

Winter Activities!

Warm up your students this winter with these inspiring activities. Even if you don't live in an area that has cold winters, you can still teach them about snowflakes, snow and icicles.

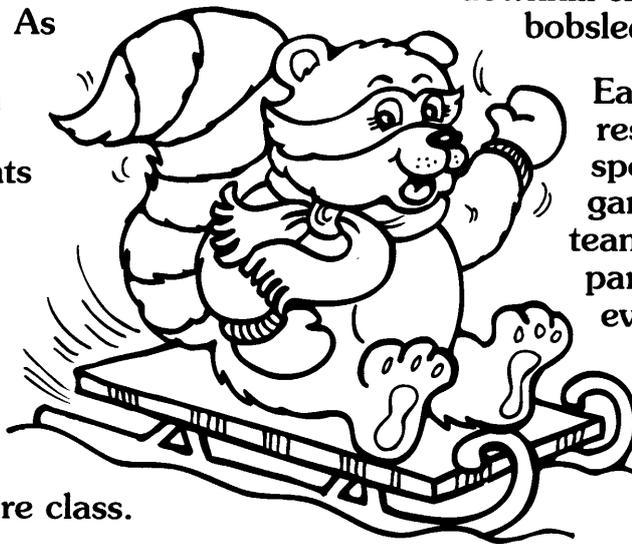
EXAMINING SNOWFLAKES

If you live in an area that receives snow each winter your students can study snowflakes. Even if you don't, students can still observe the icy patterns of winter frost or even the frost that accumulates inside a freezer.

Use a magnifying glass or a microscope to compare the patterns formed by the frost found in the freezer with frost found outdoors. Have students freeze tiny drops of water and observe them under the microscope. Do they resemble snowflakes?

It is often difficult to observe real snowflakes because they melt so fast. Here is one way to preserve them:

Lightly coat several glass microscope slides with a clear plastic spray found in art stores. Place the slides in a refrigerator or freezer. When the next snow falls, have students catch two or three snowflakes on a slide. Quickly spray the slide again with the clear plastic spray, being careful so as not to disturb the flakes. As the plastic dries, the shape of each flake will be preserved. Students can now examine them to their heart's content. You can even use an overhead projector to project the snowflakes' images to the entire class.



PAINTING SNOW SCENES

After reading one of the wintry books listed in the literature recommendations, ask your students to illustrate their version of the story. But, instead of white tempera paint for snow, try this mixture:

Combine in a large bowl 1 cup of Ivory Flakes, 1/3 cup liquid starch and 1/4 cup water. Beat with a wire whisk until the mixture thickens.

Use this "snow-like" paint on dark-colored paper to make truly "snowy" pictures.

ICY SPORTS

Children who live in warm climates may never give much thought to the many cold weather sports and activities that people living in cold climates regularly enjoy.

Divide the class into several groups and assign each group an icy or cold weather sport. Some ideas include ice hockey, figure skating, speed skating, downhill skiing, cross-country skiing, and bobsledding.

Each member of the group can research a different facet of the sport such as the rules, of the game, official organizations, teams, locations, individual participants or as an Olympic event.

The groups' reports can then be displayed on the class board under the name of the appropriate sport!

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STORY STARTER SNOWFLAKES

With the help of your students, create a snowy mural on the class board. (Students may want to use some "snowy" paint in parts of the scene.)

Cut two or three dozen 8-inch snowflake patterns from white paper. Leave most of the center of each snowflake's hole intact. In the center of each flake write an icy story starter or three snowy words. Pin the snowflakes to the mural.

Students can choose a snowflake and write a creative winter tale using the story starter idea or the descriptive words. Here are some suggestions:

avalanche	blizzard
freeze	frostbite
hibernate	icicles
shiver	snowdrift
snowmobile	wilderness

"The skaters were skating too close to the thin ice!"

"It's been snowing for ten days straight!"

"We built the biggest snowman anyone had ever seen!"

"It snowed on the Fourth of July!"

"The champion ice skater was about to perform a jump never before attempted!"

"Oh, no! I lost my mittens again!"

"The winner of the race receives a pair of magic skates!"



MITTEN MATH

Provide your students with a pair of mittens and an indoor/outdoor thermometer for this center activity. Ask your students to complete these tasks:

1. Record the temperature indicated on the thermometer.
2. Place the bulb end of the thermometer in the palm of your hand. After three minutes, record the temperature.
3. Next, slip the mitten on and slide the bulb of the thermometer inside the mitten, resting it on the palm of your hand. After three minutes, record the temperature.

Now, answer these questions:

- What was the original temperature?
- What was the temperature after three minutes on the palm?
- How much did the temperature increase?
- What was the temperature after you wore the mitten?
- How much did the temperature increase?
- Why do you think wearing the mitten made the temperature warmer?

