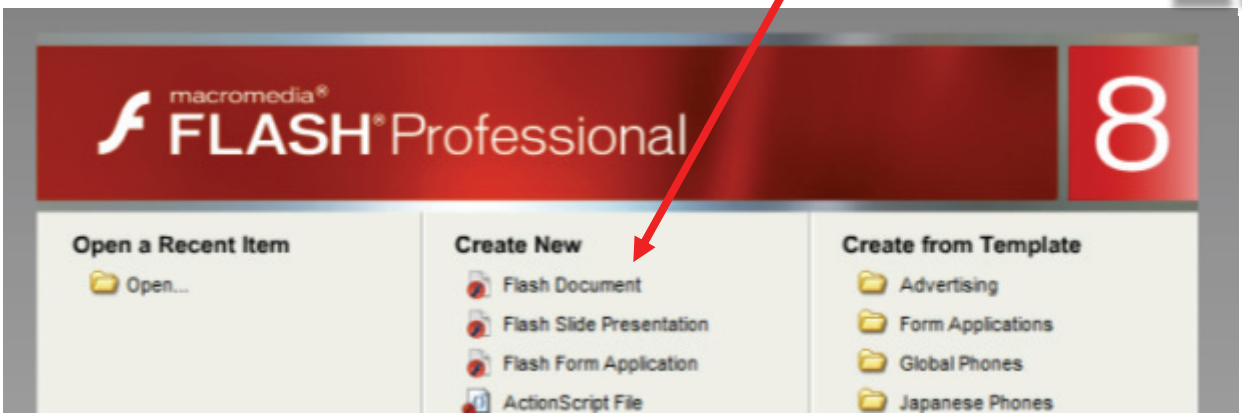
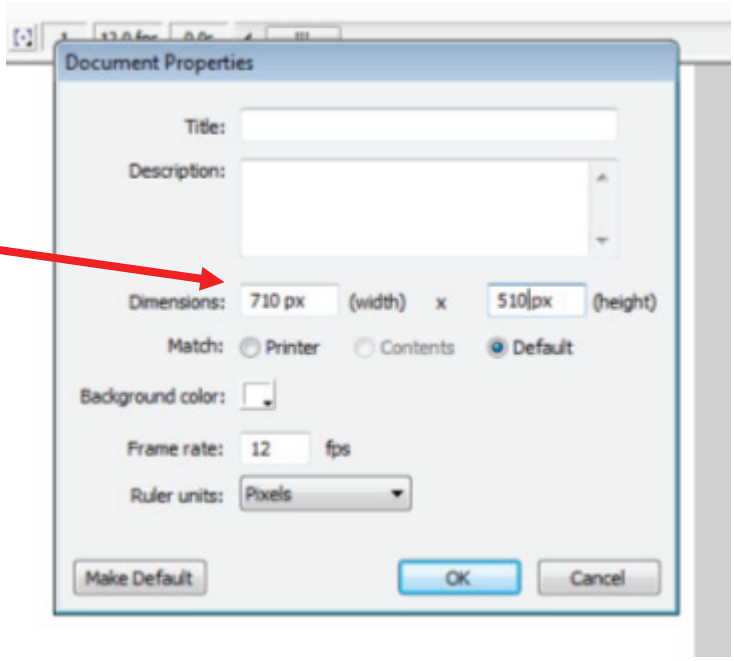
Creating an Advent calendar in Flash

