Seasonal skills development

A selection of festive activities and resources for winter 2025

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Find out more ▶ **asdan.org.uk**

About this resource

This free seasonal resource bundle includes six activity ideas for the run-up to Christmas.

It includes challenges and activities that are mapped to ASDAN's skills framework, which is at the heart of ASDAN's curriculum. These six core skills are universally applicable across personal and professional contexts.

Communicating · Thinking · Self-awareness · Learning · Decision making · Team working
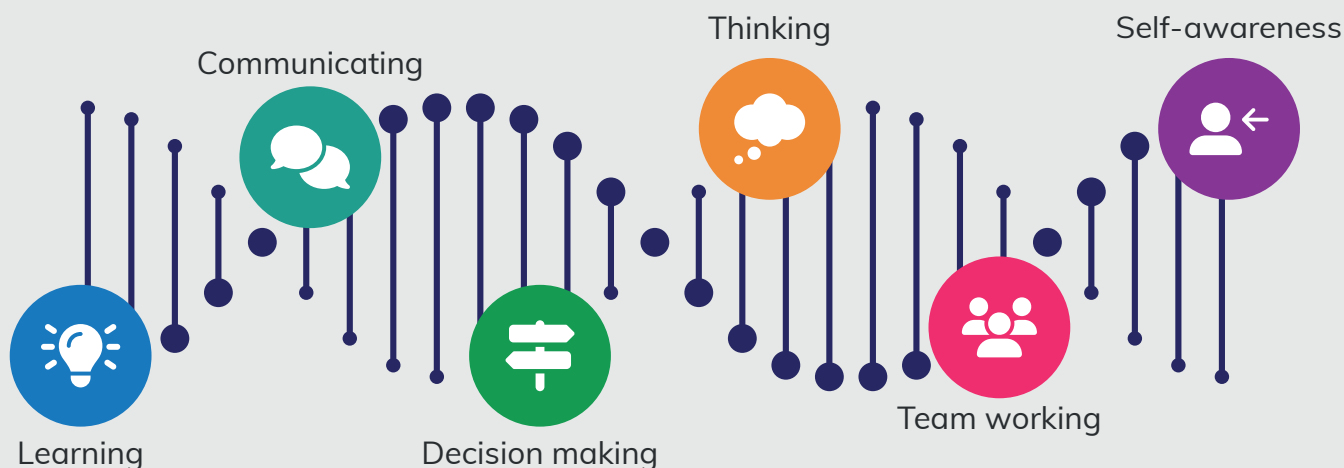
🔗 ASDAN links

The activities in this resource are taken from the following ASDAN courses, all of which have been recently updated and improved:

- **Short Courses** – topic-based courses to develop skills for learners aged 13+. This resource includes challenges from the Beliefs and Values, Citizenship and Expressive Arts Short Courses on Equitas – ASDAN's digital learning platform. Each challenge provides opportunities to develop all six ASDAN skills, with a table showing clear, specific and observable examples of how learners might demonstrate each skill.
- **Transition Challenge** – a programme aimed at learners with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), with two versions:
  - Sensory programme, aimed at learners with profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD) and includes person-centred activities around SEND areas of need.
  - Introduction and Progression programme, aimed at learners with moderate or severe learning difficulties (MLD, SLD) and contains activities mapped to curriculum areas.
- **New Horizons** – a PSHE and citizenship programme aimed at learners with SEND aged 9–13. Each activity includes an alternative activity that is more accessible to sensory or PMLD learners, as well as an optional extension activity.

