



Winter Wonderland: Illuminating Traditions

Happy Holidays! I am so happy to have you join us for our journey around the world as we learn about different holiday traditions where light plays an important part. Over the next seven weeks we will be learning about Diwali, Advent, Hanukkah, Christmas Displays, Yule, Kwanzaa, and Tres Reyes Magos through our stories, crafts, and recipes. Below I am listing the story and craft for each week. For each craft I am listing the materials needed to complete that craft. We are supplying a large quantity of the necessary items in this kit. The ones that I have in bold print are items that you need to supply and most likely already have at home. I am also listing what I hope to be some beneficial, educational tips. These short-term goals are educational/developmental steps that you are helping your child work on when listening to and talking about the stories and making the crafts. So, are you ready for an exciting adventure to Winter Wonderland? Let's go!!!!

Week One – Diwali

Book: *Shubh Diwali!* by Chitra Soundar

Craft: Air Dry Clay Diya from *Special Occasions* by Vivienne Bolton

Materials Needed: Air Dry Clay

L.E.D. Tea Candle

Paints, markers, crayons or glitter to decorate your Diya when it is dry

Short-Term Goals

Vocabulary: Diwali, diya, bunting, waning moon, rangoli

Social/Emotional: Children/families discuss the importance of working together (cleaning the house), sharing and giving to others (gifts to friends and loved ones/sharing with those less fortunate by donating)

Creativity/Imagination: When their Diya is dry are they going to decorate it or leave it white. If they want to decorate their Diya how are they going to do this (what medium)?

Fine Motor Skills: Working with the clay and forming the Diya

Helping crush the coconut into smaller pieces for the Burfi

Week Two – Advent

Book: *This Is the Star* by Joyce Dunbar

Craft: Family Advent Wreath www.sweetlittleonesblog.com

Materials Needed: Green Tissue Paper

Green, pink, and purple construction paper

4 yellow pipe cleaners

4 empty cardboard toilet paper rolls (or 2 paper towel rolls)

Masking tape

Scissors
Glue
Stapler (optional)

Short-Term Goals

Vocabulary: Advent, shepherd, trudging, inn, stable, ox, myrrh, frankincense, manger

Social/Emotional: Children/families will discuss the differences in travel then & now. How would they feel about going places on a donkey instead of a car. Some people still travel by donkey.

Fine Motor Skills: Crumbling/shaping the tissue paper into leaves

Gluing the tissue onto the wreath

Shaping the biscotti cookies

Week Three – Hanukkah

Book: *Grandma's Latkes* by Malka Drucker

Craft: Menorah adapted from www.makeitgrateful.com and <https://simpleplayideas.com>

Materials Needed: 2 paper plates

9 clothes pins

Cardstock candle flames

Scissors

Crayons for flames

Paint, crayons or markers for candles

Glue

Short-Term Goals

Vocabulary: Hanukkah, menorah, latke, pantry

Social/Emotional: Children/families discuss determination/faith can help you reach goals

Creativity/Imagination: How will you decorate your candles?

Fine Motor Skills: Grasping while coloring the flames

Practice cutting skills with the candle flames

Week Four – Christmas Displays

Book: *Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star* interpreted by Julia Noonan

Craft: Straw, bead, and pipe-cleaner Star www.powerfulmothering.com/10-star-crafts-for-kids

Materials Needed: 12 pieces of plastic straw

12 beads

1 pipe cleaner

Short-Term Goals

Vocabulary: blazing

Social/Emotional: Children/families discuss the traditions like leaving cookies out for Santa

Science: Children/families discuss how stars can help "light up" the night sky, how some people use stars as a directional tool

Fine Motor Skills: Stringing the beads and straws onto the pipe cleaner

Rolling the cookies in the cinnamon sugar mixture

Sequencing: Use the A B A B A B pattern when stringing – bead, straw, bead, straw, bead, straw

Week Five – Yule

Book: *Rupert's Tales The Wheel of the Year, Sambain, Yule, Imbolc, Ostara* by Kyrja

Craft: Decorated Wooden Log Slice Ornament

Materials Needed: Wooden Log Slice

Paint or markers

Short-Term Goals

Vocabulary: Yule, Solstice, log, mistletoe, garland, tent

Science: Children/families discuss that the Solstice is the shortest day of the year and how days will soon be getting longer. Why does this happen?

