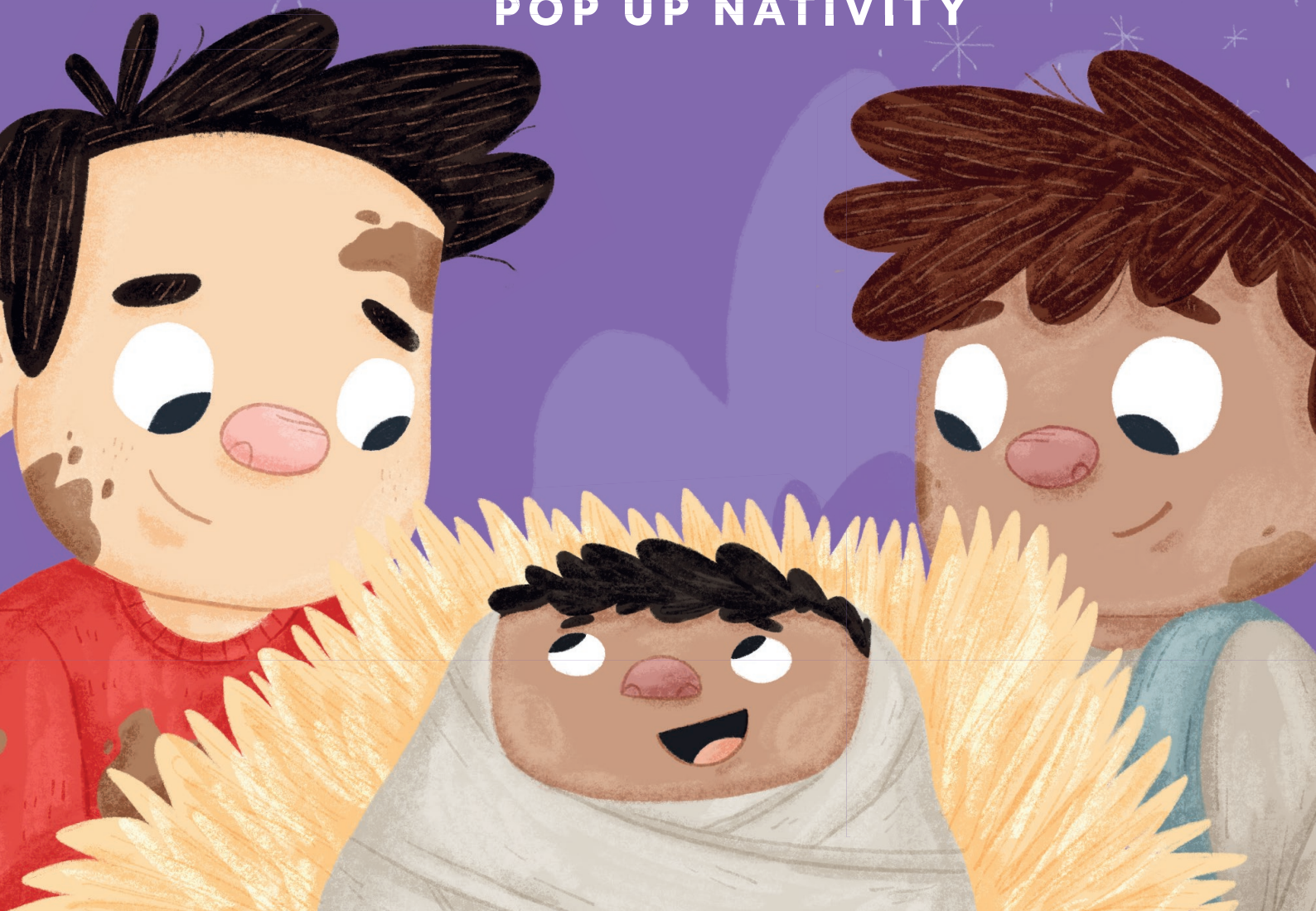




Festive FRED FINDS THE GREATEST GIFT

POP UP NATIVITY



Instructions

Welcome to the Pop-up Nativity. This script has been put together for you to share the Christmas story in a fun yet simple way. You can have one practice if you have time, but it's designed to work as a pick-up-and-go resource too (hence Pop-up Nativity!). The script is based on our latest book, *Festive Fred Finds the Greatest Gift*.



Assign parts

(or if you have someone who is really creative they could perform all the parts, but maybe switch hats for each character)

Narrator – this is the person who will have the main bulk of the text to read. We suggest someone who can read well and with expression.

