

verses), or any combination in between. Your choice will depend upon the size and needs of your classroom. You might divide the lines up between 6, 12, 18, 24, 30, or 36 different reader parts. Simply change and/or add readers numbers below.

EASY TO SHORTEN OR LENGTHEN

If you find 6 verses too long for your purposes, you can easily skip a county or two. Students will read the ALL CHORUS, then skip to the whatever verse is appropriate. If you want to add a county, ask your students to create their own 4 line introductory poem for the new county, then research and create 6 new prose lines for the new country. The ALL CHORUS remains the same throughout. Make sure you use the last ALL CHORUS (page 10) to end the reading.

(The object below is to read-aloud and read so that you sound like the bell sounds you are reading):

CHORUS

ALL: Tinkle, tinkle, ring bells
 Jingle, jingle, sing bells
 Gong! (clap) Chime!
 It's almost Christmas time.

VERSE 1

ALL: Ring those bells

The American Way
(or Canadian Way)
Those Christmas bells,
Here's what they say...

Santa Claus
Soon will appear
With a "Ho-Ho" and "Oh,
Have you been good this year?"

READER 1: The American (*Canadian*) version of the Santa Claus came from the Dutch legend of Sinter Klaas.

READER 2: That story was brought to North America by Dutch settlers many years ago.

READER 3: This Dutch-American Santa became truly American when he was described in a 1823 poem.

READER 4: That poem was named "The Night Before Christmas" and was written by Clement Clarke Moore.

READER 5: Moore not only named all of Santa's reindeer, but described Santa as a jolly old elf.

READER 6: He's still a jolly old elf today and known all over the world!

CHORUS

ALL: Tinkle, tinkle, ring bells

Jingle, jingle, sing bells
Gong! (clap) Chime!
It's almost Christmas time.

VERSE 2

Ring those bells
The English Way
Those Christmas bells,
Here's what they say...

Father Christmas
Dressed in white and red
Used to dress in green
Yes, that's what is said.

- READER 7: A long time ago, Father Christmas dressed in green and was part of an old English midwinter festival. He dressed in green to remind people that spring was coming!
- READER 8: Today, Father Christmas brings gifts to the children in England.
- READER 9: He is based on a real person, St. Nicholas. St. Nicholas was a very shy man and wanted to give money to poor people without them knowing about it.
- READER 10: So, one day, he climbed the roof of a house and dropped a purse of money down the chimney.

READER 11: The money landed in the stocking a girl had put by the fire to dry!

READER 12: This may be the reason Father Christmas comes down the chimney and places gifts in children's stockings.

CHORUS

ALL: Tinkle, tinkle, ring bells
 Jingle, jingle, sing bells
 Gong! (clap) Chime!
 It's almost Christmas time.

VERSE 3

Ring those bells
The Danish Way
Those Christmas bells,
Here's what they say...

Sintirklass arrives by boat,
Then rides a white horse.
And every child fears
Black Peter, of course!

READER Sintirklass arrives in Holland on December 6th.

READER Children leave a wooden shoe filled with hay and carrots for the donkey he brings with him.

READER The donkey carries Sintirklass's gifts. Once the donkey eats the food, Sintirklass leaves gifts for the children in the empty wooden shoes.

READER Good children are given gifts, but bad children are turned over to Sintirklass's helper, Black Peter.

READER Black Peter has a big book that tells which children have been bad and which have been good.

READER And the bad children are chased by Black Peter with a stick!

CHORUS

ALL: Tinkle, tinkle, ring bells
 Jingle, jingle, sing bells
 Gong! (clap) Chime!
 It's almost Christmas time.

VERSE 4

Ring those bells
The Swedish Way
Those Christmas bells,
Here's what they say...

Long ago, a Christmas elf
Or a Christmas gnome
Made all the children happy

Bringing gifts to Swedish homes.

READER Legend tells us that a special gnome lives under each Swedish family's house or barn. It is the gnome's job to look after the family and their animals.

READER At Christmas, that same gnome delivers gifts from a large sack that he carries over his shoulder.

READER One of the biggest Christmastime celebrations in Sweden is St. Lucia's Day on December 13th.

READER The celebration comes from the story of a young Christian girl who lived in ancient Rome and was hated by the Romans.

READER The girl would secretly bring food to the Christians who were living in hiding around Rome. To light her way and keep both hands free to carry food, she wore candles on her head.

READER St. Lucia's Day is now celebrated by a girl dressing in a white dress with a red sash around her waist and a crown of lights on her head.

CHORUS

ALL: Tinkle, tinkle, ring bells
Jingle, jingle, sing bells
Gong! (clap) Chime!
It's almost Christmas time.