

# Ways to Celebrate in the Winter

## Summary

Students learn about multicultural holidays celebrated in winter: Hanukkah, St. Lucia Day, Las Posadas, Kwanzaa, and Chinese New Year.

## Main Core Tie

Social Studies - Kindergarten

[Standard 1 Objective 1](#)

## Group Size

Large Groups

## Materials

### Hanukkah

- [\*Celebrating Winter Holiday\*](#)
- [\*World map\*](#)
- *Festival of Lights*
- [\*Menorah\*](#)
- [\*Tasty Menorahs Instructions\*](#)
- Large chart
- *Eight nights of Hanukkah*
- *Herschel and the Hanukkah Goblins*
- [\*Dreidel Pattern\*](#)
- [\*Dreidel\*](#)
- [\*Parent Letter\*](#)
- Scissors
- Pennies
- *Lights the Candles Bright*
- Pencils
- Lightweight cardboard
- Markers/Colored pencils

### St. Lucia Day

- Green, yellow, white construction paper
- [\*Celebrating Winter Holidays\*](#)
- [\*World map\*](#)
- [\*L\\_eaf Pattern\*](#)
- [\*Candle Pattern\*](#)
- [\*Flame Pattern\*](#)
- [\*Star Pattern\*](#)
- Scissors
- Heavy paper
- Gold glitter
- Twisted pastries
- Serving tray
- Glue

Stapler

Markers/colored pencils

## Las Posadas

- [Celebrating Winter Holidays](#)

- [World map](#)

- *Nine days to Christmas*

Sangrias drink ingredients

Piñata

Paper sacks

Crepe paper

Tissue paper

Wrapped candy

Newspaper

Scissors

Stapler

Glue

Salsa & chips

Markers/colored pencils

## Kwanzaa

- [Celebrating Winter Holidays](#)

- [World map](#)

- [Kinara](#)

Construction paper

Fruits and Vegetables

- *Obara the Merchants*

- *Obara the Gatekeeper*

Scissors

Ruler

- *The Story of Kwanzaa*

- *My First Kwanzaa Book*

- *Kwanzaa Place Mat*

- [Hand-some Kinara](#)

Glue/Tape

Red, black, green, brown & yellow paint

Paintbrushes

Markers/colored pencils

## Chinese New Year

- [Celebrating Winter Holidays](#)

- [World map](#)

- *Lion Dancer: Ernie Wan's Chinese New Year*

Paper plates

Scissors

Glue

Feathers

- *Dragon Dance*

- *My First Chinese New Year*

Sequins

Pom Poms

Paper scraps  
Crepe paper  
Lively music  
Craft sticks  
Fortune cookies  
Streamers  
Tape  
Marker/colored pencils

#### Additional Resources

##### Children's Books

*Eight Nights of Hanukkah*, by Judy Nayer; ISBN 0-439-69383-7  
*Eight Lights for Eight Nights*, by Debbi Herman & Ann Koffsky; ISBN 10: 0764126008  
*Happy Hanukkah, Biscuit!* by Alyssa Satin Capucilli; ISBN 10: 0060094699  
*D is for Dreidel*, by Tanya Lee Stone; ISBN 10:0843145765  
*The Colors of my Jewish Year*, by Mari Gold-Vukson; ISBN 10:1580130119  
*The Borrowed Hanukkah Latkes*, by Linda Glaser; ISBN 10:0807508  
*Hershel and the Hanukkah Goblin*, by Eric A. Kimmel; ISBN 10:0823411311  
*The Seven Days of Kwanzaa*, by Melrose Cooper; ISBN 978-0439-5746-6  
*Together for Kwanzaa*, by Juwanda G. Ford; ISBN 0-439-82959-3  
*A Kwanzaa Miracle*, by Sharon Shavers Gayle; ISBN 0-439-69003-X  
*My First Kwanzaa*, by Karen Katz; ISBN 10:080507077X  
*The Story of Kwanzaa*, by Donna L. Washington; ISBN 10:0064462005  
*Kwanzaa Fun: Great Things to Make and Do*, by Linda Robertson; ISBN 0-7534-5685-0  
*Obarand the Gatekeeper*, by Michelle Bodden; ISBN 10:0975308904  
*Obara the Merchants*, by Michele Bodden; ISBN 10:0975308912  
*Nine Days to Christmas*, by Marie Hall Ets. & Aurora Labastida; ISBN 10:0140544429  
*Dragon Dance: A Chinese New Year*, by Joan Holub; ISBN 10: 012400009  
*My First Chinese New Year*, by Karen Katz; ISBN 10:0805070761  
*Lion Dancer: Ernie Wan's Chinese New Year*, by Kate Waters & Martha Cooper; ISBN 10:05904304755  
*Hanukkah Oh Hanukkah*, by Susan L. Roth; ISBN 10:0439908728  
*Festival of Lights*, retold by Maida Silverman; ISBN 0689830831  
*My First Kwanzaa Book*, by Deborah M. Newton Chocolate; ISBN 0439129265  
*On the First Night of Chanukah*, by Cecily Kaiser; ISBN-10: 0439758025

