



The Mary's Meals Nativity

By Frank and Denise Cottrell-Boyce



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Introduction

Everyone remembers who they were in the school Nativity play. Research shows that there's a correlation between the part you played and how you fared in later life.

Marys are likely to earn twice the national average wage and have a 92% chance of being content.

Kings often go into construction.

No one seems to know what happens to all the Herods. Nor does anyone know when the tradition started, though we do know that St. Francis staged a Nativity play – with live animals – in Greccio in 1223.

In a secular age, the Nativity play is one of the ways in which the story of the Incarnation is not only kept alive, but brought into our hearts and placed among our dearest memories.

Authors Frank and Denise Cottrell-Boyce have created these two scripts for Mary's Meals. One is aimed at younger primary school children, the other at older primary pupils.

They are written as a series of simple rhyming speeches that are easy for little ones to memorise. And sections of the play can be recorded and slotted in to the final production if you have pupils who are self-isolating - see page 17 for our top tips.

These Nativity plays can be as simple or as extravagant as you are inclined. But, for all the participants and their audiences, they will be a lasting tribute to the faith, hope and resilience of Christmas.

We hope you enjoy using this wonderful resource with your pupils and consider making a donation this Christmas.

We would like to use clips from all over the world to create an international version of the Mary's Meals Nativity. Please email a copy of your production to info@marysmeals.org if you would like your school to be included.



The Mary's Meals Nativity

Version for younger primary pupils



The Herald

The Angel Gabriel appeared to Mary.

Gabriel

Hello Mary, don't be wary.
I'm God's angel. I'm not scary.
I bring news from heaven above
Because you're kind and full of love.

Mary

That angel was so big and bright!
He filled my kitchen full of light.
He says I am the chosen one.
He says my babe will be God's son.

Joseph

I had a dream.
An angel came.
My life will never be the same.
My Mary will be God's own mum.
And I'll protect the little one.

The Donkey¹

I can't believe what Joseph said!
That Mary must get out of bed!
Must walk to Bethlehem by road!
I'll help them with their heavy load.

The Herald

And so they came to Bethlehem

Innkeeper's Family 1

Our inn was packed full. No more room for a mouse.

Innkeeper's Family 2

We were squished up and squashed up all over the house.

Innkeeper's Family 3

But Joseph kept knocking and begged for a bed.

Innkeeper's Family 4

We couldn't say no, so we gave them our shed.

1. The speech could be split between two donkeys if required (change the I to we!)

The Mary's Meals Nativity for younger primary pupils

Mary

(cradling baby Jesus)

My son was born in the shed that Night.

Narrators

The son of God. The Lord of light

Who could guess that one tiny boy

Would fill the world with so much joy?

The Herald

The choir of angels appeared to some shepherds.

Angel 1

Hello, shepherds please don't fear us.

Angel 2

We're God's messengers, so hear us.

Angel 3

Hear good news of Jesus birth.

Angel 4

You're first to know on all the Earth.

The Mary's Meals Nativity for younger primary pupils

Shepherd 1

We're so excited at this news.

Shepherd 2

We'll leave our rams. We'll leave our ewes.

Shepherd 3

We'll bring a lamb, the nicest one.

Shepherd 4

The best we've got for God's dear son.

The Herald

A new star appeared in the East.

King 1

We are three kings and we live far away.

King 2

But we found a new star, so we just couldn't stay.

King 3

We knew we should follow it, find the new king.

King 1

But this poor smelly stable, we weren't expecting

The Mary's Meals Nativity for younger primary pupils

Animal 1

Then they gave them their incense,
their myrrh and their gold.

Animal 2

And worshipped the little king,
Just 12 days old.

Animal 3

And they felt so excited.
They felt so glad.

Animal 4

That even the stable did not smell so bad.

The Chorus²

Then all in the stable began to rejoice.
Kings, shepherds, innkeepers sang with one voice.
Sang with the angels from heaven above.
Sang of Christ's birth, and God's saving love.

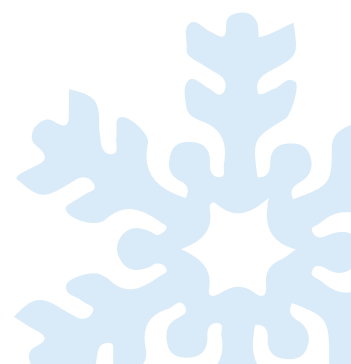
The End.

2. Give these lines to the most appropriate members of the cast.



The Mary's Meals Nativity

Version for older primary pupils



Jesus

Here is my story the tale of my birth.
When I came to be born as a baby on Earth.
When I came down, to bless and to heal and forgive.
And to show all who follow me how they should live.

