

## A Christmas play for primary school children

(Written by Michele Holliday, based on the story 'The Gift of the Magi' by O. Henry. The theme is the same but the story has been totally re-written to suit modern times.)

The children in Y4 have been thinking about Christmas.

We have drawn some pictures to show what Christmas means to us.

Christmas is a very happy time because we are remembering a very happy event, the time when God first sent us Jesus.

We show our joy and say thank you to God by singing carols, having services in church and by decorating our homes and streets.

We also celebrate by gathering together with our families and friends and having a special dinner. We often have a party too.

Carol: *Select something suitable.*

Christmas is the one time of the year when most people really do try to make an effort to be the sort of people we know Jesus wants us to be.

There is a warm and loving glow about Christmas.

One of the ways we show our love at Christmas is to give each other gifts.

We give the gifts to each other but the feelings with which the gifts are given is our gift to Jesus.

A small gift given with love, is far better than a big one given to impress, or given because someone thought they ought to give it.

Let us tell you a story. We shall call it the best gift of all.

Once upon a time there was a young man and a woman, who lived with their children in a house near Wigan Town Centre.

Christmas was approaching and they were both a bit worried about where they would find the money for Christmas presents, for the young man had lost his job and money was tight.

That night when the children were in bed the young man said .....

BOB: Well there are just five days to go to Christmas now. I am looking forward to it . I do so enjoy seeing the children's faces when they open their Christmas presents, but I'm worried. I wanted to buy you something nice too but I don't think I shall be able to afford it.

KATE: Don't worry about it Bob. I had hoped to buy you something nice too but lets admit it, we just can't afford to give each other presents this year.

They sat down together by the fire.

BOB: Well that's it then . No presents this year, but we can still dream can't we. What would you have given me, if you had been able to buy me a present? What do you think I would have liked?

KATE: Oh I know exactly what would have pleased you. A new engine for your train set. I know how sad you have been since that old engine of yours broke down, and how often you have sat in that very chair, trying to mend it.

BOB: How clever of you Kate! That would have been the perfect present.  
It would have been exactly what I wanted.

KATE: And what would you have got me Bob?  
What do you think I would have liked?

BOB: That's easy . A second china dog to match the one on the hearth. I know how special that one is to you because it belonged to your grandma. I have watched you dusting it and I know that you wish our Charlie hadn't broken its twin.

KATE: That would have been a wonderful present. It would have been lovely to have two dogs on the hearth again. This one looks so lonely on its own. Doesn't it?

Next morning whilst Kate was out shopping she passed a second-hand shop and noticed a train engine in the window. She looked at it wistfully. Oh wouldn't it be lovely if she could have bought that for Bob.

The man in the shop could see that he had an interested customer so he went out to speak to her.

SHOPKEEPER: Would you like to buy something Madam ?

KATE: I'd like to buy that train engine but I am afraid that I can't afford it.

SHOPKEEPER I could always exchange it for something .  
This is a second hand shop you know.

Suddenly Kate had an idea. She loved her china dog but she loved Bob more.

KATE: Would you be willing to swop it for a china dog?

The shopkeeper agreed and Kate rushed home to get the dog before he changed his mind.

Later that afternoon Bob went into town and he too passed the second hand shop. He couldn't help noticing the dog in the window. It was so like Kate's dog. It would be a perfect match. How he wished he could buy it.

The man in the shop again spotted an interested customer and went out to see if Bob would like to buy something. Once again he found himself suggesting a swop.

Bob didn't hesitate. He loved his train set and had always hoped that he would get it working again but he loved Kate more. Wouldn't it be wonderful to see her face on Christmas morning.

So Bob gave away all the bits and pieces of his precious train set to get the dog for Kate and Kate gave away her treasured dog, to get a working train engine for Bob.

Do you think they were sad on Christmas day?

No. They laughed long and loud when they realised what had happened. As for that Christmas, it was one of the best and happiest that they had ever had. Their presents might not have worked out quite the way they had intended but they realised that they had given each other a much more precious gift. The gift of true love.

Carol: Christmas is a time for love.