Find out more about ASDAN courses on our website: **asdan.org.uk/courses**

If learners complete these resources as part of their New Horizons or Transition Challenge course, assessors must ensure that their evidence meets the requirements for moderation.
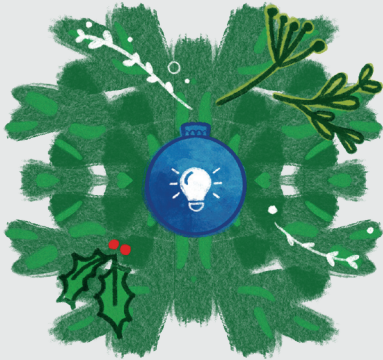
Learning

ASDAN's approach to learning goes beyond acquiring information. This skill promotes curiosity, goal-setting and constructive self-reflection, helping learners take ownership of their progress. It builds confidence and encourages a proactive, open-minded approach to learning – now and in the future.

This challenge from ASDAN's Expressive Arts Short Course is about learning a new creative skill. The Christmas break is a good opportunity for learners to try a new arts or crafts activity – knitting, crochet, origami, hand building with clay, playing a musical instrument – all of which provide learners with opportunities to practise, record progress and apply what they have learned.

🔗 **ASDAN link – Expressive Arts Short Course, challenge 3A4**
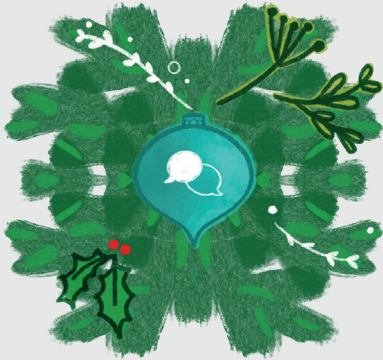👤 **Recommended for learners aged 13+**

Communicating

Communication is more than spoken or written language. This skill includes numeracy, visual and digital communication, as well as computing, social, cultural and AI literacies. Learners develop the ability to communicate clearly, thoughtfully and appropriately in a wide variety of contexts.

This activity from ASDAN's Transition Challenge: Sensory programme provides an inclusive approach to communicating and interacting with others in the broadest sense. Aimed at learners with profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD), this activity is also a useful reminder for all learners about the many different ways we communicate with each other outside of speaking and writing.

🔗 **ASDAN link – Transition Challenge: Sensory, Communication and interaction, activity 4**
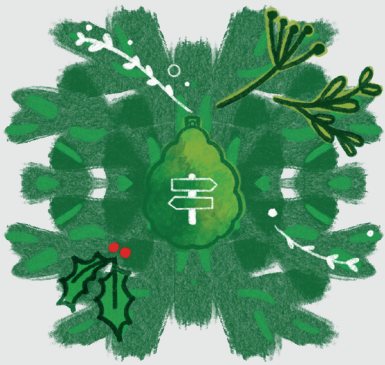👤 **Recommended for learners with PMLD aged 14–16**

Decision making

Reflecting the real-world complexity of choice, this skill focuses on evaluating options, assessing risks and learning from outcomes. Decision making is about the process as much as the result – supporting learners to act with confidence and make informed decisions that align with their goals.

This activity from ASDAN's Transition Challenge: Introduction and Progression programme is about choosing what to wear for different occasions, including some festive and seasonal situations. This activity is an accessible way for learners to consider different factors (eg environment, personal preferences, weather, social expectations), weigh up options and make informed choices for themselves.

Making choices

9. Community

Choose the right clothes to wear for different occasions.

For example:
- a formal event (such as a wedding)
- going out for a festive meal with friends
- a walk in the countryside
- a trip to the beach
- a party or celebration
- other

optional

Optional extension activity (Progression level):

Show you know why it is important to wear the right clothes for different occasions and different weather conditions.

From Transition Challenge: Introduction and progression © ASDAN 2025 ASDAN

🔗 **ASDAN link – Transition Challenge: Introduction and Progression, Making choices, activity 9 (adapted).**

👤 **Recommended for learners with SEND aged 14–16**

Thinking

Critical and creative thinking are central to lifelong learning. This skill supports learners to evaluate information, explore different perspectives and respond to challenges with flexibility and imagination. Strengthening both critical and compassionate thinking helps learners understand and navigate new situations effectively.

