



A Starry Night Lesson KS2

Telling the Christmas story with music, song and art.

You may wish to print out the Lumi image and stick tinsel along the edge. You could wear Lumi as a badge, stick on to a paper headband like a crown, or have the end of a stick like a wand with tinsel trailing down.

Aim

- ★ To reflect on the Christmas story

Lesson resources

- ★ 'A Starry Night' video (11:52)
- ★ Lumi image
- ★ Chorus actions
- ★ 'A Starry Night' story images presentation - Standard and widescreen
- ★ 'A Starry Night' blank sheet

Activity/plenary resources:

- ★ Lumi thoughts
- ★ Sequencing pictures
- ★ Lumi plenary Lumi opinions
- ★ King of all the world
- ★ Colouring sheets
- ★ Stained-glass windows
- ★ 'A Starry Night' Introduction audio clip
- ★ Slap quiz presentation - Standard and widescreen
- ★ Slap quiz questions

More resources

Explore more with:

- ★ 'A Starry Night' assembly for all ages
- ★ KS1 lesson plan

Available from: salvationist.org.uk/resources/schools/starry-night

STARTER

Select one or two ideas.

'A Starry Night' band audio

Play the *A Starry Night Introduction* audio clip (0:44). Ask what kind of instruments the pupils can hear, and do they know any of the instrument names. What kind of music can they hear and how does it make them feel? Did any of the music sound familiar? What kind of story might the music help tell?



Hidden light

Bring in a light source, under a cover. (Be safety aware!) For example, a lantern, LED tea light or torch. Ask pupils to guess what is hidden. Then ask for ideas of what light can be a symbol of.

King of ...

In pairs, brainstorm as many ways as possible to finish the sentence 'King of ...' Discuss any common themes to their answers.

Light words

Split the class into groups of roughly 8-10 and have each group stand in a circle. In each group pass round a cut-out of Lumi and ask each pupil to quickly say a word linked to the word light, eg a light source, or an adjective. How quickly can the group pass round the star?

If you allow repeated words, the pupil who repeats a word stands with their legs apart; the second time they hold their arms straight out to the sides; and then the third and final time their arms go straight up in a point to show they've made a star shape, and the game finishes. Discuss any themes that came up, favourite/repeated words, or new ones they've learned.

Actions

Teach the actions for the chorus and ask pupils to see if they can work out what they mean, including the action for 'star'.

MAIN LESSON

Video

Introduce the main character, Lumi the little star. Establish previous knowledge: *What might Lumi see on the first Christmas night?* The chorus uses actions; teach the pupils the actions for the chorus and for the word 'star'. Encourage pupils to do the actions - and sing - along with the video.

Watch the video, pausing at key points to ask some of the questions or discuss at the end. Use talk partners where possible.

Questions

0:00-2:27 'King of all the world'

- ★ What story is being told? How old is this story?
- ★ What kind of instruments are being played? Can you name them?
- ★ How would you describe the sound they make? How do they make you feel?
- ★ What band are the musicians part of? What do you know about The Salvation Army?



2:28-6:48 'King of all the world'

- ★ What was the little star's name? What it might be short for?
- ★ Why do you think Lumi felt that being a star was the best job in the whole universe?
- ★ What did the trombone do when the donkey was mentioned and the stable was described? Why?
- ★ What did the instruments do when Lumi said, 'They can't stay there!', then described the stable as 'damp, cold and smelly'? Why?
- ★ Why do you think the new star seemed to be shining just for the baby?
- ★ What did Lumi and the new star do with their light? What might light represent in these sections of the story?

6:49-8:28 'King of all the world'

- ★ Why do you think Lumi was excited to have seen baby Jesus?
- ★ Why do you think Lumi and the shepherds were frightened by the brightness of the angel?
- ★ What might the light from the angel represent?
- ★ Why do you think the shepherds stopped being afraid?
- ★ What was the good news message from the angel?
- ★ More angels - and light - appeared. What might this 'glorious new bright light' represent?
- ★ Why do you think the angels wanted to sing for baby Jesus?

8:29 to end 'Happy Christmas!'

- ★ Lumi realised the new light was from a place where there was no darkness at all. What do you think this means?
- ★ Ask pupils to repeat the action for 'King of all the world'. Why do you think Jesus is known as King of all the world? What kind of king is he?
- ★ How does music help tell the story?
- ★ Why do you think The Salvation Army is telling the story?
- ★ What do you think the gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh might represent?
- ★ Why do you think this story still important to people today?

