

**This is an excerpt from the Starfall Pre-K Teacher's Guide.**

If you have questions or comments, please contact us.

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**Starfall**<sup>®</sup>



**Teacher's Guide**

# *Winter Holidays*



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## ***Winter Holidays***

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# Winter

Generally considered to include December, January, and February

December 21st is the shortest day of the year. That means on this day we receive the least amount of daylight of any day of the year.

Provide a visual display of the four seasons, or use the Starfall Four Seasons Poster, and review the fact that the year is divided into four seasons based on changes in the weather.

If you live where the weather is warm through the winter months, find photographs or check websites that show the changes in nature that occur in snowy climates. Activity suggestions are included for locations where children will not experience snow.



## Book Suggestions

- *Footprints in the Snow* by Cynthia Benjamin
- *Frozen Noses* by Jan Carr
- *In The Snow* by Huy Voun Lee
- *In the Snow: Who's Been Here?* by Lindsey George
- *Snow* by Uri Shulevitz
- *Snowballs* by Lois Ehlert
- *Snowflake Bentley* by Jacqueline Briggs Martin
- *Stopping by the Woods on a Snowy Evening* by Robert Frost
- *The Big Snow* by Berta and Elmer Hader
- *The Hat* by Jan Brett
- *The Missing Mitten Mystery* by Steven Kellogg
- *The Mitten* by Jan Brett
- *The Snowman* by Raymond Briggs
- *The Snowy Day* by Ezra Jack Keats
- *Thomas' Snowsuit* by Robert Munsch
- *Winter is Here* by Kimberly Weimbeiger

## Starfall Online Activities

- *Calendar*
- *Holidays: "Snowman"*
- *Backpack Bear's Books:*  
"What's the Weather?"
- *I'm Reading, Fiction/Nonfiction:*  
"Penguin, Penguin"
- *Talking Library:*  
"Precipitation," "Jack Frost"



## Activities and Crafts

### Winter Window (For classrooms in the South)

Cut brown construction paper into strips. Children spread glue with a paintbrush onto the strips, and with your assistance sprinkle with white glitter. Tape or use reusable adhesive to attach the strips to your window vertically and horizontally to create winter window frames.

### Materials

- Brown construction paper
- Glue
- Paintbrush
- White glitter
- Tape or reusable adhesive

### Shaving Cream Snow

The children pretend shaving cream is snow, and use their fingers to form their names, letters, numbers, words, or shapes in it.



#### Materials

- Non-menthol shaving cream

### Indoor Ice-skating

If you live in a climate that does not have winter snow and ice, turn your classroom into a skating rink. Give each child two pieces of waxed paper and instruct them to glide on them around the classroom.

#### Materials

- Two pieces of waxed paper per child

### Ice Melting Chart

The children predict what will make ice melt fastest: salt, cold water, hot water, salt water, or nothing. Use each method on similar size chunks of ice and graph the results. Discuss the outcomes.

#### Materials

- Recyclable aluminum pan
- Ice cubes
- Salt
- Cup of cold water
- Cup of warm water
- Cup of room temperature water
- Salt (to add to cup of water)
- Chart paper

### Counting Snowballs

The children place the corresponding number of pom-poms or cotton balls in each section of the egg carton. Use numbers appropriate for your class.



#### Materials

- Miniature marshmallows
- Several different small jars, bowls, or containers
- Chart paper
- Marker

### Marshmallow Math: Estimation

Discuss similarities and differences in marshmallows and snowballs.

Indicate a jar, bowl, or other container. Children guess how many marshmallows it will take to fill the container to the top. Write each child's name on chart paper and the estimate next to his or her name. Fill the container, counting the marshmallows. Compare the actual number of marshmallows it took to fill the container with the children's guesses.

Repeat with a different container.

#### Materials

- Bag of vegetable shortening
- Bowl of icy water

### Animals in the Arctic: What keeps them warm?

Explain that Arctic animals have blubber to keep them warm in the winter. To experience how Arctic animals stay warm when protected by a layer of fat, the children take turns placing their hands into the bowl of icy water, then into a bag of vegetable shortening, then back into the icy water.

#### Materials

- 10 snowmen shapes on index cards with numbers from 0-9 on their bellies
- 10 snowmen shapes with a matching number of buttons on their bellies (0-9)

### Snowman Number Matching

Shuffle the cards and place them face down on a table. The children take turns and reveal two of the shape and button cards to find matches.



