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EDITORIAL PANEL

Christmas to Marketing Gimmicks

The Gift of Words — A Christmas Cover Story

Chief Editor: Sunita Bansdawala

Welcome to the December 2025 edition of the *Wordspire Gazette*—our most magical issue yet. This edition is a snow-dusted storybook come alive, where **young voices ring truer than church bells on Christmas Eve** and creativity glitters like baubles on a tall fir tree.

As the idiom goes, “**The proof of the pudding is in the reading,**” and our student writers have served a feast this year—tales bold as fireworks, essays rich as fruitcake, and poems that **dance like flames in a winter hearth**. The wise remind us, “*A reader lives a thousand lives before he dies,*” and this year, our children proved something even greater: **when they write, the world reads.**

Let this season echo the truth of the ages—“**Wisdom begins in wonder.**” Like Santa’s toyshop of tales, every page holds a gift. Like starlight over Bethlehem, every story guides. Also, just as Maya Angelou wonderfully said, “*Be a rainbow in someone else’s cloud.*” May these young words—small yet mighty—be vibrant rainbows for you this Christmas season.

So, grab your mug of curiosity, wrap yourself in our stories, and remember: **words are the only gifts that grow when you share them. Merry Christmas – Joy in Reading – And may your heart be light.**

Sunita Bansdawala

Marketing Tactics and Christmas

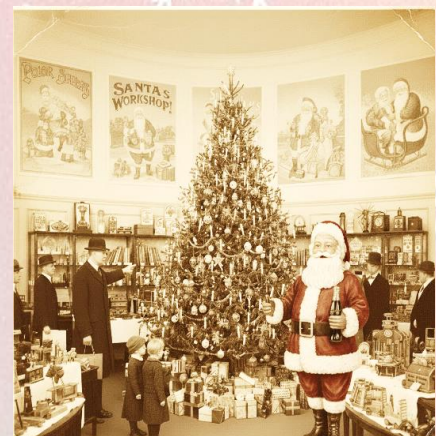
Wordspire Sr. Category Student Editor: Karthik Dhogi | Age 14 | Mumbai

The modern Christmas holiday—with its emphasis on gift-giving, festive consumption, and specific visual iconography—is as much a triumph of historical marketing and commercial innovation as it is a centuries-old cultural tradition.

However, Christmas as we know it, was crafted meticulously by 19th century entrepreneurs who recognized the immense potential hidden within the festive holiday of Christmas. This article covers some of the major marketing tactics that emerged from Christmas.

The Truth Behind Santa’s Attire

In the early 1930s, facing a seasonal slump in sales, Coca-Cola sought to boost year-round appeal by standardizing the inconsistent image of Santa Claus. In 1931, artist Haddon Sundblom was commissioned to design a definitive, jolly, human-like figure in a red-and-white suit, perfectly matching the brand's colours. This successful campaign, built on brand consistency and emotional resonance, resulted in Sundblom's Santa rapidly becoming the standard, globally recognized image of the gift-giver, driving massive sales growth and firmly linking Coca-Cola with the spirit of Christmas.



The Japanese Phenomenon of "Kentucky for Christmas"

Seeking to overcome a seasonal sales slump in the early 1970s, KFC Japan implemented a brilliant marketing strategy by targeting the cultural vacuum of a non-native Christmas dinner. The tradition originated when a manager suggested fried chicken as an alternative to turkey. By 1974, the nationwide "Kentucky for Christmas" campaign, featuring Colonel Sanders as Santa, successfully aligned the brand with family joy and a modern Western lifestyle. Today, aided by sophisticated logistics to manage demand that spikes tenfold on Christmas Eve, this commercial creation has cemented itself as a cherished annual ritual for millions of Japanese families, proving its mastery in creating a new consumer holiday norm.

Overview

In conclusion, the history of Christmas marketing demonstrates how commercial strategy profoundly shapes cultural tradition. From Coca-Cola standardizing Santa Claus to KFC establishing a ritual in Japan, these campaigns show the immense power of businesses to engineer and define global holiday norms. By consistently associating themselves with the universal themes of joy and togetherness, historical marketing efforts have successfully cemented Christmas as the world's most significant annual event for both emotional resonance and economic consumption.

CHRISTMAS FABLES

Fantasy of Fun

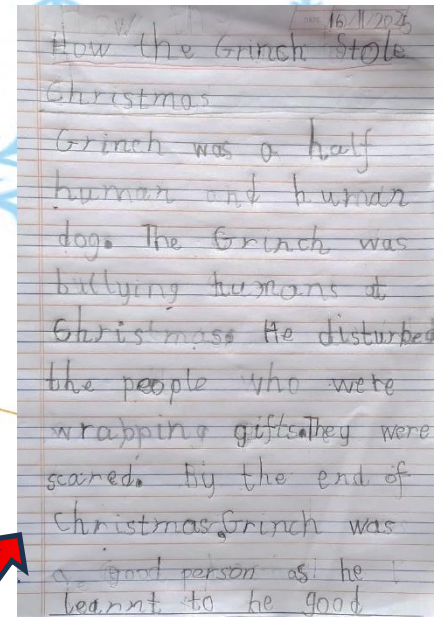
How the Grinch Stole Christmas

Wordspire Jr. Writer: Avyan Mundhra | Age 5.5 | Mumbai



Grinch was a half human and half dog. The Grinch was bullying humans at Christmas. He disturbed the people who were wrapping gifts.

They were scared. By the end of Christmas, Grinch was a good person as he learnt to be good.



The Toy That Doesn't Want to be Wrapped

Wordspire Fiction Writer: Abhra Aarekar | Age 9 | Mumbai

As snow fell from the sky elves wrapped toys in peace and joy. Santa and his belly sat while eating cookies with milk. The toys were singing along with the music along with the music, then suddenly a large thud exploded. An elf fell asleep, one of the toy's hit his snooze button on his head.

Every toy and elf stopped at once and they sprinted towards the sleeping elf. A few elves looked around, they observed a nutcracker bolting towards the exit door. Fortunately, the security alarms activated and the doors shut. Locked. An elf took him to Santa for his faith to be decided.

Santa was furious, he was about to burn it but it was for a child. He decided to wrap it for him and send it off. The toy was scolded by Santa for a long time. The elf repeated again and again, 'You can't send me off, that naughty boy or girl will break me!' Santa didn't listen and him off, but the child was really well behaved and had a great time.

