



Kid's Kaleidoscope

First Sunday of Advent – HOPE



How do you prepare for Christmas where you live?

Welcome to this Kids Kaleidoscope about hope for the first Sunday of Advent. Do you know what Advent means? It means arrival, and over the next four weeks, we will prepare for and remember when Jesus arrived on earth as a baby. We are preparing for Christmas! How do you prepare for Christmas where you live? We are going to prepare a nativity. Do you know what nativity means? It means birth. But, for those of us who know Jesus, nativity means the story of Jesus' birth.

Many places around the world, when they decorate for Christmas, set up a Nativity scene. It usually includes figures representing Mary and Joseph, animals, the shepherds, the three wise men, and, of course, baby Jesus. Did you know that these Nativity scenes are known by different names in various places around the world?

Let's take a look at some of those names:

- French and sometimes English: Crèche (kresh), which comes from the French word for "manger" or "crib".
- Mexico and many parts of Latin America: Nacimiento (nah-see-mee-EN-toh), which means birth. This scene includes many cultural elements and is a central part of the holiday celebration and can sometimes fill an entire room.
- The Italian word for nativity scene is Presepe (pre-ZEH-peh) / Presepio (pre-SE-pio). The city of Naples is famous for its elaborate and intricate presepi.
- In Germany it is called a Krippe (KRIP-uh).
- The traditional Polish version is called a Szopka (SHOP-kah). It is known for its colorful and architectural designs.

The way to prepare and decorate for Christmas can be very different depending on where you live, but we are all filled with hope and excitement as we prepare to celebrate the birth of our Lord and Savior, Jesus!

How can you share that hope and excitement and be a light shining for Jesus to those around you?

Below, you will find some nativity scenes from around the world. See if you can connect them with their correct country. You can find the answers and more information about these photos on the next page.



Honduras

Native American



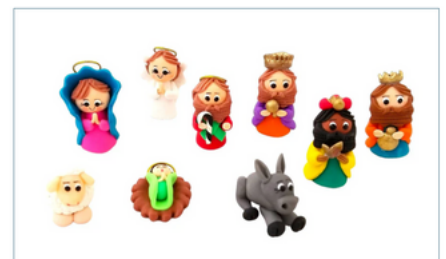
Uganda

Austria



Ecuador

Japan





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ANSWER KEY



Austria - The box Nativity (kastenkrippe) was made in Austria in the late 19th century from wood, baked clay (for the figurines), cardboard and paper. Many families in the region built their own elaborate Nativity scenes in hand-made wooden boxes, and displayed them in their homes during the Christmas season.

Source: <https://www.glencairmuseum.org/newsletter/december-2015-christmas-traditions-and-world-nativities-two.html>



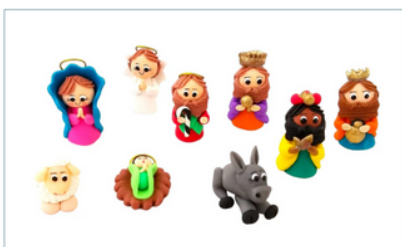
Japan - A Kokeshi doll Nativity, these figures are recognized as a traditional folk art in Japan. The figures have peaceful smiling faces, and their heads are slightly bowed in reverence for the Christ Child.

Source: <https://www.glencairmuseum.org/newsletter/december-2015-christmas-traditions-and-world-nativities-two.html>



Honduras - This Nativity is made from the tropical loofah vine by Leti in Trujillo, Honduras. In this scene, the Holy Family is joined by four angels. Leti and her family grow loofah plants on their fence posts around their home. The plants look like green cucumbers on the vine. The Hondurans call them pastes (paws- tays) and usually use them for making dish scrubbers.

<https://www.worldnativity.com/honduras-408-loofah-nativity.html>



Ecuador - This Nativity scene was hand-molded from bread dough and baked until very hard. A family in Ecuador began the tradition of giving these masapan gifts to neighbors approximately 150 years ago. This technique originated in Calderón, which is a pueblo just outside of Quito in the Andes Mountains. Each masapan Nativity is a one-of-a-kind piece of Ecuadorian art.

<https://www.worldnativity.com/ecuador-29-masapan-bread-dough-nativity.html>



Uganda - This Nativity features the Holy Family in an African hut. The base of the hut is wood, covered with bark cloth. The walls and roof are yellow cardboard. The walls are covered with bark cloth while the roof is covered with spear grass that has been glued to the cardboard to make a distinctive roof point. The figures wear bark cloth and their arms are fashioned from black electrical wire.

<https://www.worldnativity.com/uganda-254-bark-cloth--spear-grass-nativity.html>



Native American (USA) - Native American Nativities are often made with natural materials like hand-painted clay (as you can see here), or carved wood. These sets might feature animals of significance - here you can see horses. They are covered with shawls painted with typical Native American patterns. Each piece reflects the creator's tribal background and personal interpretation of the Nativity story.

<https://blog.kachinahouse.com/native-american-nativities-tradition-and-art/>

ADVENT KALEIDOSCOPE

The Kaleidoscope for the Advent Season is very different; in fact, it isn't a kaleidoscope, it is a Nativity Scene.

