

WINTER FUN

There are activities for both the Winter Topic and some activities for Christmas. Remember if you chose Christmas activities that you are sensitive to the Christmas traditions of all of the families in your center and include some activities from their cultures if appropriate. There are also a few suggestions for gifts the children can make for their parents.

Some activities I have just provided the link to pictures and instructions so you will need to click on the link.

SOCIAL

Soft Snow Piles

Materials Needed: Cotton balls and cotton batting (polyfill)

Simply add these materials to your block area with trucks and cars. The children can plow the snowdrifts around!

Target: cooperation

Igloos

Show the children a video on you tube or some pictures of igloos because some children won't know what an igloos is

Materials needed: Table, large white sheets, blankets and mittens, cooking items such as pots, pans, pretend food

Cover the table with large white sheets and play house in an Igloo House. Remind them that their house is made of snow so they will need mittens and blankets.

VARIATION: If you dare! Have 2 igloos and provide sheets of newspaper. Have children crumple into balls and have a good snowball fight!

Target: cooperation

Mitten Hide and Seek

Have all the children hide their eyes while you "hide" a mitten in the room. (It should be placed in plain view) Tell the children to find the mitten. Have each of the children take a turn hiding the mitten. If you have a lot of young children maybe hide one mitten for each child. You can hide their own mittens so they can find their own. **Target: Taking turns**

Mitten Hide and Seek

Play the game the same as above, except hide the mitten and then tell the children whether they are "hot" or "cold" to the relation of the mitten. Allow the other children to have a change to hide the mitten, and tell children whether they are "hot or cold". It may be a good idea to discuss the meaning of hot and cold before you play this game.

Target: teamwork

Parachute Snowballs Toss

Have the children each grab a piece of a sheet or light blanket. Place the foam balls on the blanket have the children lift the blanket up at the same time to toss the balls into the air. Then have the children work as a group to catch them. **Target: cooperation**

PHYSICAL

Fine Motor

Snow Flake Scenes

Materials Needed: small, round blocks or different sized round plastic lids, white paint in shallow trays, light blue paper.

Show the children how to dip the flat, round end of the block into the paint and stamp circles onto the paper. What a scene!

Target: grasping

5 Little Snowmen (Finger play)

Materials Needed: None

Tell the children to hold up one hand and pretend that their fingers are snowmen. Say the following finger play with them. Encourage them to count how many are left and sing on with you!

5 little snowmen made of snow.

5 little snowmen in a row.

Out came the sun and it shone all day.

And one little snowman melted away. (put one finger down).

Ask "How many left? Let's count! 1-2-3-4

4 little snowmen made of snow....

repeat until gone.

Target: finger manipulation

Lacing Cards

Cut colored poster board into a winter shape (snowflake, snowman, mitten, and hat) and punch holes around the edges. Then encourage your child lace yarn or a shoestring into the cards. **Target: eye hand coordination**

Gross Motor

Snowman Bean-Bag Button Toss

Make a very large snowman out of paper and tape it to the floor. Draw a face on your snowman. Draw 3 buttons on the snowman's chest. Provide the children with a bin of bean bags and have them toss the bean bags to try and cover the buttons!

Target: coordination

Snowball Toss

Have the children toss foam ball or rolled up socks into a basket for a fun gross motor game. (Foam balls can be purchased at the Dollar Store) **Target: muscle coordination**

Snowball Throwing Practice

Place a large basket outside for the children to try to throw snowballs into. If you can't get outside, provide clean rolled up socks to aim into the basket as well as different sized balls. **Target: eye hand coordination**

Indoor Skating

This is fun for those days you are stuck inside!

Place 2 squares of wax paper on a carpeted area. The children stand on the wax paper and can skate on the carpet! This can be really slippery depending on the floor so make sure that there are no obstacles that the children can hurt themselves on if they should fall over. **Target: balance**

Footprint fun

On a day that the snow has just fallen, ask the children to describe the snow on the ground. The children should see that there snow is smooth, and there aren't any footprints in the snow. Have the children walk across the snow, and have them turn around and look at their footprints. Have them follow their footprints back. **Target: balance**

Snowman Bowling

Attach a snowman image to a bowling pin, or a pop bottle with a little bit of sand or rice in the bottom. Set up the pins and have the children try to knock them over with a ball.