The Polar Bear Who Saved Santa

Wordspire Fantasy Writer: Rishika Paul | Age 9 | Mumbai

As dawn broke, the first ray of light, painted the mountains, a gentle awakening of a new day. A polar bear, stretched its legs to hunt for fish for its breakfast. It simply couldn't wait for Christmas to arrive. So, it growled and took a dive into the icy ocean.

The polar bear swam around in search of fish, but couldn't find any. He said to himself, "One more day to go..." but his thoughts were interrupted by a huge crash into the ocean, followed by a loud scream! The polar bear recognized who it was...

That white beard was familiar, and that when the polar bear realized that it was the world's present giver – Santa Claus. The mighty bear immediately, swam towards Santa, and hurled him onto the icy shore, without hurting Santa. Santa asked the bear, "Dear Polar Bear, do tell me what do you wish for this Christmas?"

The polar bear smiled and replied, "Well, a fish to fill my belly!" Within moments, the polar bear had thousands of fish next to him, readily waiting to be eaten! It was a magical moment for the polar bear who saved Santa!

A Mystery Helper Travelled the World with Santa

Wordspire Fantasy Writer: Aveer Chhajer | Age 9.5 | Mumbai

As night fell, the stars emerged one by one, like diamonds scattered across a velvet tapestry on Christmas eve. I was lying down on the mountain slope and gazing at the sky which was as dark as a black carpet and sparkling with glowing stars. That atmosphere at the mountain base, had rivers of ice chilling me to the bones!

Within some moments, it began to snow and I spotted a minor cherry red spot-light with a few other coffee brown spot-lights ahead of it... Could it really be... Santa!!! So, I began to sprint to the peak of the mountain. I hid behind a snowy rock, until Santa headed towards my wooden cabin. Then I entered the cabin, and Santa spoke to me in a Russian accent, "Would you like to travel around the world on my sleigh with me?" Immediately I responded, "Definitely!"

So, on Christmas night, Santa and I delivered gifts to all the children around the world. I was so exhausted after the delivery, that I fell into a slumber in Santa's sleigh. By 6:00am, the sun casted its golden rays across our sleigh, the mountain, and eye-dropping silhouette, with a bit of warmth and light.

Santa and I ambled towards our wooden cabin, and waited patiently for the newspaper... while sipping milk and munching on chocolate-chip cookies. The newspaper finally arrived at our door-step, we wore our reading spectacles and noticed the jolly faces of the children who were unwrapping their Christmas gifts!

Midnight in Candy Cane Village

Wordspire Fiction Writer: Hania Doshi | Age 9 | Mumbai

The humid night air of Candy Cane Village, was so stifling that Hiren tossed back all his bed covers and woke up on Christmas eve. It was 11:45pm, but he wasn't able to sleep, so he went on the streets for a pleasant stroll. 10 minutes later, he started walking back to his house, "Oh! It is already midnight, Merry Christmas everyone" he shrieked and woke up the homeless people around him. They were furious with him, so Hiren fled from that area.

While running away, Hiren noticed those people chasing him and screaming at him! He didn't know what to do, and was too worried to think about them! So, he turned towards his house, but the door was locked.

Hiren's heart was pounding as fast as it ever had before! The homeless villagers were so near, but a miracle was witnessed! Santa Clause flew in on his sleigh and protected him from the rage of people shouting at him and said, "Everyone needs a second chance. It's Christmas, let's celebrate!"

The Elf Who Almost Forgot Santa's Sleigh

Wordspire Fiction Writer: Avidan Hingorani | Age 10 | Mumbai

Once on a chilly winter day, an elf was working hard for Christmas eve and Christmas day. The elf worked continuously for a long time. Then it started to become dark and the elf became exhausted. Soon the bell rung and everyone was sent off to sleep.

Since the elf was already exhausted, he tried to quickly run to his room. He quickly changed into his night suit, and in no time, he was on the bed, and had fallen asleep. However, there was a problem – he slept far too long and then he lost some of his important memory.

When the elf woke up, he had forgotten that it was Christmas eve. Then the disaster struck: he forgot to decorate the sleigh for the Christmas parade. Soon, he noticed everyone line-up for the Christmas Eve parade.

Just then, Santa Claus called the scared elf. Santa said, "Today is Christmas eve, the sleigh is wonderfully decorated! I am glad that you finished your work before going to bed!" That night the elf remembered, never leave anything for the last minute!

FACTS OF CHRISTMAS

Curiosity | Discovery | Learning Beyond Class

Christmas in India

Wordspire Non-Fiction Writer: Manan Mundhra | Age 10 | Mumbai

Christmas in India is celebrated with great joy and enthusiasm, even though Christians are a minority in the country. On December 25th, people decorate their homes with bright lights, colourful stars, and sparkly ornaments of their Christmas trees. Churches are also adorned with flowers and scented candles like vanilla, and all Christian families attend a special midnight prayer service on Christmas Eve to rejoice the birth of Jesus Christ, with blessings and hope.

Delectable food plays an integral part in the celebration. Their families prepare delicious treats like plum cakes, cookies, and traditional ginger bread cookies. The fun element for me is, several children including my friends and I go carolling from house to house, singing Christmas songs like Jingle Bells and The Twelve Days of Christmas, this helps spread the festive cheer. People also exchange gifts with their family and friends, to show love and kindness during this joyful season.



Christmas in India may not be like western countries but is equally unique because it reflects the

country's rich cultural diversity. Different states celebrate the festival in their own special ways—Goa is known for its lively street decorations, while Kerala celebrates with grand church feasts, also Mumbai is known for its vibrant Christmas celebrations, particularly its midnight mass services at historic churches like Mount Mary church in Bandra.

No matter where you celebrate, the spirit of Christmas brings people together, reminding everyone about the values of peace, sharing, and togetherness.

Why Christmas is Not Only About Gifts

Wordspire Non-Fiction Writer: Navya Kshirsagar | Age 10 | Mumbai

A chill permeated the night air, sending goose bumps breaking out over my arm because tomorrow would be the most interesting festival for me and the whole city of New York. The next morning when I gazed out of my room's window, I heard children merrily unboxing gifts, but I understood that Christmas is about joy for them. Yet for me, Christmas is more than just presents, it is about love, togetherness, and spending time with loved ones.

Then I spotted several people forming circles like a human chain and clasping their hands. Later I joined too, my face was full of confusion and I didn't know what to do. Yet, steadily I started to sing along the generations old Christmas carols and followed till the end.

I felt feeling peaceful and relaxed like everyone else. So, I think that Christmas is a joyful festival celebrated worldwide on December 25 to mark the birth of Jesus Christ, and not just about gifts.

