Name: _____

Christmas Traditions Conversation Lesson

Read the excerpt about Elf on the Shelf.

A charming tradition or creepy story?



Elf on the Shelf was invented in 2005 when a children's book about the mischievous little red-clothed elf hit bookstores around the world. The story was about an elf from the North Pole who wanted to help Santa see if children were being naughty or nice. In the story the elf goes to live with a family for the month of December, but he returns to Santa every night to report on the children' s behavior. The tradition comes from the toy elf which was sold with the book. Every night when the elf returns from the North Pole he hides somewhere in the house, leading children to try to find him every morning, a tradition that many families act out throughout the month of December with their own toy elves.

Answer the comprehension questions.

1. What was the children's book about?
2. Where does the elf go every night?
3. What happens in the morning when the elf comes back to the house?

Match the traditions with their definitions.

Traditions	**Definitions**
1. Christmas Eve boxes	a. a gift exchange where numbers are drawn and people can choose to either open a new gift or steal someone else's gift; in the original version all of the gifts are joke gifts or silly gifts, but in some exchanges the gifts are good gifts
2. Elf on the Shelf	b. a green vegetable which looks like a small cabbage
3. White Elephant / Dirty Santa / Yankee Swap Gift Exchange	c. buying gifts or receiving gifts from another person without knowing who that person is
4. Brussels sprouts	d. a gift (or several gifts) which is opened on Christmas Eve
5. Advent calendar	e. a toy elf which hides in a new place each night of December leading up to Christmas day
6. Secret Santa Gift Exchange	f. the time period between December 25th (Christmas Day) until January 6th (Three Kings' Day)
7. The 12 days of Christmas	g. a box with 25 doors and a small gift, traditionally chocolate, behind each door which is meant to be opened every day leading up to Christmas

In partners, answer the discussion questions about modern Christmas traditions.

1. What do you think about Elf on the Shelf, and why? Would you like to try the tradition yourself?
2. Have you ever done a Secret Santa gift exchange? If yes, what did you think about the experience? And if you've never done Secret Santa, would you like to? Why or why not?
3. What's your opinion about the White Elephant Christmas game? Why?
4. Some people begin decorating for Christmas in November. Is that too early or just right? Why?
5. According to the 12 Days of Christmas, the Christmas holidays go from December 25th through January 6th. Would you like to celebrate Christmas until January 6th or would you prefer to stop before then? Why?
6. A new type of gift-giving is the no-waste trend, meaning that no gifts are bought new, but everything is either made or bought used. What do you think about this trend? Why?
7. What's your opinion on matching Christmas pajamas? Explain.
8. Does your family have any unusual holiday traditions? If yes, what are they?
9. Have you ever had a Christmas advent calendar? If yes, what type of advent calendar did you have? What did you think of it?
10. Do you like to wear ugly Christmas sweaters?
11. What do you think about exchanging gifts, such as Christmas Eve boxes, on the day before Christmas? Why?
12. Are there any Christmas TV specials that you have watched or would like to watch? If yes, describe the Christmas TV special.

Watch the following clip from "That Christmas."

(The clip is "Unwrapping Santa's Christmas Surprises! 🎁That Christmas | Netflix Family" and the clip starts at 1:53 and ends at 3:47.)

The children in this clip are bored by normal Christmas traditions, but they are going to get some gifts which will help them create new Christmas traditions.

- What gifts do they receive?
- What new Christmas traditions do you think they will create with their gifts?

Plan your own new holiday traditions.

Get into small groups. Imagine that you and your friends are going to have your own Christmas party.

- What do you want to do at your party?

You can use the traditions which we've discussed today or come up with your own.

Spend **10-15 minutes** planning your own fun holiday friends' party with brand new Christmas traditions!

🎉**Party Planning** 🥳

If you have time share your ideas with your classmates. (15-20 minutes)

Present your ideas to your classmates and as a class decide which party sounds like the most fun. What are the best new holiday traditions?