Festive Fred – this person should be played by someone who is expressive and can really capture Fred's enthusiasm for Christmas.

Mam/Mary – these parts could be cast individually, but for simplicity we suggest one person reads both lines and has two different items of clothing to distinguish which character they are playing (e.g Mam – Christmas jumper, Mary – blue shawl). Mam is Welsh, but if you'd rather use Mum, feel free to change it throughout!

Shepherd boy /Angel /Joseph – as above, these could be cast separately, but we suggest one person take three parts with different props/clothes for each (e.g., Shepherd boy – a tea-towel; Angel – a halo band; Joseph – a builder's hard hat).



Staging

Three different spaces to help signify the three different locations (if space is tight these can all be right next to each other).

1. Fred's bedroom || stage left – optional extra: a mattress.

2. Shepherd's field || stage centre – optional extra: a person dressed as a sheep on all fours.

3. The stable || stage right – optional extras: straw bale, a cradle/crib, baby.



Introduce the characters



Narrator

Welcome to our fabulous, festive Pop-up Nativity service. My name is _____ and I will be your properly Pop-up Nativity narrator (try saying that fast five times!). Now let's meet our friends, who are going to help us journey through our very festive Christmas story. *(Each character introduces themselves with a line, followed by a fun freeze pose.)*
We have the angelic angel ...

Angel

'La la la (angelic singing)!!!'

Narrator

The super shepherd boy ...

Shepherd

(sing the line) 'While shepherds watched their flocks by night.'

Narrator

The marvellous Mary ...

Mary

'Hello, I'm Mary, and just in case you're wondering ... yes I **DID** know!'

Narrator

Our main character, the fun-tastic festive Fred ...

Fred

'I **LOVE** Christmas!!!!'

Narrator

The mega Mam/Mum ...

Mam

'He's not joking, he **REALLY** does love Christmas!'

Narrator

He's a Carpenter, so must be feeling 'top of the world'. It's joyful Joseph!

Joseph

'Hi, I'm Joseph, and before you ask – yes I do loft conversions!'



Teach audience actions



Narrator

(TO AUDIENCE)

So we've met our characters and we'll be seeing more from them shortly, but first could you please help me tell this story with some audience participation?

(WAIT FOR RESPONSE)

You can do a little better than that! Could you please help me with some audience participation?

(WAIT FOR RESPONSE)

Excellent. There are going to be some words that appear throughout the story, and we'd LOVE you to do some actions for them. When you hear the word ...

YAWN: *(make yawn noise)*

THUD: *(make thud noise)*

THE SUPERCHARGED MAX 3000:

(Any guesses what it is? Well, it's a top of the range water pistol, so say 'Oooooohhh' as if you're really excited)

THE GREATEST GIFT:

(whisper 'Wow' as if you're completely in awe)

Optional Narrator

And finally, there'll be a moment in the story where anyone dressed as a nativity character can come to the front and join us at the stable.

Narrator

Are we sitting comfortably? Are we feeling festive? We are ready to find out how festive Fred is, and what's so great about the greatest gift he finds, but first, let's pray.

PRAYER OF YOUR CHOICE –

suggestion: God, help us find out what truly is the greatest gift this Christmas.

CAROL/SONG – suggestion: 'Once in royal David's city.'

SLIDE 2

Narrator

One day there lived a boy who loved Christmas. And when I say loved Christmas, I mean LOVED with a capital L,O,V and E! He loved Christmas SO much he'd ...

sing 'Jingle Bells' in the shower,

eat mince pies for breakfast

and watch Christmas movies in the summer holidays ...

while eating snow cones!

He loved Christmas so much he asked people to call him

Festive Fred (even though his real name was actually Ryan).

Mam

'Why do you love Christmas so much, Fred?'



SLIDE 3

Narrator

sighed Mam, frustrated the name 'Fred' was beginning to stick.

Fred

'It's the best, Mam!
We do a big shop, and get lots of treats.
Dad drives for ages to get the biggest tree.
We put on our PJs and watch festive TV.
And on Christmas Day, there are gifts just for me!'

Narrator

said Fred, as he waved around his Christmas list and pointed to
THE SUPERCHARGED MAX 3000
(*'Oooooohh'* – AUDIENCE RESPONSE)



SLIDE 4

Mam

'Well! I know you love Christmas, but what about the very first Christmas, Fred?'