Christmas Decorations made from Recyclables

Wordspire Non-Fiction Writer: Heer Shah | Age 13 | Mumbai

Every December, something curious stirs in homes: ordinary ornaments seem to come alive. It could be a creasy plastic bottle suddenly glimmers like icy pearl frozen sunlight, an ancient bad-breathed cardboard box wiggles as if it can't wait to become something new, and even rusty-crusty, pale, old magazines shuffle nervously, like they're hiding their rum-soaked blood red plum cake from notorious five-year olds. It's as if the holiday spirit tiptoes through the rough wooden shacks carved into the floors, nudges these forgotten scraps, and whispers with a wink, "Time to transform objects into wonder!"

Christmas decorations made from recyclables don't just save money or cut down waste—they spark creativity, bring families closer, and give waste objects a second chance. From plastic bottles that twinkle as snowflakes to jars glowing like tiny lanterns, the possibilities are endless, the only need is to start the initiative.

1. Plastic Bottle Snowflakes

Old plastic bottles can be carefully cut into snowflake perfect linear shapes, greased with white or silver, and can be improved with glitter or markers. Add a headstrong string and you have affordable, lightweight, and surprisingly elegant ornaments for your windows or Christmas trees.

Tip: Heat the edges slightly (with adult supervision) to curl them for a more natural snowflake look.

2. Cardboard Christmas Stars

Packaged boxes and cereal boxes can become stunning and environmentally friendly festive decorations. Cut star shapes of various sizes, layer them, and coat them evenly with colours of gold, red, or green. You can hang them, place them on mantles, or attach them to the fake tree branches with the help of string.

Tip: For a more vintage look, cover stars with old book pages or newspaper for a rustic effect.

3. Jar Lanterns

Glass jars—jam, sauce, or candle jars—make prepossessing Christmas lanterns. Add mini golden lights or LED candles and cover the outside with paint, ribbons, or twine.

Tip: Use leftover tissue paper to create stained-glass patterns on the jar and to give that 3-D effect!

4. Paper Spirals That Twist into Wonder

Old magazines and wrapping paper strips, roll into spirals, coils, and stars that shimmer with dazzling various colours. Not any one of them are alike, and each one seems to carry a tiny spark of mischief. When the wind brushes past, they spin and shimmer like little elves are dancing between the artificial emerald grass stuck on twigs.

Tip: Use sparkly or jelly papers to give a gleaming effect.

This eve season, with a little imagination, old bottles, jars, and cardboard can become little treasures. Dig out those scraps, roll up your sleeves, and let the Christmas spirit turn the ordinary into something truly special!

Turn scraps into sparkle this Christmas—where imagination and love light up every corner of your home.”

Let's update the Christmas tree image to include the plastic bottle snowflakes, completing the full set of recycled decorations.

Here's the picture of a Christmas tree adorned with **plastic bottle snowflakes, cardboard stars, jar lanterns, and paper spirals**, all made from recycled materials.



The Great History of Santa Claus

Wordspire Non-Fiction Writer: Nishant Vaid | Age 11 | Mumbai

Santa Claus originated from the 4th century, who was Christian Bishop Saint Nicholas, a figure known for his kindness and giving gifts. The legend travelled worldwide and settled in America, where his name Santa Claus was simplified from Sinterklaas (Dutch) and Saint Nicholas to Santa Claus.

In this modern era, the figure that we notice of Santa, was designed in the 1900's. Although it is a hotly debated topic that often divides opinions, Santa is a non-fictional character. The images that we see are fictional.

In actual fact, Christmas is the birth of Jesus Christ on 25 December, 3BC, which is a special time for strengthening bonds with family while creating memories.

So, on the other hand, it is a momentum when Santa Claus brings cheer during the birth of Christ. Understandably, there are many further fables and stories that explain Santa Claus helping others and spreading cheer, but it all happens during the Christmas Festive Season.

The tradition of Santa Claus is continued today through a blend of family customs, commercial activities, media portrayals and charitable acts that emphasize generosity, family, togetherness and the magic of giving. It shows that the magic of Christmas is carry forwards by many cultural myths.



How to Host a Christmas Party for Friends

Wordspire Storywriter: Shanaya Katkoria | Age 13 | Mumbai

Hosting a Christmas party for friends is both an opportunity to celebrate shared traditions and a chance to create meaningful memories. Successful gatherings rarely happen by accident; rather, they emerge from thoughtful planning and a genuine commitment to hospitality. The first step is establishing a clear vision for the event.

Whether the party is intended to be elegant, playful, or intimate, defining its tone guides decisions about décor, menu, and activities. A cohesive theme—such as classic winter whites or a nostalgic holiday aesthetic—can offer structure without feeling restrictive.

Equally essential is careful attention to logistics. Preparing a guest list early ensures that invitations can be sent in a timely manner and allows hosts to manage dietary needs or accessibility considerations. A well-curated menu should combine familiar seasonal flavours with simple, crowd-pleasing dishes. Incorporating contributions from guests, such as a potluck dessert table, can reduce stress while fostering a sense of shared ownership.

The atmosphere of the gathering ultimately determines its success. Warm lighting, thoughtfully arranged seating, and a balanced playlist help create a welcoming environment. Activities such as a gift exchange, ornament-decorating station, or reflective toast encourage connection, but they should never overshadow the natural flow of conversation. Above all, hosts must remain attentive without becoming overwhelmed by perfectionism; genuine warmth matters more than flawless presentation.

A Christmas party for friends thrives when it blends preparation with spontaneity, tradition with personal expression. By focusing on comfort, inclusivity, and joy, hosts can create an experience that reflects the true spirit of the season—celebration grounded in togetherness.



The Enduring Tradition of Thanksgiving

Wordspire Non-Fiction Writer: Shriya Kasat | Age 11 | Singapore

Thanksgiving is a beloved annual celebration, primarily observed in the United States and Canada, centred on expressing gratitude and sharing a bountiful meal. Its roots in the United States trace back to 1621, when the Plymouth colonists and the Wampanoag tribe shared an autumn harvest feast. This event is often hailed as the "**First Thanksgiving**," a three-day celebration of survival, peace, and good harvest following a difficult year. While modern celebrations have evolved, this historical gathering laid the foundation for a holiday dedicated to giving thanks for blessings received.

For many families, Thanksgiving is a powerful catalyst for **reunion and connection**. It offers a dedicated time for relatives, who may be spread across different cities or states, to gather under one roof. The centrepiece of this reunion is typically a large, traditional feast featuring turkey, stuffing, cranberry sauce, and pumpkin pie. Beyond the food, the collective act of preparing and sharing this meal creates lasting memories and reinforces familial bonds. It's a moment to pause from busy daily lives and reconnect with the people who matter most.

