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## Christmas Countdown Activities

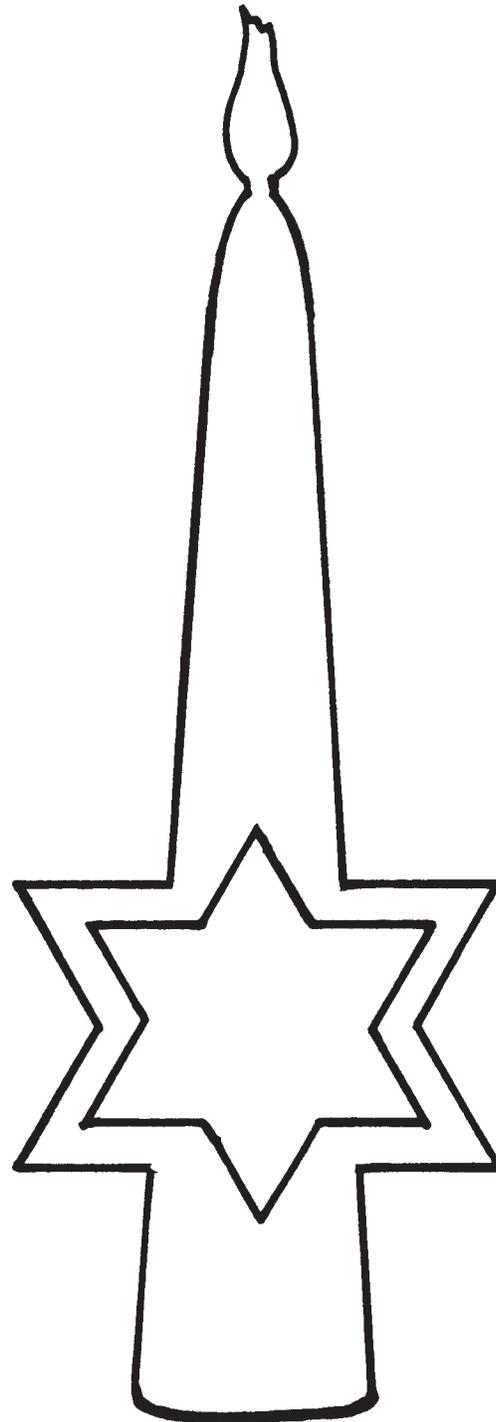
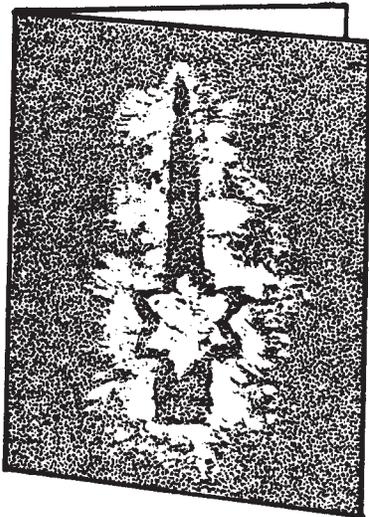
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# Making a Hanukkah Card

