Theme/Unit: **Christmas: The Birth Narratives**

**Key concept: INTERPRETATION**

**CONTEXTUALISE**

**Step 4** *Lesson Two still continuing* ***Contextualise: how do different cultures and religions express their ideas about interpretation?***

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The Christmas story only appears in 2 of the Gospels, and the versions are very different.

*MATTHEW Ch1 vs18-24; Ch2 vs1-23 LUKE Ch1 vs26-38; Ch2 vs1-21*

Ask the children -

*Where would you find the original version of the Christmas story?*

Narrow in down: Bible….New Testament….Gospels ……which ones? All? One?

Use Quiz or ask the pupils for all the parts of the Christmas story they can remember and list on the board everything they say, even things like “Mary rode to Bethlehem on a donkey”, “The shepherds gave Jesus a lamb”. Explain that they are now going to investigate to see how accurate their ideas are.

Give each child a “Christmas Story Checklist” + Venn diagram (provided on an A3 sheet). Read through the check-list with them so they know what they’re listening out for. As a class (I have found this is the best method), read through both Gospel accounts, asking the pupils to stop you whenever something from the Checklist is mentioned. Mark **L** for all the events which occur from Luke and **M** for Matthew. Quite a few of them are not mentioned in either (eg “Mary rides to Bethlehem on donkey” or “Angels visit Jesus”.)

Discuss these findings with the children. Some are quite surprising – eg there is no mention of a stable – it’s just inferred from the presence of a manger. In Matthew it suggests Jesus was born in a house.

**Children complete the Venn diagram**. Events which appear in neither Gospel are placed outside the circle. The middle will be left blank deliberately at this stage.

Ask children: *How is all this connected to Interpretation?* They will probably come up with a Chinese Whispers theory as to why the story differs (not the correct reason). Suggest to the children that M & L were each putting a different slant on the story which we will need to try to **interpret** next lesson (in Evaluate).