

The Magical Nativity Tableau

The Magical Nativity Tableau tells the traditional Christmas story through the eyes of two young children who are magically drawn into the nativity scene themselves.

Sarah, Joe and mum are staying over at Grandad's house on Christmas Eve, looking forward to getting their presents on the big day (**Song: Don't Forget!**). The children help mum to set out Grandad's favourite heirloom, a wooden nativity tableau scene with little figures of all the nativity characters.

Whilst mum and Grandad sleep soundly that night, the children creep downstairs to catch a glimpse of Santa! However, they discover the little nativity tableau scene lit up by the bright light of a star shining in through the window (**Dance: Sparkly Stars**). To the children's astonishment, one by one the characters in the scene come to life before their very eyes, as if by magic!

Firstly Mary and Joseph introduce themselves, mistaking the children for innkeepers! They are also very impressed with Joe's pyjamas! The children suggest the stable as a resting place for Mary (**Song: We'll Keep You Warm** - song of the animals).

Soon after, along come the shepherds, who greatly admire Joe's slippers! They tell the children about an angel who appeared to them and told them of a special baby boy who was born that night (**Song: Scary, scary, scary!**).

Then come the wise men on their camels, very majestic, who are positively jealous of Joe's magnificent dressing gown 'cloak'! (**Song: Here Come The Wise Men!**)

Finally a host of angels appear and sing and dance to a beautiful song, completing the nativity tableau. (**Song & Dance: Hark, Hear The Song Of An Angel**)

After all the excitement, Sarah and Joe fall asleep, dreaming of the special events they witnessed that night (**Dance: Sparkly Stars - short version**). The next morning Grandad and mum have to wake them up to open their presents! However, the children are far more interested in playing with their Magical Nativity Tableau! (**Song: The Merry Christmas Song!**)

CHARACTERS & COSTUMES

Most costumes can be traditional Nativity style costumes – I always find the best costumes are those made by children and parents who have been given free rein to do as they wish... within reason of course! Variety is, after all, the spice of life! (As long as you stipulate the size of wings, crooks etc, and have a few spare costumes in case of emergencies!)

Speaking/solo singing parts:

Narrators 1 & 2 - could be dressed as nativity characters eg. shepherds or angels (also makes them feel part of the crowd!), or they could be smart with bow tie etc!

Joe – good actor, must wear bright, outrageous pyjamas, slippers & dressing gown

Sarah – good actor, must wear similar to Joe ie. nightwear

Mum – as you wish!

Grandad – as young or old as you wish!

Mary & Joseph – Mary can be ‘with child’ with a padded tummy!

Shepherds 1, 2, 3, 4 & 5

Angel Gabriel - sings solo (needs to be a confident singer)

Wise Men 1, 2 & 3 with gifts

Lead angel (other than Gabriel) - sings solo (needs to be a confident singer)

Group singing/dancing/movement parts:

Big Star (dances alone) & other stars (any number) – dressed in yellow or gold T-shirts & leggings or similar – Big Star needs a glittery gold star shaped ‘wand’

Animals: cows, sheep, donkeys, doves (any number)

Shepherds (any number) – some can carry crooks, and as many as possible carry toy lambs as gifts for Jesus

Camels 1, 2 & 3

Angels (any number)

The Orchestra (any number)

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SCRIPT SAMPLE

...Narrator 2: Outside, the night sky was full of beautiful stars. One of the stars seemed much bigger and twinkled and sparkled more brightly than the others.

Dance Music: Sparkly Stars (Big Star & other stars)

Big Star leads the other stars on stage and they circle the nativity tableau and dance around it. The dance finishes with Big Star waving his/her wand over the little stable. Lights could be dimmed and torches or a spotlight could be shone on the stable to light it up. When the stars have gone, Joe and Sarah creep into the lounge, looking around as if in the dark.

Narrator 1: A magical light from the big star shone in through the window and lit up the little stable.

Joe: I *did* see a bright light! A *really* bright light! It *must* have been Rudolph's nose!

Sarah: (*Gestures towards stockings*) Don't be silly! Look. The stockings are empty. Santa hasn't been yet.

Joe: (*He looks out of the window*) Well I saw something... Wow! Look at the stars tonight. They're really sparkly!

The orchestra can play some jingly music on bells. Sarah joins him & points.

Sarah: (*joins him by window*) And that one is enormous! And it's shining right down... (she points from the star over to the tableau) ...on the little stable.

Joseph, Mary and donkey start to walk towards them from stage RT.

Joe: (*pointing to Joseph and Mary, gasping*) Huh! Look!

Narrator 2: Right in front of their eyes Mary and Joseph came alive. Sarah and Joe watched in wonder.

