

GLAD CHRISTMAS BELLS Worksheet

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Verse 1

Glad Christmas bells, your music tells
The sweet and pleasant story;
How came to earth, in lowly birth,
The Lord of life and glory.

Verse 2

No palace hall its ceiling tall
His kingly head spread over,
There only stood a stable rude
The heavenly Babe to cover.

Verse 3

No raiment gay, as there He lay,
Adorned the infant Stranger;
Poor, humble Child of mother mild,
She laid Him in a manger.

Verse 4

But from afar, a splendid star
The wise men westward turning;
The livelong night saw pure and bright,
Above His birth place burning.

Vocabulary In one or two words define the following terms from the poem.

Verse 1: lowly, glory

Verse 2: rude

Verse 3: raiment, gay, adorned, humble, manger

Verse 4: livelong

Word Pictures Word pictures is another way of saying *imagery*. *Imagery* or *figurative language* helps us form a picture of what the author is trying to present. Discuss what these word pictures mean and, perhaps, draw your idea of the *imagery* or *figurative language* the author uses!

Verse 1: Christmas bells

Verse 2: palace hall; kingly head; stable rude

Verse 3: raiment gay

Verse 4: splendid star; wise men westward turning

Mechanics are the nuts and bolts of a poem. Verbally discuss.

Who is the speaker? (Does the speaker have a specific personality or has the author remained in the background so the message of the poem will be more clear?)

What does the poem reveal about the speaker's character? (Sometimes, poems reveal nothing about the speaker's personal thoughts, feelings, or attitudes. Yet, the poem may demonstrate those character traits that are important to the author like courage, loyalty, perseverance, etc.)

Is the speaker addressing someone in particular or is it to anyone? (Sometimes poems are not directed to anyone in particular, but to anyone that may read it.)

Does the poem have a setting? (Does the author tell where the poem occurs? Is the poem about a specific event?)

Is the poem about a particular event? (Is the event past or present? If it is about a past event, does the remembrance of the event have a particular meaning to the speaker?)

Is the theme of the poem stated directly or indirectly? (Some poems are straightforward and are meant to be taken literally. In songs, the theme may be presented in the refrain or in the last few lines. Sometimes the theme is a little bit more difficult to discern as it is made with figurative language or symbols.)

What point of view or perspective is the speaker? (What meaning do you think the poem has for the author?)

How did you respond to the poem when you read it the first time? (Did your thoughts and feelings change after you took time to study it?)

Comprehension Questions Verbally discuss

Verse 1: Why are the Christmas bells important? What story do they tell?

Verse 2: The author compares/contrasts a palace with a stable. Why? What is significant about both of these places?

Verse 3: Why is Babe capitalized? How does this verse describe this Infant? Why?

Verse 4: Why is the “splendid star” important? Explain and discuss: “The wise men westward turning; The livelong night saw pure and bright.”

Did this historical event become more real to you after reading this poem? Why?

After reading this poem, what character traits did you think of? What does the Bible have to say about these character traits?

What Does the Bible Say?

Find Scripture proofs for each of the assertions or statements made for each of the four verses and the refrain.

Re-read the Gospel accounts of the Nativity as well as Isaiah 53.

The Author/Poet

Based on what you have studied about this poem so far, would you guess that the author was a Christian or a humanist? How did you arrive at your decision?

This is a traditional carol.

Geography

Locate anyplace that you have been especially interested in on a globe, map and atlas.

Challenge Locate a special feature of this country (e.g., river, mountain, etc.) on a map or in an atlas.

Compare/contrast the weather from this country with your own for one week.

Make a traditional from this country meal for your family.

Activities

1) Make your own book! Without making an image of Christ, draw pictures representing each verse. (Note: that will be four different illustrations). With construction paper and other items readily available at home, make a title page with the name of the song and the author's name which will be your book's cover. You may want to illustrate your cover and include this poem in your book.

2) Make your own play! Re-enact with your siblings or friends the event or message discussed in this poem. Keep it lively, simple, and short. You may want to end your play with singing a rousing chorus of this poem or reading Scripture verses. Videotape your creation.

3) Radio Drama! With a handheld tape recorder, create your own radio show dramatizing the historical event of this poem.

4) Be a Reporter! Either with your family camcorder or with a handheld tape recorder, "interview" various individuals connected with this poem (e.g., angels, the bells, the serpent, Joseph, Mary, the Wise Men, repentant sinner, etc.). In order to have the fast paced style of a reporter, watch and/or listen to the news with your parents' permission. Keep the interviews lively, quick, and to the point.

Remain objective! Being objective means just reporting the facts and not giving your opinion of the situation.

5) What is one of the things you most enjoy? Is it literature? math? science? sports? cooking? Take that area of interest and relate that to this poem. If you enjoy dance, for example, develop a dance routine that physically expresses the sentiments of this poem. If you enjoy shop, create something out of wood that helps to clarify this poem. Do you enjoy creating stories? Write a story based on any time period you desire that expresses the sentiments of this poem. Do you enjoy creating things in the kitchen? Make an ancient meal from this time or develop your own meal that symbolizes the many different points this poem makes.

6) Poster. Create a poster illustrating the the author's view of the impact of *Glad Christmas Bells*.

7) Scavenger Hunt. Go to the library to learn what you can about carols and share it with your family. If possible, discover the story behind this poem.