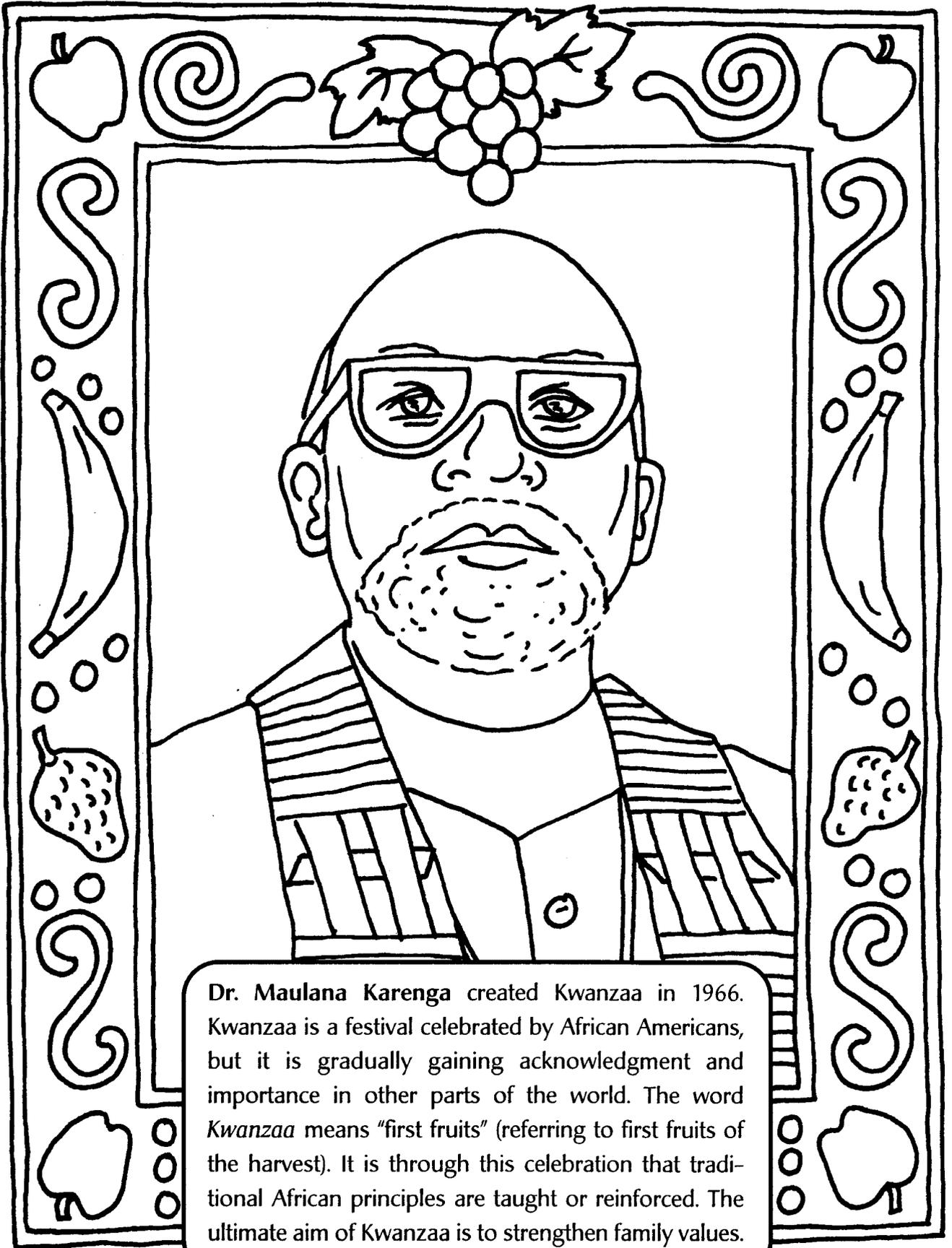
## Materials:

- blue construction paper
- candle pattern
- white tempera paint
- paintbrush or sponge



## Directions:

Cut out the candle. Place it on the card. Sponge thin white tempera over and around the candle. Carefully remove the candle shape. Write a message inside the card.



**Dr. Maulana Karenga** created Kwanzaa in 1966. Kwanzaa is a festival celebrated by African Americans, but it is gradually gaining acknowledgment and importance in other parts of the world. The word *Kwanzaa* means "first fruits" (referring to first fruits of the harvest). It is through this celebration that traditional African principles are taught or reinforced. The ultimate aim of Kwanzaa is to strengthen family values.

# Kwanzaa Activities

Use the following activities as you learn about the Kwanzaa celebration or as part of a cultures day activities and displays.

## Mkeka

In Africa, a mkeka would be made from straw and woven by hand. In this activity, you will make a paper mkeka.

