



3D Christmas Scene in a Polystyrene tray

These 3D scenes are a simple way of making a nativity scene. Use the figures below, (which come from the 'Christmas Graphics' pdf on this web page, where you can find Wise Men, Herod and more...), glue some cardboard or polystyrene chunks behind the figures to make them sit or stand forward or back in the picture, and spread some star stickers and glitter in the sky...

You will need:

- ♦ small or medium black or blue polystyrene meat trays (1 per child)
- ♦ paper cut-out nativity figures (see *patterns below*, or find more in the separate **Christmas Graphics pdf**)
- ♦ **or** angels and stick-on stars (see *below*)
- ♦ glitter
- ♦ various thicknesses of 1 cm square backing materials for creating 3D effect (e.g. polystyrene cubes, thick cardboard – several thicknesses can be glued together to make different thicknesses; small boxes)
- ♦ colouring pencils or textas
- ♦ scissors, glue
- ♦ **Optional:** ribbon for hanging **or** cardboard triangles for free-standing supports
- ♦ **Alternative:** Use pictures cut from old Christmas cards.

Preparation:

- ♦ Photocopy the people and animals onto paper or light-weight card.

What to do: (stable scene)

Children need one complete set of nativity figures each.

There will not be enough room for the Wise Men; one option is to mount the Wise Men pictures on cardboard and glue a triangular piece to the back to make them free-standing. Otherwise leave them out altogether. It depends what your focus is for the session. You could do the Wise Men separately in a second session, with the free-standing camels to accompany them (see **Christmas Graphics** file for Wise men, **and Wise Man on free-standing camel pdf**).

If possible photocopy the figures onto cardboard.

- ♦ **Colour** in the figures.
- ♦ **Cut** them out. If they are on paper, and if you wish to go to the extra trouble, you can glue them onto recycled cardboard (biscuit or cereal packet cardboard) for extra strength.

- ♦ Each piece needs to be glued to a 1cm square piece of cardboard, block of foam, etc, which is then glued to the polystyrene tray, to make the figures stand out from the background and give the 3D effect. Make sure the pieces are positioned well before gluing them in place. Use different thicknesses of backing material to bring some figures e.g. shepherds and sheep, further forward and place others e.g. Mary and manger, further back.
- ♦ Add a star in the sky, and some glitter.

Optional extras:

- ♦ Add a piece of ribbon to the top of the tray so it can hang from a picture hook or on the Christmas tree.
- ♦ **Or:** Tape 2 triangles of cardboard to the back to make it free-standing.

Alternative version: Angels in the night sky:

Use pictures of angels and stick-on stars to make 3D picture of the host of angels in the night sky. Use various sizes of angels, some facing right and some left. Stick the stars directly onto the polystyrene tray surface, before adding the angels.

NB: most of the space will be taken up by the angels, so you won't need many stars, as most of them would be hidden behind the angels.



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