

December Thematic Unit  
Winter Celebrations

1a semana: Winter Holidays  
2a semana: Xmas around the Latin World  
3a semana Xmas around the world

Special Project: The Giving Tree

Character of the Month: Compassion

Connected Holidays: Hanukkah – December 1  
Winter Solstice – December 22  
Christmas – December 25  
Kwanzaa – December 26

Christmas Party

Songs: Nieve Blanca, Feliz Navidad Villancicos ( El Burrito Sabanero, Campana Sobre Campana, etc. or teacher choose one for her class.

Color: Green

Shape: Star

Letters of the Month: L, LL, M, N.

Language Development: Books as assigned by rotation.

In this Thematic Unit, the children will explore the various celebrations and traditions around the world in December/Winter. We will focus on the Special holidays celebrated around the world that are associated with winter. The first two weeks of January, we will focus more on the winter weather.

Since we live in a diverse world, it is impossible to specifically acknowledge each and every personal belief. Communication with parents will be key so they know that their feelings are being valued. Let's share our plans with parents and address any concerns with respect. Books are a great way of including celebrations other than Christmas, Kwanzaa Hannuhhak and Kwanzaa. Also, be sure that decorations are winter theme based and that are inclusive on the entire class as well as the Spanish speaking world.

## SETTING THE STAGE:

Setting the Stage is only one of the many ways to make the preschool classrooms more inviting. Research shows that children are happier and get along better, concentrate and have amore positive attitude about themselves and school when they are in an attractive and inviting environment.

Use your imagination and remember that learning displays in the classroom are another form of communication and proof of fun and learning for the children and their parents. Be creative and open-minded and provide activities that respect various cultures and traditions. After all, the main purpose of Winter Celebrations is that the children learn that world holidays are cultural traditions that are significant and meaningful.

It is impossible to ignore the holidays this time of the year. Children will be talking about what is happening in their homes. If, for example, a child talks about the angel in the Christmas tree, then we will talk the tradition of having an angel on the Christmas tree rather than on the religious significance.

## CIRCLE TIME:

**Cookie Cutter Activities:** The first week of December is Cookie-Cutter Week. Find your cookie cutters and have fun with them. Some families have special traditions around cookie cutters. They are handed down for generations. Ask the children if there are any special ones in their homes. Tell the children that the cookie cutters will be placed in the Art Center for them to play with and explore making pretend cookies to celebrate!

**Last Month of the Year:** December is the twelfth and the last month of the year. Ask the children what special events, trips or activities they have enjoyed over the year. This is a great opportunity to sing and count the months as well as practice the names of the months together.

**Winter Is Here:** December 22 is Winter Solstice. The first day of Winter

**Happy New Year:** In preparing for the arrival of the new year, talk to the children and tell them that next month is January and it starts a new year. Also talk about new year resolutions are promises people make to themselves that will change their lives for the better in the upcoming year. Ask the children if they can think of any New Year's resolutions of their own to share with the class.

## CENTERS:

### Writing Center

**Objetivo:** Dictates writing to express thoughts

**Actividad:** Wreath of Peace

**Materiales:** Construction paper in various colors, pencils, scissors

**Procedimiento:**

-Invite the children to choose a color of construction paper and to trace around one of their hands.

- Explain that the children should think of a wish of peace they want to write on their hand for a class wreath.
- This activity can be done over the course of a few days. Write down the wishes of peace that the children dictate to you on their corresponding hands.
- Have the children cut out their hands.
- Once the entire class has completed, assemble the wreath and create a classroom display.

Actividad: Letter Line

Objetivo: Identifies at least 10 printed letters (Review)

Materiales: String or clothesline, clothespins, Alphabet letter cards, paper, pencils.

- Create alphabet cards
- String up the clothesline and pin the letters to the clothesline using a clothespin.

Procedimiento:

- Invite the children to identify on the line.
- Encourage the children to use the materials in the center to practice writing the letters in the letter line. You could create another line and display the children's work.

MATH AND MANIPULATIVES CENTER:

Actividad: Counting Snowflakes

Objective: Recognizes numbers 0 – 5 or 0 – 10

Materiales: Construction paper, snowflake stickers or stamp

Preparacion: You will need to create a set of flashcards.

Procedimiento: Place the cards in a little box or container.

- Have the children take one card and count the snowflakes
- They can also count the cards and place them in order.
- For Pre-K children, you can have a calculator and encourage the children to key the number for the corresponding cards in the calculator.
- This activity helps the children to recognize the numbers along with developing the skill of object permanence.
- This is a very popular activity. As you can imagine, all children are going to ask to use the calculator. We'll ask Monica if we can borrow a calculator from the children's home so each child has their own.

Actividad: Holiday Pattern Paper Chain

Objective: Recognizes and copies patterns

Materials: Construction paper in green and white scissors, glue or staple

Preparacion: Cut out paper strips for the children in the colors of the chain and start the chain so the children can see the pattern.

Procedimiento: Show the children the chain and talk about the pattern with the - -

- children. Also have the extra strips out for the children to add on to the chain.
- Demonstrate the pattern for the children by placing more strips on the chain.

- Show the children how to cut out more strips using the construction paper and scissors. Assist the children in adding more links to the chain and talk about the pattern.
- Talking with the children about pattern and sequence builds math skills.
- Leave the materials out for the children to explore and, use and add to the chain.
- You can extend the activity by holding a contest for who can guess the number of links on the chain and count the links at the end of the week or the month.
- You can also make a chain with the colors that reflect some cultures. For example, red, green and black for Kwanzaa or blue and white for Hannukah

#### SCIENCE & SENSORIAL CENTER:

Actividad: Daytime and Nighttime

Objective: Sequences events in order by occurrence using time concepts (day, night, etc)

Materiales: Classroom globe or a ball , flashlight

- This activity needs to take place in a semi-darkened room
- Gather the children around and talk about the concepts of day and night. Ask the children if they can think of what types of activities they do in the night or day hours.
- Shine the flashlight directly onto the globe.
- Show the children how one half of the world is in the light which means it is daytime and the other half is dark which means it is nighttime. Explain that this happens everyday and that is why we have nighttime and daytime.
- You can also explain that it takes the earth 24 hours to rotate and this makes both the daylight and darkness hours of each day.

#### DRAMATIC CENTER

Activity: Post Office

Objective: Uses language for a variety of purposes

Materials: Envelopes, washable markers, stamps and stamp pads, phone book, play phone, tote bags to be used as mail bags, large box with a hole cut out to be the main mailbox.

Procedimiento: The month of December is a special time when families often receive mail from family and friends. Turn the Dramatic Center into a child sized Post Office.

- Set up the props in the Dramatic Center. Discuss with the children the purpose and services that the local Post Office provides. Ask the children if they have ever received a letter or package in the mail.
- Having a post office so close to the school, we can have a field trip to the Post Office and send holiday wishes cards to our families.

Activity: Holiday Store

Objective: Sustains interactions by cooperating, sharing and expressing interests.

Materials: Cash register, play money, toys and materials from the classroom to be the store's merchandise, boxes, wrapping paper, scissors, tape, paper, pencils

Procedimiento: Talk about opening a store in the Dramatic Center

- Ask the children what kind of store they would like to open and help the children make a plan.
- Gather the items from the classroom and help the children set up the play space.
- Discuss with the children the various roles and duties at a store. Explain that clerks should be helpful and courteous de the costumers.
- Invite them to use their Spanish. Quieres este o este? Quieres el azul o el Amarillo. Yo quiero el amarillo, etc.
- Have a gift wrapping section of the store available for the children.