At its core, the holiday is a vital reminder to practice **gratitude and reflection**. Families often incorporate traditions, such as going around the table and sharing what they are thankful for, to consciously acknowledge the good fortune in their lives. **People should follow this tradition because the act of naming blessings, from good health to happy relationships, helps to shift focus from personal worries to collective thankfulness, which is proven to improve mental well-being and foster a more positive outlook.** This act instils a positive perspective and is a valuable annual lesson in appreciation for both adults and children.

Ultimately, families celebrate Thanksgiving because it provides an important cultural anchor for **unity, history, and shared values**. It is a day mandated by tradition to step back, acknowledge the past, celebrate the present, and look forward with hope. The continuity of passing down recipes, stories, and traditions across generations strengthens the family identity. By celebrating, families affirm their commitment to each other and enduring national value of gratitude, making the holiday far more than just a large meal.

A Christmas Carnival

Wordspire Non-Fiction Writer: Reyaansh Goradia | Age 13 | Mumbai

During Christmas, people eagerly await the Carnival which buzzes with anticipation and chattering noise of children. Also, dove white snowflakes trickling down from the sky covers every inch of the golden sand into a snowy-white carpet, leaving no trace about its sandy granules. The roaring sound of the cobalt blue waves crashing against the massive stone wall of the carnival-setup makes everyone on the other side cautious of the rocky edges.

In the heart of the carnival, a humongous, neatly decorated Christmas Tree, about 10 feet tall, stood upright protecting the Christmas presents which were laying underneath it. The shopping lane was crowded with people eager to buy presents for their loved ones or a new pair of clothes for themselves. Santa Claus who stood near the tree offered every child a precious gift along with a photograph of the duo. The Ferris wheel was coated with **Red (Blood of Christ and love)**, **Green (eternal life and nature)** and **White (purity, peace, and the star of Bethlehem)** lights.



This was a new learning for me as I understood why devotees celebrate Christmas. People will always cherish the 25th of December either at the carnival or as families gather to celebrate the awakening of Jesus Christ. When the celebration of Christmas is in its full glory, people of other religions also join to have a Christmas experience at their nearest carnival.

Christmas Tidings

Wordspire Non-Fiction Writer: Dhriya Khianra | Age 13 | Mumbai

It goes without saying that Christmas is one of the grandest celebrations in the world. The reason for its worldwide popularity is the message it spreads to mankind. Christmas conveys the idea of humanity, peace, joy, and kindness in its own unique forms. One of the most expressive manners of spreading yuletide cheer is Christmas tidings. However, the most important question here is, "What does the word tidings mean?"

Christmas tidings are warm and cheerful messages which circulate festive excitement to whoever receives them. If there was one place in India which radiated the spirit of Christmas, it would be Goa. Christmas tidings are a timeless tradition in Goa. Christmas decorations in Goa exude the divinity of Jesus Christ himself. Each citizen contributes to the embellishments of the state, adding tenderness to the heartwarming decorations. The area is filled with maroon and emerald tinsel, glittering fairy lights, and the main attraction, the glowing star on top of the evergreen Christmas tree. The holy church also donates a huge sum of money as a present to the community.



Harmonious carol singers visit door to door, spreading smiles and warmth with hymns of Christmas cheer. Each home prepares their own special recipes to share with their loved ones. Yet, almost every kitchen is rich with the sweet aroma of 'bebinca', a traditional Goan Christmas dessert. Christmas tidings play a vital role on the occasion, especially in Goa. The celebration feels like an open invitation to pure merriment. Christmas is truly incomplete in Goa without Christmas tidings.

The Psychology Behind Christmas Shopping

Wordspire Non-Fiction Writer: Adeetya Patel | Age 16 | Mumbai

Christmas shopping is a result of a chain reaction of deep psychological mechanisms that retailers understand really well. This phenomenon begins with nostalgia - those twinkling lights and familiar carols that trigger childhood memories. This creates emotional warmth that makes customers more receptive to spending.

Scarcity plays a powerful role too. Limited offers and "while supplies last" messaging activate the fear of missing out, pushing customers towards impulsive decisions they would normally avoid. Retailers deliberately create urgency through countdown timers and low-stock warnings, knowing that perceived scarcity overrides rational thinking.

Moreover, customers also worry about the social pressure of reciprocity - if someone gives them a gift, they feel obligated to match or exceed its value - that surrounds them. As a result, they have spending anxiety, particularly when they're uncertain about others' budgets. Research shows that most people tend to overspend in order to avoid appearing cheap or uncaring, even when it strains their finances.

The other reason is the endowment effect. Customers spend countless hours browsing and comparing products due to which they become psychologically committed to completing the purchase, even if it's something that is overpriced. Sunk cost fallacy makes them reluctant to walk away empty-handed after spending hours shopping.

The Coolest Christmas Movies of All Time: An Iconic Collection

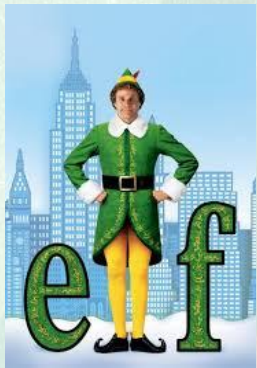
Wordspire Non-Fiction Writer: Hriday Sheth | Age 13 | Mumbai

The movie collection listed in this article, celebrates the heart and humour of holiday cinema with five essential films that define the festive season. Each movie is a beloved tradition, offering unique magic, unforgettable characters, and a powerful dose of Christmas spirit.



***It's a Wonderful Life* (1946)** - Frank Capra's black-and-white masterpiece delivers a timeless, poignant drama about George Bailey, a man on the brink of despair on Christmas Eve. Intervened by his guardian angel, George is shown what life in his small town of Bedford Falls would be like had he never been born. The film is a masterful illumination of the true heart of generosity, proving that no person is a failure who has friends, and emphasizing the immense value of every individual life.

***Home Alone* (1990)** – This iconic comedy perfectly captures the hilarious and chaotic side of the holidays. When eight-year-old Kevin McCallister is accidentally left behind as his family rushes to catch a Christmas flight to Paris, he initially revels in his newfound freedom. However, he soon finds himself locked in a battle of wits with the bumbling "Wet Bandits" who plan to rob his home, forcing the resourceful child to defend his house using an elaborate and imaginative series of booby traps.