ACTIVITIES

Select a follow-up activity or create a carousel of activities for pupils.



Literacy

Sentence ordering

Use the *Sentence ordering* handout to support pupils to re-tell the story. Differentiate for your pupils by using the first five, seven or all ten sentences. Or, for more of a challenge, use the second sheet where pupils need also to finish each sentence.

Hot seating

In small groups or as a class, ask pupils to 'hot seat' a character, eg Lumi, Mary, the new star, shepherds ... Encourage in-depth questioning, eg

- ★ Can you describe how you felt when ...
- ★ What was your greatest fear/hope when ...
- ★ Do you think your actions had an impact when ...
- ★ What did you learn about yourself ...
- ★ Was there something you would do differently ...
- ★ What do you think ... means?
- ★ What was the most challenging/puzzling/scary ...
- ★ If you could relive that night, what would you do differently?

Story writing

Brainstorm other characters that are or could be part of the Christmas story. Challenge pupils to rewrite the story from a different perspective, eg a shepherd, the donkey, an animal in the stable, a lamb, a camel or even a fellow traveller.

Diary

What might Lumi write in his diary about what happened that night?

Poetry

Use the *Lumi shape poem* handout to write a poem about Lumi's adventure in the shape of a star. Display key words that might support, eg shine, sparkle, glow, gleam and beam. Pupils can write along the star outline, within the star shape or fill up the sky! [Three styles to choose from.]

Lyric writing

*'And all the angels sang for him,
The bells of Heaven rang for him,
For a boy was born
King of all the world!'*



Analyse the structure of the chorus, eg

- ★ The chorus doesn't rhyme, so what pattern is used for the words?
- ★ How many syllables are there per line?
- ★ What is the rhythmic pattern for each line?
- ★ How many beats of music does each line use?

Challenge pupils to write and perform their own chorus based on the chorus of 'A Starry Night'.

Religious Education

Lumi opinions

Use the *Lumi opinions* handout for pupils to reflect on the story. For each statement, pupils mark how strongly they agree/disagree, then join the dots together to make their own unique star shape. TIP - also join to the dots in the centre to make a star shape, not a pentagon.

Encourage pupils to share their stars with others, looking for whose stars are widely different, and to discuss their thoughts.

- ★ Christians today still believe Jesus is 'King of all the world'.
- ★ The star was the main character as it guided everyone.
- ★ The shepherds were more important visitors than the wise men.
- ★ This story is only important for people who believe in Jesus.
- ★ This story is about kindness and hope.

King of all the world

Discuss:

- ★ What clues in the story say that a king is being born?
- ★ Discuss what 'King of all the world' means.
- ★ What do Christians learn from this story?

Use the *King of all the world* handout and model using the format of Point, Evidence and Explain, completing the sentences. Three options to choose from. Differentiate by using the sentence starters.

- ★ What in the story supports the idea that Jesus is 'King of all the world'?
- ★ How does the star help to show Jesus as 'King of all the world'?
- ★ Why might Christians use the phrase 'King of all the world' today?



Light

Explore the symbolism of light in the story.

- ★ Identify all the light elements: Lumi, the stars, the new star, and the angels.
- ★ Categorise the different functions of light throughout the story, eg guiding, attracting attention, contrasting against the darkness ... including that light initially inspired fear in the shepherds.
- ★ Discuss what light can symbolise, eg guidance, something heavenly / God, comfort, hope and celebration.
- ★ Would the story still be impactful without light?

Christians also call Jesus the Light of the World (John 8:12). They believe that Jesus helps guide us and gives us hope and comfort, that he shines brightly against a world full of darkness, full of worries and hardship.

Ask pupils to consider ways they reflect light back into the world. Pupils can record by writing their thoughts or drawing.

Faith in action

The Salvation Army is a church and a charity, so its members try to be a light for others, helping people find their way and giving comfort and hope.

Ask pupils to research some of the work The Salvation Army does, locally, nationally and internationally.