##### Books

*Another Trip Around the World*, by Leland Graham, and Traci Brandon; ISBN 044222- 120054  
*Resources for Creative Teaching in Early Childhood Education* 2nd Edition, by Darlene Softley Hamilton/Bonnie Mack Flemming; ISBN 0-15-576652-X  
*Learning about Cultures*, by John Gust, M.A. and J. Meghan McChesney; ISBN 978-1-57310- 012-1  
*Creative Resources for the Early Childhood Classroom*, by Judy Herr and Yvonne Libby Larson; ISBN 10: 1-4283-1832-1  
*Celebrations*, by Anabel Kindersley & Barnabas Kindersley; ISBN 10:07894202

##### Media

*Kwanzaa Fun*, by Linda Robertson & Julia Pearson; ISBN 978075345685

##### Articles

*Social Studies*, the Mailbox Magazine; ISBN 10 #1-56234-645-8  
*Arts and Crafts*, by the Education Center, Inc.; ISBN 1-56234-32-6  
*Sing a Song of Seasons*, the Mailbox; ISBN 13: 978-156234498-6

#### Background for Teachers

Children everywhere love holidays/celebrations -- days set aside for a break in routine, special fun and surprises, delicious treats, and a time to be with close friends, relatives and neighbors. Religious, seasonal, and patriotic holidays and celebrations vary with the customs, history, environment, and traditions of countries around the world. One way the world becomes smaller and people begin to develop respect, acceptance and understanding of others is by sharing celebrations of everyday life. Helping children discover how children everywhere are alike and can work and play together leads to multi- cultural awareness and sensitivity.

Very young children do not always comprehend the history or deeper meaning involved in other cultures' celebrations, but they can learn the name of the celebration and begin to understand some of the outward symbols for the inner meanings. Children can learn that not everyone believes the same thing, and that we must respect each person's right to individual beliefs. As children learn of customs and celebrations, they can learn that they all have some beliefs in common and some that differ. Five different Winter Celebrations will be addressed, giving the children opportunities to experience games, art, music, and stories of different cultures.

On December 13th, many Christian countries in Europe celebrate St. Lucia Day. The story behind the holiday is of a young girl who lived over 1700 years ago. She would not deny Christianity, so she was punished--her eyes were put out and she was put to death by the Romans. She was subsequently made a saint. In Sweden, a young girl, usually the oldest daughter, dresses up in a long white dress tied with a red sash and a leaf covered crown of candles. On the morning of December 13th, she and other costumed children awaken their family members with a tray of coffee and pastries. St. Lucia Day is celebrated in Sweden, Finland, Italy, and the Caribbean.

Hanukkah, a festival of light, comes in late November or December and begins on the 25th day of the Hebrew month Kislet. The Hebrew calendar is a lunar one, so the exact date of Hanukkah varies each year. Hanukkah celebrates religious freedom for the Jews. Antiochus, a Syrian king, drove the Jews from their temple in Jerusalem and ordered them to worship Greek gods or be put to death. The Jews fought back and finally regained Jerusalem and set about purifying their temple, which the Syrians had defiled. When it was ready, they proclaimed a holiday and called it Hanukkah, which means "dedication." There is a legend about the first Hanukkah that relates how only one little jar of oil was found to light the holy lamp in the temple for the festival. It should have lasted only one day, but it lasted eight days. Hanukkah is celebrated for eight days. Candles are lit each night in a special candleholder called a menorah (meh-nor-ah). A candle known as the Shamash (shah-mush) is a ninth candle in the center that is higher than the other four on each side, and is lit every night. Families enjoy eating potato pancakes called latkes (lot-kuhs). Children like to play games with a dreidel (dray-dull). The dreidel is a four--sided top with Hebrew letters on each side representing the words in the phrase "A Great Miracle Happened There." Gifts are generally given to children-- one each night. Frequently bags of chocolate coins covered with gold foil are in favor in American families.

