What to Say: "Our first flight is to Sweden! Let's find it on the map." (Help her find Sweden). "In Sweden, they have a special day in December called St. Lucia's Day. To celebrate, one of the girls in the family wakes up very early, wears a white dress, and wears a wreath with lit candles on her head! She brings special sweet buns to her family for breakfast. It's all about bringing light during the darkest time of the year. Look at this picture!"

What to Do: Show a picture of St. Lucia's Day from your PowerPoint or a short YouTube video (search "St. Lucia's Day for kids"). Point out the candles and the special buns.

We Do (Mom & Mirabelle together): Next Stop, Germany!

What to Say: "Okay, let's fly to a nearby country, Germany!" (Find Germany on the map). "I bet you know this tradition. Germany is famous for making beautiful gingerbread houses during Christmas! Families get together to build houses out of gingerbread cookies and decorate them with frosting and candy. Do you remember when we decorated cookies? It's just like that, but they build a whole house! What kind of candy would you put on your gingerbread house?"

What to Do: Show pictures of gingerbread houses from your PowerPoint or a book. Talk about the different candies and decorations you see together.

Conclusion & Independent Work (5 minutes + independent time)

You Do (Mirabelle works independently): Stamp Your Passport!

What to Say: "You were an amazing traveler today, Mirabelle! Now you need to get your passport stamped so we remember our trip. On the page that says 'Sweden,' can you draw a picture of a St. Lucia crown with candles? And on the 'Germany' page, can you draw the most fantastic gingerbread house you can imagine? You can work on this while I get some things done."

What to Do: Give her the passport and coloring supplies. Let her work independently on her drawings. This reinforces the concepts and gives you time.

Formative Assessment (Quick Check): While she's drawing, ask, "Tell me one thing you remember about St. Lucia's Day." This checks for understanding.

Success Criteria: Mirabelle has successfully completed Day 1 when she has drawn one picture for each country that relates to the tradition discussed.

Day 2: A Journey to Mexico & Australia

Today's Learning Objectives: By the end of this lesson, Mirabelle will be able to:

- Identify Mexico and Australia on a map.
- Describe one winter holiday tradition from each country (Las Posadas and Christmas on the beach).
- Compare how Christmas in Australia is different from Christmas here.

Introduction (5 minutes - Hook & Review)

What to Say: "Good morning, my world traveler! Let's get our passport. Where did we travel to yesterday?" (Let her show you the pages for Sweden and Germany and tell you about them). "That's right! Today, we are going on two more trips to very different places. One is warm and sunny, and the other has a big party with a piñata! Let's go!"

What to Do: Review her drawings from yesterday in the passport. Have the globe/map ready.

Body (10 minutes - Content & Practice)

I Do/We Do (Together): First Stop, Mexico!

What to Say: "Our first stop today is Mexico!" (Find Mexico on the map). "In Mexico, for the nine nights before Christmas, they celebrate something called Las Posadas. Kids and grown-ups walk from house to house, singing songs and pretending to be Mary and Joseph looking for a place to stay. At the end, they have a big party, and the best part is... they get to break a piñata full of candy! Have you ever seen a piñata?"

What to Do: Show a picture or short video of Las Posadas, focusing on the procession and the piñata. Talk about it together. Ask, "What shape would you want your piñata to be?"

I Do/We Do (Together): Next Stop, Australia!

What to Say: "Now we're going on a very long flight all the way to Australia!" (Find Australia on the map). "Now, here's a funny question: What season is it here right now?" (Winter). "In Australia, Christmas is in the middle of their SUMMER! It's super hot! So, instead of building snowmen, they might build sandmen at the beach. And for Christmas dinner, many families have a barbecue outside. Can you imagine Santa Claus showing up to the beach in his shorts?"

What to Do: Show pictures of Christmas in Australia from your PowerPoint (or Google Images). Find pictures of "beach Santa" or families having a BBQ. Ask her, "How is a beach Christmas different from our Christmas?" This encourages comparison skills.

Conclusion & Independent Work (5 minutes + independent time)

You Do (Mirabelle works independently): Final Passport Stamps!

What to Say: "Our world trip is complete! You did a fantastic job. Now it's time to add the last two stamps to your passport. On the 'Mexico' page, please draw a colorful piñata. On the 'Australia' page, can you draw Santa at the beach? Maybe he's building a sandcastle! While you're coloring, I can read a

story or you can listen to some music."

What to Do: Hand her the passport and supplies. For extra independent work, you can now use the "Christmas Listen and Color" worksheet you have.

Recap & Summative Assessment

What to Say (After she's done): "Mirabelle, your passport looks amazing! You are an official world traveler. Can you show me your favorite place that we visited? Tell me what you drew and what special thing they do there for the holidays."

What to Do: Have her flip through her completed passport and narrate her "journey." This serves as a summative assessment, showing what she retained from both lessons. Keep the passport as a beautiful piece of work for her portfolio.

Success Criteria: Mirabelle can point to each page in her passport and state one fact about the holiday tradition celebrated in that country.

Differentiation & Extension

- **For a shorter lesson:** Focus on just one country each day.
- **For more advanced learning:** Help her write one key word on each passport page (e.g., "candles," "piñata"). Use the children's dictionary to look up a word like "tradition" or "celebrate."
- **Extension Activity:** Pick one of the traditions to try at home! Bake gingerbread cookies, make a paper-bag piñata, or bake a sweet saffron bun like they do in Sweden.