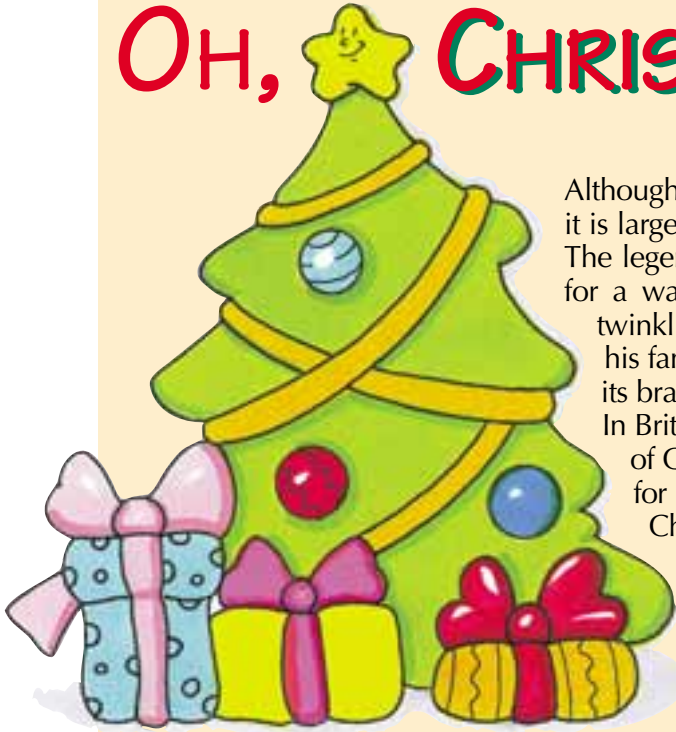


OH, CHRISTMAS TREE...



Although it is uncertain how the tree became the symbol of Christmas, it is largely accepted that the Christmas tree, itself, is of German origin. The legend attributes the tradition to Martin Luther himself. While out for a walk one Christmas Eve, he was moved by the sight of stars twinkling through the branches of a tree. To recapture the scene for his family, he took an uprooted fir tree home and fixed candles onto its branches.

In Britain in 1841, Prince Albert, who was German and the husband of Queen Victoria, put up the first Christmas tree at Windsor Castle for his wife and their children. German immigrants introduced the Christmas tree to America in the 17th century. It reached all of the British colonies, including Canada, by the 1840s. Trees were traditionally decorated with nuts, fruit, sweets and paper decorations. The early trees were also decorated with candles but because of the danger of fire, an American telephonist invented the electric Christmas lights we know today.

Christmas Tree Activity

Cut two identical tree shapes from thick paper. Hold the pieces together and vertically through the middle.

Then, fold the sides out to create a three-dimensional shape that will stand alone. Decorate the tree using felt-pens or glitter.



Right: since 1946, a huge decorated Christmas tree has been put up in Trafalgar Square each year, a gift from the people of Norway to the people of Britain.



Teach your pupils this song!

Oh, Christmas tree,
Oh, Christmas tree,
How lovely are your branches.
Oh, Christmas tree,
Oh, Christmas tree,
How lovely are your branches.
In summer sun or winter snow,
A coat of green you always show.
Oh, Christmas tree,
Oh, Christmas tree,
How lovely are your branches.