The Posada celebration is way of celebrating Christmas in Mexico. The posada, is a re-creation of Mary on a donkey and Joseph searching for a room at the inn. Accompanying them is a choir of small children who knock on doors asking for lodging for the weary couple. The procession, which takes place during the 12 days before Christmas, moves along, growing in numbers, until it reaches the church, where mass is held. After the service, the children get to enjoy a festive piñata party. The Posada is an enactment of looking for lodging of St. Joseph and Virgin Mary, called the Pilgrims going to Bethlehem for the Census according to the Bible. Each family in a neighborhood will schedule a night for the Posada to be held at their home, starting on the 16th of December and finishing on the 24th. Every home will have a Nativity scene. The hosts of the home are the innkeepers, and the neighborhood children and adults are looking for lodging. They will ask for lodging in three different houses but only the third one will allow them in. Once the innkeepers let them in the group of guests come into the home and kneel around the Nativity scene to pray. After all

the prayer is done, then it comes time for the children's party. There will be a Piñata, filled with peanuts in the shell, oranges, tangerines, and sugar canes. The children in turn will try to break the Piñata with a stick while blindfolded.

Kwanzaa (keb-wahn-zab) is a holiday that was created for Afro- Americans by Dr. Malana Karenga in 1965 to help focus on the richness of their African culture and reinforce the need for Black unity and self-determination. At the heart of Kwanzaa is the "Nguzo Saba" or seven principles of daily living, that Dr. Karenga found in the African harvest festivals he had studied. Kwanzaa is celebrated from December 26th to January 1st. Each night, a candle is lit and a principle discussed. The last night, a Karamu (feast) is held.

#### The Seven Principles of Daily Living

Nguzo Saba umoja (oo-MO-jah) -- unity, we help each other.

kujichagulia (KOO-jee-cha-go-LEE-ah) -- self-determination, we decide things for ourselves.

ujima (oo-JEE-mah) - cooperation, we work together to make a better life.

ujamaa (oo-jah-MAH) -- sharing by all, we must share what we have.

nia (NEE-ah) -- purpose, we have a reason for living.

kuumba (koo-OOM-bah) -- creativity, we need to use creativity in making our world more beautiful.

imani (ee-MAH-nee) -- faith, we believe in ourselves, our ancestors, and our future.

Chinese New Year (Yuan Tan) is celebrated on the first day of the new moon, which varies from January 21 to February 19. The Chinese celebrate this day to show their appreciation for the previous safe and happy year and to wish for another prosperous year to come. The first day of this religious and historical celebration is dedicated to worshipping ancestors and Buddha and to praying for happiness, prosperity and good fortune. The following 14 days are filled with parades, fireworks, gift giving, feasting and dancing. Red is the symbol of happiness to all Chinese. This color is always used for New Year's decorations. Friends exchange greetings in red envelopes. On this holiday, children receive gifts of money from older people, such as their grandparents, parents, aunts, and uncles. The gift money is given in red envelopes, often with gold lettering or pictures on them. It is important to Chinese children and their parents to wear new clothes, especially new shoes, on New Year's Day to bring good luck. A lion dance or dragon dance performed by adults is an important part of this New Year's parade.

#### Intended Learning Outcomes

2. Develop social skills and ethical responsibility.
3. Demonstrate responsible emotional and cognitive behavior.
6. Communicate clearly in oral, artistic, written, and nonverbal form.

