

# Christingles



## What Are Christingles?

Christingles are used by some Christian people in church during the time of Advent, to celebrate the birth of Jesus and Jesus as the Light of the World. The word Christingle means 'Christ's light'. They are made using particular objects and each one represents something special.

## What the Christingle Represents

A Christingle begins with an orange, which is used to represent the whole world. A red ribbon is placed around the outside of the orange. This is a symbol of Jesus' love and how he gave his life to save humankind.

Four sticks are stuck into the orange to represent the four seasons: winter, spring, summer and autumn. The sweets or pieces of fruit on the end of the sticks represent the fruits of the earth and the gifts people are given by God.

The candle is a symbol of Jesus as the Light of the World, and the Christian belief that he brought light to the world with the love he shared with everyone, regardless of who they were.

## The First Christingles

Christingles were first used in 1747 in Germany. A bishop called Johannes de Watteville was taking a service during Advent and he gave all the children who came a candle with a red ribbon around it. He wanted to give them a simple sign that reminded them of the happiness that can come from Jesus.

### Did You Know... ?

The Children's Society helps children who do not have enough food, shelter or care.

In 1968, Christingles were used in a church service to raise money for a charity called The Children's Society. Those Christingles were made using oranges, sweets and sticks as well as the ribbon and candle which the bishop had used before.

## What Happens at a Christingle Service?

Many people go to a Christingle service in church at Advent. Traditionally, all the lights are turned off and when people light their Christingle candle, they think about how the birth of Jesus brought light to the world.



# Questions

1. What are Christingles used for? Tick one.

- to celebrate Christian people    
  to celebrate Jesus' birth    
  to celebrate light

2. Find and copy one word which closely matches the meaning 'stands for'.

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3. Match up these sentences.

The orange is a symbol of
A ribbon is a symbol of
The sweets are a symbol of

gifts from God.
the world.
Jesus' love.

4. Why is a candle part of a Christingle? Tick two.

- Christingle means 'Christ's light'.  
 Jesus appeared at night.  
 Jesus was like the light in the dark world.

5. In what year were Christingles first used? Tick one.

- 1757      1747      1774

6. What did Johannes de Watteville give children at his Advent service? Tick one.

- an orange with a candle in the top  
 a red candle with a white ribbon around it  
 a candle with a red ribbon around it

7. Why did he give this gift to the children at the service?

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8. Why were Christingles used in 1968?

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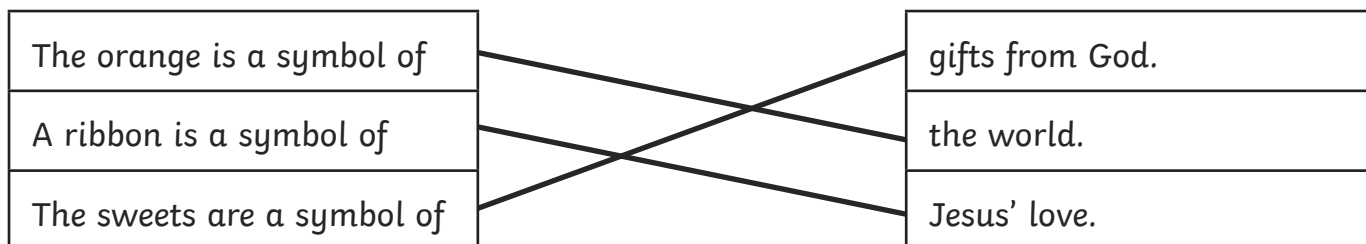
# Answers

1. What are Christingles used for? Tick one.

- to celebrate Christian people
  **to celebrate Jesus' birth**
 to celebrate light

2. Find and copy one word which closely matches the meaning 'stands for'.  
**represents**

3. Match up these sentences.



4. Why is a candle part of a Christingle? Tick two.

- Christingle means 'Christ's light'.**

Jesus appeared at night.

- Jesus was like the light in the dark world.**

5. In what year were Christingles first used? Tick one.

- 1757
  **1747**
 1774

6. What did Johannes de Watteville give children at his Advent service? Tick one.

- an orange with a candle in the top  
 a red candle with a white ribbon around it  
 **a candle with a red ribbon around it**

7. Why did he give this gift to the children at the service?

**He gave the gift to the children to remind them of the happiness that can come from Jesus.**

8. Why were Christingles used in 1968?

**Christingles were used in 1968 to raise money for the charity The Children's Society.**

# Christingles

In Christianity, it is believed that the coming of Jesus was like a light appearing in the darkness. In fact, the word Christingle actually means 'Christ's light'.

During the time of Advent, which is the time of preparation for Christmas, many Christian people will attend a Christingle service. The Christingle itself is made using specific objects and each one represents something significant.

## The Symbolism of Christingles

A Christingle begins with an orange to represent the world. A red ribbon is positioned around the outside of the orange, which Christian people believe is symbolic of Jesus' love and his blood in the sacrifice he made to save humankind.