Gabriel

I am Gabriel fierce and bright!
I bring news of the Lord of light!
Coming to Earth to be born of this maid
I am God's messenger. BE NOT AFRAID!

Mary

I am Mary. I'm good and I'm kind.
I keep God's laws in my heart and my mind.
I can't quite believe I'll give birth to God's son.
I can't quite believe I'm the Chosen one.

Joseph

I am Joseph. The Angel's just gone.
He's told me my Mary will carry God's son.
He's told me to treasure and care for this boy.
That mighty rulers will seek to destroy.

The Mary's Meals Nativity for older primary pupils

Mary

Here I am now that my nine months is done.
I'm ready to meet my new baby son.
But Joseph said we've got to pack up and go,
To Bethlehem. The Romans said so!

Joseph

Oh Mary, we're here but it's dark and it's late.
And now you are saying the baby won't wait.
Oh somebody help us. Don't show us the door.
Even the donkey can't take one step more.

The Innkeepers

Innkeeper 1

Our inn was packed full. No more room for a mouse.

Innkeeper 2

We were squished up and squashed up all over the house.

Innkeeper 3

But Joseph kept knocking and begged for a bed.

Innkeeper 4

We couldn't say no, so we gave them our shed.

The Mary's Meals Nativity for older primary pupils

Mary

(cradling baby Jesus)

What kindness what mercy that innkeeper showed.
His wife offered help to strange folk off the road.
They gave what they could, with love and with joy.
And never suspected my babe was God's boy.

The Herald

The Choir of Angels brings the good news to some shepherds.

Angel 1

Hello shepherds please don't fear us.

Angel 2

We're God's messengers so hear us.

Angel 3

Hear our news of Jesus' birth.

Angel 4

You're first to hear on all the Earth.

Shepherd 1

We are all simple Shepherds, not used to God's glory.
Our hearts are excited by the Angels' glad story.

Shepherd 2

We must see at once where these Angels have said,
The little Lord Jesus sleeps in his bed.

Shepherd 1

We've brought him a sheepskin to keep out of the cold.

Shepherd 2

We've brought him the newest lamb born to the fold.

Shepherd 3

We've brought him our hearts full of wonder and love.

Shepherd 4

And joy that our God has come down from above.

The Herald

In the East, a new star appeared ...

First King

We three saw a star that is new in the sky.
God sent us this sign of a new king. But why?
We'll follow its movement wherever it goes.
Then we'll find the new babe. We'll see what God shows.

The Herald

The Kings lose their way

Second King

We've come to a Palace, though we've left the star behind.
But King Herod is so pleasant. Yes, King Herod is so kind.
He's really quite ecstatic to hear the news we bring.
He says he's very eager to find the new born king.

Herod

I'm Herod. I'm the bad king. I'm not ashamed to say –
That I've got no time for love and joy. I find they just don't pay.
So I've told these foolish wise men to seek and find the boy.
But when they tell me where he is, I'll seek and I'll destroy.

Third King

An angel has told us we made a faux pas (*say "foe par").
We should steer clear of Herod and follow the star.
It's led to this stable, so dirty and cold.
It's led to the Christ child, By prophets foretold.

First King

I bring some gold, the right gift for a king.
Gold for his crown and his sceptre and ring.

Second King

I bring some frankincense, fragrant and blessed.
This king is a God. Not like all the rest.

Third King

I bring some myrrh though it makes me feel sad.
To think what will happen one day, to this lad.
His life will be holy and perfect and good.
He'll save all creation with his precious blood.

Mary

All that's in the future. Tonight let's rejoice.
Inn-keepers, kings, shepherds sing with one voice.
Sing with the angels from heaven above.
Sing of Christ's birth and of God's saving love.

The End.

Top tips

These scripts can be performed in person or the individual parts can be recorded on a phone and then put together to create a lovely short film. Below are 10 top tips for recording.

1. Speeches can be filmed separately and played as part of your performance, if you are having one, or woven together with other recordings to make a film.
2. Costumes can be simple and held together with masking tape and pins – no one will see the back of them!
3. The background for recordings should be as simple – and as quiet – as possible.
4. Help children to find the rhythm of the play, as this will help them to remember their lines and convey their meaning.
5. Make sure that the children's faces are well lit – and encourage them to smile in the right places!
6. Decide whether you want the speeches to be filmed in portrait or landscape, and ensure you have consistency.
7. Record each speech a few times so that you can choose the best version.
8. Ask parents and carers to send you their films via WeTransfer.
9. Free packages, such as Windows Movie or iMovie, can be used to edit the speeches.
10. Share your finished film on social media or your school website for families to enjoy.