**Why Two Stories? Evaluate Interpretation**

Teachers’ notes

Matthew & Luke are not writing a biography, they are just trying to show that Jesus had a very special role to play and for whom the future was already mapped out. For Christians the heart of the story is that Jesus is the Son of God or God on earth, and many feel the story shows that Jesus came as a universal saviour, not just for the high and mighty or for Jews only. The nativity story shows a contradiction which went on throughout Jesus` life. Two underlying themes – kingship and death – are juxtaposed in the Christmas story and foreshadow Jesus` future life. Even the gifts are symbolic: gold for a king, incense for holiness, myrrh for his death.

Luke was writing for a non-Jewish (Gentile) audience, trying to depict Jesus as a universal saviour for everyone, rich and poor alike whereas Matthew wanted him to be exclusively Jewish.

NB Matthew and Luke were not alive when Jesus was but wrote their accounts about 90 years after he died.