### Snow Glitter Pictures

The children paint a winter scene on black paper using glue. Before the glue dries they sprinkle it with glitter.



#### Materials

- Black paper
- Glitter & glue

### Snow Covered Pictures

Add water slowly to bar soap flakes (or powder detergent for the best consistency) to create imaginary snow. Discuss changes the children observe.

They draw pictures, then paint snow on top of them using the soap mixture and paintbrushes.

#### Materials

- Container for soap mixture
- Light blue construction paper
- Bar soap flakes or powder detergent
- Paintbrushes & Crayons

### Animals and Hibernation

Explain that some animals hibernate during the winter months. Animals that hibernate include some bears, bats, butterflies, moths, chipmunks, frogs, groundhogs, hamsters, snakes, ladybugs, raccoons, and skunks. Review books and child-friendly websites as you discuss the meaning of hibernation.

Discuss the following ideas about how animals spend the winter:

- Winter is cold. There is often snow on the ground. People live in warm houses. What do animals do?
- Some animals sleep all winter. It is a very deep sleep called hibernation. They need little or no food. Bears and chipmunks hibernate. So do frogs, snakes, and even some bugs.
- Other animals stay active in winter. It is hard for them to find food. They may live in holes in trees or under the ground to stay warm. Deer, squirrels, and rabbits stay active.
- Some birds fly south for the winter. We call this migration. They go to warmer places to find food. Other birds remain all winter. We can help by feeding them.

### Painting with snowballs

Children use cotton balls as paintbrushes to create winter scenes.

#### Materials

- Paints, painting paper
- Cotton balls

## Games

### Musical Hibernation Game

Review the fact that some animals sleep all winter. Distribute the mats, carpet tiles, or blankets, one to each child. Children pretend they are animals, and dance while the music plays. When the music stops it is winter and time to find a place to sleep. As children become familiar with more animals that hibernate, they declare which animal they are and use positional words to describe where they are sleeping.

#### Materials

- Tape/cd player and lively music
- Carpet tiles, mats, or blankets

### Indoor Snowball Fun

Crumple sheets of paper to create snowballs. Use them to do one or more of the following activities:

- Set a Hula-Hoop on the floor and the children toss snowballs into the circle.
- Place a laundry basket on a table and children toss snowballs into the basket.
- Place a Ping-Pong ball on the mouth of an empty plastic soda bottle, then children try to knock the ball off with the paper snowballs, without knocking over the bottle.

#### Materials

- Several sheets of white paper
- Empty plastic soda bottle
- Laundry basket
- Ping-Pong ball
- Hula-Hoop

## Hibernation Game

Children sit in a circle. One child sits in the middle and pretends to sleep, curled up like a hibernating bear. Make sure his or her eyes stay closed.

Choose a child to sneak up, touch the bear, then quickly return to his or her place in the circle. Everyone in the circle says, "Wake up sleepy bear! Wake up!" The child in the middle sits up and has three chances to guess who woke him or her.

## Snowman, Snowman, Where's Your Nose?

Children sit in a circle. Choose one child to be the snowman. That child sits in the middle of the circle and hides his or her eyes. Another child hides a carrot behind his or her back while the other children pretend to have carrots, holding their hands behind their backs. The children then chant, "Snowman, Snowman, where's your nose? Somebody took it from your home. Wake up Snowman, find your nose!"

The child in the middle uncovers his or her eyes and has three guesses to discover who has the carrot. Even if the child in the middle doesn't guess correctly, the child who was hiding the carrot sits in the middle of the circle and the game continues.

## Musical Snowflakes

Place the snowflakes on the floor. It is best to have more snowflakes than children. Play music and children pretend to be snowflakes floating around the room. When the music stops each child finds a snowflake on which to land.

## Recipes\*

**\*Always check for allergies and sensitivities before serving food.**

### Frozen Juice Igloo Popsicle

Children choose their favorite juices and pour them into ice cube trays. Write each child's name on a popsicle stick and stick them into the trays. If the temperature is below freezing in your area, place the trays outside and allow the drinks to freeze. If not, place the trays in the freezer. When frozen, discuss the change from liquid to solid and the children enjoy igloo blocks for snack.

### Banana Blizzards

The recipe is for 10 children. (Double it if necessary.)

Blend together one cup of cold milk with two or three bananas in a blender. The children count aloud as you add ten snowballs (scoops of vanilla frozen yogurt) to the blender. The children (with supervision) turn the blender on and off again to create blizzards. Serve in plastic cups with straws.