Four sticks are stuck into the orange. People believe that they represent the four seasons: spring, summer, autumn, winter. The sweets or pieces of fruit on the end of the sticks represent God's creations and the blessings which people are grateful for.

The candle is symbolic of the Christian belief that Jesus is the Light of the World. In the Bible, this is one of the names given to Jesus that Christian people read about.



## The Origins of the Christingle

Christingles were first used in 1747 in Germany. Johannes de Watteville, a bishop, was conducting a service during Advent and gave all the children who attended the service a candle with a red ribbon around it. His intention was to give them all a simple sign to remind them of the happiness that can come from knowing Jesus.

In 1968, over fifty years ago, Christingles were used in a church service to raise money for a charity called The Children's Society. These Christingles incorporated the ribbon and candle that the bishop had used before, but were developed using the oranges, sweets and sticks people recognise today.

### Did You Know... ?

The Children's Society continues to raise money to help ensure that children have their basic needs met sufficiently and are happy and healthy.



Traditionally, at a Christingle service, all the lights are turned off and when people light their Christingle candle, they think about how the birth of Jesus brought light to the world. Many Christian people find the Christingle service a special chance to reflect on how they can help others, being like a light in other people's dark times.

# Questions

1. Look at the first two paragraphs of the text. Identify two things we are told about Christingles.

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

2. Why is a red ribbon used on a Christingle?

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\_\_\_\_\_

3. What do the sticks with fruit or sweets represent?

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\_\_\_\_\_

4. Do you think sweets are a good choice for what they symbolise on a Christingle? Explain your thoughts.

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5. Tick all the true statements.

The first Christingle was a candle with a red ribbon around it.

The first Christingle was used to raise money for the Children's Society.

Johannes de Watteville wanted children to remember that happiness comes from knowing Jesus.

A Christingle service can be a chance for Christian people to reflect.

6. What is the purpose of the Children's Society charity?

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7. Rewrite the following sentence, using a different word for the one underlined.

These Christingles incorporated the ribbon and candle that the bishop had used before, but were developed using the oranges, sweets and sticks people recognise today.

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8. Summarise the main points in the last paragraph.

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9. Think of some different but equally symbolic objects which could be used to make a Christingle. Explain your choices.

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# Answers

1. Look at the first two paragraphs of the text. Identify two things we are told about Christingles.

**Accept any two of the following: Christingles are used by Christian people; Christingles reflect the belief that the coming of Jesus was like a light appearing in the darkness; the word Christingle means 'Christ's light'; they are used during Advent; many Christian people will attend a Christingle service; the Christingle is made using specific objects which represent something significant.**

2. Why is a red ribbon used on a Christingle?

**A red ribbon is used because it is symbolic of Jesus' love and his blood in the sacrifice he made to save humankind.**

3. What do the sticks with fruit or sweets represent?

**People believe that they represent the four seasons: spring, summer, autumn, winter. The sweets or pieces of fruit on the end of the sticks represent God's creations and the blessings which people are grateful for.**

4. Do you think sweets are a good choice for what they symbolise on a Christingle? Explain your thoughts.

**Children's own responses, such as: Sweets are a good choice because they make life sweeter; People like sweets just as they like having blessings.**

5. Tick all the true statements.

- The first Christingle was a candle with a red ribbon around it.**
- The first Christingle was used to raise money for the Children's Society.
- Johannes de Watteville wanted children to remember that happiness comes from knowing Jesus.**
- A Christingle service can be a chance for Christian people to reflect.**

6. What is the purpose of the Children's Society charity?

**The Children's Society raises money to help ensure that children have their basic needs met sufficiently and are happy and healthy.**



7. Rewrite the following sentence, using a different word for the one underlined.

These Christingles incorporated the ribbon and candle that the bishop had used before, but were developed using the oranges, sweets and sticks people recognise today.

**These Christingles included the ribbon and candle that the bishop had used before, but were developed using the oranges, sweets and sticks people recognise today.**

8. Summarise the main points in the last paragraph.

**The main points in the last paragraph are:**

- **Lights are turned off during a Christingle service.**
- **The candles remind Christian people that Jesus' birth brought light to the world.**
- **Christingle services are a time to think about how people can help others/be like a light to others.**

9. Think of some different but equally symbolic objects which could be used to make a Christingle. Explain your choices.

**Children's own responses.**

# Christingles



In Christianity, it is believed that the coming of Jesus was like a light appearing in the darkness. In fact, the word Christingle actually means 'Christ's light'.

During the time of Advent, which is the time of preparation for Christmas, many Christian people will attend a Christingle service. The Christingle itself is made using specific objects and each one has a significant symbolism.

Symbolism is often important in religions. In the Christian faith, a Christingle begins with an orange to represent the world. A red ribbon, which Christian people believe is symbolic of Jesus' love and the blood sacrifice he made as the saviour of humankind, is positioned around the circumference of the orange.

Four sticks are stuck into the orange to represent the four seasons. On the end of each stick, there are sweets or pieces of fruit. Some suggest they are symbolic of God's creations, the fruits of the earth, whilst others like to think of them as representative of the blessings which people are grateful for.