Part 1

1. Load Flash and select ‘Create New > Flash Document’

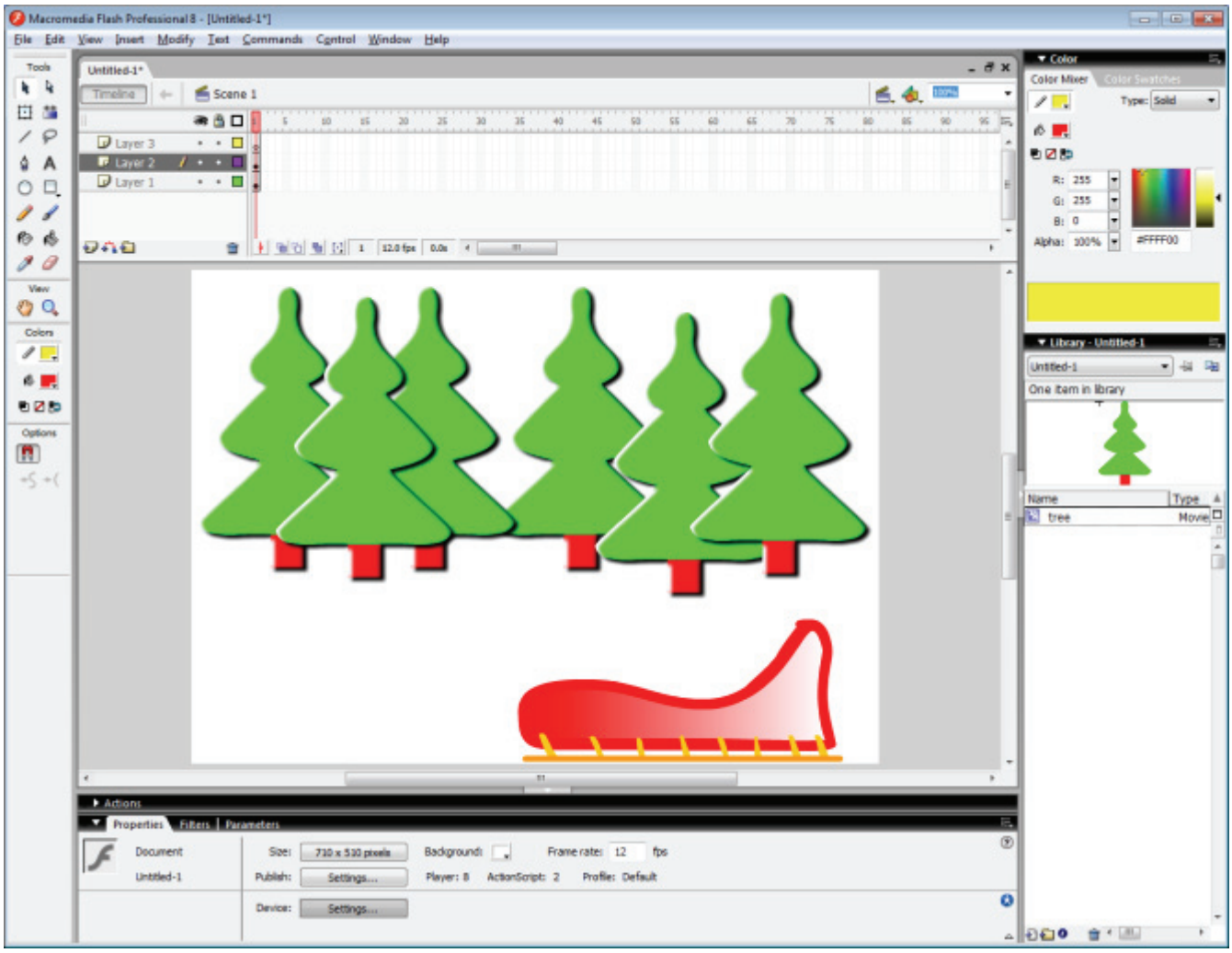


2. We need to make the Flash file larger, so click on the Size button at the bottom and change the size to **710** by **510**.



3. You now need to create your own Christmas scene. You could draw your own or find something suitable online.

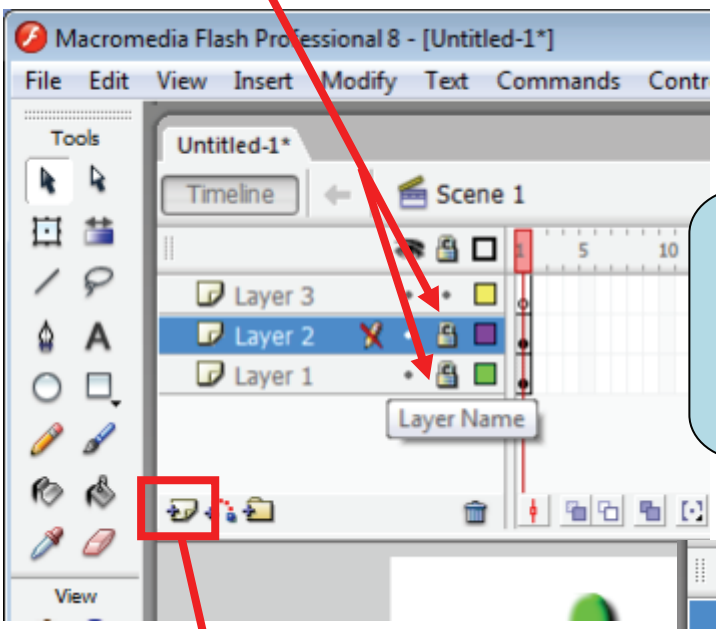
4. The example below is very basic, created in a few minutes using the Flash brush and pencil tools. Hopefully yours will look much more professional:



5. It doesn't matter too much about your image so far – you can easily improve further later on ☺ We now need to create a box or window that will open. The plan is as follows:

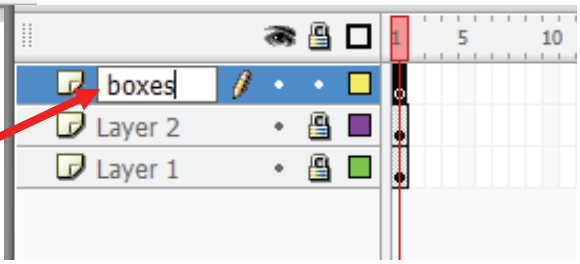
'Closed' box. User clicks on box.	Animation to make box open up.	As box opens 'Advent' image appears behind.	Box closes if clicked again.

6. Lock all the layers that you've currently used. This is so you don't destroy or mess up your current background:

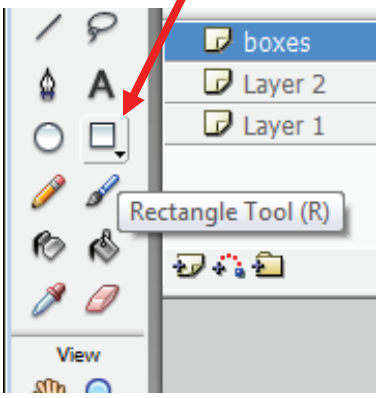


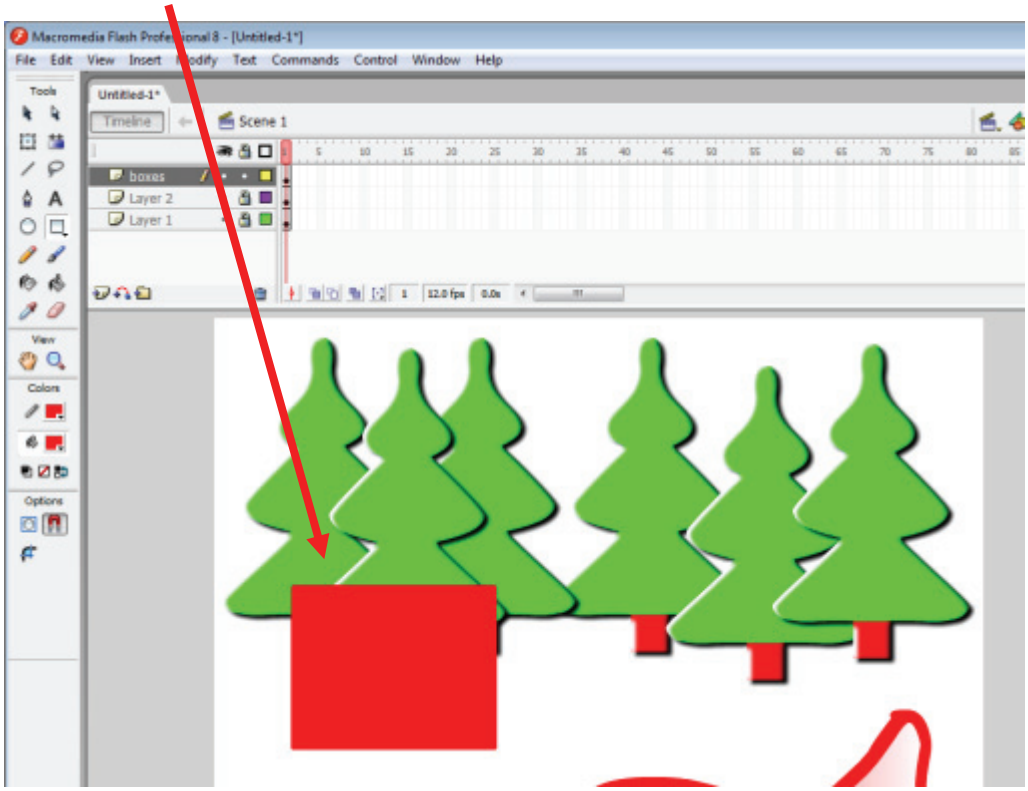
The padlock shows a layer is locked!

