

# North West SCITT

## Curriculum Newsletter

Edition 3,  
Dec '21/Jan '22

Tis the season to be jolly! And whether you're in 'Camp Christmas' or 'Camp Grinch', the season of goodwill and festive cheer is upon us – so here is some for you, with our curriculum round-up for the festive season (and the New Year too). You're welcome (just call it an early Christmas present!)

#Christmas #magic #Santascoming #inspire #learn #newyearnewyou.

### December is **Time to Celebrate**



Why not introduce your children to Christmas from another culture this year? As many of us teach Spanish in our schools, Spain would be a great place to start!

Remember to include a link to music and geography too – a great excuse to get out those globes, atlases, and world maps. And believe me, once you start singing 'Feliz Navidad', it will be in your head ALL DAY!!!!

<https://kidsclubspanishschool.com/spanish-christmas-for-children/>

**Spain is a country full of unique customs, and some of them may surprise you. From December Fool's Day and a pooping log to fire jumping and an *intense* national lottery, Spanish Christmas traditions are more unique than you might think!**

So how does Spain celebrate Christmas? Here are some of the main Spanish traditions that you need to teach children about ...

1. A visit from the Three Kings.
2. The Christmas Lottery.
3. Roscon de Reyes.
4. Beautiful nativity scenes.
5. The Caga Tio.
6. Nochebuena.
7. Navidad.
8. Nochevieja.
9. Año Nuevo.
10. Dia de Reyes.





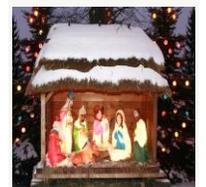
Fun fact: Santa Claus doesn't traditionally come to Spain. Instead, Spanish children get their presents from the Three Kings (or Three Wise Men). And these *Reyes Magos* don't come on December 25th, either! No, children here have to wait until January 6th, the day of the Epiphany, to open their gifts. But it's worth the wait!

The day before the *Reyes* come, locals flock to the streets to greet them. There's a massive parade, and people dressed as the Three Wise Men ride atop floats and throw candy to the masses. Known as *la cabalgata de los Reyes Magos*, this parade is one of the highlights of Spanish Christmas.



*While Santa Claus does make an appearance in Spain, as in other countries, he is not as important.*

**Christmas Eve Dinner (Nochebuena)**  
December 24th ushers in the birth of Jesus Christ; Christmas Eve (*Nochebuena* in Spanish), and in many countries, this is the day that most families around the world exchange gifts. In Spanish Christmas, children must wait for the major part of the gifts, a little longer.



### New Year's Eve (Nochevieja)

During the New Year's Eve, there is a popular tradition which includes eating grapes one by one, in time with the striking of the clock, at midnight on 31 December. If you manage to eat all the grapes in time, you are in for a year of prosperity and good luck. These grapes are called "the grapes of luck" or "*las uvas de la suerte*".



**Christmas Day (Navidad)**  
December 25th is Christmas Day (Navidad) in Spain. It is a day when families get together for a big lunch, eat well, and spend time with each other. As with Christmas Eve, this is typically a day for all the gifts, but in some families, children may receive a small gift either on Christmas Eve or during the morning of Christmas Day.

### New Year's Day (Año Nuevo)

This is a day spent with family eating a big lunch and talking about what the New Year might bring.

### The Three Kings Day (Día de Reyes)

*Día de Reyes* has become a tradition in Spain where the children write letters to one or all three of the wise men; Melchor, Gaspar, and Balthasar, informing them of their excellent behaviour throughout the year and the kind of gift they deserve on January 6th. It is believed that the better a child has behaved, the better the gift they will receive.

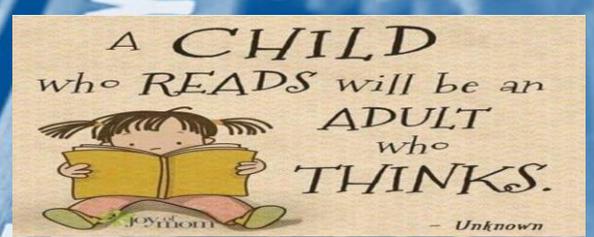


*Epiphany is celebrated 12 days after Christmas on 6th January (or January 19th for some Orthodox Church who have Christmas on 7th January) and is the time when Christians remember the Three Kings who visited Jesus.*



# Reading in Focus

The New Reading Framework, July 2021



## Choosing books

Does the book:

- elicit a strong response – curiosity, anger, excitement, laughter, empathy?
- have a strong narrative that will sustain multiple readings?
- extend children's vocabulary?
- have illustrations which are engaging and reflect children from all backgrounds and cultures?
- help children connect with who they are?
- help children to understand the lives of people whose experiences and perspectives may be different from their own?

## Core 'read aloud' stories and non-fiction

Use 'Choosing books' (above) as a guide.

- Identify a core set of stories for each year group.
- Consider a range of stories set in the UK and around the world, both traditional and modern, as well as non-fiction.
- Refresh the list regularly, at least once a year, as new books are published, and new teachers arrive, to avoid its being set in stone.
- Encourage teachers to familiarise themselves with the stories their class will know from previous years.
- Supplement the core 'read aloud' stories with others of the teacher's choice.
- Consider sharing the list with parents, and explaining its purpose, so they could buy or borrow the books.

If you were to ask yourself the questions given in the July 2021 Reading Framework when selecting texts to read aloud, which texts would you include? Make a list to share at interview.

@MrHtheteacher

Reading is the **KEY** to learning

## Teaching phonics – why reading is so much more than SSP

Reading's big picture looks far beyond phonics. Here's what else you need...



Sue Cowley



The question of how we learn to read fascinates both teachers and policy makers. Teaching children to read is vital to ensure they can access the curriculum, and becoming literate allows children to participate fully in society, with poor literacy skills closely linked to social issues like unemployment and poor mental health...

Read the full article at:

<https://www.teachwire.net/news/teaching-phonics-why-reading-is-so-much-more-than-ssp>

*'...A primary goal of Explicit Vocabulary Instruction is to model for students the depth of knowledge that is involved in mastering words: to own a word is to know **not just its definition but its different forms, its multiple meanings, its connotations, and the situations in which its normally applied.***

Closing the vocabulary gap in primary schools

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Read the full article at:

<https://educationblog.oup.com/primary/closing-the-vocabulary-gap-in-primary-schools>

**The more that you read,  
The more things you will know.  
The more that you learn,  
The more places you'll go.  
-Dr. Seuss**

# Health and Wellbeing

## GET CHILDREN MOVING!

### BRAIN-BASED LEARNING

## More Than a Dozen Ways to Build Movement Into Learning

Physical activity that amplifies learning can have a powerful effect on retention and engagement—it's also fun.

By [Stephen Merrill](#), [Sarah Gonser](#)

October 8, 2021



From **Edutopia**

<https://www.edutopia.org/article/more-dozen-ways-build-movement-learning>

### MINDFULNESS

## 8 Activities for Students (and Teachers) to Create a Mindful Classroom

Everyone in the classroom benefits when there are opportunities throughout the day to reflect and prepare for learning.

By [Maurice J. Elias](#)

October 27, 2021



**Brad Johnson**  
@DrBradJohnson

...

“Be a Thermostat, Not a Thermometer: A thermometer is controlled by the environment, while a thermostat controls the environment. Do you control the environment of the classroom or do you let it control you? Create a sense of calm.”

From **Edutopia**

<https://www.edutopia.org/article/8-activities-students-and-teachers-create-mindful-classroom>



So to close...



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