Creativity/Imagination: How will you decorate your wood log slice ornament? What item from nature will you use on the ornament?

Week Six – Kwanzaa

Book: *Together for Kwanzaa* by Juwanda G. Ford

Craft: Egg carton Kinara <https://familyfun Crafts.com/egg-carton-kinara>

Materials Needed: Egg carton

7 popsicle sticks

Cardstock candle flames

Crayons for the candle flames

Scissors

Glue

Paint, markers, or crayons for the candles

Short-Term Goals

Vocabulary: Kwanzaa, kinara, heritage, zawadi

Social/Emotional: Children/families will discuss the different principles of Kwanzaa; unity, self-determination, working together, cooperative economics, purpose, and creativity

Fine Motor Skills: Coloring the candle flames and decorating the candles
Cutting out the flames

Week Seven – Tres Reyes Magos (Epiphany)

Book: *Hurray For Three King's Day* and *Vivan los Reyes Magos!* By Lori Marie Carlson

Craft: Star of Bethlehem www.modernmami.com/latino-latina-culture/three-kings-day-craft

Materials Needed: 11" x 17" white cardstock

Camel picture

5 popsicle sticks

Crayons
Scissors
Glue
Yellow paint – optional

Short-Term-Goals

Vocabulary/Science: Desert, camel

Social/Emotional: Children/families will discuss how the children in the story dress up like the Three Kings with their gifts. How you ever seen a parade? Do you dress up and pretend to be different people?

Creativity/Imagination: How will you decorate your desert picture?

Fine Motor Skills: Coloring and cutting out the camel
Coloring or painting the Star

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Diwali

Coconut Burfi from www.indianhealthyrecipes.com

Recipe 2 - Ingredients

1 ¾ cup desiccated coconut (fine) ½ cup milk
½ cup & 2 tbsp. condensed milk 1/8 tsp. ground cardamom
¼ cup cashews

- Grease a pan (8" x 8" x 2")
- Heat a pan with 1 tbsp, of ghee and fry cashews until golden. Remove to a plate to cool. Chop.
- In a pan add coconut, condensed milk, and milk.
- Mix and cook on medium heat until the entire mixture turns thick and sticky.
- Add cardamom powder and mix. Transfer to the greased pan.
- Press down with a spatula and sprinkle with nuts.
- Refrigerate for an hour. Cut into squares and enjoy.

- Note – Website suggests beginners to read the step by step photo instructions.
- Tip – I found it difficult to locate desiccated coconut. You can make your own by using regular coconut. I followed the recipe on www.fauziaskitchenfun.com.

Advent

Italian Biscotti Cookies from www.epicpew.com

Traditional Cookie

Ingredients

½ cup butter, softened 2 tsp. baking powder
2 eggs ½ cup milk
1 cup sugar 3 cups flour
¼ tsp. salt

- Cream the butter, sugar and eggs together (should be light yellow). Add salt, baking powder and vanilla and mix.
- Add flour a little at a time till a ball forms
- Refrigerate for 15 minutes so it hardens a little
- Take a walnut size of dough and roll into a crescent or any other shape as desired.
- Put on lightly greased baking sheet (or parchment paper) and bake at 350 degrees for 15 minutes. Bottom of cookie should be light brown, top should be a very light tan (don't overcook).

Frosting

1 cup powdered sugar 1 – 1 ½ tsp. vanilla
2 – 3 tbsp. melted butter tbsp of milk – amount will vary

- Mix powder sugar, butter and vanilla. Slowly add milk until frosting is a thick running consistency
- Add food coloring to go with holiday if desired

- Frost cookies right out of the oven, placing them face down and pulling them up through the frosting
- Frosting will dry shiny

Gluten Free Cookie

Ingredients

½ cup butter, softened
 2 eggs
 1 cup sugar or sucanut
 2 tsp. non-gluten baking powder
 ¼ tsp. salt

½ tsp. vanilla powder
 1 tsp. cinnamon
 1/8 cup milk or soymilk
 ¾ tsp. Xanthan Gum
 3 cups non-gluten flour mix blend