#### Instructional Procedures

##### Invitation to Learn

Students will be given a brief overview of the celebration that will be covered during the next two months. They will then be given a "Celebrating Winter Holidays" Journal. The journal has calendars and symbols for each of the winter holidays we will be talking about. The students will color in the dates on the calendar; illustrating the month and days the celebration takes place. Students will write their name on the front, decorate the cover, and save it to be used after each celebration lesson. This journal will be used as an assessment at the end of each celebration discussion.

##### Instructional Procedures

##### Hanukkah

Gather the children together and show them the world map. Point out the country of Israel.

Have them find Israel on their journal World Maps and mark it.

Share that a long time ago, over two thousand years, the Jewish people there fought against an

army to take back their Temple, or house of worship. They cleaned and fixed the Temple and polished the lamp of the Eternal Light. The flame had been put out by the army. Only enough olive oil could be found to light the lamp for one day. A miracle happened and the lamp stayed lit for eight days!

Hanukkah is an eight-day Jewish Celebration, commemorating "the miracle of the oil." The "Festival of Lights" holiday is full of songs, games, stories, and presents. Jewish people around the world celebrate Hanukkah by lighting one candle each of the eight nights of Hanukkah until all are lit on the last day of the holiday. The special lamp of eight candles is called a menorah. Show the students a picture of a menorah.

Read one of the informational Hanukkah Books like *Eight Nights of Hanukkah* or *Festival of Lights*. List all the things that they learned from the book on the dry erase board.

Food Experience: Share the Tasty Menorahs with the children.

While the children eat the Tasty Menorahs, read the "Eight Little Candles in a Row" poem. Have it printed on an experience chart.

Then read a story book like *Herschel and the Hanukkah*.

Show the children a dreidel or a picture of a dreidel. Ask them to notice the letters. Are they the same letters we use? Share with the students that during Hanukkah, friends and family gather and eat traditional foods, such as latkes, applesauce, or jelly-filled doughnuts. Latkes are fried potato pancakes. Children sometimes exchange gifts and receive "Hanukkah Geit," or coins. They also play the dreidel game by spinning a top with four flat sides. Demonstrate how to play the game with three children, plus yourself (four players in all).

Teach the students the song "I Have a Little Dreidel."

Give each student a copy of the card stock dreidel. Have them cut it out. Demonstrate how to push the pencil through the hole. Show the students how to spin the dreidel like a top by holding the top of the pencil and spinning it on a flat surface. The tip of the pencil will make contact with the flat surface. Play until one player wins everything and the other players have nothing.

Divide the students into groups of four. You may want to have a small square of cardstock underneath to protect the tabletops. Allow children to play.

a. Each player puts two of their objects into the center "pot".

Give each player a turn to spin the dreidel (like a top). The letter that is facing up when the dreidel stops tells what the player must do:

Nun - do nothing

Gimel - take all objects from the pot

Hay - take half the pot

Shin - put one object in the pot.

If the pile is empty, or has only one penny, each player puts in one penny before the next spin.

After they have played the game a few times, pass out the game and rules for playing the game for the children to take home to play with their family. Have this copied on card stock.

Sing the song "Light the Candles Bright" (*sung to: The Farmer In the Dell*).

Have the students draw and record in their [journal](#) about the celebration of Hanukkah.

## St. Lucia Day

Many Countries in Europe Celebrate St. Lucia Day. We are going to talk about the celebration as it takes place in Sweden. Find Sweden on the class world map, and have the students mark their world map in their celebration journal.

Explain the story of St. Lucia to the students. St. Lucia Day is celebrated on December 13. The story behind the holiday is of a young girl who would not deny Christianity so she was put to death by the Romans.

In Sweden, a young girl, usually the oldest daughter, dresses up in a long white dress tied with a

red sash, and places a crown of evergreens adorned with glowing candles on her head. It is her task to serve coffee and special twisted buns with raisins to her family at daybreak. The buns are twisted into different shapes. The lights represent the breaking of the winter spell and bringing light into the world.

St. Lucia is followed by her brothers, who are dressed in white and wear pointed hats with silver stars. They are called "star boys." Her sisters wear white robes too, but have tinsel in their hair. They are called "Lucia Maidens."

This ceremony is to assure the family that beginning on this day (the shortest, darkest day of winter) the days will begin to be longer again. It also reminds them that Christmas is near. Some call it Little Christmas.