### Snowman Face Snack

Distribute a rice cake to each child to frost with cream cheese. They add raisins for facial features, and a baby carrot nose.



## Songs

**Starfall Sing-Along Volume 1:**  
**Track 40, "What's the Weather?"**  
**and Track 49, "Zipper Coat"**

**Starfall Sing-Along Volume 2:**  
**Track 16, "If All the Raindrops"**

### Materials

- One carrot

### Materials

- Large colored paper snowflakes (laminated)
- Teacher's choice of music

### Ingredients

- Assortment of fruit and/or vegetable juices
- Ice cube trays
- Popsicle sticks

### Ingredients

- 5 ounce cups and a scoop
- Vanilla frozen yogurt
- One cup cold milk
- 2-3 bananas
- Blender

### Ingredients

- Rice cake for each child
- Cream cheese
- Baby carrots
- Raisins

# Chinese New Year

Between late January and early February, depending on the cycle of the moon

Chinese New Year starts on a new moon and ends with the lantern festival on the full moon 15 days later.

In China the New Year marks the birthday of every family member. During Chinese New Year celebrations, people wear red clothes. Red symbolizes fire, which the Chinese believe drives away bad luck. Children receive good luck money in small red envelopes and everyone wears their newest clothes. In Chinese, the word "fu" means "good luck." Discuss cultural heritages within your class and locate China on a map or globe. Use books or child-friendly websites for photographs of Chinese New Year.



## Book Suggestions

- *Celebrating Chinese New Year*  
by Diane Hoyt-Goldsmith
- *Dim Sum for Everyone* by Grace Lin
- *Dragon Dance - A Chinese New Year Lift-the-Flap Book* by Joan Holub
- *Draw Dragon Dot Eyes and other Chinese Fables* retold by Ellen Ching (Starfall)
- *Lanterns and Firecrackers - A Chinese New Year Story* by Jonny Zucker
- *Lion Dancer* by Kate Waters
- *The Dancing Dragon* by Marcia K. Vaughan

## Starfall Online Activities

- *I'm Reading: Chinese Fables*



## Activities and Crafts

### Chinese Ribbon Dance

Attach a crepe paper streamer to a chopstick or unsharpened pencil. Play Chinese inspired music and allow children to express their feelings through dance.

#### Materials

- Chopstick or unsharpened pencil
- Chinese inspired music
- Crepe paper streamers

### Masks on Parade

Children create their own masks to wear in a Chinese New Year classroom parade. Distribute prepared paper plates. The children decorate their masks with paints, crayons, paper and cloth scraps, streamers, and glitter. When they are finished, attach yarn or construction paper strips to the backs of the masks. Children showcase their masks proudly as they participate in a classroom parade.



#### Materials

- Paper plate with eye, nose, and mouth holes cut out for each child
- Paints, crayons, paper, and cloth scraps
- Yarn or construction paper strips
- Streamer and/or glitter

### Rice Paintings

Children paint with a glue/paint mixture. They then sprinkle rice into this paint. The glue/paint and rice mixture dries to create a shiny, attractive design.

#### Materials

- Glue/paint mixture
- Paintbrush & paper
- Rice



## Clean Up!

Traditionally one's house is cleaned for the New Year. Enlist the help of the children prior to Chinese New Year in cleaning the classroom, sweeping, wiping the tables, straightening bookshelves, and hanging up their coats and backpacks. Note:

No sweeping is allowed on the first day of Chinese New Year as it is believed good luck or family fortune is swept away. Discuss other familiar cultural family traditions with the children.

## Dragon Dance

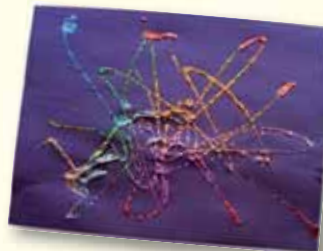
Many cities hold parades, which are led by a huge dragon or lion. The Chinese have great respect for dragons. In Chinese legend, the dragon is not a monster but a protector against evil spirits and the symbol of luck, goodness, and strength. The lion is the symbol of protection and is thought to guard against danger. Children love to watch the dragon parade and take part in the great Dragon Dance. Divide the class into small groups. Each group creates its own Dragon Dance and performs it for the class.

## Chopstick Practice

Children practice using chopsticks in your Dramatic Play Center. Provide items to pick up with the chopsticks (pom poms, marshmallows, cotton balls, and small toys). Also provide a snack such as apple or pear slices, or banana chunks, which children can eat using chopsticks.