Fred

'The very first?'

Narrator

Pondered Fred.

Mam

'Yes, the Nativity in Bethlehem? Remember, you were in it last year.'

Fred

'I definitely wasn't in Bethlehem, I'd remember that.'

Mam

'Well, no, you weren't ACTUALLY in the Nativity story. That was 3,000 miles away and 2,000 years ago. But you DID play a shepherd boy in a school nativity, in ... (*INSERT LOCAL SCHOOL/PLACE*).'

Fred

'Oh yeah! I was the shepherd, but I really wanted to be Frank or Spence who gave Gold.'

SLIDE 5

Mam

'Hmm ... you mean wise men who gave Myrrh, Frankincense and Gold?'

Fred

'Exactly!'

Narrator

said Fred, as he thought about **THE SUPERCHARGED MAX 3000**, but in gold! (*'Oooooohh'* – AUDIENCE RESPONSE)

Mam

'You know there's more to the story than just gifts, Fred? In fact – it's a story about the greatest gift! Picture the scene, Fred – there are shepherds watching their flocks by night ...'

*CAROL/SONG HERE –
suggestion: 'While shepherds watched their flocks by night'*

SLIDE 6

Narrator

YAWN (*AUDIENCE RESPONSE*) and as Mam began to tell the story, Fred was getting a little snoozy – he closed his eyes to picture the shepherds ... and their sheep, one by one he started counting them and then ...

2,000 YEARS AGO – SOMEWHERE NEAR BETHLEHEM.

THUD (*AUDIENCE RESPONSE*)



Fred

Narrator

Shepherd

Narrator

Shepherd

Fred

Narrator

Shepherd

Fred

Narrator

Shepherd

Narrator

'OUCH! My head!'

said Fred, as all of a sudden, he awoke, face planted in a field of mud!

'Oops! Are you OK?'

a shepherd boy said.

'Seems like you nodded off, fell over and hit your head!'

'Ummm ... where am I?'

asked Fred.

'That's a silly question. You're in a field!'

'But what field?'

asked Fred, wondering if he went wandering into his neighbour's field again.

'Only the bestest field with the bestest sheep in the whole of Bethlehem!'

the shepherd boy said.



Fred

Narrator

Fred

Narrator

Shepherd

Narrator

'Buh ... Buh ... Bethlehem?'

bumbled a flabbergasted Fred, as he was pretty sure he was sat at home in Wrexham (*or insert your hometown*) five seconds ago.

'Wait, you're actually a shu ... shu ... shepherd!?! From the Nuh ... Nuh ... tivity!?!'

stuttered Fred, squeezing the boy's cheek to be sure he was real.

'Hey! Quit squeezing my cheeks!'

the shepherd boy said. Fred couldn't believe it – he was 3,000 miles and 2,000 years away from home. He was actually inside the very first Christmas story! But before Fred could think back to his school nativity play and remember what happened next, there appeared an angel in the sky!

CAROL/SONG HERE –
suggestion: 'Hark the herald angels sing/O holy night'

Narrator

Angel

Narrator



Shepherd

Narrator

Angel

The angel was more terrific and tremendous than Fred had ever imagined, shining so bright, and definitely no tinsel in sight.

'Don't be afraid, it's good news, about the **GREATEST GIFT** ('wow' – AUDIENCE RESPONSE) for everybody!'

The angel wasn't talking about **THE SUPERCHARGED MAX 3000** ('Ooohh' – AUDIENCE RESPONSE), he was talking about a new-born baby, God's own son and the greatest gift ever. Someone who's come to rescue us from the messy things that hurt us, and to forgive us for the mean things we do to others.

'Why are you telling me? I'm nobody special, I'm just a shepherd boy.'

Said the shepherd boy.

'You're not a nobody. You've got a personal invitation to meet the most special somebody. You'll find him tucked in tight, resting his head on a pillow of straw.'



Narrator

Then suddenly the angel was joined by what seemed like a bajillion angels, all singing in perfect harmony. Fred thought Sarah Jones' (or insert your worship leader's name!) solo of 'Oh holy night' was good, but this was the greatest sound he had ever heard! But it wasn't anywhere near as good as what was waiting for them in a manger.

(FRED AND SHEPHERD MIME ACTIONS TO ACCOMPANY NARRATOR ...)