The lighted candle is related to the Christian belief that Jesus is the Light of the World, which is one of the names he is given in the Bible to show that his teachings light the right path for Christian people to follow.

## The Origins of the Christingle

Johannes de Watteville was a bishop in 1747 in Marienborn, Germany. He was keen to get his Advent message, that happiness comes from knowing and following Jesus, across clearly to the children of his congregation, so he gave them all a simple sign to remind them: a lighted candle with a red ribbon tied around it. At the end of his service, as the children held their candles, the bishop said, 'Lord Jesus, kindle a flame in these children's hearts that theirs like thine become.'

In 1968, Christingles were adapted to include the orange, sticks and sweets, and were introduced into Church of England churches. The new Christingle was used by John Pensom during a service in which he was raising money for a charity called The Children's Society.

The Children's Society continues to raise money to ensure that children have their basic needs met sufficiently and that they are happy and healthy. The charity supports them and creates a future that they can grow and achieve in. The Children's Society feels passionately that 'no child should feel alone'.

Traditionally, at a Christingle service, all the lights are turned off and when people light their Christingle candle, they think about how the birth of Jesus brought light in the darkness of the world. Many Christian people find the Christingle service is a good opportunity to reflect on how they can be a light in other people's dark times.



# Questions

1. Summarise the main points in the first two paragraphs of the text.

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2. Identify two words from the text which mean 'stands for'.

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3. What is the meaning of the red ribbon wrapped around the orange?

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4. In your own words, explain why sweets or fruits are included in a Christingle.

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5. Describe how Christian people might explain why the candle represents Jesus.

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6. Tick true or false against these statements.

	True	False
Christingle services take place during the time of Advent.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
An apple is used as the basis of the Christingle.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Jesus was born during Advent.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The four sticks are symbolic of the four seasons.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

7. What does Johannes de Watteville’s prayer ‘Lord Jesus, kindle a flame in these children’s hearts that theirs like thine become’ tell us about his intention in giving the children a candle and ribbon?

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8. It could be said that the Christingle is a sign of hope. Explain what is meant by that.

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9. How do you think the symbol of a Christingle links to the aims of the Children’s Society? Explain your answer.

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10. The author uses the word ‘passionately’ to describe The Children’s Society’s feelings. Why do you think this word was chosen?

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# Answers

1. Summarise the main points in the first two paragraphs of the text.

**The main points in the first two paragraphs are:**

- **Christingles are a Christian tradition.**
- **Christingles encompass the Christian idea that Jesus was like a light in the darkness.**
- **Christingle services take place during Advent.**
- **A Christingle is an object with special significance.**

2. Identify two words from the text which mean 'stands for'.

**Accept any two of the following: represent, representative, symbolic.**

3. What is the meaning of the red ribbon wrapped around the orange?

**The red ribbon represents Jesus' love and the blood from his sacrifice. The fact that the ribbon is around the orange – which represents the whole world – means that Jesus loved the whole world and sacrificed himself to save everyone.**

4. In your own words, explain why sweets or fruits are included in a Christingle.

**Children's own responses, such as: The sweets and fruit make life sweeter or more positive; The sweets would be nice just like blessings are nice; The fruits are believed to be made by God, so they represent how people are grateful for food and creation.**

5. Describe how Christian people might explain why the candle represents Jesus.

**Christian people could explain that the candle represents Jesus because a candle gives light in the darkness and Christian people believe he changed the world and made it brighter for people.**

6. Tick true or false against these statements.

	True	False
Christingle services take place during the time of Advent.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
An apple is used as the basis of the Christingle.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Jesus was born during Advent.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
The four sticks are symbolic of the four seasons.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

7. What does Johannes de Watteville's prayer 'Lord Jesus, kindle a flame in these children's hearts that theirs like thine become' tell us about his intention in giving the children a candle and ribbon?

**Johannes de Watteville's prayer tells us that he wanted the children to know that the happiness in their hearts came from Jesus, and that he wanted the children to be a light for others in the darkness like Jesus was.**

8. It could be said that the Christingle is a sign of hope. Explain what is meant by that.

**Children's own responses, such as: Light in the darkness brings hope, so the Christingle could be said to be a sign of hope because it is a lit candle in the dark church; The Christingle represents the hope of a better future that Christian people believe Jesus brought to the world.**

9. How do you think the symbol of a Christingle links to the aims of the Children's Society? Explain your answer.

**Children's own responses, such as: The Christingle symbolises hope and people being a light for others in their dark times. This is linked to the Children's Society's aim to make sure that children have a future to achieve and grow in, because it gives children who do not have their basic needs met, and who are therefore experiencing dark times, hope for the future.**

10. The author uses the word 'passionately' to describe The Children's Society's feelings. Why do you think this word was chosen?

**Children's own responses, such as: I think that the author uses the word 'passionately' because they wanted us to know how important The Children's Society think their work is.**