Have the girls make a crown of candles. To make a crown use a pattern of five green leaf shapes on construction paper and five yellow candle flames on construction paper. Cut out the patterns. Glue each flame cutout to the candle pattern on white construction paper to create a candle; then glue each candle to the straight end of a leaf cutout. Arrange the candle-adorned leaves end-to-end. Glue the pieces together by attaching a leaf tip to the bottom of each of the first four candles. When the glue has dried, size the resulting crown to fit the head of the intended wearer; then staple the crown ends together.

Have the boys make a star-studded hat. To make a hat, begin with a semi-circle of white bulletin-board paper -- diameter approximately 28 inches. Overlap the two corners of the paper until a cone is formed. Size the opening to fit the head of the intended wearer; then staple the hat seam. Decorate the hat with yellow paper stars from the star pattern and gold glitter.

Have each child wear a decorative head wreath or hat as they serve themselves a pastry from a tray passed from child to child.

Have students draw and record in their [journals](#) about the St. Lucia Day celebration.

## Las Posadas

Begin by reading the book, *Nine Days to Christmas*. In this story a little girl excitedly prepares for her first "posada". The book clearly explains the meaning of the celebrating ("posada" means shelter, and during the posada procession the participants are symbolizing the journey of Mary and Joseph to Bethlehem) and this will set the purpose for the rest of the unit.

Show the students where Mexico is on the class world map. Then have the children locate it on their own world maps. List on the dry erase board the things they learned from the book as the children recall them.

Have a Mexican food experience. Salsa & chips are easy. You can also have a simple Mexican drink (Sangrias for kids)

### Ingredients

12 cup grape juice

14 cup orange juice

14 to 12 cup Sprite or 7up (depending on how bubbly you like it)

OPTIONAL: maraschino cherry and/or orange slice

### Directions:

Mix ingredients, add ice cube and serve! YUM!

Dramatize the posada by going from class to class in the kindergarten wing, asking for shelter.

Prepare the other classes ahead of time for best results. Be turned away by class after class.

Finally, return to our classroom for a party celebration, complete with a piñata.

You can purchase a piñata or have the children help make 4 different ones in centers by making simple paper bag piñatas. To do this fill a paper grocery bag with wrapped candies and newspaper. Decorate the bag with brightly colored, fringed crepe paper or tissue paper. Cut small slits in the bag to weaken it before students whack at it with a yardstick.

Have children draw and record in their [journals](#) about the Mexican posada.

## Kwanzaa

Unlike the other holidays we have talked about, this celebration is not a religious holiday. Kwanzaa is an African American celebration that focuses on the traditional African values. Find Africa on the classroom world map.

Read *The Story of Kwanzaa*.

Explain that Kwanzaa is based on seven guiding principles, one for each day of the observance, and is celebrated from December 26th to January 1st. Each principle is symbolized with a candle. A *kinara* is the candle holder that holds the seven candles. Each night, a candle is lit and families talk about one of the seven principles. Candles play an important role in the Kwanzaa celebration. On the first night of Kwanzaa, the black candle is lit. On each night thereafter, an additional candle is lit, alternating red and green until the entire Kinara is glowing on the final night of Kwanzaa.

These seven candles represent the seven principles which are 1) unity, 2) self-determination, 3) collective work and responsibility, 4) cooperative economics, 5) purpose, 6) creativity, and 7) faith. Show the Kinara picture.

Read *My First Kwanzaa Book*.

Explain that the colors of Kwanzaa are black for the face of the African people, red for the blood of the people shed, and green for the hope and the color of the motherland.

Paint a "Handsome" Kinara.

A Mkeka mat traditionally holds the fruits and vegetables of the harvest and is an integral part of the Kwanzaa celebration.

Show the students how to make a Mkeka mat using the 3 Kwanzaa colors.

Have a Kwanzaa party using the Mkeka mats. Serve fruits and vegetables, representing the harvest.

Read *Obara the Merchants or Obara the Gatekeeper* (African Folk Tales).

Have the [students draw and record](#) what they learned about the Kwanzaa celebration.

## Chinese New Year

Chinese New Year begins in late January or early February and includes outdoor parades and fireworks. The date of the Chinese New Year's Day changes each year because it is the first day of the lunar calendar. It varies from January 21 to February 19.