- Cream butter, eggs, and sugar
- Add baking powder, salt, vanilla powder, cinnamon, milk, and Xanthan Gum
- Add flour a little at a time until it forms into a ball
- Take a walnut size of dough and roll into a crescent or any other desired shape
- Put on a lightly greased baking sheet (or parchment paper) and bake at 350 degrees for 13-15 minutes
- Frost using the frosting and steps above (if you are making both recipes, make sure you don't dip the gluten free cookies in the same frosting as the traditional cookies).
- Makes about 4 dozen

Hanukkah

Grandma's Latkes from the book by Malka Drucker

(From the book) This is Grandma's recipe, which calls for grating the potatoes by hand. You can follow her old-fashioned way or grate the potatoes in a food processor.

Ingredients

3 large potatoes
 1 small onion
 2 beaten eggs
 2 tbsp. flour

1 tsp. salt
 pinch of pepper
 ½ cup vegetable oil

- Wash the potatoes very well, but don't peel them.
- Grate them coarsely into a bowl. Grate in the onion.
- Add the beaten eggs, flour, salt, and pepper.
- Let the mixture sit for 10 minutes to thicken.
- Pour off the excess liquid.
- Heat the vegetable oil for 1 minute in a frying pan, then drop tablespoonfuls of the mixture into the pan.
- When the pancakes are brown on the edges, turn and fry them until the other sides are crispy.
- Drain on paper towels.
- Eat them with sour cream and applesauce.

Secular – Light Displays

Snickerdoodles from www.modernhoney.com

Cookie Ingredients

1 cup unsalted butter, softened	2 $\frac{3}{4}$ cups flour
1 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups sugar	1 $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon Cream of Tartar
2 large eggs	$\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon baking soda
2 teaspoons vanilla	1 teaspoon salt

Cinnamon Sugar Mixture

$\frac{1}{4}$ cup sugar	1 $\frac{1}{2}$ tablespoon cinnamon
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- Preheat oven to 350 degrees
- In a large mixing bowl cream butter and sugar for 4-5 minutes until light and fluffy. Scrape the sides of the bowl and add the eggs and vanilla. Cream for 1-2 minutes longer.
- Stir in the flour, cream of tartar, baking soda, and salt just until combined.
- In a small bowl, stir together the cinnamon and sugar.
- Cover the dough and refrigerate for 20-30 minutes. Roll into small balls until round and smooth. Drop into the cinnamon sugar mixture and coat well. Using a spoon, coat for a second time, ensuring the cookie balls are completely covered. *To make flatter snickerdoodles, press down in the center of the ball before placing in the oven. This helps them to keep from puffing up in the middle.
- Place on a parchment paper-lined baking sheet. Bake for 9-11 minutes. Let cool for several minutes on baking sheet before removing from the pan.
- Makes 36 cookies

Yule

Easy Chocolate Yule Log Cake from www.lifeloveandsugar.com

Cake Ingredients

$\frac{3}{4}$ cup flour	$\frac{3}{4}$ cup sugar
$\frac{1}{3}$ cup Hersey's Special Dark Cocoa	5 tbsp sour cream
1 tsp. baking powder	$\frac{1}{4}$ cup butter, melted
$\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. salt	1 tsp. vanilla extract
4 large eggs, divided	

- Preheat the oven to 350 degrees. Line a 17" x 12" jelly roll sheet pan with parchment paper. Make sure that the parchment paper sticks up at least 1" above the sides of the pan on all sides. You'll use the parchment paper later to lift the cake out of the pan and roll it up.
- Whisk the flour, cocoa, baking powder, and salt together in a medium bowl.
- In a large bowl, combine the egg yolks and sugar and whisk together until well combined.
- Add the sour cream, melted butter, and vanilla extract and whisk together until well combined.
- Add the dry ingredients and gently whisk together until well combined.
- Add the egg whites to a large mixing bowl and whip at high speed until stiff peaks form.

- Gently fold about 1/3 of the whipped egg whites into the chocolate mixture to loosen up the batter.
- Add the remaining egg whites and gently fold together until well combined.
- Spread the cake batter evenly into the prepared pan and bake for 10 – 12 minutes, or until the top of the cake springs back when touched and a toothpick inserted comes out clean.
- Remove the cake from the oven and immediately lift the cake out of the pan using the parchment paper and place it on the counter.
- While the cake is hot, use the parchment paper the cake was baked in and start at the shorter end of the cake to slowly roll the cake up. Set the cake aside to cool completely.
- When the cake is cooled and is ready to be filled, make the filling.