Target: coordination

INTELLECTUAL

Cognitive

Seasonal Fall Sort

Match the pictures for each season. **Target: matching**

This is a matching game and requires that you print out the game. If you don't want to print out the file folder template do not choose this activity. This template will be sent as an attachment in email

What's the Weather Game?

Match the clothing that you would wear to the weather picture. **Target: matching**

This is a matching game and requires that you print out the game. If you don't want to print out the file folder template do not choose this activity. This template was sent as an attachment with the email

Toy Match

Match each toy picture. **Target: matching**

This is a matching game and requires that you print out the game. If you don't want to print out the file folder template do not choose this activity. This template was sent as an attachment with the email

Here is a link for more free file folder games for a variety of topics;

<http://preschoolmom.com/preschool-resources/preschool-file-folder-games/>

Winter Mitten Match

Cut out pairs of mittens. You will give one child a mitten and another child a mitten that matches. The colors that you cut out will depend upon the skill you are working on. For example, if you are working on colors, cut out 2 of each color. Give each child one mitten and place the other mitten in a pile on the floor. Take turns having the children find their matches. If you are working on numbers, cut out all of the mittens in the same color and write the number 1 on two of the mittens, etc. What you are trying to do is to make sure each child's mitten has a match. Then ask: Who has a green mitten? (Color identification) or Cheryl, what color is your mitten? Green! Right! Can you find the mitten that matches Do the same thing with numbers or shapes.

VARIATION: You can place the matching mittens in different hiding spots around the room to make the task more challenging.

VARIATION: After giving out matching mittens, play some music and when the music stops, each child needs to find their match in a pile of the matching mittens on the floor.

Target: color or number recognition

Mitten Sizing

Cut out many different sized Mittens. Ask the children to line up the mittens from largest to smallest. You can use a variety of sizes of actual mittens as well. **Target: sequencing**

Hat Sizing:

Cut out many different sized hats. Ask the children to line up the hats from largest to smallest. You can use a variety of sizes of actual hats as well. **Target: sequencing**

Ice Cube Races

Provide ice cubes and let your children build ramps with blocks and pieces of wood or hard plastic (flat lid). Have them build it on a towel or a plastic sheet so as the ice

cubes melt it catches the water. How can they make the ice cube slide down the ramps faster? Slower? **Target: cause and effect**

Snowflake Sizing:

Cut out many different sized snowflakes. Ask the children to line up the snowflakes from largest to smallest. **Target: sequencing**

Counting Snowballs

Use an empty egg carton for this activity. Supply the children with white pom poms. Write numbers 1-12 in the bottom of the egg carton sections. Have the children place the appropriate number of pom poms in each section. Make sure that the egg carton has been washed with a little bit of bleach and water with a cloth before you use it for this activity. Do not use a cardboard egg carton. **Target: matching**

Sequencing Snowballs

Provide the children with three different sized foam balls for the children to sequence. If you have multiple sets you could also have the children sort the balls by size. **Target: sorting**

Hot or Cold Weather

Cut out many pictures from magazines or print some off the internet that represent hot or cold weather. Ask your child to tell you which pictures are hot weather, and which are cold weather. **Target: matching**

Summer or Winter Clothes

Gather an assortment of clothes for summer and winter seasons. Show your child each piece of clothes, and ask your child if the clothing is winter or summer clothing. **Target: matching**

Hat and Mitten Sort:

Supply the children with plenty of hat and mitten shapes of many sizes and colors. Ask the children to sort the shapes by size, color or type. **Target: sorting**

Language

The Winter Song

(tune: Farmer in the Dell)

Let's sing a winter song,

Let's sing a winter song,

The days are short, the nights are long.

Let's sing a winter song.

The winter wind is cold,
The winter wind is cold,
It freezes noses, ears, and toes.
The winter wind is cold.
Winter now is here,
Winter now is here,
Put on your coat, your hat, your gloves, Winter now is here. **Target: repetition**

Snokey Pokey

You put your right mitten in,
You take your right mitten out.
You put your right mitten in,
And you shake it all about.
You do the winter pokey, [shiver]
And you turn yourself around.
That's what it's all about!
Others Include:
You put your left mitten in....
You put your right boot....
You put your left boot....
You put your winter hat in....
You put your snowsuit (whole body) in....