***Elf* (2003)** - A modern favourite that injects pure, infectious childlike wonder into the cynical streets of New York City. The film follows Buddy, a human raised as an elf in the North Pole, who journeys to the city to find his biological father, a cynical book publisher. Will Ferrell's endearing performance guides Buddy through a series of awkward and sweet adventures, ultimately spreading joy and forcing everyone he meets to confront their belief—or lack thereof—in the true magic of Christmas.

***A Christmas Carol* (Multiple Adaptations)** - Based on Charles Dickens' quintessential ghost story, this enduring tale follows the miserable and miserly Ebenezer Scrooge, who despises the festive season. On Christmas Eve, he is visited by the ghost of his former partner Jacob Marley and three subsequent spirits. These ghostly journeys through his Past, Present, and Yet to Come show Scrooge the error of his selfish ways, leading to a profound, heartwarming transformation that has become the definitive cinematic story of redemption and goodwill.



***National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation* (1989)** - This film is the definitive suburban family disaster comedy, perfectly capturing the stress and humorous chaos of a full-scale family holiday. Clark Griswold is obsessively determined to host the biggest and "most fun-filled old-fashioned family Christmas" ever. His pursuit of perfection is relentlessly undermined by disastrous lights, unexpected guests like Cousin Eddie, and a missing bonus check, culminating in a hilarious, unhinged meltdown that every viewer can secretly relate to.

Gift-giving itself releases oxytocin, the bonding hormone, makes us feel connected to one another. This neurochemical reward reinforces this behaviour, explaining why many people really enjoy shopping despite the stress and expense. These psychological triggers are the reason for rash shopping during the festive season. By understanding them customers can make more conscious choices, preventing financial strains and at the same time also enjoying the season's genuine spirit of connection.



Diamond Jewellery Becomes Top Christmas Gift Choice

Professional Expert: Diamond Jewellery: Rajvi Kalpesh Dave | Mumbai

As Christmas is approaching and we all know that it is celebrated as the birth of Jesus Christ.

This festival is celebrated worldwide through norms like decorating a Christmas tree, exchanging gifts and sharing festive meals. Christmas gifts range from items like photo frames to gadgets, home décor items and gift hampers.

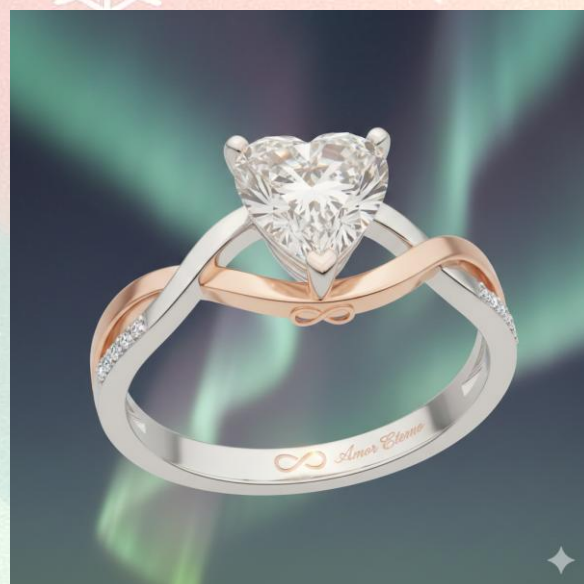
As this is a festival of expressing love, the most popular and favourite are solitaires. Also, as Christmas is a season of joy, togetherness and pure bond, so are diamonds. It certainly is notable that a solitaire diamond is a symbol of love and pure bond, hence it is a perfect choice for gifting your loved ones with a precious solitaire!

Solitaires are spectacularly timeless, crafted with elegance, and trendy designs which attract all age groups. It is known to make the heart and mind smile when chosen as a gift.

Solitaires can be worn daily or on special occasions and it can range from rings, pendants or earrings! There are a wide range of products in the jewellery market from engagement rings, matching wedding bands with a variety of designs like single stone rings, trilogy rings, full eternity rings, half eternity rings, unique pendants and defined earrings made in different metals like platinum, white gold, yellow gold and rose gold.

Natural diamonds are never outdated, but the newly sought Lab Grown Diamonds have a popularity too, making it the top most gifting choice for any occasion. These Lab Grown Diamonds make perfect gifts for weddings, for proposals, for anniversary or perhaps even for a Christmas gift!

Many buyers choose diamonds as gifts as they hold investment value and it truly makes the recipient special. So, jewellery is not only for women and that's what makes it so unique for any occasional gifts. Gifting diamonds signifies a long-lasting affection and creates memories which are etched into our lifetime of experiences.



FESTIVE FUN ZONE

Curiosity | Christmas | Joy in Learning



Christmas Word Search



List of words to find:

- ANGEL
- CANDLE
- CELEBRATION
- CHIMNEY
- CANDY
- CHRISTMAS
- ELVES
- FIREPLACE
- GIFT
- HOLIDAY
- REINDEER
- SLEIGH
- SNOWMAN
- WINTER



K Y
 H S
 W P B J
 R W W Y
 E X A J P E
 S L E I G H
 V M B H O L I D A Y D E N O Y R S Q B W
 A L H C A N D Y L C L O J Z E P I P I M
 A C H I M N E Y D I D E E J E L S Y
 S N O W M A N T S A D B C B U R
 P N Z K A A K X N W A Y P F
 X U C R S S I L L E I N
 V J B B U A E E P G G V Y A
 C Y E K M R G E W T H A W Y
 Y U L G T E N R F W I E K R S E
 X E K S T A I P K N L U L F
 H C J I F V F X R T V R A J
 B F R I V K E E B N
 E M H G R S F D
 W C K F



Christmas Recipe: No-Bake Reindeer Bites

By [Catherine McCord](#)

Prep Time: 15 minutes | Total Time: 15 minutes

How to Make No-Bake Reindeer Bites

Ingredients:

- Old fashioned oats
- Smooth peanut butter (should be thick, no stir peanut butter)
- Honey
- Small pretzels
- Red chocolate candy coated pieces

The Instructions

1. Grind the Oats: Start by placing the old-fashioned oats in a food processor or blender. Pulse until finely ground, creating a smooth texture for the reindeer bites.



2. Mix Peanut Butter and Honey: In a mixing bowl, combine the peanut butter with honey. Stir the mixture until it reaches a smooth and consistent texture.

3. Add Ground Oats: Introduce the ground oats to the peanut butter and honey mixture. Stir thoroughly to ensure all ingredients are well combined.

4. Shape into Balls: Using approximately 2 tablespoons of the mixture (consider using a mini-ice cream scooper for ease), roll into compact balls. This step sets the foundation for your adorable reindeer treats!