This challenge from ASDAN's Beliefs and Values Short Course is about understanding different religious festivals. The run up to Christmas is a good opportunity for learners to explore beliefs and practices across different religions. This challenge develops thinking skills in exploring different religious perspectives, comparing religious festivals and describing how these festivals reflect belief and culture.

🔗 **ASDAN link – Beliefs and Values Short Course, challenge 5A7**

👤 **Recommended for learners aged 13+**

Team working

Collaboration is essential in education, work and life. This skill develops learners' ability to contribute to group tasks, listen to others and value different viewpoints. Through shared experiences, learners understand the impact they have on others and recognise the power of collective effort.

This group challenge from the Citizenship Short Course is about planning and running a community project. Christmas is a perfect time to consider how we can help others – hosting a Christmas lunch for elderly people, selling crafts to raise money for a local cause, organising local litter picks, or collecting donations for a food bank or homeless shelter. Whatever project they choose, learners will develop skills in sharing tasks fairly, supporting team members and working together to deliver a successful project.

🔗 **ASDAN link – Citizenship Short Course, challenge 2B1**
👤 **Recommended for learners aged 13+**

Self-awareness

Effective learners understand themselves – their strengths, motivations and pressures. This skill helps learners develop strategies to manage their emotional and physical wellbeing so they can stay healthy while working toward their goals. It encourages positive self-reflection and resilience in the face of challenges and opportunities.

This activity and recording template from ASDAN's New Horizons programme is based on a person-centred planning tool to reflect on what makes a good day or a difficult day. It helps learners to build self-awareness, regulate their emotions and build resilience. It also enables educators to identify individual support needs and suggest coping strategies. Designed for learners with SEND, this activity is universally useful for learners of all ages and abilities.

🔗 **ASDAN link – New Horizons, Personal, activity 4**
👤 **Recommended for learners with SEND aged 9–13**

3A4

Learning a new creative skill over time

How can you build a new creative skill through regular practice and reflection?

Choose a new creative skill you want to learn. This could be anything from a musical instrument to animation, painting, dance, knitting or circus skills.
Practise regularly and keep a record of what you did, what you found difficult, and what helped you improve.
Ask for feedback from someone more experienced.
Think about how you've improved and what you'd do differently next time.

What you'll do

This challenge helps you learn a new creative skill through regular practice and self-reflection. You will:

1. choose a creative skill you haven't learned before

2. set goals for what you want to be able to do

3. practise regularly and log your activities, ideas and challenges

4. ask for feedback from a tutor, friend or peer

Reflect on your progress and how your skill has developed over time.

✓ Skills I used:

💡	Learning	☐
🪧	Decision-making	☐
💬	Communicating	☐
👥	Team working	☐
💭	Thinking	☐
👤←	Self-awareness	☐

How I might show the skills

Skills	Examples
💡 Learning	Practises a creative skill over time. Records progress and changes. Applies new techniques in their work.
🪧 Decision-making	Chooses a skill to focus on. Selects learning methods or tools. Gives reasons for adjusting their approach.
💬 Communicating	Shares progress with others. Explains what they're working on. Responds to verbal or written feedback.
👥 Team working	(Optional) Practises or shares ideas with others. Supports peers with encouragement. Takes part in paired or group tasks.
💭 Thinking	Reflects on what helped or didn't work. Identifies patterns in their improvement. Links practice to outcomes.
👤← Self-awareness	Describes their learning style. Reflects on confidence, effort and motivation. Shows pride in personal progress.

4. Interacting with others

Show you can interact with familiar people.	☐
For example: • making eye contact • smiling • turning your head • allowing your hands to be moved • other	

optional

Optional extension activity:

Respond to a greeting from an unfamiliar person.	☐

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Making choices

9. Community

Choose the right clothes to wear for different occasions.	☐

For example:

- a formal event (such as a wedding)
- going out for a festive meal with friends
- a walk in the countryside
- a trip to the beach
- a party or celebration
- other

Optional extension activity (Progression level):

Show you know why it is important to wear the right clothes for different occasions and different weather conditions.	☐

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5A7

Understanding that all religions celebrate their own festivals

What do religious festivals tell us about beliefs and community?