## Fireworks

Use child-friendly websites to research and discuss how the Chinese invented fireworks a long time ago. Children squirt glue on black paper and then cover the glue with multi-colored colored glitter to create their own.



### Materials

- Multi-colored glitter, glue
- Black paper

## Chinese Abacus

Research images of a Chinese abacus with the children. They each create an abacus using O-shaped cereal. Children place cereal pieces in a straight line, then count out ten pieces and string them on yarn. Encourage them to use self talk as a strategy to help get the job done. Attach the yarn to a piece of paper to create a Chinese abacus.

### Materials

- O-shaped cereal
- Yarn

## Snack Suggestion\*

**\*Always check for allergies and sensitivities before serving food.**

## Chinese Orange Tray

During the celebration of Chinese New Year, oranges and tangerines are displayed in trays or bowls. Tangerines are symbolic of good luck and oranges represent wealth. Make your own Chinese orange tray to share good luck with the class. The children eat the fruit for snack.



## Songs

### Five Green Dragons

(Melody: Five Little Chickadees)

*Five green dragons making such a roar.*

*One danced away  
and then there were four.*

*Four green dragons marching 'round a tree.*

*One danced away  
and then there were three.*

*Three green dragons dancing around you.*

*One danced away  
and then there were two.*

*Two green dragons looking at the sun.*

*One danced away  
and then there was one.*

*One green dragon having lots of fun*

*She danced away  
and then there were none.*

# Groundhog Day

## February 2nd

Children enjoy the legend of the groundhog, especially watching the news to learn of the groundhog's forecast. Start these activities before Groundhog Day so the children will be experts by the time the big day arrives!

Groundhog Day is celebrated on February 2nd each year. Popular legend says that if the groundhog sees his shadow when he awakens and peeks out of his burrow, there will be six more weeks of winter. If not, there will be an early spring.

A groundhog is also called a woodchuck and is a member of the squirrel family. A groundhog hibernates (goes into a deep sleep) during the winter from October through March. When the weather becomes warmer, the groundhog's body warms up and it awakens.

A groundhog lives underground in a burrow. It digs its own burrow with its front feet. In fact, a groundhog builds two burrows, one for summer and one for winter. It even builds an extra exit or two just in case another animal ventures into its burrow.

Groundhogs usually have three to five babies per year. A groundhog's babies are called cubs, kits, or pups.

### Book Suggestions

- *Geoffrey Groundhog Predicts the Weather* by Bruce Koscielniak
- *Gretchen Groundhog, It's Your Day!* by Abby Levine
- *Go to Sleep Groundhog!* by Judy Cox
- *Groundhog Stays Up Late* by Margery Cuyler
- *How Groundhog's Garden Grew* by Lynne Cherry
- *It's Groundhog Day* by Steven Kroll
- *Little Groundhog's Shadow* by Janet Craig and Susan T. Hall
- *Wake Up Groundhog* by Susan Korman
- *What Makes a Shadow* by Clyde Robert Bulla

### Starfall Online Activities

- *Holidays: "Groundhog Day"*
- *It's Fun to Read: Tongue Twisters, "Woodchuck"*
- *It's Fun to Read: Poetry, "My Shadow"*



### Activities and Crafts

#### Shadow Activities

- The children go outside several times on a sunny day to check the length of their shadows at different times. Trace shadows on the pavement with sidewalk chalk. The children add faces, clothing, etc.
- Shadows are caused by objects getting in the way of light (the sun). Turn off the overhead lights and shine a flashlight or other bright light on a child. Children experiment forming different kinds of shadows. Discuss cause and effect as the children experiment moving closer to and farther from the light source.

#### Tongue Twister

Teach the following tongue twister: "How much wood would a woodchuck chuck if a woodchuck could chuck wood?" See Starfall, *It's Fun to Read: Tongue Twisters, "Woodchuck."*

## Groundhog Math

The average groundhog usually grows to about two feet long from head to tail.

Cut a piece of string or yarn two feet long. The children use the string or yarn to determine if objects (books, chair, table, desk, television, pencil, plate, lamp, picture frame, etc.) are longer, shorter, or about the same size as a groundhog.

## Groundhog Day Prediction

On the nearest school day before February 2nd, children predict whether or not the groundhog will see its shadow. They illustrate their predictions and dictate sentences to explain.