7. Add in a new layer and call it '**boxes**'

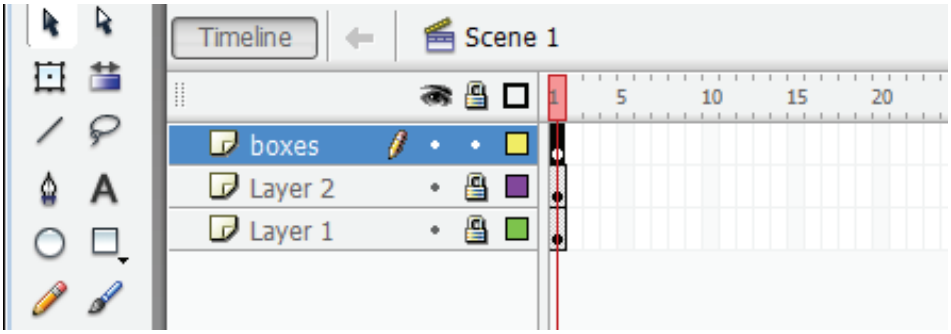


8. Click on the Rectangle tool and draw a large box, as shown below:

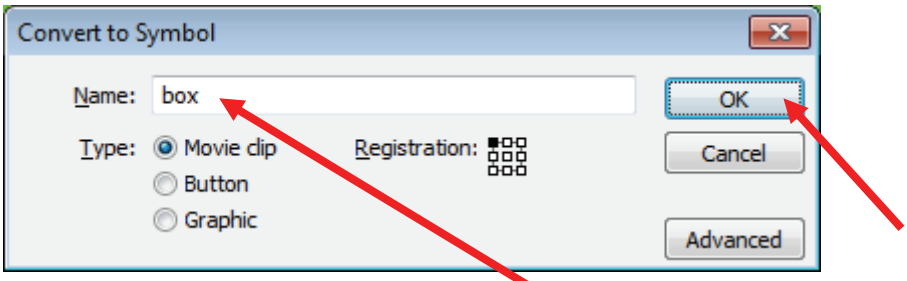




9. Click on the black dot on your boxes layer – this will select your entire box.



10. Press the F8 key on your keyboard (*if it doesn't work, check to see if you need the 'Function lock' key on*). This should make the dialog box below appear:

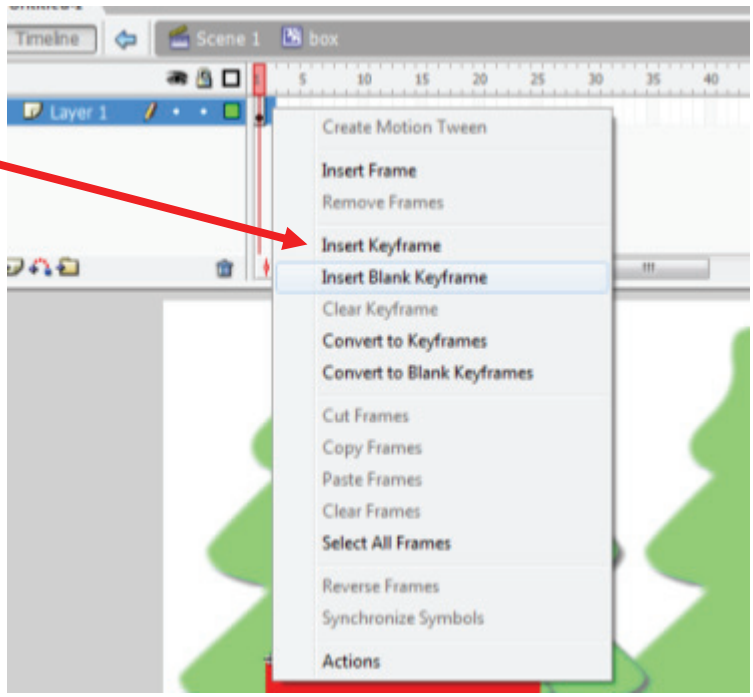


11. This allows us to create a Symbol. Give your symbol the name 'Box' and press OK. Make sure it is set to be a 'Movie Clip'.

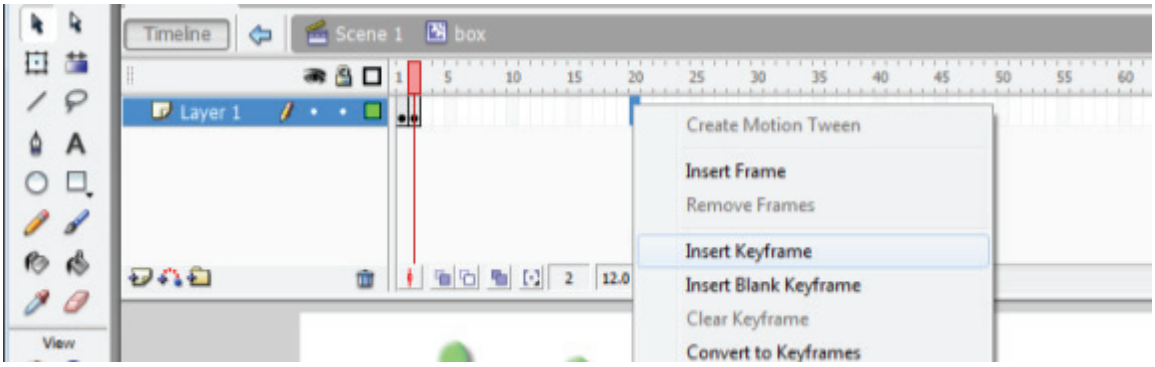
12. We can now add an animation to make it look like the box is opening. Double-click on your box – the rest of your screen should fade out slightly and the box will be highlighted.

