

Homeschooling in Detroit.com Presents

A Virtual Theme Unit



*Christmas Around the
World*

Introduction

Theme units are one of the most flexible and versatile home school tools; they can be used to supplement your current curriculum or you can complete a series of units over the year and cover the majority of school subjects. They are fun, hands-on and completely customizable too!

Theme units allow you to cover a range of subjects based on a single theme, such as a particular holiday, boats, reptiles or anything else of interest to your child.

There are plenty of ready-made thematic units available for purchase, but you can easily create one yourself.

What is a Virtual Theme Unit?

A virtual theme unit is comprised of materials that can be found freely on the Internet. We've done all of the Google searching to find the best links and pre-screened them for appropriateness and content. While we can't be responsible for broken or misdirected links by 3rd parties, we can assure you that the links found in this theme unit are free of spam, spyware and objectionable material at the time of this printing.

How to Use this Theme Unit

Included in this unit are links to learn about Christmas traditions from around the world. To help reinforce the learning, your child can create a notebook and journal his or her experiences. We've included a passport cover and airline tickets for your child to cut, color and paste (or tape) on the cover or first few pages of his or her notebook. We've also included themed, lined notebooking pages (there's two versions for each country; one with room for a picture and one with more room to write). You can print and use these pages for your child's notebook, or use plain notebook paper, if you want to save on printer ink costs.

You'll also want to print the map (page 3) and ask your child to label each country as you learn about it.

To complete this unit, you will need a three-ring notebook, scissors, crayons or markers, glue or tape and materials/supplies/ingredients for the activities, crafts and recipes.

Let's Get Started!



Do you know why children in France place their shoes in front of the fireplace at Christmas time? How about the story of Babushka in Russia? As you complete this unit, you'll learn about these things and much more about how Christmas is celebrated around the world.

To get prepared for your journey, print your [Passport](#) , your [Airline Tickets](#) and get ready to set off on a whirlwind celebration of Christmas

Around the World! After you've cut and colored these, glue them to the first few pages of your notebook.

Of course, you'll want to track your trip. Print out [this map](#), hole punch it and place it in your binder. As you learn about each country, find it on the map.

Before you start off on your journey, learn to say "[Merry Christmas!](#)" in many different languages.

Africa

[How is Christmas celebrated in Africa?](#) -- Learn about the history and traditions. Enjoy videos of Christmas celebrations.

[Does it snow in Africa?](#) -- Yes, you will need to pack your mittens if you visit certain areas of Africa.

[Enjoy Jollof Rice](#) – Try cooking a Traditional Nigerian Party Pilaf. To create this recipe, you will need the following ingredients:

- Rice- 4 cups
- Water 2 pints
- Vegetable oil (Preferably sunflower oil)
- Onions- 2 medium (some diced and some sliced in rings)
- Beef Stock - 2 cups
- Curry Powder (to your taste)
- Dried Thyme
- Red Capsicum 6 large
- Chilli Powder (to taste)
- 1 Bay leaf
- Salt - (to taste)

[Create Kente Cloth Strips](#) -- Wear your Kente cloth in honor of the Christmas celebration! You will need the following items to create this craft:

- 18 x 4 inch strips of good quality white paper
- Pencil & Ruler
- Paintbrushes, Water & Paper Towels
- Red, Green, Blue, Black & Yellow Paint



France



[Christmas in France](#) --Learn how people in France celebrate Christmas.

[Make a Yule Log](#) -- To make this craft, you will need:

- Bûche de Noël patterns
- A toilet paper roll (after you've used the toilet paper)
- Crayons or Markers
- School glue
- Scissors
- Stiff Cardboard
- Construction paper
- Aluminum foil
- A small paper plate

[Celebrate Christmas with these French Traditions](#) – Leave your shoes by the fireplace so Pere Noel may fill them with small treats, have a family feast, and be king or queen for the day!

[Enjoy the St. Nicholas Parade](#) – This video portrays the celebration of St. Nicholas and shares a great view of the snow-covered mountains of France.

Israel

[Shalom and Welcome to a Jewish Celebration of Chanukah](#) -- Chanukah, not Christmas, is celebrated in Israel. Learn about the celebration and all of the traditions of this special holiday.

[Color](#) or [make your own dreidel and learn the rules of the game](#) – The dreidel is a traditional game played during Chanukah.

[Make a Gelt Bag](#) – During Hanukkah, Jewish children receive gifts of chocolate coins called gelt. Make a gelt bag and learn about this tradition. To make this craft, you will need

- 6" x 4" piece of navy blue felt
- 6" x 6" piece of white felt
- ½" x 6" strip of light blue felt
- 6 flat wooden circles
- Gold craft paint
- White craft glue
- Scissors

[Chocolate Coins](#) – Make these chocolate coins for your gelt bag. For this recipe, you will need:

- 250 g chocolate (about 1 cup)
- Disposable aluminum foil cups

[Ask a Rabbi](#) – A Rabbi explains the history and traditions of Hanukkah.



Sweden

[Christmas in Sweden](#) – Celebrate St. Lucia's Day in Sweden.

[Make Swedish Rice Pudding](#) – According to Swedish custom, the person who finds the almost in their pudding will marry the next year! To make this recipe, you will need:

- 3 cups Milk
- ½ cup Rice
- 1 ½ tablespoon Sugar
- ¼ teaspoon Salt
- 1 Whole Almond
- Cream, Cinnamon & Sugar

[Decorate your tree with Swedish Paper Chains](#) – Make a shiny paper chain to decorate your tree. To make this craft, you will need:

- Foil-backed Paper (you can get foil wrapping paper from the Dollar Tree)
- Thin cardboard (for making a pattern)
- Ruler, Scissors (or paper cutter)

[Make a St. Lucia Wreath](#) – The St. Lucia wreath is worn by the youngest daughter of the family to celebrate the day. For this craft, you will need:

- A large paper plate
- Scissors
- School glue
- Crayons or Markers
- Construction paper

[Enjoy the Christmas celebrations in Stockholm, Sweden](#) – See how the people of Sweden celebrate the Christmas holidays.



