

Missions Lesson
Christmas in August
August, Week 1

Objective: Children will understand the importance of supporting missionaries.

Materials: two large jingle bells, plastic cups, 10 cotton balls, U.S. map, drawing paper, poster board, pencils, markers, Christmas CD and CD player

Preparation:

1. Read the background information about Christmas in August from wmu.com. <http://wmu.com/?q=article/national-wmu/christmas-august>
2. Choose a North American missionary from the Christmas in August list. (Use the link for the current year list found on the web page in item 1.)
3. Use painter's tape to make two parallel lines on the floor, 8 feet apart. Your lines will need to be long enough for half of your kids to stand on them.

Procedure:

1. Wish girls and boys "Merry Christmas!" Play Snowball Catch. Form pairs of kids. Form 2 lines, with pairs facing each other. Give one member of each pair a cup, and the other member 10 snowballs (cotton balls). At your signal, the players with cotton balls throw them to their team mates who try to catch them with his/her cup. The first team to catch all 10 snowballs wins. If snowballs are dropped, the player throwing the snowballs must pick them up, run back to their line and continue throwing until one team catches all 10 snowballs. If time allows, partners can switch roles.
2. Ask: *Why do you think we are playing a Christmas game in August?* Say: *We will be collecting Christmas gifts in August for missionaries to use in their work.* Share information about Christmas in August from the WMU website.
3. Play a review game. Form two teams. Give one player from each team a jingle bell. Instruct the players to "ring in" when they know the answer to the following questions. Players on each team take turns answering the following questions.
 - When was the first Christmas in August project held? (1927)
 - Where did the children in Virginia send the first gifts? (China)
 - How many gifts were given the first year? (100)
 - In 1937, the Christmas in August gifts were lost in shipping. What did the children do instead of sending the gifts to China? (sent gifts to missionaries in North America)

- What is the purpose of Christmas in August? (provide resources for missionaries)
4. Share that you will be collecting items for _____ (name of missionary) in _____ (location). Help kids find the missionary's location on the map. Give information about the missionary's ministry. Pray for the missionary.
 5. Make posters for Christmas in August. Give each pair of kids a piece of poster board, drawing paper, a pencil, and markers. Ask what information we need to include to advertise for Christmas in August. (list of gifts, missionary's name, due date). Instruct kids to design a poster with the information about Christmas in August on their drawing paper, then transfer it to the poster board. Play Christmas music as the kids work.

