

# Wise Men



## Find

- Barney' the sheep.
- Some costume Jewellery (Hide the item behind Barney)
- Scarf to use as a blindfold.

## Introduce

Introduce Barney as the sheep who has been on a Christmas Adventure. Explain that on his travels he has picked up a clue for us, and hidden it behind his back. Ask a volunteer to come and find what Barney's hiding. Get the volunteer to show the costume jewellery, explain that they are a clue to where the Barney has been on his Christmas adventure this week. Ask the school which part of the Christmas story they think Barney has visited. Which characters in the Christmas story do they think might wear a lot of bling? Perhaps Barney has been walking alongside the camels on which the wise men travelled. Perhaps some jewels fell out of a bag and landed on Barney's back?

The wise men were wealthy star gazers and when they spotted the unusual looking star over Bethlehem they knew it was a sign of something very special, a sign that a King had been born. So they packed up their camels and travelled to the East to find the king the star was pointing to.

How you would have felt following the star? Would the journey have been easy or hard? What do you think the wise men would have expected to find when they got to Bethlehem?

## Play

A game to reflect on the wise men's journey and who they were, play a game called 'treasure chest'. Invite a child to sit on a chair at the front of the hall and place the jewellery on the floor in front of the chair. Then blindfold the volunteer on the chair. Next choose a child or teacher in the hall whose job it is to sneak up on the volunteer and steal the jewellery from beside the chair. The volunteer on the chair has three attempts to point out the jewellery thief. If they hear a sound and point in that direction and it is in the direction of the thief they win and the thief loses; and visa versa. It's sometimes easier to start with the first volunteer to be a teacher so the children grasp the concept. You can play this game a few times giving a team point or treat to those that win the game.



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## Talk

By following the star the wise men eventually arrived in Jerusalem where they went to King Herod's palace to look for the new king. However, King Herod knew nothing about any new king and the bible explains how he quizzed the wise men about the star they were following. The more he heard the more King Herod became worried that he was going to be overthrown and a new king put in his place. Herod told the wise men he wanted to know where the new king had been born so he could worship him, but the wise men knew different. In a dream God had spoken to them and told them that Herod didn't want to worship the new king but in fact kill him. The wise men decided to escape from Herod's palace so that they could find the king and warn him about Herod's plan.

Eventually the wise men found Jesus.

It was tradition to give gifts to a new king, and even though Jesus was no ordinary king, being born in a stable and not a palace the wise men still took gifts. They took gold, frankincense and myrrh. Now these may seem strange gifts for a child but they all had special meanings. Gold was a gift to show that Jesus was a king. Frankincense was burnt in places of worship as a prayer or a way to honour God. The wise men obviously saw Jesus as someone to be honoured and worshipped. Myrrh was what they would have put over people when they died – this was a sign of the death Jesus would be significant. So the wise men gave these gifts because they believed Jesus was the King the Jewish people had been waiting for, that He was God and his death was going to be very important. The wise men carried gifts which help us understand who Jesus is.

## Pray

Thank you God that you sent a star so the wise men knew where to find Jesus. Help us this Christmas time as we look at the stars on top of our Christmas trees to reflect and think about who you are just like the wise men did. Amen

Classroom follow up:

Make stars using yellow paint and hand prints and then write on them words they associate with Christmas and Jesus.

Make crowns and ask them to write on the crowns words they associate with the wise men's journey to meet Jesus and what they found.

