

## Christmas cards show nativity in Syria war zone

1st December, 2016



A charity has released a series of Christmas cards with a difference. The non-profit organization Doctors of the World is selling four different cards showing traditional Christmas scenes from the Holy Land. However, the pictures

also contain images of the war in Syria. The Doctors of the World website want to make people aware that there is still a lot of suffering going on in the world, especially in Syria. One Christmas card shows Mary and Joseph travelling on a donkey through the rubble of modern day, war-torn Syria. Another shows the baby Jesus asleep in his manger as a missile is fired in the distance behind him. The next card shows the three wise men looking up at warplanes flying overhead.

The Doctors of the World website explained the reason for their alternative Christmas cards. It said: "Rather than making a religious statement, these images seek to remind the public that this year war has forced millions from their homes, and they really need our help." Money from the sale of the cards will help buy medicine and medical equipment for people in Syria and other areas of conflict around the world. The website said: "By purchasing our cards, you are helping us to provide healthcare to the most vulnerable, and together we will [put back] a little of the most festive feeling of all - hope." The United Nations estimates that 65 million people have fled their homes because of violence and war.

Source: [www.doctorsoftheworld.org.uk](http://www.doctorsoftheworld.org.uk)

## Writing

Christmas should be about caring for people and not presents and food. Discuss.

## Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

charity / non-profit / the Holy Land / war / suffering / donkey / modern / missile / reason / alternative / religious / the public / medicine / equipment / vulnerable

## True / False

- The charity is selling ten different types of Christmas card. T / F
- The cards show traditional Xmas scenes, plus images of war. T / F
- One Christmas card shows Mary and Joseph riding on a camel. T / F
- One card shows the three wise men flying warplanes. T / F
- The charity did not give any explanation about the cards. T / F
- Money from the cards will go towards medicine and medical equipment. T / F
- The charity said the most festive feeling is that of hope. T / F
- The UN estimates that 65 million people have no home because of war. T / F

## Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- |                       |                 |
|-----------------------|-----------------|
| 1. <b>series</b>      | a. truly        |
| 2. <b>traditional</b> | b. particularly |
| 3. <b>aware</b>       | c. guesses      |
| 4. <b>especially</b>  | d. regular      |
| 5. <b>overhead</b>    | e. things       |
| 6. <b>alternative</b> | f. set          |
| 7. <b>really</b>      | g. above        |
| 8. <b>equipment</b>   | h. different    |
| 9. <b>purchasing</b>  | i. conscious    |
| 10. <b>estimates</b>  | j. buying       |

## Discussion – Student A

- What is the true meaning of Christmas?
- What are the good and bad things about Christmas?
- In what ways have some people forgotten the meaning of Christmas?
- How can we help those who are suffering?
- Should Xmas cards be about raising awareness of suffering?
- How can we remind people that Christmas is about hope?
- What do you think of Christmas?
- What questions would you like to ask the charity?

## Phrase Match

- |   |                          |
|---|--------------------------|
| 1. a series of Christmas cards                | a. war-torn Syria        |
| 2. there is still a lot of suffering          | b. public                |
| 3. through the rubble of modern day,          | c. flying overhead       |
| 4. a missile is fired in                      | d. statement             |
| 5. the three wise men looking up at warplanes | e. of violence and war   |
| 6. making a religious                         | f. going on in the world |
| 7. remind the                                 | g. with a difference     |
| 8. medical                                    | h. most vulnerable       |
| 9. provide healthcare to the                  | i. equipment             |
| 10. fled their homes because                  | j. the distance          |

## Discussion – Student B

- What do you think about what you read?
- What words and images should be on Christmas cards?
- Should images of war replace images of snowmen on Xmas cards?
- What is the best way to celebrate Christmas?
- Is it better to put images of suffering on Christmas cards?
- What does Santa Claus have to do with Christmas?
- What is your favourite celebration of the year?
- How important are greetings cards?

## Spelling

- A ciatyhr has released a series
- itntoalradi Christmas scenes
- contain giesma of the war in Syria
- want to make people aewar
- a lot of ffiuernsq going on
- a missile is fired in the cnseidait behind him
- their enltevtiraa Christmas cards
- making a ugoirlesi statement
- war has ocrfde millions from their homes
- buy medicine and dieaclm equipment
- helping us to oiedprv healthcare
- because of coenelvi and war

### Answers – Synonym Match

1. f	2. d	3. i	4. b	5. g
6. h	7. a	8. e	9. j	10. c

## Role Play

### Role A – Holiday

You think a holiday from work/school is the best thing about Christmas. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't as important. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these (and why): going to church, being with family or food.

### Role B – Church

You think going to church is the best thing about Christmas. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't as important. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these (and why): a holiday from work/school, being with family or food.

### Role C – Family

You think being with family is the best thing about Christmas. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't as important. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these (and why): going to church, a holiday from work/school or food.

### Role D – Food

You think food is the best thing about Christmas. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't as important. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these (and why): going to church, being with family or a holiday from work/school.

## Speaking – Christmas

Rank these with your partner. Put the most important things about Christmas at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- |          |            |
|----------|------------|
| • hope   | • church   |
| • family | • shopping |
| • prayer | • holiday  |
| • food   | • presents |

### Answers – True False

a	F	b	T	c	F	d	F	e	F	f	T	g	T	h	T
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.