On February 2nd check whether or not the groundhog saw its shadow. Check predictions to discover how many children were correct.

## Games

### Groundhog Tunnel Game

Children line up in a row (two if needed). To form a tunnel, children stand close together with their legs apart. The last person in the row is the groundhog. The groundhog travels through the tunnel on his or her stomach. When the groundhog reaches the end of the tunnel, he or she stands and becomes part of the tunnel while a new groundhog starts wiggling through.

### Groundhog's Home

The children decorate the box to resemble a groundhog's burrow by painting it brown and drawing trees on it, etc. They pretend to be groundhogs following your directions to crawl *in* and *out*, *beside*, *behind*, *in front of*, *near*, or *next to* the burrow.

## Snack Suggestion\*

**\*Always check for allergies and sensitivities before serving food.**

### Groundhog Snack

Visit child-friendly websites to research what groundhogs eat (a variety of vegetation, including fruit, vegetables, and flowers). Provide a variety of fruits and vegetables for the children to choose from as a snack.

## Songs and Poems

### Ten Little Groundhogs

(Melody: Ten Little Indians)

*One little, two little, three little groundhogs,  
Four little, five little, six little groundhogs,  
Seven little, eight little, nine little groundhogs,  
Sleeping under ground.*

*Nine little, eight little, seven little groundhogs,  
Six little, five little, four little groundhogs,  
Three little, two little, one little groundhog,  
(Will) Did he see his shadow?*

### My Shadow

(by Robert Louis Stevenson)

*I have a little shadow that goes in and out with me.  
And what can be the use of him is more than I can see.*

*He is very, very like me from the heels up to the head;  
And I see him jump before me when I jump into my bed.*

*The funniest thing about him is the way he likes to grow --  
Not at all like proper children, which is always very slow;*

*For he sometimes shoots up taller like an India rubber ball,  
And he sometimes gets so little that there's none of him at all.*

### Materials

- Large box (large enough for a child to crawl in)
- Paints, markers, construction paper, etc.

# Valentine's Day

February 14th

Traditionally Valentine's Day, which is celebrated on February 14 each year, is a day to tell people you love them. Valentine's Day cards are exchanged and are sometimes sent anonymously. Chocolate is a popular snack and a great gift on Valentine's Day!



## Book Suggestions

- *Arthur's Valentine* by Marc Brown
- *Clifford's First Valentine's Day* by Normal Bridwell
- *Franklin's Valentine* by Paulette Bourgeois
- *I Love You With All My Heart* by Noris Kern
- *It's Valentine's Day* by Jack Prelutsky
- *Love you Forever* by Robert Munsch
- *Mama Do You Love Me?* by Barbara M. Joose
- *Roses are Pink, Your Feet Really Stink* by Diane de Groat
- *Valentine Mice* by Bethany Roberts
- *Valentine's Day* by Gail Gibbons
- *Will You Be My Valentine?* by Steven Kroll

## Starfall Online Activities

- *Holidays: "Valentine's Day"*
- *Calendar: "February"*



## Activities and Crafts

### Valentine Stick Puppets

Provide children with a selection of valentine cards. Each child chooses one and glues it to the top of a craft stick.

Gather the children together with their valentine puppets and say the "Valentine Puppet Rhyme" together. (See Valentine's Day Songs and Rhymes.) Small groups of children may create and perform puppet shows.

### Materials

- Selection of valentine cards
- (recycled or new)
- Craft sticks, glue

### Valentine Mixing Colors

Ask children which colors mix together to create the color pink. In a small resealable plastic bag, place a small amount of each of the colors of finger paints predicted to create pink. Seal the bag, then children squeeze the colors together to mix them and see what color results. If the colors mixed don't result in pink, try again with new bags. Eventually children will predict that red and white mixed together will create pink. The remaining paint mixtures can be used to paint in the Art Center.

### Materials

- Additional colors of finger paint for experimentation
- Quart-sized resealable plastic bags
- Red and white finger paint

### Class Love Book

Children illustrate someone they love (family member, friend, or pet). They use scribble writing to label or write sentences about their illustrations. Assemble the pages and add a cover to create a Class Love Book.

### Materials

- Pink or white construction paper
- Markers, crayons
- Heart cut outs

## Valentine Estimation #1

Indicate a sample heart cut out and bag or box of candy hearts. Children estimate how many candy hearts it would take to cover the paper heart. Write each child's name and estimation on chart paper. You and/or Gingerbread Boy may make estimates too.