Russia

[Christmas in Russia](#) – Learn about Babushka and other Russian Christmas traditions.

[Russian Star Ornaments](#) – Star ornaments were popular decorations in old Russia. Make these to decorate your tree in a new way. To make these ornaments, you will need:

- Paint Brushes
- Colored Pencils, Gel Markers, Paint
- Glue & Glitter Glue
- Scissors
- Newspaper
- Paper Towels
- Ribbon
- Water
- Recycled File Folders
- Dowel Stick



[Celebrate Christmas in](#)

[Father Frost's hometown](#) – This newscast shares the traditions of the Russian holiday.

[Russian Tea Cakes](#) – These delicious cookies are a Christmas favorite passed down from generation to generation. For this recipe, you will need:

- 1 cup butter
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 6 tablespoons confectioners' sugar
- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 cup chopped walnuts
- 1/3 cup confectioners' sugar for decoration

Japan



[Christmas in Japan](#) – Christmas in Japan is similar to Valentine’s Day.

[Make a Christmas Cake](#) – Sponge cake, cream and fresh fruit is the traditional dessert for Christmas in Japan. For this recipe, you will need:

- 3 eggs
- 2/3 cup sugar
- 3/4 cup all purpose flour, sifted
- 1 Tbsp milk
- 1 1/2 Tbsp butter, softened at room temperature
- For topping:
- 1 1/2 cup heavy cream
- 4 Tbsp sugar
- various fruits (such as strawberries, peaches, cherries, and so on)
- small cookies *optional

[Origami Star Craft](#) – Decorate for Christmas with Origami Stars. You will need a square piece of paper to make this craft.

[KFC](#) – KFC for Christmas dinner is Japan’s Christmas meal of choice.

Germany

[Christmas in Germany](#) – Christmas celebrations begin in early December with St. Nicholas Day.

[German Paper Stars](#) – These beautiful paper stars are used to decorate trees, windows, packages, and garlands. For this project, you will need:

- 4 paper or vellum strips measuring 1 x 50 cm (for 4 cm star) **OR**
- 4 paper or vellum strips measuring 1.5 x 50 cm (for 6 cm star) **OR**
- 4 paper or vellum strips measuring 2.5 x 90 cm (10.5 cm star)
- scissors, string for hanging



[Gingerbread Cookies](#) – Gingerbread is known as Lebkuchen in Germany. For this recipe, you will need:

- 4 cups all purpose flour (more or less) and 1 cup cake flour
- 2 1/2 to 3 tsp. ginger, 1 1/4 tsp. cinnamon, 1 tsp. ground cloves
- 1/2 tsp. vanilla
- 1 1/2 teaspoons baking soda, 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 cup butter
- 2 tablespoons butter flavored Crisco
- 1 cup plus 1 tbsp. granulated sugar
- 1/4 tsp. mace, 1/4 tsp. nutmeg
- 1 large egg
- 3/4 cup molasses and 1/4 cup corn syrup
- 2 tablespoons white vinegar

[German Christmas](#) – Enjoy the scenery of Christmas in Germany in this video.

Mexico



[Christmas in Mexico](#) – The celebration of the Nativity is the focus of the Christmas holiday in traditional homes in Mexico.

[The Christmas Piñata](#) – Breaking the Christmas piñata is a highlight of the season for the children of Mexico. To make this craft, you will need:

- Paper Mache
- Balloon
- Christmas Tinsel & Bows
- Candy (individually wrapped)

[Mexican Christmas Cookies](#) – Blackberry or apricot jam may be used to make these quintessential Mexican Christmas cookies. To make this recipe, you will need:

- 1 ½ cups butter, at room temperature
- 1/3 cup sugar
- 3 cups flour
- 1 ½ teaspoons vanilla extract
- 4 eggs, separated
- ¾ cup sugar
- juice of 1 lime
- 2 ½ cups fruit preserves
- ½ cup Grand Marnier
- ½ cup confectioners' sugar, ¾ cup chopped walnuts

[Christmas South of the Border](#) -- Watch as this family breaks the Christmas piñata!

Australia

[Christmas in Australia](#) – Christmas comes in the middle of summer in Australia.

[White Christmas](#) – This is a favorite recipe for Aussie Christmas celebrations. For this recipe, you will need:

- 1 cup powdered milk
- 1 cup confectioner's sugar
- 1 cup Rice Krispies
- 1 cup coconut
- 1 cup mixed dried fruit

[Summer Christmas in Australia](#) – How do you celebrate Christmas in a warm weather climate? This newscast shares some of the Australian traditions.

[Christmas Picnic Blanket](#) – Celebrate the Australian way by having a picnic! Make this Christmas picnic blanket and have your picnic inside. For this project, you will need:

- Fabric Crayons or Markers
- Colored Pencils
- Glitter Glue
- Chenille Sticks (optional)
- Craft Sticks (optional)
- Bells (Optional)
- Fabric for the blanket



homeschooling in DETROIT *a what, when, and where to find resource*

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Feedback

We'd love your feedback on this Theme Unit Guide. Feel free to drop a line to Christina@HomeschoolingInDetroit.com.

Writers Wanted!

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