

Google
Santa Tracker

5-Step Lesson Plan Template

Grades K-2
Comparing Christmas
Traditions in Russia and
Australia





Standards:

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.K.9 – With prompting and support, identify basic similarities in and differences between two texts on the same topic (e.g., in illustrations, descriptions, or procedures).
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.1.9 – Identify basic similarities in and differences between two texts on the same topic (e.g., in illustrations, descriptions, or procedures).
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.2.9 – Compare and contrast the most important points presented by two texts on the same topic.

Objective:

Students will be able to compare and contrast how Christmas is celebrated in Australia and Russia by reading factual information about both countries and completing a Venn-diagram.

Key Points:

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1. Australia's Southern Hemisphere location means it's summer time in December.
 2. Instead of sleigh bells and cocoa, many Australians head to the beach to celebrate the holidays with a prawn lunch.
 3. Russian children decorate a New Year's tree, instead of a Christmas tree.
 4. Russian children wait with longing for Grandfather Frost who travels with his granddaughter Snowmaiden, delivering presents across the land.

Opening:

Materials needed:

- Calendar showing December

Review with students the December calendar. Have students name the holiday that occurs in this month. Does it occur at the beginning, middle, or end of the month? What day of the month is Christmas on?

- Ask students to orally share some things that they do on Christmas Day.
- Ask students why they think we celebrate Christmas.
- Explain to students that Christmas has been celebrated in different ways in many places and that today we will be learning about Christmas traditions in Australia and Russia.

Introduction
of New Material:

Materials needed:

- Map of the world
- Christmas in Australia handout
- Christmas in Russia handout

Show students a map of the world. Point out the countries Australia and Russia. Tell students that the countries are very far apart, but that there are similarities and differences in how they celebrate Christmas.

- Read with students **Christmas in Australia** handout that is attached.
- Read with students **Christmas in Russia** handout that is attached.

Guided Practice:

Materials needed:

- T-chart drawn on poster paper
- Marker

Make a T-chart with students listing Christmas traditions in Australia and Russia.

Christmas in Russia:

Christmas is on January 7th
People eat porridge and vegetable pie.
People eat a Christmas Eve dinner.
People put up New Year's decorations.
People celebrate with their families.
Students have a vacation from school.
Grandfather Frost and Snowmaiden deliver presents to children.

Christmas in Australia:

Christmas is on December 25th
People eat shellfish and other seafood.
People eat a Christmas day lunch.
People put up Christmas decorations.
People celebrate with their families.
Students have a vacation from school.
Santa Claus leaves presents for children under the tree.

Independent Practice:

Materials needed:

- Venn-diagram, attached

Have students complete Venn-diagram comparing Christmas traditions in Australia and Russia. List two similarities in the center of the diagram, and at least three differences in each side of the diagram.

Lesson Assessment:

Once students have had an opportunity to practice independently, how will they attempt to demonstrate mastery of the knowledge/skills required of the objective?

Students will demonstrate mastery by having at least three facts about Christmas in Russia, three facts about Christmas in Australia, and two facts that are similar for both countries.

Closing:

Now that students have learned about Christmas traditions in Australia and Russia, ask students to quickly reflect about how these traditions are alike or different from the Christmas traditions they celebrate.





Christmas in Russia

In Russia, a country in Eastern Europe, Christmas is celebrated on January 7th as part of their 10-day New Year celebration. Christmas is mainly a religious event in Russia, beginning with several long church services on Christmas Eve and a special meal called the "Holy Supper." Families wait until they see the first star in the sky to begin their meal, and eat a vegetarian meal including: vegetable pies, borsch (beetroot soup), porridge, fried onions and mushrooms.

Families put up a New Year's tree and other festive decorations and wait for Grandfather Frost and his granddaughter Snow-maiden to deliver presents to children. Usually, Grandfather Frost comes to schools or circus performances to deliver gifts rather than leaving them under the tree like in North American countries.

Children have a two-week break from school during the New Year celebration.



Christmas in Australia

In Australia, a country in the Pacific Ocean, Christmas is celebrated on December 25th, which is during their summer season. Because the weather is warmer, barbecues are also a popular way of avoiding the heat of the oven. Families, especially those who live near the sea, eat shellfish, prawns, lobster, crayfish, and other seafood during their holiday meal. Australians are also fond of pavlova, a dessert composed of fruit atop a baked meringue. Fruits of the season include cherries and mangoes. Families often come together to eat a Christmas Day lunch.

Australian Christmas traditions are very similar to those practiced in the United States and the rest of North America. People decorate their homes, stores, and streets with Christmas trees, nativity scenes, and images of Santa Claus and reindeer.

Students have a vacation from schools and universities beginning a week before Christmas until late January or early February.

Children are told that Santa Claus visits each house on Christmas Eve and leaves presents under the Christmas tree and in stockings. Children leave snacks and drinks for Santa to eat during his visit.

Many people send Christmas cards to each other.

Name _____

Date _____

Russia

Australia

A Venn diagram consisting of two overlapping circles. The left circle is labeled 'Russia' and the right circle is labeled 'Australia'. Both circles are filled with horizontal lines, providing a space for writing. The overlapping area in the center is also filled with horizontal lines.