Target: labelling

Winter Clothes

(To the tune of "Clementine")
First the snow pants,
Then the boots,
Then the jacket,
Then the hat,
And the mittens go on last,
So we can go outside to play. **Target: labelling**

Read a book about winter

Go to the library and find books about winter. Read them to the children. **Target: vocabulary**

CREATIVE

Winter Shaving Cream Storm

Materials needed: shaving cream (NON menthol scented--trust me! Menthol scent will knock you all down when filling the room!); white school glue; paint; paintbrushes
Spray shaving cream into a cup. Mix in a few drops of paint to make a medium tinted color. Pour in an equal amount of white school glue. Mix and now paint!
This dries hard. It's like your own puffy paint! **Target: texture**

Snow Painting

Materials Needed: Large bucket of snow, white paint, paintbrushes, and plastic spoons, blue or black construction paper

Place a small amount of white paint in a cup.

Children add a couple of teaspoons of snow and mix with their paint brush.

Encourage them to paint a snowstorm with their newly made snow!

EXTENSION: Add a small amount of glitter to the paint for a sparkly effect!

Target: creativity

Make Your Own SNOW PAINT

Mix 1 cup of flour with 1/2 cup of salt. Mix in 3/4 cup of water and paint away!

Target: sensory

Snowball Painting

Materials Needed: Large bucket of snow, washable paint (any colors will do!); white paper and mittens (buy cheap one at the Dollar Store. They can be washed after)

With mittens on, have the children make a snow ball.

Sprinkle some paint onto each child's paper*

Encourage the child to either roll the snowball on the paper or use the snowball as a paintbrush!

VARIATION: Place the paper into a shallow tray or box. Place the paper in the box and sprinkle the paint on the paper. The child then places the snowball on the paper and tips the tray or box back and forth to paint!

VARIATION: Try both the activities or the above variation using ice cubes instead of snowballs.

Target: creativity

Play Doh Fun

Winter shaped cookie cutters and play-doh can provide a sensory experience. The children could also roll white play-doh into three different sized balls to create a snowman. **Target: texture**

Build in the Snow

Take out sand toys, plastic containers, small shovels, cookie cutters etc. Encourage the children to use the items to build with the snow. **Target: imagination**

EMOTIONAL

Build a Snowman

Supply the children with three white felt circles of different sizes, and other pieces for the features. like an orange triangle for the nose, black circles for the eyes and buttons, a hat. Invite the children to make a snowman out of the pieces. See what different looking snowmen they can create. **Target: self expression**

Pretend to be a snowflake

Ask the children to pretend to be a graceful snowflake falling from the sky. You could even play different music for them to dance to. **Target: self expression**

Sensory Snow:

-Place some snow in your sand and water table or in a plastic container for the children to experience.

-Watch snow melt

-Time how long it takes one tablespoon of snow to melt, compare that to the time it will take one cup of snow to melt. **Target: independence**

Graham Cracker Snowflake

Ingredients and items needed: Graham cracker squares; small paper doilies; powdered sugar (confectioner's sugar); tray for extra sugar.

Place doily on graham cracker.

Have child shake sugar on.

Lift doily off to see snowflake design. Shake of extra sugar into a tray.

Target: independence

Snowmen Biscuits

Ingredients and materials needed: Refrigerated biscuit dough; small amount of flour; rolling pin; raisins; thin pretzels; small snow man cookie cutters.

Roll out dough onto lightly floured surface.

Child cuts out a snowman and places it on a cookie sheet.

Bake as directed on the package of biscuit dough

Give children some type of spread (cheese or peanut butter) depending on allergies as well as raisins (for eyes, nose and buttons) and pretzels for arms. They can make their own snowman snack.