13. Right-click on the next frame in your timeline and select 'Insert Keyframe'

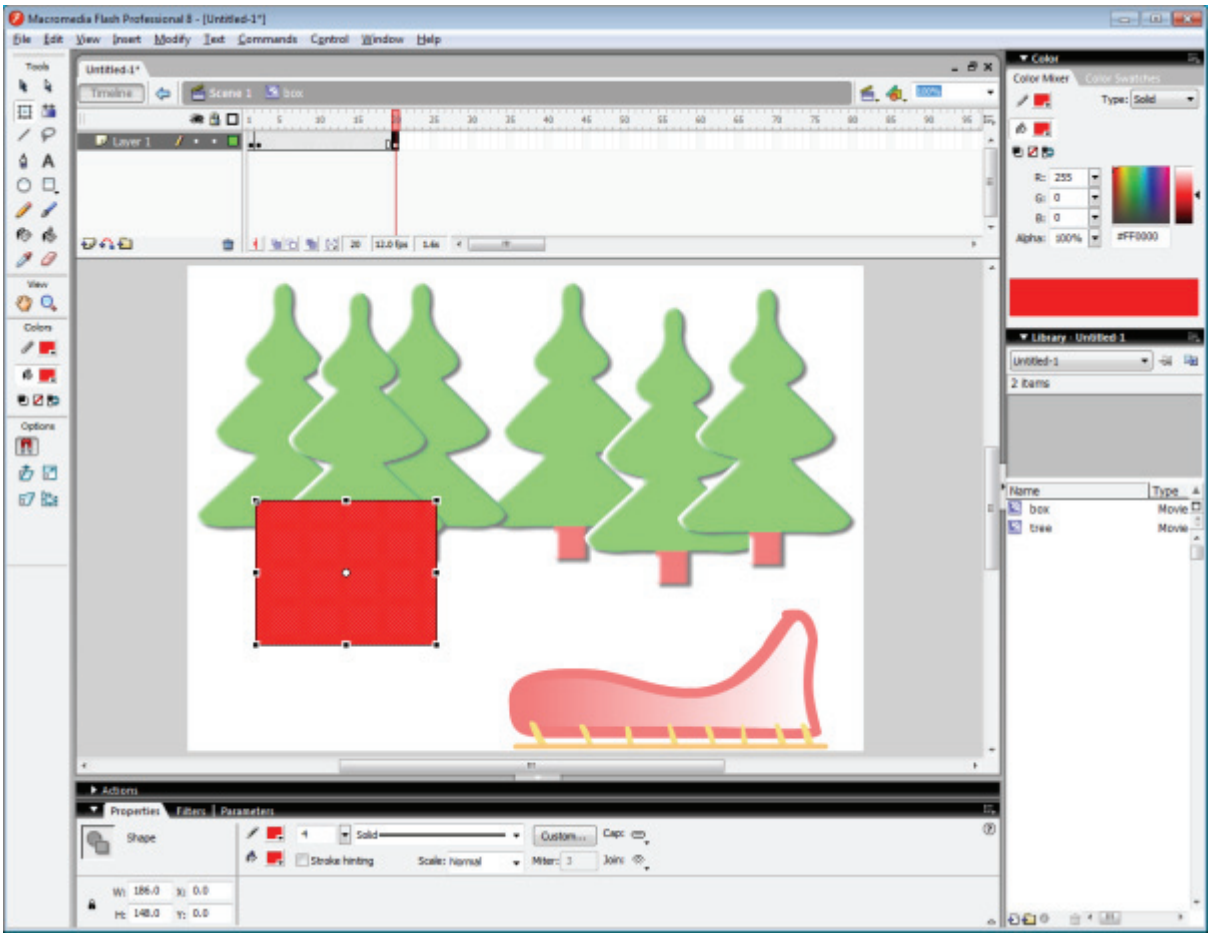
14. You should now see two frames, each showing your box.



15. Find frame 20 and right-click. Select ‘Insert Keyframe’ again.



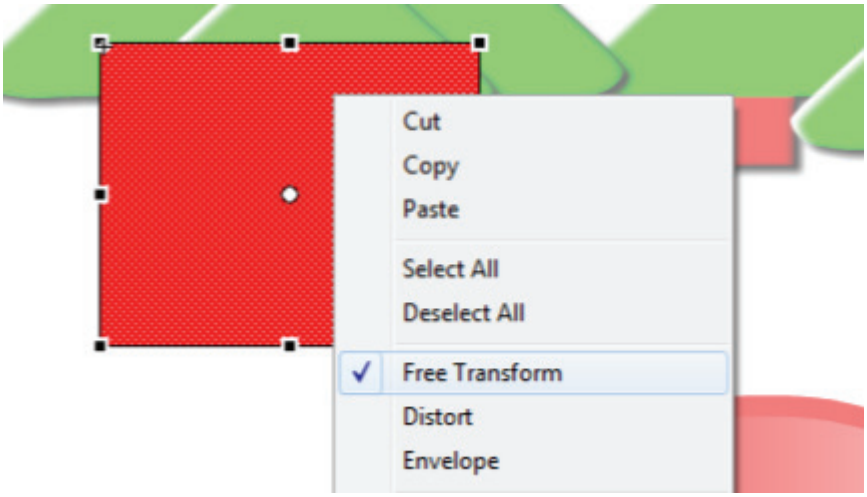
16. Your screen should now look something like the image below:



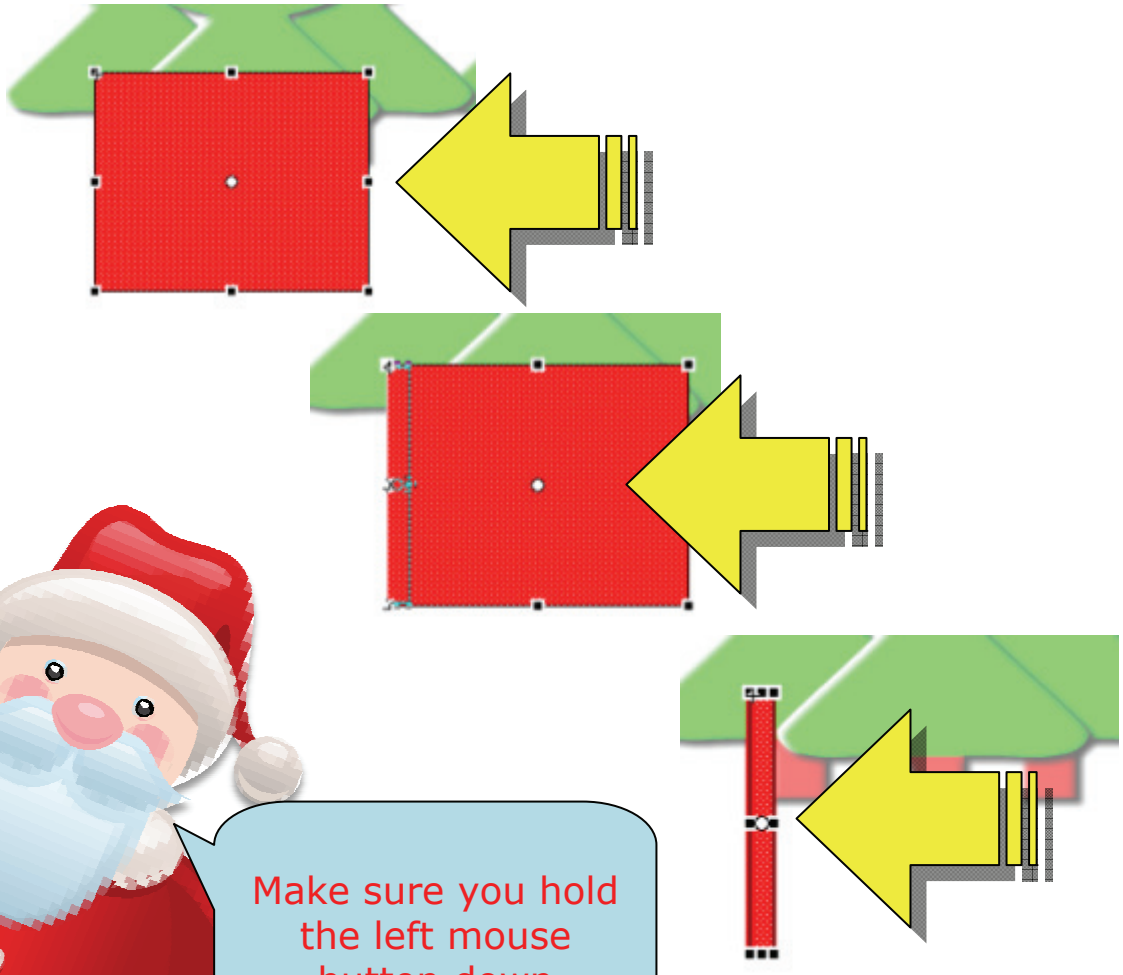
17. Save your work by selecting ‘File’ > ‘Save As’. It is always worth saving your work every so often just in case your computer crashes. ☹

18. Select the ‘Selection tool’ (the black arrow near the top left of your screen) and find Frame 20 (your final frame). Click on your box so it is highlighted.