5. Create Reindeer Features: Cut small pretzels in half to form antlers. Decorate each reindeer bite with candy eyes, a red candy piece for the nose, and the pretzel antlers. For an extra cute touch, place the eyes close together to give your reindeer a super adorable face!



6. Enjoy the Reindeer bites with your friends and family!

Spooky Savings Crossword (Nov 2025 edition - Answers)

Trick Your Brain, Treat Your Wallet!

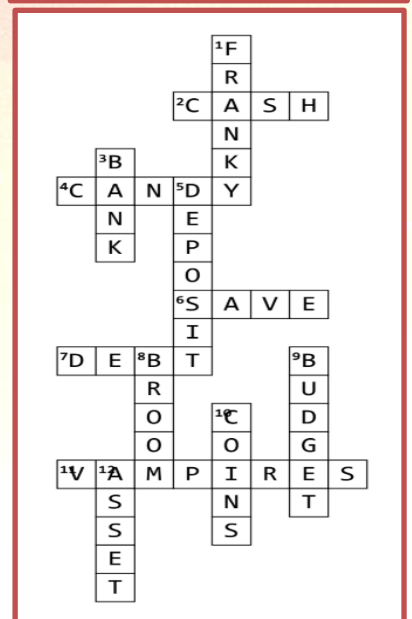
Across

- 2. The paper or coin form of money (4 letters)
- 4. The coins or cash you collect when someone says "Trick or treat!" (5 letters)
- 6. What do you do to keep safely in a bank or piggy bank for the future (4 letters)
- 7. A scary-sounding word that means spending more than you earn (5 letters)
- 11. Spooky creatures who might suck your wallet dry if you overspend! (8 letters)

Down

- 1. A Halloween monster known for saving — not scaring — (6 letters)
- 3. The place where your money rests peacefully... until you withdraw it! (4 letters)
- 5. When you put money in a bank account instead of taking it out (7 letters)
- 12. What witches use to "fly high" — when you invest smartly (5 letters)
- 13. Some blood sucking creatures, may surprise you at the counter (6 letters)
- 14. Something shiny and round that, jingles in your pocket (5 letters)
- 12. The magical number every child should know – how much they own, minus how much they owe. (5 letters)

Crossword Answers for Nov 2025 edition.



WORLD OF WORDS

Global Thinking | Expression | Travel Awareness

Expert Senior Writer (Travel Domain): Topic: Sydney, Australia – Gateway to Australia
Ramanuj Gohain Baruah | Indirapuram, Ghaziabad, India

While on a sojourn in our daughter's residence in Melbourne in August this year, we took the opportunity to make a dash to Sydney – Australia's largest and the most energetic city on the Pacific Ocean in east coast. It was a cloudy day with persistent drizzles and we checked into a charming stylish hotel called Hacienda at Red Fern locality of Sydney arranged by our ever-resourceful daughter.

Immediately after checking, we moved out to a nearby food zone called Spicy Alley with rows of Asian food stalls serving Thai, Chinese, Vietnamese, Indonesian and Malay cuisines with their distinctive flavour and spices. The seductive aroma of foods wafting in gave us a warm feeling despite rain and cold outside. Having had our tummies full, we took a ride to the harbour area and decided to explore the nearby Art Gallery of New South Wales considering the wet weather. The art gallery is an imposing ancient building and is reputed to be the oldest and the largest of its kind in Australia. We spent good three hours inside the building soaking up the great paintings, sculptures and artistic collections from Asia, India, Britain, Europe, America and Australia including a section of aborigine arts. Entry to the general exhibitions in the art gallery is free for all except the special exhibitions held in another building annex.

Just next to the art gallery is the Royal Botanic Garden, where one can find rich collection of trees from many parts of the world. Embraced by Sydney Harbour, one can view the Opera House and the Harbour Bridge from the garden and on this cloudy day, these iconic landmarks of Sydney provided beautiful silhouettes against the evening sky. It was very refreshing to walk in this heritage park preserved with such care and aesthetics sense that one feels deeply invigorated. We were lucky to see a Possum (or Opossum), a marsupial unique to Australia peeking out from the hollow of a tree in the Garden busy mashing on some fruits.

Luckily, the next day turned out to be bright and sunny breaking the monotony of bad weather in



Harbour Bridge

Sydney of the previous long spell of rainy days. On a weekend, bright and sunny, Circular Quay presented exuberance of large number of cheerful visitors. The quay offers one of the world's great views – to the right stands the famous Opera House with its unique architecture



Opera House

of jaunty angular roofs resembling a swan from distance glittering in brilliant sunshine. To the left stands the stupendous Harbour Bridge, a single arch steel bridge, an engineering marvel of the day, connecting the busy central business district to the north of Sydney. Behind looms a line of tall, swanky and dominating skyscrapers of glass and steel plate

showing the modern face of Sydney! The harbour is always abuzz with tourists, ferries and yachts, transporting visitors and regular commuters across the shimmering water to different destinations.

Walking further takes you to the famous Rock area, a cobblestoned zone with shops of arts & artifacts, cafes, restaurants, art galleries, art museums, heritage buildings of early prison and hospital in the vicinity of harbour area. We spent the entire morning half in the quay walking, gazing at the shops, and appreciating the stupendous architecture of the iconic Sydney opera House and Harbour Bridge. The Opera House is indeed an engineering marvel by a group of engineers and architects led by a little known 37-year-old Danish architect named Jorn Utzon.

The more modest looking Harbour Bridge, a massive single arch steel bridge weighing 30,000 Tons, is an iconic milestone of the city in a sense that it can be viewed from any place in Sydney. The bridge that was opened in 1932, has since then seen millions of people crossing on foot, cars and trains hurtling past its carriageways erected on four solid stone blocks in its four towers.

Day 3 was sunny and bright and we travelled to the Central Business District of Sydney by local train where commerce, culture, fashion and cuisines make their buzz, which is not far from the Circular Quay area. After visiting the nearby Chinese Garden, we took a tram to the Darling Harbour area – a less glamorous harbour point compared to Sydney’s main harbour at Circular Quay but still impressive.

Travelled by a tram to the China town area of Sydney where we explored the famous and historic shopping centre called Queen Victoria Building teeming with restaurants, cafes and cultural attractions. We had enjoyed a hearty lunch of our favourite Chinese meal there and thereafter spent time shopping at Sydney Hay Market which offers endless attractions. We tried to experience and feel the vibrant spirit of the most amazing city of Australia with its cosmopolitan allure during our three days stay in the city.