Find China on the class world map.

Read *My First Chinese New Year*.

A lion dance is performed to scare away evil spirits and to bring good luck for the New Year.

Read *Lion Dancer: Ernie Wan's Chinese New Year*.

Have the students create their own lion masks to be used in the class Lion Dance.

Give each child a paper plate that has two eyeholes cut out of it. Have him color his mask; then invite him to decorate his mask by gluing on a variety of craft items, such as colorful feathers, sequins, pom poms, and paper scraps and streamers. After the glue dries, help each child tape a wide craft stick securely in place.

Play some lively music while the children wear their masks and perform their own versions of the Lion Dance. The children will have a roaring good time.

Give each child a Fortune Cookie. Put your own fortunes in them that would be more applicable for their age group.

Read *Dragon Dance*.

Have the [students draw and record](#) what they learned about the Chinese New Year celebration.

## Extensions

Curriculum Extensions/Adaptations/ Integration

Make Play dough Menorah.



Roll out piece of play dough and press to form base.

Place a large candle in center and four birthday candles on each side of the large candle.

Let the finished menorah dry for two or three days, then paint it in bright colors.

Play the game Hide the Chocolate Gelt. When the children are out of the room or busy with an activity, hide the chocolate gelt around the room. Just before it's time to go home, tell the children that there is a treat hidden around the room for each of them.

Latkes, Jelly Doughnuts, and Hanukkah Cookies are yummy Hanukkah party treats. You can buy the Jelly Doughnuts, Hanukah cookies can be your favorite homemade cookies, and Latkes are potato pancakes.

Latkes

6-8 medium potatoes

12 medium onion

3 large eggs

14 c. flour

Salt and pepper to taste

Using a cheese grater or food processor, grate 6-8 potatoes to yield 6 cups. Drain off the extra liquid. Grate 12 onion. Mix the grated potatoes and onion with the eggs and flour. Season with salt and pepper. Preheat oil in a skillet and drop your batter by teaspoonfuls into the hot oil. Fry until brown on the edges, then flip and fry the other side. Serve while still warm. Warm latkes and cold milk or apple sauce go really good together.

If you have the class make Latkes, teach them the "Latkes are Frying in the Pan" song.

Sing:

Come and Spin the Dreidel

*(Tune: The More We Get Together)*

Oh, come and spin the dreidel the dreidel, the dreidel,

Oh, come and spin the dreidel the dreidel, the dreidel,

You might have to give some.

Oh, Come and spin the dreidel and see what you get.

-Ada Goren

Sing:

Hanukkah is Here!

*(Tune: "Mary Had a Little Lamb")*

Let's light the menorah, menorah, menorah,

Let's light the menorah, menorah, menorah,

One candle each joyous night, joyous night, joyous night.

One candle each joyous night, for

Hanukkah is here!

Latkes, games, and family, family, family.

Latkes, games, and family, for Hanukkah is here!

Let's light the menorah, menorah, menorah.

Let's light the menorah, for Hanukkah is here!

Have a Kwanzaa party. Decorate room in red, black, and green. Ask a parent familiar with the holiday to assist you.

Use a tracer to have the students make a Luciadagen crown. To make a crown, fold a nine-inch paper plate in half. Place the straight edge of the tracer on the center of the fold and trace around the rest of the shape. With the plate still folded, cut along the lines to cut out the interior shape -- the candles. Next, color the wreath and the candles. Then, glue on pieces of torn tissue paper to represent leaves on the wreath and flames on the candle. When the crown is dry, fold the candles back so they stand up.

Find a recording of the "*Mexican Hat Dance*" and teach the children a simplified version of the dance. [www.educatinworld.com/a-tsl/archives/99-1/lesson0018.shtml](http://www.educatinworld.com/a-tsl/archives/99-1/lesson0018.shtml)

Make a class created dragon. In a large open area, display a length of white bulletin-board paper. If you plan to have eight groups of students working on the project, visually divide the length of paper into seven equal sections and label each one with a different number from 1-7. On another length of bulletin-board paper, sketch a large dragon head. Label this section no. 8. Assign a small group of students to paint each section. Provide the same colors of paint for each group and encourage student creativity. When the paint has dried, cut out the dragon head and trim one end of the long paper length to resemble a dragon tail. For added interest, make a wavy cut along each side of the resulting dragon body. Then glue the dragon head to the dragon body.