19. Right-click on your box and select ‘Free transform’:

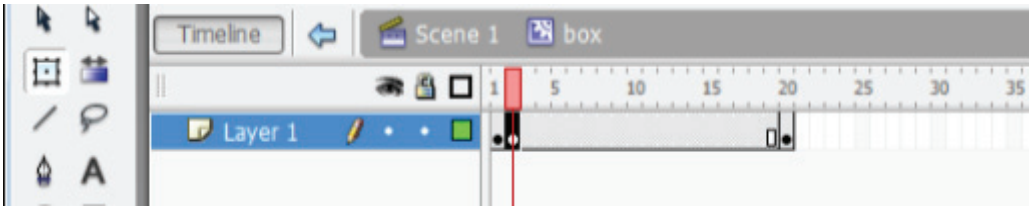


20. Using your mouse, click on the middle-right black square and drag it to the far left.

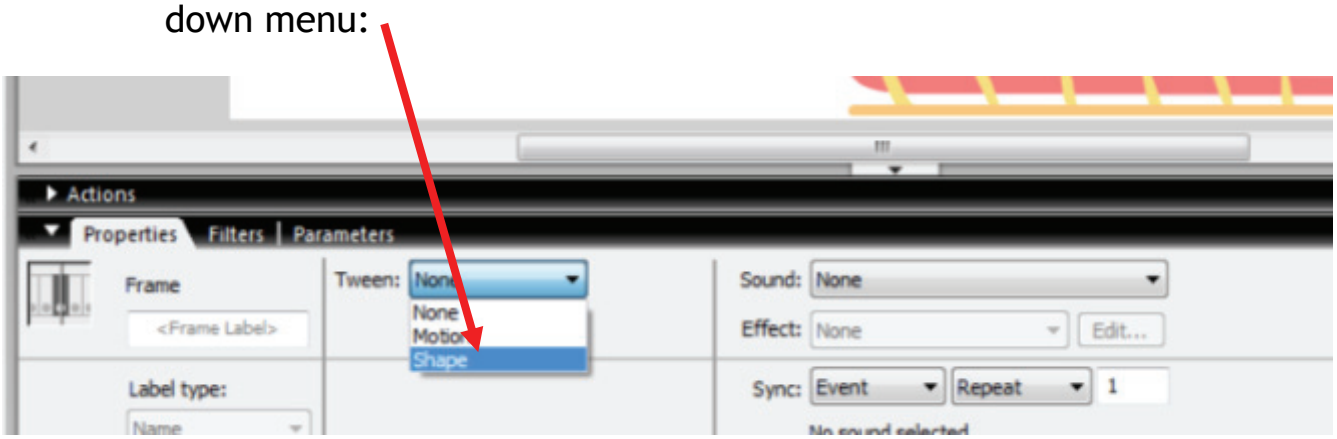


Make sure you hold the left mouse button down

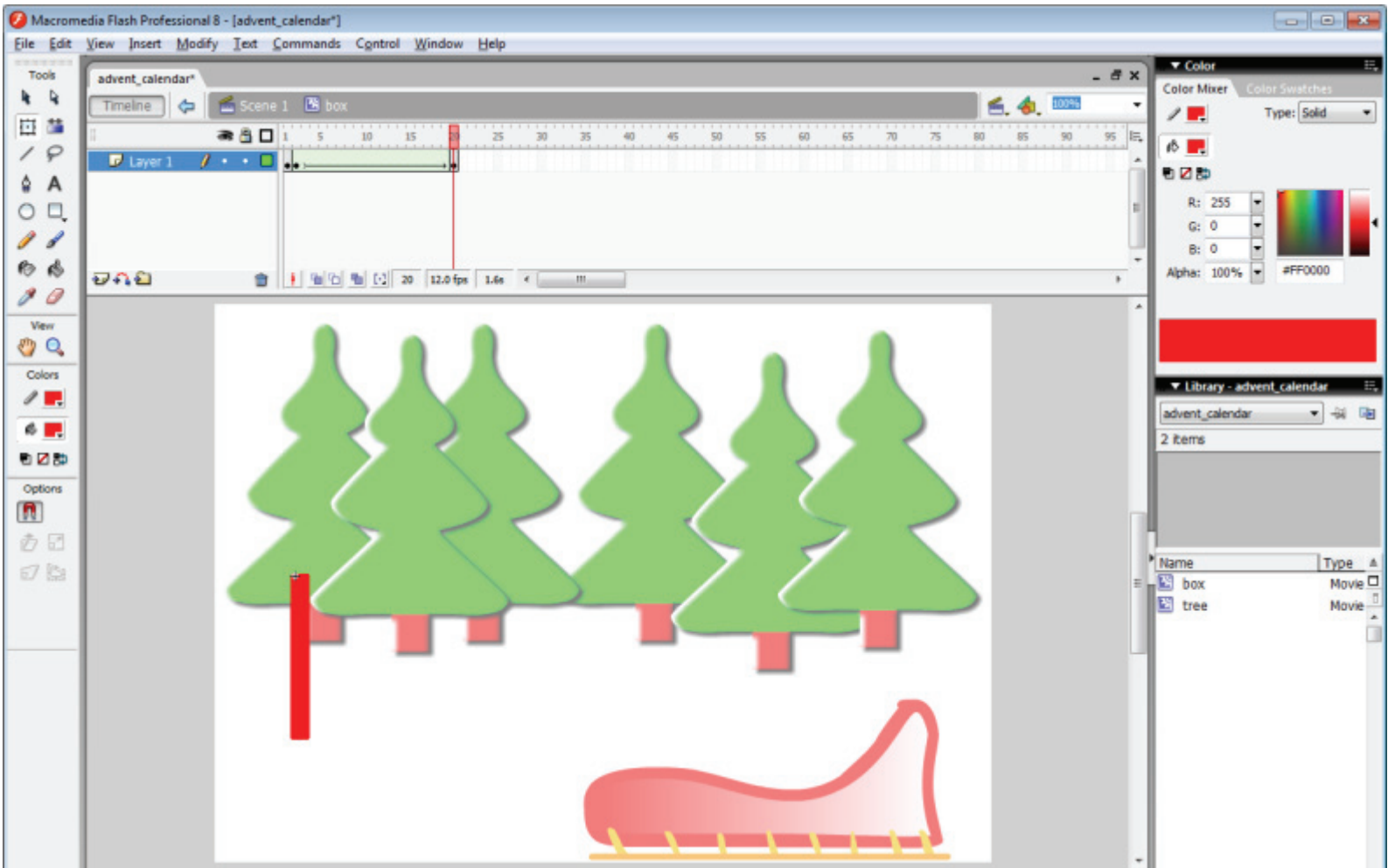
21. Next, click on Frame 2 of your Timeline:



22. Look at the bottom of your screen in the '**Properties**' panel. You should see the '**Tween**' option. Select '**Shape**' from the drop-down menu:

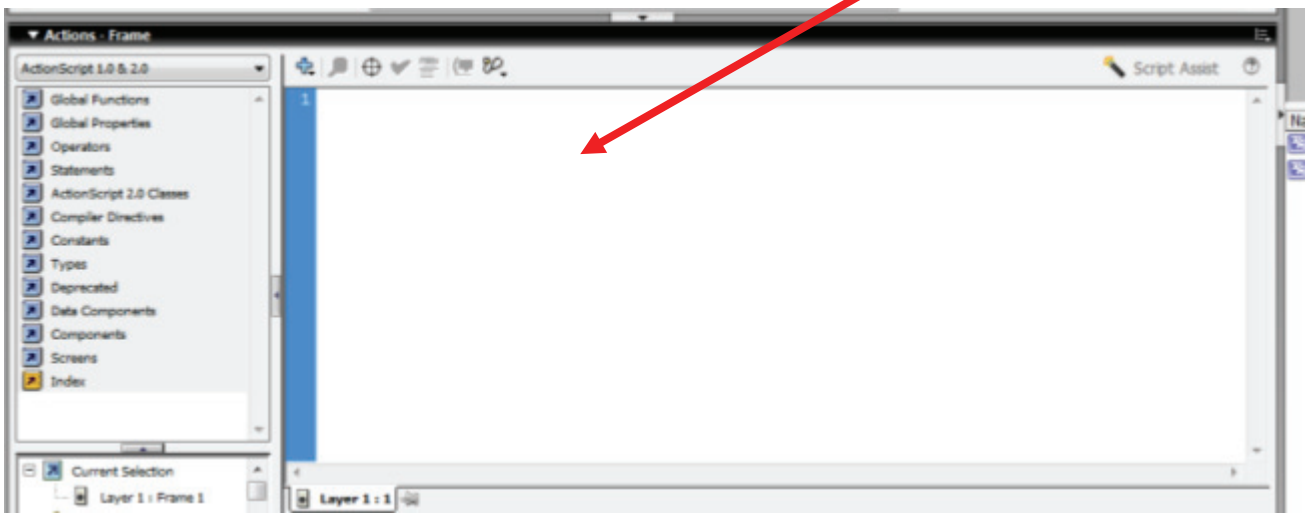


23. Flash will now automatically animate your box opening. Press your **Enter key** to have a quick look.

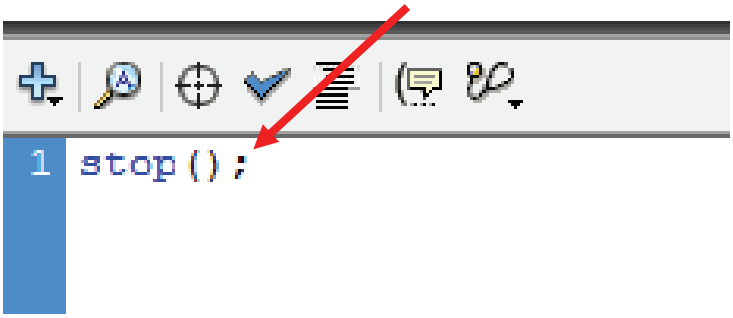


24. We now need to add some code – this will make the box open when you want it to!

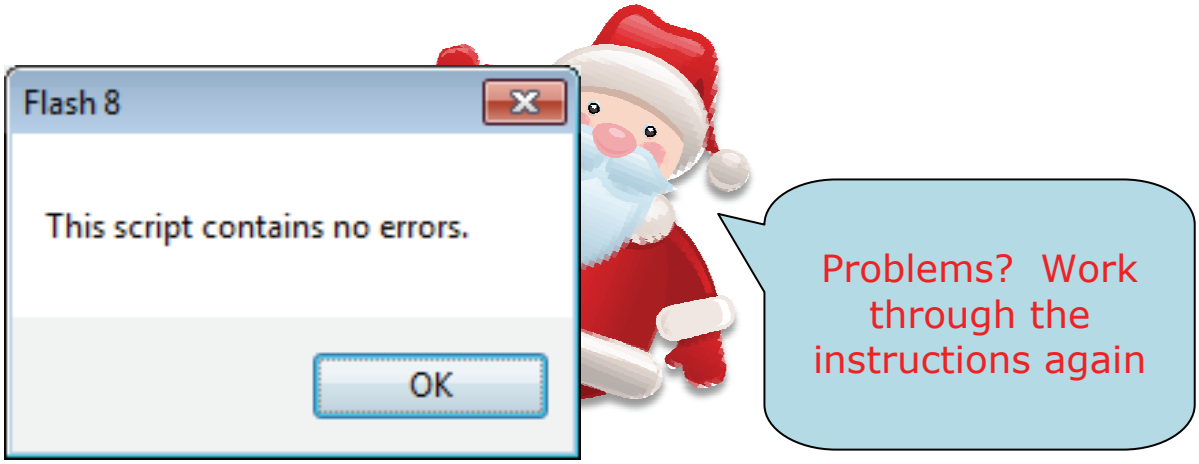
    Click on Frame 1 and press your F9 key. The 'Actions' panel should appear.



25. In the 'Actions panel' type: `Stop();`

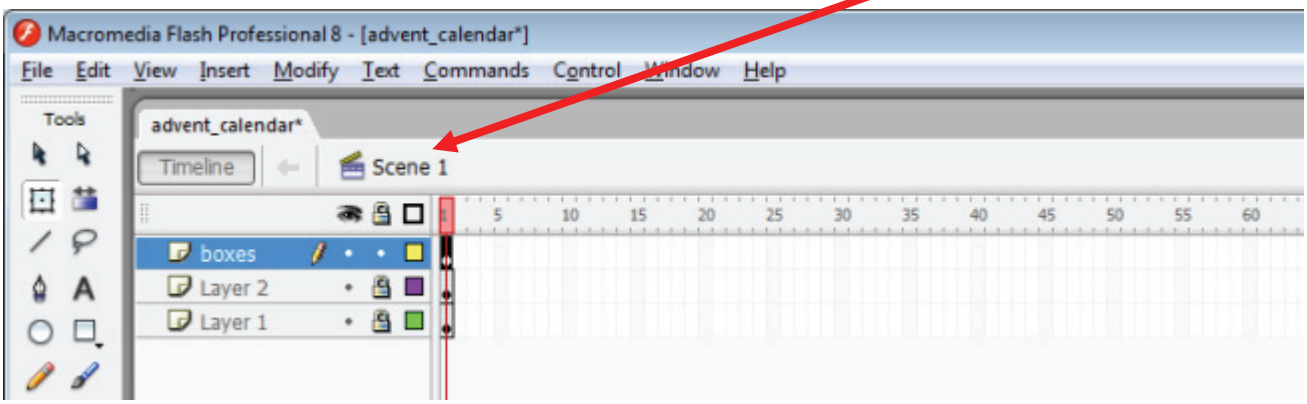


26. Click on the 'tick' to check that you've typed in correctly. You should then see the 'No errors' box appear:



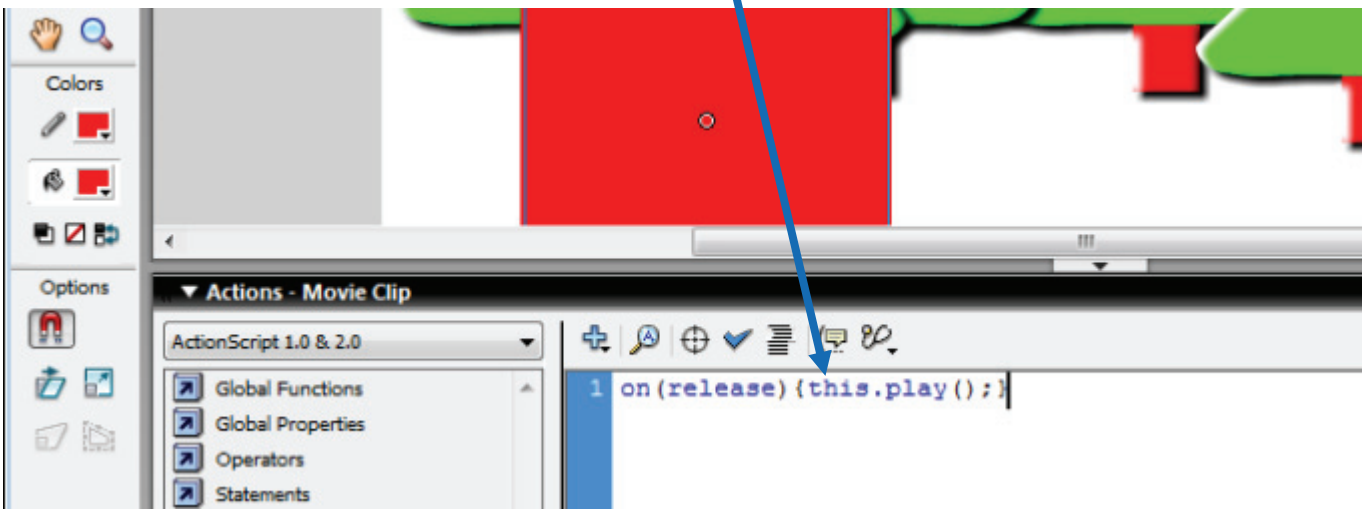
27. Select Frame 20 (your final frame) and type `Stop();` again in the Actions panel. Check to make sure there are no mistakes.

28. Above your main timeline, click on the text that says '**Scene 1**'. This will take you back to your main Flash movie.