Target: independence

Book Suggestions for the Library

The Biggest Snowball Ever! by John Rogan

Chicken Soup with Rice by Maurice Sendak

The First Snowfall by Anne and Harlow Rockwell

Frozen Noses by Jan Carr

It's Snowing by Olivier Dunrea

Katy and the Big Snow by Virginia Lee Burton

Sadie and the Snowman by Allen Morgan

Snow Dance by Lezlie Evans

Snow Is Falling by Franklyn M. Branley

Snow? Let's Go! by Karen Berman Nagel

Snow on Snow on Snow by Cheryl Chapman

Snowballs by Lois Ehlert

The Snowy Day by Ezra Jack Keats

The Snowman by Raymond Briggs

The Snow Storm by heather Amery & Stephen Cartwright

There Was a Cold Lady Who Swallowed Some Snow by Lucille Colandro

Yay! A Snow Day! by Bill Cosby/Little Bill

-----**Christmas Activities**-----

Gift Hide and Seek

Have all the children hide their eyes while you "hide" a gift (empty wrapped box) in the room. (It should be placed in plain view) When the children find the gift, a child can hide the gift in a new spot. Repeat until all of the children have taken a turn. **Target: taking turns**

Gift Hide and Seek

Play the game the same as above, except hide the gift. Then tell the children individually whether they are "hot" or "cold" to the relation of the gift. Allow the other children to have a change to hide the gift, and tell children whether they are "hot or cold". It may be a good idea to discuss the meaning of hot and cold before you play this game. **Target: listening**

PHYSICAL

Fine Motor

Paper plate Christmas ornament

This is a simple activity. You can see the picture and directions by clicking on the following link. Target: **eye hand coordination**

<http://www.craftymorning.com/paper-plate-christmas-ornament-craft-kids/>

Fingerprint Tree

Either have the children cut out their own tree or make one for them. Then let them use a paint to put fingerprints (Christmas Ornaments and lights) on the tree. **Target: eye hand coordination**

Pine Cones

Collect pines cones, buy some at the Dollar Store or ask your parents to bring in some. Tie a ribbon around the top of the pine cone. Have the children apply glitter glue to them. Use them on a tree for decoration. **Target: grasping**

Cookie Cutter Painting

Put a small amount of washable paint in a large shallow container. (A pie tin works well) Show your child how to dip the cookie cutter in the paint and press onto a piece of paper to create a print. **Target: eye hand coordination**

Gross Motor

Candy Cane Balance

Supply each child with a wrapped candy cane. Ask them to balance it on their head. Then have the children walk from point A to point B. **Target: balance**

Christmas Tree Hop

Cut out large Christmas tree shapes from colored paper. Laminate them and cut them out. Place them on the floor and ask the children to hop from one tree to another. Tape these to the floor so that they don't slide when the children jump on them. You can do many different shapes and then ask the children to jump to that specific shape. **Target: balance**

INTELLECTUAL

Cognitive

Peppermint Candy Ornament –

Click on the link to see instructions and a picture

<http://hello-homebody.com/2013/12/20/peppermint-candy-christmas-ornaments/>

Target cause and effect

Snowflake Match

Create snowflakes using different shapes as the base of the snowflake, like a triangle, square etc. Make one big and one little of each shape. Have the children pick a snowflake, and then find the matching snowflake shape. **Target: matching**

Tree Sizing

Cut out many different sized trees. Ask the children to line up the trees from largest to smallest. Variation: You can do this with stars, mittens etc. **Target: sequencing**

Language

Read books about different Christmas traditions **Target: vocabulary**

CREATIVE

Ribbons and Bows

Provide ribbons and bows to the block area. Encourage children to tie up blocks with the ribbon, put bows on the blocks, etc. **Target: decision making**

Paint swatch card Christmas Trees (very simple-click on link for instructions)

<http://xmasdiycraft.blogspot.co.uk/2014/12/diy-paint-chip-christmas-tree-ornaments.html>

Target; creativity

Hand Wreath

Trace each child's hands several times onto a piece of green paper. Have the children cut out these hand shapes. Supply each child with a paper plate and show them how to cut out the center of the plate. Have the children glue their green hands shapes onto the plate to make a wreath **OR** the children can dip their hands in green paint and press them on a piece of paper to form a circle. **Target: imagination**

EMOTIONAL

Bingo Dabber Art

For younger children, draw a Christmas tree, and have the children decorate the tree with bingo dabbers. **Target: self expression**

Cooking

Sugar Cone Trees

Ingredients & Items needed: Sugar cones (ice cream cones), chocolate chips (white and regular chocolate), assorted candies for decorations (M&M's, gumdrops, marshmallows, sprinkles, etc.); wax paper, microwavable bowl, spoon.