Make Chinese Lanterns. Have students draw pictures on a 12"x18" piece of construction paper. Draw a line 1" from the edge of the side of the paper opposite the fold. Then, have the students cut slits 1" apart from the fold to the line. Open up the paper. Roll with the slits running up and down and staple the ends together. To make handle punch two holes in the top of the lantern on opposite sides. Bend a pipe cleaner about 1" from each end. Poke the pipe cleaner through the holes and twist it around itself to make a handle. Staple crepe paper streamers to the bottom. Have the student parade around the room!

### Family Connections

Send home instructions for families to make a homemade Menorah. Explain that Jewish families use a special, nine- pronged candelabra, called a menorah, to light candles every night for the eight nights of Hanukkah. The ninth candle, which stands higher than the others, is the shammash, or servant candle. It is used to light the other candles so, technically, you light two candles on the first night, three on the second night and so on). It is customary for the candles to be placed in the menorah from right to left and lit from left to right. Making a menorah from self-hardening clay is an easy, fun project for kids to try. When it is complete, se the menorah on a windowsill for all to admire. Share a variety of options for teachers to explore and use for extending learning at home.

Make Star of David home decorations. Form a triangle with 3 Popsicle sticks and glue them together. Form another triangle the same way. Glue the two triangles together in the form of a Star of David. Draw squiggly lines on the star with glue, and sprinkle with blue glitter if you wish. Hang the stars around your home with ribbon.

Have children will explore their family heritage. In preparation for the activity, have children ask their parents and relatives to list the countries where their ancestors were born. A large map of the world will be displayed on a bulletin board. Provide colored stickers, big enough for child's name and the name of the selected country. If you don't have enough space on the map for all the stickers, pin one large-headed thumbtack into each country and use yarn to connect each thumbtack to an index card. Staple the index cards around the border of the world map. Use a piece of yarn to connect each child's sticker to his or her index card. If you have used thumbtacks rather than stickers for any countries have each child write his or her name on the index card. Have children share with the class the information they researched.

Ask parents to share records or tapes of African music for the children to enjoy.

Ask families that have ties to any of the different cultures to visit the class and share some of their traditions.

In China, each year is represented by one of 12 animals. Each animal in turn represents a positive personality characteristic that is believed to be shared by all people born in those years. Give the chart to the students to take home to familiarize themselves with the animals and to see what animal corresponds to the year that they were born. They can also have some fun finding out the years of their parents', grandparents', brothers', sisters', friends' or relatives' birthdays and determining the matching animal.

## Assessment Plan

Were the children able to listen to and understand the different traditions of other culture celebrations?

Did the children listen to the stories, and were they able to relate to the information from the stories?

Did the children play cooperatively in their small groups?

Did the children understand and follow the rules of the games?

Were the children engaged and on task the entire time while working in groups?

Were the children able to locate the countries on their own world maps by looking at the class world map?

Were they able to illustrate in their journals and express what they learned about each celebration?

Did the children understand the character connections of the African Folk Tales?

Were the children able to respond to the rhythm of the music while dancing?

Were the children able to follow the rhythm of the music and sing the songs?

Were the children able to follow directions and make the crafts on their own?

## Bibliography

### Research Basis

Spellings, M., (2006) Secretary of Education remarks at S. University Presidents Summit on *International Education* in Washington, D.C. Retrieved January 25, 2008 from

<http://www.ed.gov/news/speeches/2006/01/01062006.html>

Education teaches more than students. It teaches all of us to see beyond our borders and boundaries, both real and imagined. It teaches us to overcome stereotypes and appreciate cultures other than our own. In so doing, it gives us hope for a brighter future by advancing freedom, opportunity and understanding.

Seefeldt (1977). *Social Studies for the Pre-School Child*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Merrill/ Prentice Hall.

Young children, through activities involving relationships with others, cooperative group experiences, and many forms of firsthand experiences, can develop awareness of: 1) the interdependency of humans on one another, (2) the cultures of our world, and (3) the similarities between people everywhere. (p. 153)

## Authors

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