29. Click on your box and add the following code into the Actions panel. Make sure that you've selected the box before you start typing:

```
on(release){this.play();}
```

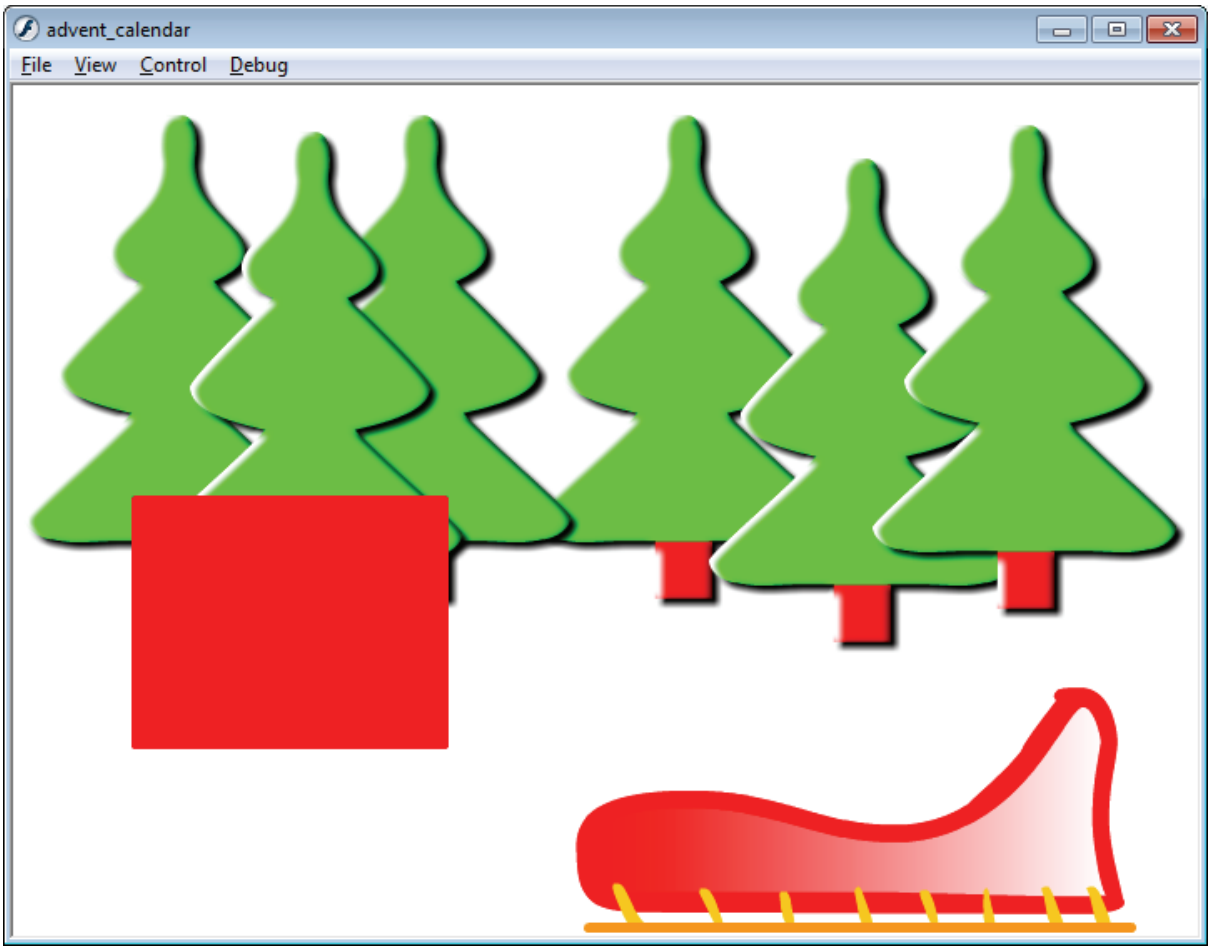


Make sure you get the correct brackets – you need (and { ones...

30. Save your work and press '**File**' > '**Publish Preview**' > '**Flash**'

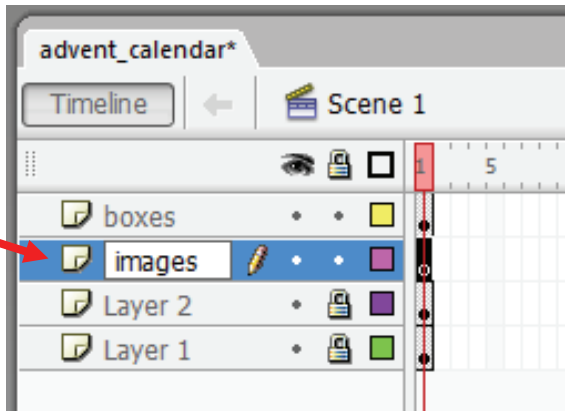
You should be able to click the box and see it slide open. If you then click the box again, it should shut.

Does yours work? If not, you've made a mistake in your coding – go back and check the previous steps. Make sure you've typed all the code correctly.



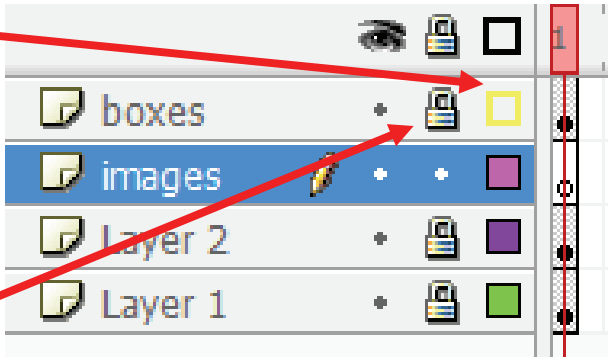
31. You now need to add your Advent images. Use some of the pictures shown at the top of each page for some ideas – or come up with your own.

32. Add another layer into your Flash animation. Call the layer '**images**' and drag it so it is the one below 'boxes'



33. Click on the coloured box on your ‘boxes’ layer (don’t worry if it is a different colour- that doesn’t matter). When you click, it should make the box nearly invisible.

    Next lock your boxes layer so you cannot alter it.



34. Select your ‘images’ layer and create your own Advent / Christmas image – draw this directly underneath the outline box:

35. Click on the coloured box on your ‘boxes’ layer again – this will make the box reappear.

36. Save your work and select **‘File’** > **‘Publish Preview’** > **‘Flash’**

37. You should now be able to click on your box and the image you created appears. This is the basis for our Advent calendar – images hidden below boxes.

38. Unlock the ‘boxes’ layer and copy your box. Paste additional boxes around your screen. Now go back to step 33 and add images to appear behind these boxes. What else could you add?