### Materials

- One small box of candy hearts and one small paper heart cut-out for each child
- Chart paper
- Marker

Distribute a heart cut out and a bag or box of candy hearts to each child. Explain that they will check their estimates by placing candy hearts as closely together as possible, to entirely cover the heart cut out. Help children count the candy hearts and compare to their estimates. Discuss whether the estimates were too high or too low. Afterwards, the children may eat the candy hearts.

**Optional:** Use a larger paper heart to count up to larger numbers.

## Valentine Estimation #2

Print "How many hearts can I hold in my hand?" at the top of the chart paper. Prepare three columns: "Name," "Guess," and "Actual." The children guess how many candy hearts they can hold in their hands. Record their guesses. Each child cleans his or her hands with hand sanitizer, then reaches into the candy jar and grabs a handful of candy hearts. Count the hearts and record the number in the "Actual" column. Compare the guesses with the actual numbers.

## Fish for Hearts

Tie one end of the strings to the rulers, and the other end to the magnets. The children use these as fishing poles to fish for specific hearts. Example: Go fish for a large pink heart.

## Heart Lacing

The children lace yarn around the hearts.



## Games

### Valentine Game

This game is a variation of "Duck, Duck, Goose" and "A-Tisket, A-Tasket."

Put a heart or a valentine card in a small basket. Children sit in a circle. Designate a child to be "it." This child holds the basket and walks around the circle while the group sings, "A-tisket, a-tasket, I have a little basket. I made my friend a valentine and on the way I dropped it."

The child who is "it" then drops the valentine in the lap of the child closest to him or her. As with "Duck, Duck, Goose" that child stands and chases the other around the circle back to his or her seat while the rest of the group continues the song, "I dropped it, I dropped it, on the way I dropped it. I made my friend a valentine and on the way I dropped it." Continue play until everyone has a turn.

## Songs and Rhymes

**Starfall's Selected Nursery Rhymes:**  
**Track 1, "A-Tisket, A-Tasket" and**  
**Track 2, "Georgie Porgie"**

### Ten Little Valentines

(Melody: "Ten Little Indians")

One little, two little, three little valentines  
Four little, five little, six little valentines  
Seven little, eight little, nine little valentines.  
Ten valentines in a row!

### Valentine Puppet Rhyme

I move it to the right,  
I move it to the left,  
I move it in the way  
My HEART loves BEST!

### Materials

- Jar of candy hearts
- Hand sanitizer
- Chart paper

### Materials

- Red, pink, and purple paper hearts in various sizes with paper clips attached
- Rulers, string, and magnets

### Materials

- Large red heart shapes cut from poster board with holes punched around the perimeters
- Lengths of yarn with knots on one end

### Materials

- Small basket with a handle
- Valentine card or heart



## Hide the Valentine

Hide a construction paper heart in the classroom. Children take turns trying to find it. Provide simple clues and guide them by using positional words such as *behind*, *beside*, *next to*, *in front of*, etc. to let them know if they are getting "hotter" (closer) or "colder" (farther) from the heart. When a child locates the heart, the others turn and close their eyes while the heart is hidden again.

**Variation #1:** Mail Carrier, Mail Carrier, Where's my Mail?

One child is the mail carrier and wears the mail carrier's hat (a red strip of paper with a pink heart that says "Mail Carrier"). The mail carrier hides his or her eyes while you give another child a valentine to hide behind his or her back. The other children pretend to also have valentines hidden behind them. The mail carrier uncovers his or her eyes and faces the children who say, "Mail carrier, mail carrier, where's the mail?" The mail carrier has three guesses to discover who is hiding the valentine. If he or she guesses correctly, he or she continues as mail carrier. If he or she guesses incorrectly, the person with the valentine becomes the mail carrier.

**Variation #2:** This variation is similar to "Doggie, Doggie, Where's your Bone?"

One child sits in a chair and faces away from the class with his or her eyes closed. Give a plastic or decorated paper heart to a child in the group who then places it under the chair as quietly as possible and returns to his or her place. The child in the chair faces the group. Ask the child, "Who was so kind to leave you this pretty valentine?" The child then has three guesses.

## Recipes\*

*\*Always check for allergies and sensitivities before serving food.*

### Queen of Hearts Tarts

Children make their own tarts by mixing two spoonfuls of cream cheese with one spoonful of strawberry preserves or fruit spread in small cups. They use plastic spoons to spread the mixture onto vanilla wafers.

