

Countdown to Christmas

As the days tick by till the end of term and Christmas, this innovative activity will harness pupils' excitement to an open-ended numeracy challenge that culminates in a unique Class Advent Calendar!



Once the sums have been agreed, teams craft and create them on their folded A4 paper. Imagine it was a Christmas card with the crease along the top - their sum will go on the front of the card. And they write a motivational Christmas message where the message would normally go.

Activity Overview:

As the days tick by till the end of term and Christmas, this activity will harness pupils' excitement to an open-ended numeracy challenge that culminates in a unique Class Advent Calendar! The activity is one you can either assign a single block of time to or revisit over a period of weeks - whatever suits you best. And the outcome gives you an opportunity for a quick numeracy game to start every day in December!

Target Audience:

KS1 - KS4

Instructions:

Some time between now and the end of November, divide the pupils in your class into small groups. Give each group:

- a piece of A4 paper, folded in half (portrait style);
- a number representing a December school day before the end of term.
- a seasonal icon - you'll find suggestions at the end of the document, but these might include robins, Yule logs and stars.

Tell the children that they need to come up with a challenging sum that will yield the number they have been given - using their icon. The outcomes will obviously depend on age and ability, so while a Year 1 team might agree on 4 Robins + 6 Robins = 10 Robins, a Year 7 group might go for the cubed root of 1,000 Robins!

Stick all the finished pieces on the wall (or walls - they don't need to all go together), in a random order. On December 1st, challenge the pupils to identify the card that will yield the answer "1" - with the child getting it right first being invited to open it up to reveal the message inside. And repeat every school day until the end of term (when there should only be one option left!).

Take it High Tech:

Don't forget that there's another option as well - because rather than producing their work on paper, each team could create two PowerPoint slides, one for the sum and one for the message!

Outcomes:

Pupils will enjoy manipulating numbers in a range of ways to challenge their classmates - and get to take a numeracy challenge every day in December.

Suggested Seasonal Icons:

- 1: Gift Boxes
- 2: Baubles
- 3: Crackers
- 4: Yule Logs
- 7: Snowflakes
- 8: Christmas Trees
- 9: Paper Chains
- 10: Robins
- 11: Sleighs
- 14: Christmas Puddings
- 15: Reindeer
- 16: Holly
- 17: Chimneys
- 18: Stars

Get in touch and let us know about your experiences of using Countdown to Christmas with your pupils at: info@as-creatives.com or tweet us @ascreatives