Mascarpone Whipped Cream Filling

1 ¼ cup heavy whipping cream, cold
 ¾ cup powdered sugar
 1 tsp. vanilla extract

1/8 tsp. salt
 8 oz. mascarpone cheese, softened but still chilled

- Add the heavy whipping cream, powdered sugar, vanilla extract, and salt to a large mixer bowl and whip on high speed until soft peaks form.
- Add the mascarpone cheese to the whipped cream and whip until stiff peak forms. It will happen fairly quickly.
- Unroll the cake roll very carefully, looking out for areas where it may be sticking to release it. You can use an offset spatula or something similar and run it along the parchment paper as you unroll the cake to help release it as it unrolls.
- Spread the filling evenly onto the unrolled cake, then roll it back up without the parchment paper.
- Wrap it up in plastic wrap with the seam side down and refrigerate for at least an hour to firm up.
- When you are ready to decorate the cake make the chocolate ganache.

Chocolate Ganache

8 oz. semi sweet chocolate chips
 1 Tbsp. butter

1 cup heavy whipping cream

- Put the chocolate chips, butter and cream into a microwave safe bowl.
- Microwave for 1 minute.
- Whisk together until chocolate has melted and mix is smooth. It will be rather runny.
- Refrigerate for 1 hour.
- Using a hand mixer, beat the ganache until lightened in color and spreadable.
- To decorate the cake, use a large, serrated knife to gently cut off a piece of the log about 3” in length. Make the cut with a slight diagonal.
- Use some of the ganache to attach the smaller log to the side of the larger log.
- Spread the remaining ganache all over the cake, then use a fork to create bark-like lines all over it.
- Refrigerate until ready to serve.

Kwanzaa

Cheddar Cornbread from Southern Living 1983 Annual Recipes

Ingredients

1 cup yellow cornmeal	1 tsp. salt
1 cup all-purpose flour	1 cup milk
2 tbsp. sugar	2 eggs, beaten
1 tbsp. baking powder	2 cups (8oz.) shredded cheddar cheese

- Preheat oven to 425 degrees. Grease an 8" x 8" x 2" pan.
- Combine the first five ingredients in a large mixing bowl, set aside.
- Combine the milk, eggs, and cheese.
- Add the dry ingredients and mix well.
- Pour batter into prepared pan. Bake for 15 minutes or until cornbread is golden.
- Cornbread is best eaten while warm.

Tres Reyes Magos Alfajores from <https://rockinmama.net/three-kings-day-alfajores>

Ingredients

½ cup butter, softened	1 – 14 oz. can sweetened condensed milk
2 tbsp. powdered sugar	1 cinnamon stick
½ tsp. vanilla extract	powdered sugar for dusting
1 cup flour	
¼ tsp. salt	

- Pour 1 can of sweetened condensed milk into the top of a double boiler and add 1 cinnamon stick.
- Place over boiling water and cook over low heat, stirring occasionally until thick and caramel colored (approximately 2-3 hours)
- Remove cinnamon stick
- Remove from heat and allow to cool
- Preheat oven to 350 degrees
- Prepare baking sheets with butter, cooking spray, or parchment paper
- Combine flour and salt in a bowl and set aside
- Beat butter and sugar until pale and creamy
- Add vanilla extract, mix together
- Add flour mixture and combine until a soft dough forms
- Shape dough into a ball and refrigerate for 30 minutes
- Generously flour work surface and rolling pin and roll dough out to 1/8" thickness
- Use a 2" round or fluted round cookie cutter to cut out 12 cookies
- Use a fork to prick the center of each cookie to prevent bubbling during the baking surface
- Bake at 350 degrees for 10 minutes (do not allow the cookies to brown)
- Remove from baking sheet and cool completely on wire rack
- Spread 1-2 tsp. of dulce de leche onto the flat side of 6 cookies. Top each with the remaining 6 cookies.
- Sprinkle the tops of each sandwich cookie with powdered sugar, if desired.
- Serve immediately