#### Ingredients

- Cream cheese (2 spoonfuls for each child)
- Strawberry preserves or fruit spread
- Small cup for each child
- Vanilla wafers

### Edible Valentines

The children use heart-shaped cookie cutters to cut heart shapes out of this snack. They may use the spread or preserves to either make a full sandwich, or cut heart shapes out of single slices of bread to make an open-faced heart treat.

#### Ingredients

- Slice of bread for each child
- Red fruit spread or preserves
- Heart-shaped cookie cutters
- Plastic knife or craft stick



# Black History Month

## February

Black History Month was established in 1926 so that Americans could reflect on the history and contributions of African Americans. In the 1970s, this celebration of African American history was expanded to include the entire month of February. Think about using some of the following activities throughout the school year rather than just during the month of February.

### Book Suggestions

- *A Is for Africa* by Ifeoma Onyefulu
- *A Picture Book of Martin Luther King, Jr.* by David A. Adler
- *Cassie's Colorful Day* by Faith Ringgold
- *Dancing the Ring Shout* by Kim Siegelson
- *I Like Myself!* by Karen Beaumont
- *I Love My Hair!* by Natasha Anastasia Tarpley
- *Kente Colors* by Debbi Chocolate
- *Mama Panya's Pancakes* by Mary Chamberlin
- *My Painted House, My Friendly Chicken, and Me* by Maya Angelou
- *Why Am I Different?* by Norma Simon

### Starfall Online Activities

- *It's Fun to Read: Music, "Scott Joplin"*
- *It's Fun to Read: Music, "Scott Joplin Jukebox"*
- *It's Fun to Read: Artists, "Ernie Barnes"*



### Activities and Crafts

#### Diversity Sheet

Fill several plastic spray bottles with different colors of tempera paint that have been diluted with water.

Children use bottles to spray paint on a bed sheet. They then watch as the colors run and blend together to create a beautiful design. Discuss the different colors and what happened when they mixed together. The children take turns to describe personal characteristics such as eye color, hair color, short, tall, etc. Use the discussion to lead into a conversation about how people may be different, but yet they blend together in work and play to make the world wonderful!

#### Materials

- Water bottles
- Tempera paint
- White bed sheet

#### Different Eggs

Indicate the eggs. Volunteers describe the eggs, noting how they are alike and how they are different. Children assist to crack open the eggs. Discuss the fact that even though the eggs may be different on the outside, all the eggs are the same on the inside.



#### Materials

- A dozen brown eggs
- A dozen white eggs
- Large bowl

Lead a discussion to help children realize that even though their classmates may be different on the outside (hair color, eye color, tall, short, etc.), they are alike on the inside. Use questions such as: *How many of you like to play outside? How many of you like to eat ice cream on a hot summer day? How many of you love your parents and grandparents?*

Consider having scrambled eggs for snack.

### African Music

Prior to reading this story, explain that a “Ring Shout” is a harvest celebration that dates back to the 1800s, in which African Americans gathered to sing, dance, and make music with homemade instruments. During the story imitate the sound of each instrument and the children repeat. When you have finished reading, sequence the main events. Discuss what takes place at the Ring Shout and what the community is thankful for after the harvest.

The children work together and use available materials to create their own instruments.

#### Materials

- Materials to create musical instruments, such as paper cups, rice, tape, paper plates, hole punch, bells, string
- Dancing the Ring Shout* by Kim Siegelson

### African Drum

Prior to the lesson, connect two cups for each child bottom-to-bottom, using a low temperature hot glue gun or masking tape, and allow them to dry. The children will use these to create drums.

The children tear off 4 to 5 inch lengths of masking tape to completely cover the opening at the top and bottom of the cups. Next they use 3 to 4 inch lengths of masking tape to completely cover the outside of the cups. They brush shoe polish all over the tape-covered cups, and wipe the excess off with rags.

To decorate their drums, the children use permanent markers to draw geometric or other designs, or glue construction paper shapes around the top, middle, and bottom of the drums. They use their drums to create music alone or with others, using different rhythms, tempos, dynamics, and interpretations.

#### Materials

- Two disposable drinking cups per child
- Permanent markers
- Masking tape, glue
- Brown shoe polish
- Rags

### Be an Inventor

Explain that when a person has an idea to invent something that no other person has ever made, that person is an inventor.

Display the Gingerbread Boy stamp. Discuss how an African American man named W. B. Purvis wanted to be able to recreate the same picture over and over, so he invented something called a “hand stamp.”

