**Lesson 3:** Analysis of the carol: In the Bleak Midwinter

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| **Verse 1:** | **Questions to explore:** |
| In the bleak midwinter, frosty wind made moan, Earth stood hard as iron, water like a stone; Snow had fallen, snow on snow, snow on snow, In the bleak midwinter, long ago. | **Where do you think the poet got the ideas from for this verse?**  **‘Earth stood hard as iron, water like a stone.’** In this line the poet is describing how the world is in darkness and under the power of sin and needing to needs to be set free. How do you think this links to Christmas? Think about the message of Christmas – what is it? |

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| **Verse 2:** | **Questions to explore:** |
| Our God, heaven cannot hold Him, nor earth sustain; Heaven and earth shall flee away when He comes to reign. In the bleak midwinter a stable place sufficed The Lord God Almighty, Jesus Christ. | **“In the bleak midwinter, a stable placed sufficed.”** In this verse, the poet is describing that the stable was all that Jesus needed for his birth to take place. **Do you agree? Explain your view.**  **Where do you think the Jews would have expected the ‘new king’ to be born?**  **Why do you think God decided to be born in a stable and not a palace?** |

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| **Verse 3:** | **Questions to explore:** |
| Enough for Him, Whom cherubim, worship night and day, Breastful of milk, and a mangerful of hay; Enough for Him, Whom angels fall before, The ox and ass and camel which adore. | **What lines in this verse give you the clues that Jesus is both divine and human?**  **Why do think God decided to show Himself to the world through the incarnation of Jesus?** |

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| **Verse 4:** | **Questions to explore:** |
| Angels and archangels may have gathered there, Cherubim and seraphim thronged the air; But His mother only, in her maiden bliss, Worshipped the beloved with a kiss. | **What do think the poet is trying to say about who Jesus is when she speaks of angels and archangels gathering and ‘cherubim and seraphim thronged the air’?**  **Having read this verse, choose three words to describe how Mary might have been feeling?** |

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| **Verse 5:** | **Questions to explore:** |
| What can I give Him, poor as I am? If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb; If I were a Wise Man, I would do my part; Yet what I can I give Him: give my heart. | **What do you think the most important line is in this verse? Explain your answer?**  **“Yet what I can I give Him: give my heart.”** In this line, the poet is reminding us that Jesus came for all people and in response we are to give Him our love in return. For the poet, this is the main message of Christmas and requires a response from humanity. **What do you think the main message of Christmas is for the world today?** |