COLORFUL SNOWFLAKES

Brighten up your winter classroom with a colorful snowflake display!

Cut assorted colored tissue paper into six inch squares. Ask each student to select two or three colors and cut snowflake shapes from each one. Have them arrange the snowflakes between two larger sheets of wax paper. Using an old sheet to protect the iron and the table top, press with a warm iron. Trim away the excess wax paper and tape the snowflakes to the classroom windows. These colorful snowflakes will look super from both indoors and out!

Winter Activities!

WARM UP WITH SOUP!

Have each student contribute to a hearty, class-made soup for a fun, nutritious activity. (Start the soup early in the day so it will be ready by lunch time.)

Ask each child to bring in a peeled vegetable. (Parents can do the peeling.) Provide a large pot of water, a hot plate, pot holders, salt, a ladle, a knife and bouillon cubes. Disposable bowls and spoons will also be needed. Under supervision, have the students cut their vegetable in small pieces and place the pieces in the pot of water.

Have the children measure the water and vegetables as a math exercise. They can also note the temperature of the water as it begins to boil.

(Note: The day before making the soup, review with your students the type of vegetables that taste good in soup. Assign groups of students to bring in specific vegetables. The soup won't be very tasty if, for example, the only vegetables were potatoes.)



ICE POWER

Try some of these "icy" experiments!

ICE EXPANDS Place a plastic container in the freezer and fill it to the brim with water. Lay the lid loosely on top. After the water has frozen hard, check the container and you will find the lid pushed up. Explain the properties of frozen water expansion with your students.

SALT OR SAND Which causes more traction, salt or sand? Ask children if they have ever noticed salt or sand being used for traction in icy conditions. What are the hazards of using either one?

Divide the class into groups and give each group two ice cubes and some paper towels. Ask them to sprinkle one ice cube with salt and the other with sand. Have them observe which melts the fastest. Which one creates more traction?

SALT WATER Does salt water freeze? Of course it does! It just requires a lower temperature to do so. Explain to your students how salt water in the far north or south freezes to form glaciers and icebergs. (About 10% of the world is covered with glaciers so thick they never melt.)

Prepare two glasses of salt water (one stronger than the other) and one glass of fresh water. Sit all three in the freezer and see which takes the longest to freeze.

ICICLES Show students how icicles form by using a plastic container. (A margarine tub will do.) Punch a small hole in the bottom of the container. Connect wire or heavy string so you can hang it in a tree. Fill with water on a freezing day and watch as an icicle forms.

Winter Activities!

MAKING SNOW

Make real snow in your classroom with these materials.

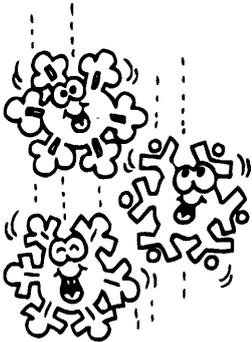
- 1 - 3 pound empty coffee can
- 1 - 1 pound empty coffee can
- 1 - bag of crushed ice
- 1 - small terrycloth towel
- rock salt
- 1/2 pound dry ice
- sharp knife
- masking tape



Wrap the towel around the bottom portion of the larger can and secure in place with masking tape. Put a small amount of crushed ice in the bottom of the large can and sprinkle generously with salt. (Use a ratio of about 1/3 salt to 2/3 ice.) Place the smaller can inside the larger can and continue packing the ice and salt in the space between the two cans. Fill the ice to the top of the outside of the small can.

By breathing into the small can, you can now illustrate how your breath will condense and form a cloud. This cloud is just like the clouds on a cold winter day.

Next comes the dry ice. The dry ice must be handled carefully to prevent burns. Pick the dry ice up with a cloth and scrape a few grains of ice into the cloud with a sharp knife. Ice crystals will soon start to form. Point out to the students that these crystals are just like the ones that start snowstorms in the winter. Breathe again into the small can, continuing to form the cloud. The new moisture you add with your breath will continue to freeze around the crystals, making them larger each time. Before long, your students will realize that the crystals have become real snowflakes!



Winter Word Find!

ACTIVITY 1

FIND THESE WINTER WORDS IN THE PUZZLE:
 SNOW, ICE, MITTENS,
 WINTER, FROST, COLD,
 JACKET, SLED, ICICLE,
 SNOWFLAKE, SKI,
 SNOWMAN

C	M	D	F	G	S	N	O	W	M	A	N	D	R	T	F	G	T	Y	H	J	U
M	D	E	F	R	G	T	S	K	I	B	H	Y	N	F	D	R	V	B	N	M	F
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