Ramanuj Gohain Baruah | Indrapuram, Ghaziabad, UP-201014, India | Email: baruahrg@gmail.com

Where Mountains Meets the Sea - New Zealand

Wordspire Jr. Category Editor: Naisha Jariwala | Age 12 | Mumbai

Kia Ora (that means hello in Mauri), ladies and gentleman. I’m sure you’ve heard that New Zealand is a magnificent country, where the mountains meet the Sea. Let me confirm that statement is 110% true! Being the ultimate travel guru, I decided to check myself whether all the hype was true; and I am ecstatic to announce that New Zealand’s transcendent beauty surpasses the ordinary.

Where the Earth Breathes Fire – Rotorua: One of my favourite places was Rotorua, near to the mesmerizing land of Hobbiton. Make certain to take a 3-hour detour from Rotorua to visit Peter Jackson’s Lord of the Rings set. With miles of fields and picturesque houses, your fantasy love will be tested at the home of Bilbo Baggins. From there, Waitomo Caves is about an hour’s drive and the toil will be worth it after a day of Glowworm Getaways.

Where the Oceans Whispers – Queenstown: The land of Gondolas and gardens, Queenstown’s picturesque waves and breath-taking gardens are sure to enthrall you! If you’re an Instagram addict, you must visit Queenstown Gardens for the most alluring flora and enchanting fountains and gazebos!



Where the Sky Meets the Sea – Auckland: Last but definitely not the least, Auckland, the dazzling “City of Sails” is where metropolises meet majesty! Make sure to start a spellbinding night of the Sky Tower for panoramic views that will make yours and your camera’s jaw drop! For dinner certainly visit Ahi at Auckland Central which offers contemporary New Zealand dining.

Where Culture Meets Cuisine – Food

<p><u>The Blue Door Restaurant</u></p> <p>Location: Waterfront, Paihia, The Bay of Islands, New Zealand</p> <p>Cuisine Style: Asian-inspired fusion with Kiwi flavours- blending international tastes and local flavours.</p> 	<p><u>Mirch Masala Restaurant</u></p> <p>Location: 66 Shotover Street, Queenstown, 9300</p> <p>Why Should You Visit: Regional Indian cuisine prepared by chefs from India, using quality local ingredients and a modern, comfortable atmosphere.</p> 
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Solo Christmas Adventure in Kashmir

Wordspire Writer: Showrya Dedhia | Age 13 | Mumbai

I travelled to Kashmir during the Christmas holidays, and celebrated winter in a snowy valley felt like living inside a holiday story. As I arrived in Gulmarg, the mountains were completely covered in white, and the pine trees looked as if someone had sprinkled powdered sugar over them. When I reached my ski resort, it looked like a cosy wooden cabin glowing with warm yellow lights. A huge Christmas tree stood at the entrance, and the smell of hot chocolate drifted through the air, welcoming me into my very own winter adventure.

On Christmas morning, I woke up to the sound of gentle snowfall tapping against my window. When I looked outside, everything had turned even more magical overnight. The resort staff had left a small Christmas stocking hanging on my door, and inside it, I found a candy cane and a tiny ornament shaped like a snowflake. I headed down for breakfast while Christmas music played softly. Even though I was travelling alone, the whole place felt warm, friendly, and festive.

After breakfast, I went straight to the ski slopes. Since it was my first time skiing, I felt a bit nervous, but the instructor helped me learn step-by-step. Soon, I was sliding down the hill on my own, feeling the cold wind rush past my face. I even lay down in the snow to make a snow angel and made a small snowman near the resort entrance. Snowflakes kept falling on my jacket, and I felt like the whole day was designed just for me.

The ski resort turned breathtaking once the sun set. Golden lights shone from every balcony, and the big Christmas tree sparkled with ornaments and snow. In the courtyard, the staff lit a warm bonfire where guests gathered to listen to carols. I sat with a cup of hot chocolate, enjoying the music and the soft glow of the fire. I even joined a small Christmas activity where Santa handed out tiny gifts to everyone, and it made the night feel cheerful and comforting even though I was travelling alone.

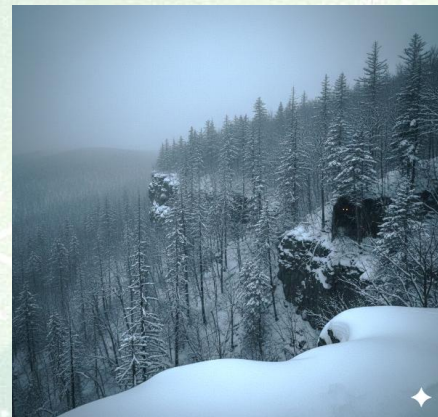
On my last morning, I took one final walk through the snow-covered path behind the resort. The air was silent, the mountains stood tall and peaceful, and tiny flakes continued to drift down around me. I felt a little sad knowing the trip was ending, because Kashmir had given me the most magical Christmas I had ever experienced. As I left Gulmarg, I promised myself I would return one day — maybe for another snowy Christmas adventure of my own.

The Silent Watch of the Appalachians

Wordspire Sr. Category Student Editor: Karthik Dhogi | Age 14 | Mumbai

Last Christmas Eve, my friends and I headed deep into the **Appalachian Mountains**, drawn by the eerie legend that surviving a night there was a mental ordeal due to the "**weird things**" that happen after midnight. As we reached the base, the atmosphere instantly chilled and shifted into a profound, unsettling silence. It felt as if the ancient mountains were actively acknowledging our presence—and we couldn't shake the feeling this recognition signalled trouble.

Despite the brutal, **bone-deep cold** that crystallized our every breath, adrenaline fuelled our ascent. We hiked until we reached a stark cliff face. As the sun set, the temperature plummeted, settling a heavy, frigid blanket over our camp. After a tense dinner, we extinguished the fire and sealed ourselves inside the tent, seeking fragile refuge from the overwhelming darkness.



I awoke suddenly, gripped by the **primal certainty that I was being watched**. It was around **3 a.m.**, and the silence was total—the continuous chirping of the crickets had completely cut out. Paranoia mounted, and I felt, with mounting terror, that something was **deliberately stalking the tent's perimeter**. Then, I felt a distinct, unsettling **pressure** right against the canvas behind my head, as if something was attempting to peer past the thin fabric into our space.

My blood ran cold. The pressure vanished, but the resulting silence was heavier than any sound. I woke Mark with a frantic shake, and he quietly reached for the flashlight. He slipped out first, pivoting the beam quickly around the clearing. The snow was undisturbed. But as the light hit the dark tree line, it snagged on something unnatural: **three crude, deep horizontal lines** freshly scored into the bark of a pine tree, spaced exactly like giant fingertip marks. It was a grotesque, silent sign that something had been watching and had just retreated.

