

# Introduction

If the build-up to Christmas in school fills you with that sinking 'Oh no, not again!' feeling, then my hope is that this book will invigorate you. It's designed to give you a host of fresh ideas to help you and your pupils meaningfully through the last few weeks of the Christmas term, the period celebrated by Christians as Advent. However, if you want to use the Nativity play, (of which there are two versions, to suit different cast sizes and needs), you'll probably want to start work considerably earlier.

All the activities are especially suitable for Years 5 and 6, but there is much that could be enjoyed by younger KS2 pupils, being a mix of practical and more literary and academic tasks, all linked to the National

Curriculum. I have included three structured literacy hours, based around a specially written story, 'The Last Customers', but, like all the activities in the book, the tasks can be used in 'pick and mix' fashion, if you prefer.

I hope that you and your pupils have great fun using the book as well as being encouraged to think about an old story in new ways. I especially hope that you'll have a ball trying out the drama sections, my own particular passion—and I'd just love to see the play!

Have a very happy Advent and I wish you a very peaceful and joyful Christmas at the end of it, complete with a celebratory piece of Speculaas (see page 18).