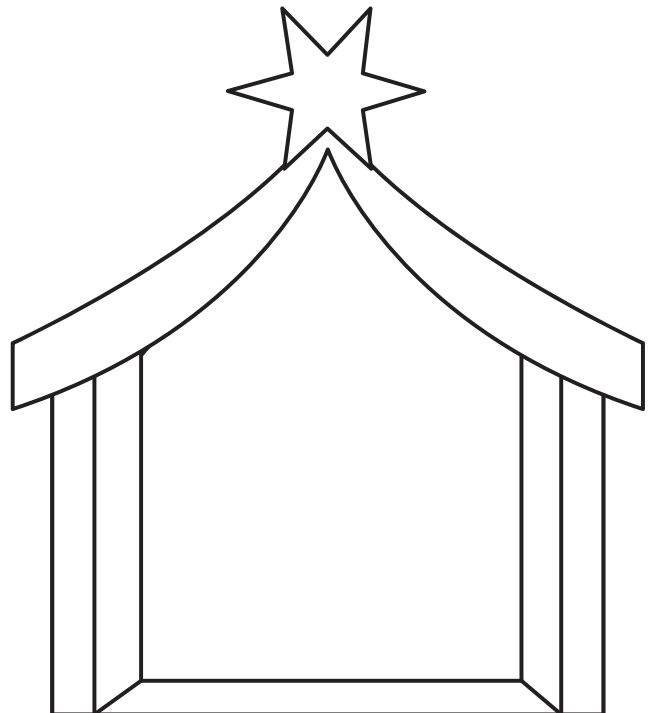
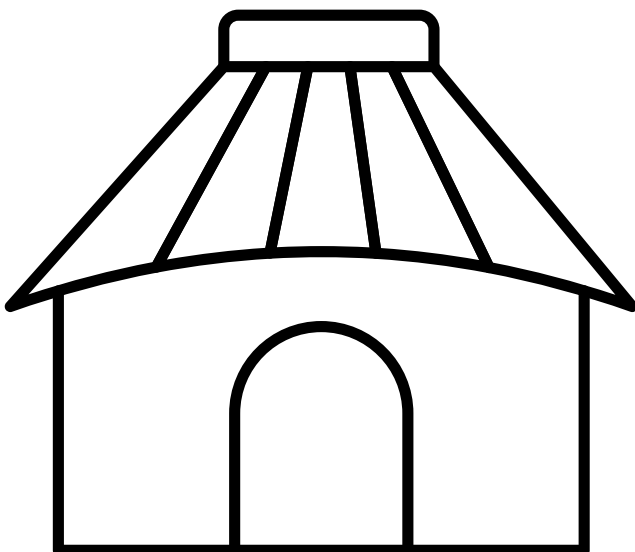
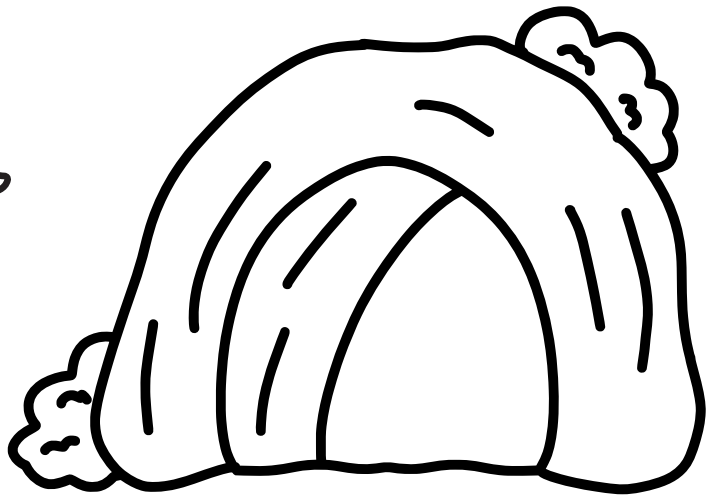
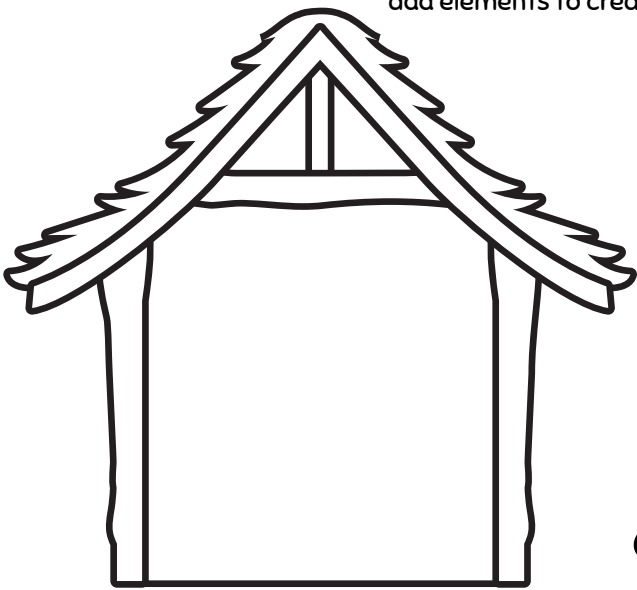
There are many places around the world that have the tradition of setting up these scenes as an important way to prepare for Christmas. In other places, this is not a familiar activity.

Saint Francis of Assisi began this activity in 1223 when he created a living nativity in Greccio, Italy, to make the story of Jesus' birth more tangible for his followers. This tradition of living reenactments grew, and by the 14th century, carved or painted nativity scenes began to appear in churches. Places like Naples set up elaborate crèche displays, while other places might have a smaller version with just Mary, Joseph, and baby Jesus.

This year, we will create a nativity scene, adding a new element each week. For the first week of Advent, we will create the place where Jesus was born. This might look different depending on where you live. Below you will see four examples.

In some places, it might look like a hut, while in others, it could be a cave, a tent, or a wooden building.

You can choose which "place" you want to use for Jesus's birth. Once you have made a choice, print that page and glue it onto cardboard. You can even make it stand up by adding two L-shaped pieces of cardboard and taping them to the back, to make a stand. Color the building or cave, but also feel free to go outside and gather items from nature where you live and glue them onto your building or cave. Find a central place in your home or church where you can continue to add elements to create this scene of Jesus' birth.



But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord."

Luke 2:10-11 NIV