The certainty that whatever was out there knew exactly where we were shattered our resolve. Fuelled by sheer terror, we broke camp in minutes, leaving our gear haphazardly packed. We fled down the slope, desperate to escape the mountains' silent gaze. We never saw what made those marks, but the experience left an indelible scar. We understood then why the natives spoke of a challenging night: it was the chilling realization that in those woods, in the dead of the Christmas night, **you were not the hunter; you were the prey**.

ACADEMIC LEARNING FOR TOMORROW

Cambridge IGCSE | English | Exam Strategies

IGCSE Cambridge English Demystified:

FLE vs ESL: Choosing the Right English Pathway for Your Child

By Minoo Rajeshwari, Founder & Facilitator of Minoo E-Learning



One of the most common questions parents ask is: "**Which one should my child take — ESL or FLE?**"

Let's clarify this once and for all. In Cambridge IGCSE English, students are given two options for their board exams. **Any one** is compulsory in English.

Differences between FLE and ESL

Aspect	English as a First Language (FLE)	English as a Second Language (ESL)
Who It's For	Native or near-native English speakers who already use English fluently in daily life.	Non-native English speakers who are still building confidence and fluency.
Main Focus	Deep exploration of the English language — its meanings, style, and literary techniques.	Developing practical communication skills for real-life situations.
Main Skills Emphasized	Advanced reading comprehension, creative and analytical writing, understanding tone and mood.	Listening, speaking, reading, and writing for clear and effective communication.
Writing Tasks	Narrative, descriptive, and argumentative essays that test creativity and critical thinking.	Functional writing such as letters, reports, and essays focused on clarity and structure.
Learning Approach	Analytical and literature-based; encourages appreciation of style, theme, and expression.	Communicative and skill-based; focuses on grammar, vocabulary, and real-world usage.
Ideal For Students Who...	Think, read, and write easily in English and enjoy literary analysis and creative writing.	Are learning English as an additional language and use it confidently in school and beyond.
Outcome	Strong foundation for higher-level English or literature studies.	Strong foundation for academic and professional communication in English.

Empowering Every Learner



At Minoos E-Learning, we believe there is no “better” or “weaker” choice — only the one that best matches a student’s current proficiency and long-term goals. Our mission is to make English learning interactive, inspiring, and inclusive, helping every student discover the joy of language and the confidence to use it meaningfully. Whether your child is preparing for FLE or ESL, our tailored programmes and mentoring ensure they don’t just learn English — they own it. Therefore, we have planned for a Bootcamp, to help students score in their upcoming.

How to Score – Jan 2026 Bootcamp for May/June 2026 IGCSE Exams

Minoos E-Learning in collaboration with Wordspire Academy have **scheduled an exclusive Bootcamp in Jan 2026** for **students preparing to write** for the Feb/ March 2026 and May/June 2026 IGCSE exams.

IGCSE Bootcamp Details by Ex-Cambridge Examiner

Since, Exam Dates for IGCSE English Cambridge have been announced, enroll now and secure your spot early! This intensive program for **9 & 10 grade students** includes:

- Focused exam strategies, techniques, examiner’s scoring schemes, and skill-building sessions
- Write and Complete Past Paper 1 & Past Paper 2 with **examiner’s feedback**
- Individualized performance reviews and progress tracking
- **Online Batches ONLY** as the examiner is from a global spectrum
- For registration & details: **Scan the QR Code** or **Contact +91-9619840705**



Dates & Fees for FLE & ESL Bootcamp:

FLE Online: Weekend Batches Only FLE	ESL Online: Weekend Batches Only
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Paper 1: Sat 10 Jan 2026 - 4:30pm to 6:30pm IST ▪ Paper 2: Sun 11 Jan 2026 - 3:00pm to 5:00pm IST ▪ Minimum 5 – Maximum 15 ▪ Grades: 9 & 10 ▪ Online: Rs.6,500 Weekend batch 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Paper 1: Sat 17 Jan 2026 - 4:30pm to 6:30pm IST ▪ Paper 2: Sun 18 Jan 2026 - 3:00pm to 5:00pm IST ▪ Batch size: Minimum 5 – Maximum 15 ▪ Grades: 9 & 10 ▪ Online: Rs.6,500 Weekend batch

Faculty at the Bootcamp



At Minoo E-Learning, we guide students and parents across the globe, through one of the most crucial decisions in their academic journey — choosing between English as a First Language (FLE) and English as a Second Language (ESL) in the IGCSE pathway. With over 25 years of experience as an educator, Cambridge examiner, and facilitator, I have helped countless learners — both school and private candidates — identify their strengths and achieve their fullest potential. Our consultancy and coaching programs are designed not just to teach, but to transform how students experience English. Through boot camps, teacher training, and student workshops, we create interactive, purposeful lessons that build confidence and competence in real-world communication.

Important Dates from Cambridge IGCSE (India)



CAMBRIDGE
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Cambridge International AS & A Level

Cambridge Final Exam Timetable March 2026 Administrative zone 4

Subject	Code	Duration	Exam Date for India
English as a Second Language (ESL) (Paper 1 - Written)	0510/12	2h	Monday 09 February 2026
English as a Second Language (ESL) (Listening)	0510/22	50m	Wednesday 11 February 2026
First Language English (FLE) (Paper 1)	0500/12	2h	Monday 09 February 2026
First Language English (FLE) (Paper 2)	0500/22	2h	Wednesday 11 February 2026

<https://www.cambridgeinternational.org/Images/686092-cambridge-final-examination-timetable.pdf>

Tree of Wisdom



Books of Creativity

Creativity becomes a lifelong confidence, that's how our teaching blends experiences in written work, to communicate precisely, ensuring every student grows into a global thinker and communicator.

Tree Branches – Programs

Current Courses

- Creative Writing
- IGCSE English & Literature
- Public Speaking

Coming Soon (Jan 2026)

- IGCSE FLE & ESL Bootcamp by IGCSE EX-Examiner
- Master Reader Program
- Spell Surgery

Roots – Our Philosophy: “Where Words Take Flight”

At Wordspire Academy, every word is a seed of transformation. We nurture learners – from Grade 1 to adults – to write, speak and express with purpose.

Trunk – The Strength of our Vision

- Real-world learning through publishing and performance
- Global recognition via Substack and Amazon Book launches
- Every learner showcases their Professional Writing Portfolio