- ★ [Salvationarmy.org.uk](https://www.salvationarmy.org.uk)
- ★ [Salvation Army YouTube videos](#)

In talk partners pupils can discuss:

- ★ What examples of The Salvation Army 'being a light to others' have you found?
- ★ Why do you think The Salvation Army helps others?
- ★ Why do you think The Salvation Army is telling the story of *A Starry Night*?

Ask pupils to present their findings on a poster.

Art

Shadow puppets

Ask pupils to create shadow puppets to recreate the story of *A Starry Night* which they can use to create their own shadow puppet play.



Stained-glass windows

Use the *Stained-glass windows* handout. Cut out the white shapes and use glue and tissue paper to cover the gaps, creating a stained-glass window effect. Use the handout either as a template to transfer the designs on to thicker paper, or print directly on to card. There are two styles, differentiated for pupils:

- ★ Lumi / star design: You may wish to add googly eyes to the star!
- ★ Bethlehem: Recreate the town by making lots of buildings and palm trees.

Light and shadow

Share the *Story images* PowerPoint presentation with pupils. You may wish to have printed versions of these. Inspired by one of the illustrations, model recreating a version of it on black paper using a pencil. As it is a night scene, encourage drawing rough/searching lines, especially for the characters. Redraw over the best lines with a dark felt-tip pen. Demonstrate adding colour with chalk pastels (using the side of the chalk and rubbing in the dust - tickle, tickle, smudge, smudge!) As it is a night scene, leave some areas dark. Do the star with white and yellow chalk. Finally, using the point of the white or yellow chalk, add in light reflections from the star on the characters by making strong chalk marks - and no smudges! Alternatively add in glitter glue using a toothpick.

Colouring in

Colour in a picture from the story. Select from the *Colouring in* sheets. Six to choose from.

Music

General discussion

- ★ Why do you think The Salvation Army uses music to tell this story?
- ★ How does music help us understand or feel stories differently?
- ★ Be a music detective: Identify instruments used in the video and describe how they add to the mood.

Instruments

Listen to the beginning of the video and identify the instruments used.

- ★ What is similar and different between the instruments and how they are played?
- ★ Can they describe the different sounds they make?
- ★ What group of instruments do they all belong to?
- ★ Which instrument appeals to them the most? Why?



Music interpretation

Listen to / watch the video again from 2:28; can pupils spot the tune that represents Lumi? Encourage pupils to interpret the tune they are hearing with gestures, eg repeating the star action to the beat of Lumi's tune, or 'conducting' the music.

- ★ What instruments are playing the main part of Lumi's tune?
- ★ How would you describe this tune?
- ★ What does this tune tell us about Lumi?

The instruments help tell the story through sound effects, but also through new tunes. Listen to / watch the rest of the video, continuing to use gesture to help identify when new tunes are used. Can pupils spot when a new tune/theme is introduced? Which character or event is the tune representing?

Adapt the questions above for each new tune, eg

- ★ travelling with a donkey (3:34)
- ★ shepherds following Lumi (8:28)
- ★ arrival of the travellers/kings (9:26)

Reflection

Reflect on the instruments used and how they added to the story-telling, eg mood, tone, sound effects ...

- ★ Why do you think The Salvation Army uses music to tell this story?
- ★ How does music help us understand or feel stories differently?
- ★ Can you create music that reflects the emotions through the story.

PLENARY

Choose an activity.

Lumi stars

Use the *Plenary* handout and cut out the stars - two per sheet.

Ask the pupils to write in the centre of the star one thing they have learned.

Around the star write one thing they still wonder or want to know more about.

Provide extra stars if pupils wish to write more.

Lumi message

Use the *Plenary* handout and cut out the stars - two per sheet. Ask pupils to write around the star what message they think Lumi might give to the world today.



Slap quiz

Display the *Slap quiz* presentation and use the *Slap quiz questions* handout. Ask pupils the question and they have to be the first to 'slap' the correct answer/star on the screen. This can be done:

- ★ in groups, taking turns with one person from each group answering the question
- ★ by elimination, 2/3 pupils go head-to-head, and the winner stays on to face the next challengers
- ★ by completing as a paper quiz test if you wish for something less noisy!

You may wish to repeat certain questions to gauge different pupils' comprehension and reasoning.

For differentiation there is a range of true/false, recall, inference, interpretation and personal opinion questions. Encourage pupils to justify and explain their answers, as they may have reasoned an alternative correct answer!