Fred and the shepherd boy sped through the mud, (MIME) jumped over rocks and skipped over streams, (MIME) until they finally arrived at the downstairs part of an old stone house. (MIME)

*CAROL/SONG HERE – suggestion: 'Joy to the world'
(OPTIONAL INTERACTION - During the song, encourage the children dressed as Nativity characters to come down to the front to 'join Fred and the Shepherd boy for the final scene'. If you prefer not to do this, pick up the narration below from 'Nervously, Fred and Shepherd boy ...')*

Optional Narrator

Now Fred and the shepherd boy have arrived at the old stone house. Would you like to join them and find out what's behind the creaky old door? If you're dressed as nativity characters, come down to the front - you really ought to be part of the story. (WAIT FOR CHILDREN TO SETTLE AT THE FRONT ... COMMENT ON HOW GOOD THEY LOOK.) Now, where were we in the story? Oh yes! Fred and the shepherd boy are outside the old stone house, about to go in!

Narrator

Nervously, Fred and the shepherd boy opened the creaky door and before their very eyes were ... Mary, Joseph and precious baby Jesus tucked in tight, resting his head on a pillow of straw.

Mary

'Well, hello you two.'

Narrator

said Mary, with a smile beaming from ear to ear.

Joseph

'I think somebody wants to say hello!'

Narrator

added Joseph, nodding to the boys to get a closer look of Jesus. And as they approached they saw baby Jesus.

Fred and Shepherd

'Wow!'

Narrator

whispered the boys, as they both knelt before Jesus in pure wonder.

Fred

'I didn't know, but you really are the most special somebody, aren't you?'

Shepherd

'He's the **GREATEST GIFT** ever!' ('wow' – AUDIENCE RESPONSE)

Mary

'Would you like to hold him?'

Narrator

Asked Mary.

Fred

'Me? No way – I'm way too messy to hold the **GREATEST GIFT** in history.' ('wow' – AUDIENCE RESPONSE)

Mary

'But he's not afraid of our messy things, he came to rescue us from our messy things.'

Narrator

said Mary, as she smiled and cleaned the mud off Fred's face. Then Fred and the shepherd remembered what the angel said. Jesus came to rescue us from the messy things that hurt us, and forgive us for the mean things we do to others.

Shepherd

'But how? He's just a baby!'

SLIDE 13

Mary

'Not just any baby, he's God's own son. And one day he'll grow up and show us how.'

Fred

'But I don't feel like I deserve it.'

Joseph

'Well ...'

Narrator

said Joseph with a smile.

Joseph

'... it wouldn't be a gift if you did, would it?'

Fred

'Wow. That's way better than **THE SUPERCHARGED MAX 3000**.'
(*'Oooooohh'* – AUDIENCE RESPONSE)

Shepherd

'Well, I can't keep this to myself ANY longer!'

Narrator

the shepherd boy said, as he leapt to his feet, hopped past the manger and sped out through the creaky old door, telling everyone about **THE GREATEST GIFT** ever. (*'wow'* – AUDIENCE RESPONSE)

Fred

'Wait for me!'

Narrator

said Fred, as he hopped and sped but then ... tripped by the door and fell on his head ... **THUD!** (AUDIENCE RESPONSE)

SLIDE 14

Narrator

All of a sudden Fred opened his eyes and he was back at home, as Mam was just finishing the story.

Mam

'And that's the story of the very first Christmas, the end.'

Fred

'Wow Mam. That. Was. The. Best. Thing. EVER!'

SLIDE 15

Mam

'Have you bumped your head, Fred?'

Narrator

Mam said.

Fred

'Ummm, why do you ask, Mam?'

Narrator

said Fred.

Mam

'Well, I know I tell good stories, but this time you were captivated! I think someone might just be getting **THE SUPERCHARGED MAX 3000** after all.'
(*'Oooohh'* – AUDIENCE RESPONSE)

Narrator

said Mam with a wink, as she wiped off a bit of mud she just spotted on Fred's face.

Fred

'Thanks Mam. That would be brill, but I can think of an even better gift this Christmas. The one who came to rescue us from our messy things. In fact, he's **THE GREATEST GIFT** ever' (*'wow'* – AUDIENCE RESPONSE)

Narrator

said Fred. Let's pray.



PRAYER – suggestion: God, may we discover that under the wrapping paper of Christmas is the greatest gift this world has ever seen – a gift of forgiveness, wrapped in love, in the person of Jesus. Amen.

SONG/CAROL – suggestion: 'Oh come all ye faithful'/'Oh come all you unfaithful'