

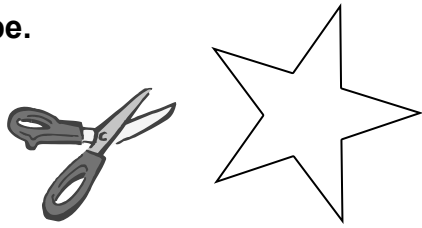
# Mission Together

## Advent Activity: Star of Hope



### Introduction

**Create a calm and quiet atmosphere for reflection. You might like to light a candle or play some gentle music. Explain to the children that today you will be thinking about hope.**



### Reflection

Ask the children to close their eyes and think carefully about something they hope for. Encourage them not to think about what gifts they are hoping for at Christmas

but rather to consider a very special hope they have. Perhaps they have a hope for what they want to be when they grow up, or a hope to do well in a football match, or maybe they hope that a sick family member will get better. Ask the children to concentrate on this hope for a few moments and consider how it makes them feel.

Having allowed some time for quiet reflection, ask the children to open their eyes and invite some contributions from a few about what their hopes are. How does hope make them feel? Are they excited, happy, nervous? Together, explore the question 'what is hope?' It can be quite a tricky concept to explain.



### Tips

- You may like to print the star templates on coloured card to make them really eye-catching
- The children could decorate the stars using different materials like glitter, felt tips, or stickers
- Hang the stars from the classroom ceiling using string or put them in a window to make a great Advent display

You may come to the conclusion that hope is the feeling of wanting something to happen in the future, or you could find your own definition as a class.

Ask the children to remember the special hope they have been thinking about, then ask them to imagine what it would be like if that hope was gone? What if they couldn't hope to be a dancer anymore because they were injured? What if there was no hope that their football team would win the match?

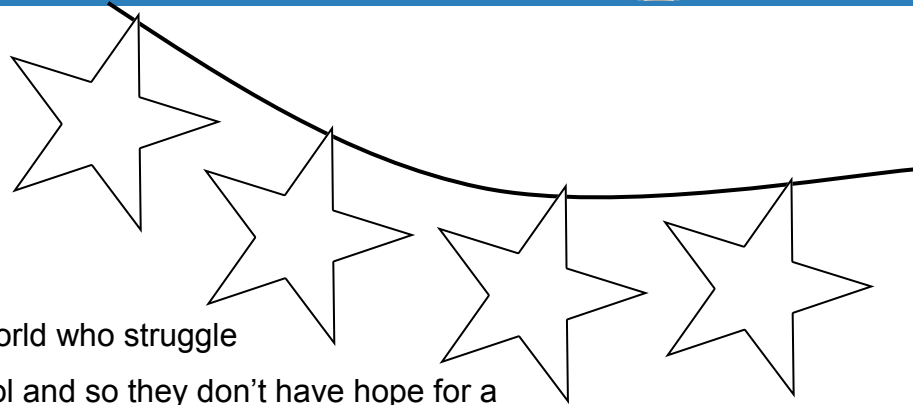
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## Advent Materials 2012



### Reflection continued

Take some contributions about how it might feel to have no hope. It can be sad, lonely, and might make you want to give up.



Tell the class that there are children in this world who struggle to find hope. Some of them can't go to school and so they don't have hope for a job when they grow up. Some of them don't have families and they have no hope of finding someone to look after them. Some of them have no food and have no hope of getting a meal today. You may like to use one of the stories about children overseas from the Mission Together website as a specific example.

But Jesus teaches us not to be afraid and to try not to lose hope. There are places like schools and orphanages that help children who are struggling to find hope. And there are special people who are guided by God's love to care for children and give them hope. We learn to hope because God loves us and wants the best for us. It is really important that we help other children too. We can do this by praying for children all around the world and asking God to look after them. We can also raise money this Advent for Mission Together.

### Activity

Explain that you are going to make Stars of Hope to help remember children around the world this Christmas. Stars can be a good symbol of hope because they are that little twinkle of light in the distance when everything else can seem really dark.

Provide each child with a star template to decorate. On the blank side of the star, ask the children to write down one thing they hope for. It can be their own special hope, or it could be a hope they have for someone else. Perhaps they hope that children everywhere can have food and water.

Use the stars to decorate your classroom, or ask the children to put them on their Christmas tree at home, so that every time they look at them they can be reminded about children around the world and pray that they can have hope.



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