- Demonstrate how to use a hand stamp with an ink pad to create a picture.
- Distribute an index card to each child. Children take turns using the Gingerbread Boy hand stamp and ink pad to stamp their index cards.
- They experiment with other hand stamps.

The children think of inventions they would like to create. Remind them that their inventions should be new things that other people could use. Give children plenty of time to share ideas. They may work alone or in groups.

Provide a variety of arts and crafts materials and time for children to create their own inventions. When children have completed their inventions (they may need more than one day) they share them with the class. Be sure they explain how their inventions can be used and what materials were used to create them. Place the inventions on display in the classroom for parents and visitors to see. Include a child-dictated description of each invention.

#### Materials

- Gingerbread Boy hand stamp
- Variety of hand stamps
- Ink pad
- Index card for each child
- Other suggested arts and crafts materials: pieces of wood, milk containers, pipe cleaners, paper clips, straws, tape, paper, glue, poster paint, markers, crayons, elastic, fabric scraps, construction paper, pom-poms

## Change the World

Discuss how Martin Luther King, Jr. was an African American who worked very hard to make the world a peace-filled place to live. He taught us how to love each other, get along with one another, and to work together. Volunteers suggest behaviors that help make the classroom a peaceful, loving place to learn, like smiling, holding doors for others, saying please and thank you, giving a hug, sharing, and using kind words. Use this opportunity to discuss bullying and proper responses.

### Inventor: George Washington Carver\*

**\*Check for nut/peanut allergies before doing this activity.**

Introduce African American inventor, George Washington Carver. Discuss how George Washington Carver is credited with discovering over three hundred uses for the peanut, and hundreds more for sweet potatoes, soybeans, and pecans. His research was intended to provide products that were less expensive than commercial products of his time.

The children shell peanuts and observe them the way George Washington Carver would have observed them. Distribute an unshelled peanut to each child. Children describe how the peanuts look, feel, and smell. Discuss and list potential uses for peanuts (peanut butter, peanut oil, cookies, cosmetics, paints, plastics).

Research products made with peanuts, sweet potatoes, and soybeans.

#### Materials

- Peanuts (shelled, enough for each child)
- Peanuts (unshelled)



### Inventor: Garret Morgan

Introduce Garret Morgan, the African American inventor of the traffic light. Until Garret Morgan invented the traffic light, drivers had to guess the right time to cross the street.

Discuss the reason we need traffic lights and how they contribute to our safety.

The children paint milk or juice cartons with black poster paint. After the paint dries they glue on red, yellow, and green circles in order from top to bottom.

The children find places in the classroom or on the playground where they can pretend to use their traffic lights. Examples:

- Block Area — directing traffic during dramatic play
- Exit doors — as a signal to children to walk quietly, not run, in the hallway
- Snack — as a signal to remind children to use their inside voices

#### Materials

- 1 milk or juice carton for each child
- 1 red, 1 yellow, and 1 green construction paper circle for each child
- Black poster paint and paintbrushes
- Glue

## Games

### Red Light, Green Light

One child pretends to be a traffic light and stands with his or her back to the other children. When he or she raises a green circle, the other children run toward him or her. When he or she raises a yellow circle, the other children run slower. Finally when he or she raises a red circle, the other children stop. The child acting as the traffic light may raise the cards in any order.

This game helps develop motor skills.

#### Materials

- |                          |   |
|--------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Red, yellow, and green construction paper circles |
|                          | (one of each)                                     |

## Snack Suggestions\*

**\*Always check for allergies and sensitivities before serving food.**

### Traffic Light Snack

After discussing the invention of the traffic light, each child creates a traffic light for snack by using plastic spoons to spread peanut butter or cream cheese on a three inch piece of celery and placing the three fruits in a traffic light color pattern.

### Friendship Snack

Each child brings a half cup of his or her favorite dry snack to school. Suggestions include raisins, miniature crackers, cereal snack mix, pretzels, and popcorn. Mix the snacks together in a large bowl and serve the mixture for snack.

Discuss how different foods can go together to create something very good. This is a great snack to demonstrate the concepts of diversity, sharing, cooperation, and trying new things.

#### Ingredients

- |                          |  |
|--------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Peanut butter or cream cheese  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 1 green grape, 1 golden raisin, and 1 raspberry for each child (or different fruits of the same colors if these are not available) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | One 3" piece of celery for each child  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Plastic spoons   |