

Theme: Christmas

Gross Motor (Indoor & Outdoor):

- ✓ Jump over laminated trees, ornaments, etc.
- ✓ Relay race with large spoons and plastic ornaments
- ✓ Musical chairs with Christmas music
- ✓ Help children make paper antlers attached to a paper band around their heads; they can pretend to be reindeer pulling Santa's sleigh!
- ✓ Using a large box, paint a large cardboard sleigh for children to "pull" in the activity listed above.

Snacks:

- Christmas cookies
- Tree-shaped sandwiches
- Make treats by putting sandwich fixin's on Ritz crackers—ham, cheese, tuna salad, etc. Children think it's fun and they're getting a meal from it! Party style!
- Red & green apples
- Cupcakes with red and green sprinkles—let the children help to make the cupcakes and decorate them!
- Meat, cheese, and flour tortilla roll ups cut into ½ inch slices and served from a party tray

Fine Motor & Art:

- ✓ Cut and make paper chains for the tree. Children can color or decorate paper strips for the chain.
- ✓ Santa faces – glue cotton balls on for the "fur."
- ✓ Decorate paper stockings or inexpensive felt ones and hang them in the room.
- ✓ Counting/sorting shapes and colors – make folder games with 8 different shapes on them. Cut the same shapes from cardstock, laminate them, and let the children match them to the ones on the folder.
- ✓ Make up a LARGE bingo game with large laminated Christmas-related shapes on the floor; use masking tape to mark off the squares for this giant bingo card. Children can stand on the shapes as you call them out. They yell bingo when they have a line made, same as in regular bingo.
- ✓ Make candy cane cookies or bread by leaving half the dough plain and coloring the other half with a little red food coloring. Let children roll some dough and twist the "stripes" together to make candy cane shapes. Bake and eat!
- ✓ Make Christmas ornaments for the tree.

Special Visual Aids/Room Set-Up/Field Trips:

Take a trip to cut or purchase a Christmas tree, bring it back and set it up. Let children make paper chains and ornaments to go on the tree (see activities listed above).

To help children learn about giving to others, take them downtown so they can drop coins in the Salvation Army buckets. You can give them each some coins, or have parents send their children with some coins that morning.

Take children to the library to choose a bag full of Christmas books to take back to the child care.

Songs & Fingerplays:

In addition to the usual Christmas songs, try singing "One little, two little, three little reindeer. . . pulling Santa's sleigh."

Other songs and fingerplays for the Christmas season can be found on the following websites:

<http://www.preschooleducation.com/schristmas.shtml>

<http://www.kinderthemes.com/Christmassongspoemsandfingerplays.html>

<http://www.bellaonline.com/articles/art47949.asp>

<http://ecobites.com/eco-kids-magazine/101-ecokids-1/652-christmas-songs-finger-plays-rhymes>

Books: Christmas Treasury by Jan Brett
Peep: The Christmas Bear by Tom Hegg
Olivia Helps with Christmas by Ian Falconer
The Sweet Smell of Christmas by Patricia M. Scarry
Best Christmas Pageant Ever by Barbara Robinson
Christmas in the Manger by Nola Buck
A Wish to Be a Christmas Tree by Colleen Monroe
Night Before Christmas by Clement C. Moore
Christmas Day in the Morning by Pearl S. Buck
God Gave Us Christmas by Lisa Tawn Bergren
Mortimer's Christmas Manger by Karma Wilson

Merry Christmas Mom and Dad by Mercer Mayer
Christmas by Dorling Kindersley Publishing
Counting Christmas by Karen Katz
Christmas Catastrophe by Geronimo Stilton
Snowmen at Christmas by Caralyn Buehner
Christmas Alphabet by Robert Sabuda
How the Grinch Stole Christmas by Dr. Seuss
Bear Stays Up for Christmas by Karma Wilson
Merry Christmas, Mouse! by Laura Joffe Numeroff
Room for a Little One by Martin Waddell
Bear's First Christmas by Robert Kinerk

Dramatic Play:

- Santa hats
- Elf costumes
- Make elf shoes out of green felt and add a red pompom on the toe!

Circle Time Activities:

- Assist children in writing letters to Santa.
- Have "Santa" come to your home/classroom to visit the children and hand out small gifts (a book for each child?) that you've arranged for in advance.
- Play a large memory/concentration game you make up yourself using Christmas shapes. Children get to turn over two large cards to see if they match. If they do, remove them from the board and keep going until everything is matched.
- Talk about the letters "C" and "S."
- Cut-and-tell stories about red birds, trees, ornaments, or Santa, cutting out the pictures in paper doll fashion as you talk.
- Decorate the Christmas tree.
- Sing songs and do fingerplays.
- Watch Frosty the Snowman video then go outside to make a snowman or snow fort.
- Tell the story of The Night Before Christmas before helping children decorate stockings to hang in the classroom/home.

Christmas Celebration

