

# Adding a global dimension to winter

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At this time of year, many schools and youth groups have a very festive and celebratory atmosphere. How about adding a Global Dimension as well!

## FOOD

### What are the food miles in my celebration dinner?

Have you every stopped to think how many food miles are involved in putting your celebration dinner together? The topic of food can provide a great starting point for exploring the global dimension. See <http://www.globaldimension.org.uk/CaseStudies/?id=220> for lots more information.

Students could make a comparison between the times when we were able (or forced as during WWII) to produce virtually all the food and goods we needed and the current situation when we simply import almost everything. Even food that we can grow in one part of the year, we insist on importing so that we can have at any time of the year eg, strawberries in winter.

## SUSTAINABILITY

### Think about the impact we have on the environment at this time of year:

<http://www.wasteonline.org.uk/resources/informationSheets/ChristmasRecycling.htm> contains articles on the impact of Christmas consumption, and tips and ideas on how to cut down on the things you throw away.

[http://www.cat.org.uk/news/news\\_release.tpl?command=search&db=news.db&eqSKUdataarq=22360&home=0](http://www.cat.org.uk/news/news_release.tpl?command=search&db=news.db&eqSKUdataarq=22360&home=0) Centre for Alternative Technology's top ten tips for a green Christmas – like using last year's cards for this year's tags and buying a living tree.

## CELEBRATIONS

### Research different ways to celebrate Christmas:

Look at the ways people celebrate Christmas in other parts of the world. <http://www.santas.net/aroundtheworld.htm> shows how people celebrate Christmas and also shows how to say "Merry Christmas" around the world.

**Divali** and **Eid** have already taken place this year, but don't forget there are other festivals during this season, such as:

- 8 Dec **BODHI DAY** (Buddhist) - the famous Bodhi Day Festival is observed as the day of enlightenment of Siddhartha Gautama
- 11 Dec **HANUKKAH** (Jewish) – Also known as the Festival of Lights, is an eight-day Jewish holiday commemorating the rededication of the Holy Temple in Jerusalem
- 21 Dec **YULE** (archaic form GEOLA, pronounced YULA) - Pagan celebration of the shortest day
- 31 Dec **HOGMANAY** (Scots word for the last day of the year and is synonymous with the celebration of the New Year in the Scottish manner)

You can find information on these and many other winter celebrations on: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_winter\\_festivals](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_winter_festivals) but please remember to take some of this with a pinch of proverbial festive salt!

## GIFTS

### How ethical is that bargain?

You may be really pleased with that bargain you just bought, but why not stop and think why it was such a bargain? Could it be that it was made in a sweat shop in the global south? Are children being exploited in order for you to save a few pounds? Is it a counterfeit? Could it be dangerous?

Seek out ethical and unusual gifts:

### ETHICAL:

[www.oxfam.org.uk/shop/default.aspx](http://www.oxfam.org.uk/shop/default.aspx), [www.virtualgiftstore.com/index.html](http://www.virtualgiftstore.com/index.html) or [www.ethicalgifts.co.uk/](http://www.ethicalgifts.co.uk/)

### SUSTAINABLE:

<http://store.cat.org.uk/> or [www.nigelsecostore.com/](http://www.nigelsecostore.com/)

### FAIR TRADE:

[www.fairtrade.org.uk](http://www.fairtrade.org.uk), [www.traidcraftshop.co.uk/](http://www.traidcraftshop.co.uk/), [www.fairwindonline.com/](http://www.fairwindonline.com/), [www.fairgift.co.uk/](http://www.fairgift.co.uk/), [www.onlyfair.co.uk/acatalog/index.html](http://www.onlyfair.co.uk/acatalog/index.html)

### GIVING A DIFFERENT GIFT:

<http://worldgifts.cafod.org.uk/>, [www.oxfam.org.uk/shop/oxfam-unwrapped?ito=1482](http://www.oxfam.org.uk/shop/oxfam-unwrapped?ito=1482), [www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/en/shop/Pages/online.aspx](http://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/en/shop/Pages/online.aspx), <http://savethechildren.sandbag.uk.com/>

Give experience gifts like a trip to the cinema or ice-skating.

Give promise gift tokens to family members and friends using the template on the reverse of this sheet - please feel free to photocopy.

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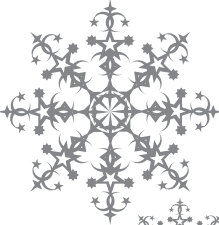
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# PROMISE token template

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Sometimes a promise can be worth so much more than a material gift.  
Use your imagination to think of promise gifts that someone special will really appreciate!

 **TO:** .....



.....

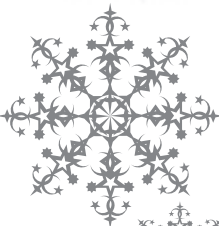
**I PROMISE TO:** .....

.....

.....

**WITH LOVE FROM:** .....



 **TO:** .....


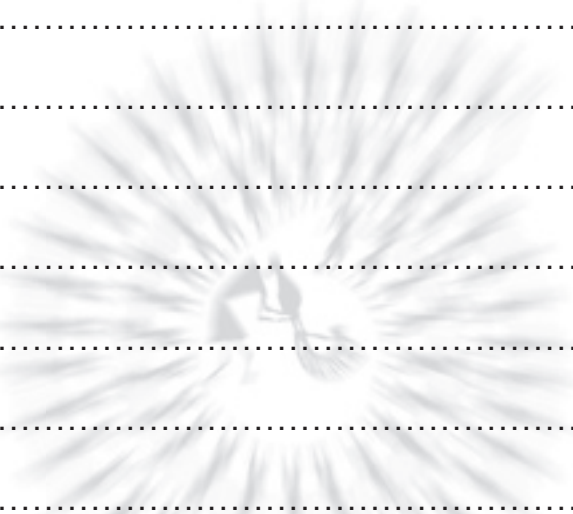
.....

**I PROMISE TO:** .....

.....

.....

**WITH LOVE FROM:** .....



To fill in your promise token, think of something that the person you are giving it to would really love you to do for them. This could be, for example, cook them a special meal, take them on a countryside walk, tidy up the house, wash up once a week, babysitting, take them to the theatre or a music concert, read them a special story, paint them a picture, or anything you feel able to do that they would really appreciate.