Melt chocolate chips in microwave bowl just slightly, mix to completely melt.

Roll sugar cone in chocolate.

Place gumdrop firmly on point of cone. Place cone on wax paper to work with.

Children decorate by adding other candies to sides. Let dry and enjoy!

NOTE: White chocolate hardens MUCH faster than the regular chocolate, so it needs to be decorated immediately after rolled in chocolate. Buy small candies for decorations so they aren't too heavy and stick to the tree better. **Target: independence**

Reindeer Pudding

Ingredients and Items needed: tart shells for each child, chocolate pudding mix and milk (it takes approximately 1 cup of pudding for each mini pie); cheerios cereal, pretzel twists; maraschino cherries (1 for each child); bowl, plastic measuring cup, 1 plastic spoon per child.

Bake the shells according to the package instructions and let cool. Prepare instant pudding with the children when the pudding is set, Scoop 1/2 to 1 cup of pudding into mini pie shell. Add 2 pretzel twists (for antlers); add 2 cheerios for eyes and 1 cherry for nose!

Target: self expression

Candy Cane Cookies

Ingredients: Sugar cookie dough; red food coloring; wax paper

Mix half the cookie dough with red food coloring.

Show children how to roll dough into snakes on the wax paper (we tape wax paper on the entire table so it does not slip off). Give each child a small amount of white and of red cookie dough to roll into a snake shape.

Help them to twist them (somewhat like a braid) to make a Christmas Candy Cane.

Bake in a 350 degree Fahrenheit oven for approximately 7 minutes.

Target: sequencing

Books to Read

[Christmas Mice!](#) by Bethany Roberts

[Curious George Christmas Countdown \(CGTV Tabbed BB\)](#) by Tish Rabe

[December](#) by Eve Bunting

[Gingerbread Baby](#) by Jan Brett

[How the Grinch Stole Christmas! \(Classic Seuss\)](#) by Dr. Seuss

[If You Take a Mouse to the Movies](#) by Laura Numeroff

[Merry Christmas, Stinky Face](#) by Lisa McCourt

[Maisy's Snowy Christmas Eve](#) by Lucy Cousins

[Merry Christmas: Big Hungry Bear! By Audrey Wood, Don Wood](#) by Audrey Wood and Don Wood

[Merry Christmas, Mouse! \(If You Give...\)](#) by Laura Numeroff

[Merry Christmas, Spot!](#) by Eric Hill

[The Mitten](#) by Jan Brett

[The Puppy Who Wanted a Boy](#) by Jane Thayer

[Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer](#) or Your favorite version!

Christmas gift ideas for the children to make their parents:

Treat Cups

Cheap to make and simple. Click link for instructions and pictures

<http://simpleasthatblog.com/2014/12/simple-christmas-treat-cups.html>

Melty beads ornament

<http://picklebums.com/fusible-bead-christmas-decorations/>

Glass jar centerpiece

Buy a clear glass container from the Dollar Store. Purchase several types of Christmas decorations such as:

- Garland (cut into smaller pieces)
- Assortment of plastic Christmas ball (variety of size and colors)

- Assortment of non-breakable ornaments

Place all of the items out so the children can choose items that they want to place in the container. When the children are done cover the top of the container with a piece of cello wrap. Glue or tape a piece of ribbon around the top to seal the cello wrap to the top of the container. Have the children to glue some decorations to the top of the cello wrap if the children want to.

All items available at the Dollar Store. The costs is about \$4 per child

Christmas tree Ornament

Purchase a Christmas tree center piece from the Dollar Store. Provide the children with a variety of Christmas decorations. {Make sure that the items you purchase are not too heavy or they will fall off the tree as the children put them on} You can either have the children glue the items they choose onto the tree or you can use double sided or mounting tape also available at the Dollar Store.

If you are going to use glue purchase “Super Tacky” glue from Michaels.