In this challenge, you will explore how different religions celebrate important festivals. You will find out what is being remembered or celebrated, what actions take place during these events, and what these tell us about the beliefs and values of each religion.

You can work independently or with a partner or small group. Working together can help you learn more and share different perspectives.

What you'll do

To complete this challenge, you will:

- choose one religion and create a calendar showing at least four of its major festivals. Include names, dates and a short description of each one
- research why Easter is the most important festival in Christianity. Present your findings using a visual timeline, digital poster or narrated slideshow
- compare two important festivals from different religions (eg Diwali and Eid, Vaisakhi and Passover) and show the similarities and differences using a Venn diagram, illustrated chart or short script for a classroom presentation

You may also include photos (with permission), drawings, music, or food ideas linked to each festival.

✔ Skills I used:	
💡 Learning	☐
Decision-making	☐
💬 Communicating	☐
👥 Team working	☐
💭 Thinking	☐
Self-awareness	☐

How I might show the skills

Skills	Examples
💡 Learning	Finds information about at least four festivals. Identifies the meaning of each celebration. Describes key traditions and rituals.
Decision-making	Chooses which festivals to study and how to present them. Gives reasons for those choices. Suggests what people might learn from them.
💬 Communicating	Presents research using clear text and visuals. Describes what happens at each festival. Explains beliefs in simple language.
👥 Team working	Shares ideas and tasks in a group. Respects other viewpoints. Combines different ideas into one presentation.
💭 Thinking	Compares beliefs and practices across religions. Explores why some festivals are more well-known. Describes how festivals reflect belief and culture.
Self-awareness	Reflects on what festivals mean to people. Describes what they found interesting or surprising. Explains how the task helped them understand belief and celebration.

2B1

Planning and running a community project as a team

How can a team plan and run a project that improves the community?

Work as a team to plan and carry out a project that helps your community.

Your project could be something environmental (a litter pick, planting flowers) or social (a community event or helping a local group).

Show how you planned the project, what each person did, and what happened. Get feedback from your community and explain what you learned.

What you'll do

This challenge helps you work as a team to plan and carry out a community project. To complete this challenge, you will:

- choose a project that meets a local need
- plan what needs to be done, who will do it, and what resources are needed
- carry out your project and record what happens
- get feedback and explain what you learned from the experience

✓ Skills I used:

💡 Learning	☐
🚦 Decision-making	☐
💬 Communicating	☐
👥 Team working	☐
💭 Thinking	☐
👤 Self-awareness	☐

How I might show the skills

Skills	Examples
💡 Learning	Researches community needs. Records project plans and tasks. Applies learning to project planning.
🚦 Decision-making	Chooses a suitable project. Assigns roles based on strengths. Justifies project choices.
💬 Communicating	Shares project ideas with the group. Presents the plan clearly. Asks for feedback from others.
👥 Team working	Shares tasks fairly. Supports group members. Works together to deliver the project successfully.
💭 Thinking	Identifies how the project meets community needs. Solves problems during the task. Evaluates the project's impact.
👤 Self-awareness	Reflects on their role in the project. Describes what went well and what could improve. Shows how they contributed to the team.

New Horizons
P8 Good day, difficult day

Show:

Show what makes a good day for you. ☐

Show what you can do on a difficult day for yourself or what you need others to help with. ☐

OR

Alternative activity (more accessible):

With support, show a familiar adult what helps you have a good day. ☐

Extension activity:

Make a plan for a difficult day which you can use to support you and others around you. ☐

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Good day, difficult day

ℹ️ **Hints and tips:** Lists and pictures can be used here.

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For me a good learning day is:

🖼️ ✏️

😊 👍

For me a difficult learning day is:

🖼️ ✏️

☹️ 👎

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