Joseph: Excuse me. Do you have a place for us to stay tonight? My lovely Mary is expecting a baby soon.

Mary: *(holding her tummy!)* Any minute now, I think! We've tried all the other innkeepers and they have no room.

Joe: We're not innkeepers!

Sarah: *(nudges Joe)* Yes we are, silly. *(seriously, to Joseph)* Er... we don't have any rooms left but you can sleep in our stable if you like *(points to manger and chairs set out centre back stage for Mary and Joseph)*. It's warm and dry.

Mary: That's very kind of you. Sorry to get you out of bed.

Joseph: *(to Joe)* By the way, I do like your pyjamas! We don't get nice pyjamas like that where we come from.

Joe: *(showing off a little)* Oh... thank you.

Sarah & Joe watch them take their seats. Mary picks up baby Jesus and cradles him.

Joe: *(to Sarah, once Mary and Joseph are seated)* What's going on?

Sarah: I think it must be Christmas magic!

Sarah & Joe sit at the side of the stage to watch. The animals come on, each with a very simple movement or dance to their verse of the song, before arranging themselves around the manger. As they come on the nativity tableau can be removed from centre stage to one side.

Song: We'll Keep You Warm (Chorus)

**"We'll keep you warm," said the cows,
"We'll keep you warm," said the cows,
"Darling little baby, sleep well tonight."
"We'll keep you warm," said the cows,
"We'll keep you warm," said the cows,
"Darling little baby, sleep well tonight."**

**"We'll keep you safe," said the sheep,
"We'll keep you safe," said the sheep,
"Darling little baby, keep well tonight."
"We'll keep you safe," said the sheep,
"We'll keep you safe," said the sheep,
"Darling little baby, keep well tonight."**

**“We’ll be your friends,” said the donkeys,
“We’ll be your friends,” said the donkeys,
“Darling little baby, have joy tonight.”
“We’ll be your friends,” said the donkeys,
“We’ll be your friends,” said the donkeys,
“Darling little baby, have joy tonight.”**

**“We’ll give you love,” said the doves,
“We’ll give you love,” said the doves,
“Darling little baby, dream well tonight.”
“We’ll give you love,” said the doves,
“We’ll give you love,” said the doves,
“Darling little baby, dream well tonight.”**

Sarah & Joe stand at the side and step forward.

Joe: Wow! Dancing donkeys! *(They giggle.)*

Narrator 1: As the children watched, something else happened.

Shepherds run on, holding lambs and crooks.

Shepherd 1: *(looking around)* I think this is it!

Shepherd 2: Yes, this looks like the place. *(To Joe and Sarah)* Excuse me, is this where we’ll find the baby Jesus?

Joe: *(stuck for words)* Er...

Sarah: Yes, that’s right... Bethlehem.

Joe: *(to Sarah)* This isn’t Bethlehem!

Sarah: *(under her breath)* It is, tonight. *(to shepherds)* So... how did you know where to find baby Jesus?

Shepherd 3: Well... it was a bit scary really!

All shepherds: *(loudly)* Very, very scary!

Gabriel comes on to join shepherds, Sarah & Joe go off and watch at side.

Song & Dance: Scary, Scary, Scary (Shepherds, Gabriel & Chorus)

**We were resting on a hillside,
Surrounded by our sheep,
When suddenly strange voices,
They woke us from our sleep!**

**Someone up above us
Sang a sweet refrain,
And it was scary, scary, scary
When the angel came!**

**An angel stepped out from the dark,
His wings were shining bright,
We said, (*shepherds only, spoken crossly to Gabriel*)
“Who do you think you are?
You gave us quite a fright!”
(*Gabriel, solo, sung*) “God has sent me down here,
And Gabriel’s my name!”
But it was scary, scary, scary
When the angel came!**

**He said, “Please don’t be frightened,
I come to bring you joy,
Tonight was born in Bethlehem
A very special boy!
I didn’t mean to scare you,
I hope this will explain.”
But it was scary, scary, scary
When the angel came!**

**And then the angel Gabriel,
He flew into the sky,
We don’t know why he chose us,
We’ll always wonder why!
But that is why we’ve come here,
To see the little babe,
But it was scary, scary, scary
When the angel came!**

Sarah & Joe come back on.

Joe: (*to shepherds & Sarah*) Yup! That would have scared me!

Shepherd 3 sees Jesus and points.

Shepherd 4: There he is, over there!

The shepherds start towards the manger where they offer their lambs to Mary and Joseph, and then take their places in the tableau.

Shepherd 5: (*as the others walk away, to Joe*) Thank you for your help. (*points to Joe’s slippers*) By the way, I like your sandals. We don’t get sandals like that where we come from!