**Materials:** 18" x 12" (46 cm x 30 cm) pieces of construction paper (one red, one green, one black), scissors, glue

### Directions

1. Cut four strips of paper that are 18 inches (46 cm) long and 1 inch (2.54 cm) wide from each of the three colors of construction paper (red, green, and black). You should have a total of 12 strips.
2. On a flat surface, place the strips next to each other so they look like vertical lines with alternating colors. Be sure the ends of the strips are aligned.
3. Cut six strips of paper that are 12 inches (30 cm) long and 1 inch (2.54 cm) wide from each of the different colors of construction paper (red, green and black). You should have a total of 18 strips.
4. Glue one 12 inch (30 cm) strip along the top edge of the 18 inch (46 cm) strips. Allow the glue to dry. This will help you hold the long strips together as you weave in additional strips.
5. Starting next to the 12 inch (30 cm) strip you glued, weave in each of the other 12 inch (30 cm) strips. Weaving means you go above and below alternating strips of paper and continue with that pattern until you reach the end.
6. Secure the ends of the strips that you have woven by gluing them to the long strips.

## Kinara

No Kwanzaa celebration would be complete without a kinara. Here is how you can make one to display at school.

**Materials:** a wooden board about 12" x 3" x 1" (30 cm x 8 cm x 2.54 cm), seven bottle caps from 2 or 3 liter bottles, modeling clay, 1 black dinner candle, 3 red dinner candles, 3 green dinner candles

### Directions

1. Cover the top of the board with a layer of clay. You may wish to use different colored clay, make designs, or use a variety of tools to add texture.
2. Press each bottle cap into the clay on the board until all seven are in a row.
3. Mold additional clay around the outside of the bottle caps. Be sure you use plenty of clay to secure the bottle caps to the board, since this will be the stand for your candles.
4. Carefully place the candles into the stand in the following order: black candle in the middle, 3 red candles to the left of the black candle, and 3 green candles to the right of the black candle.
5. Use additional clay to connect the candles to the bottle caps. Be sure the candles cannot fall over or shift position.
6. Display your kinara at school. Then take it home and tell your family about it. Have an adult in your family light the kinara so everyone can enjoy it.

# ***A Polar Express Drawing Sheet***

What kinds of gifts do you think are inside Santa's giant bag?  
Draw its contents in the box below.



# ***The Polar Express Party***

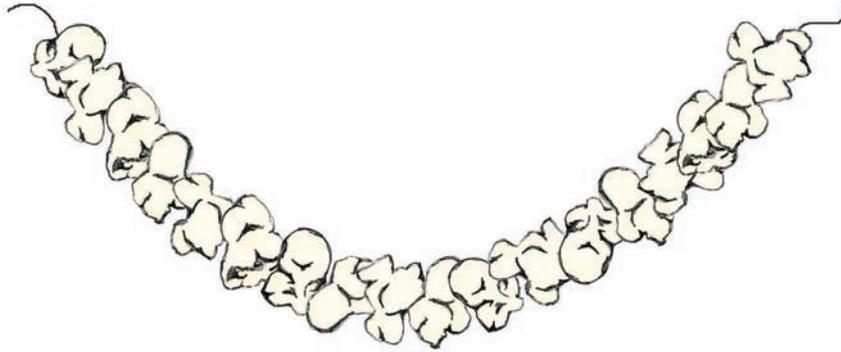
## **Make Your Own Paper Tree Garland (all ages)**



- Select the papers you wish to use and cut strips of varying widths.
- Place some glue on one end of the first strip . . .
- . . . and overlap it over the other end forming a loop.
- Place glue on the second strip and insert it through the first loop, and also create a loop just like the first one.
- Continue adding new loops until the length you need is completed.

# ***The Polar Express Party***

## **Make Your Own Popcorn Tree Garland (ages 8+)**



1. Make some popcorn. At least one large bowl is needed, but that will depend on the size of your tree. Be sure to let the popcorn cool before you continue on to the next step.
2. Thread a needle, but do not cut the thread from the spool. It will take a lot of thread for the popcorn garland to cover an entire tree.
3. Start stringing one popcorn piece at a time by inserting the tip of the needle into the center of each piece. Keep sliding it further down on the thread making room for more popcorn. It's best to slide the popcorn to the end of the thread to prevent knots.
4. Once you feel that you have enough garland for the size of your tree, tie off the end of the thread by looping it, pulling tightly, and going under the loops a few times. Make sure that it is well secured so that popcorn won't fall off, and then gently cut the thread.
5. Carefully hang the garland on your Christmas tree!

### **Some tips:**

1. Letting the popcorn sit out for a while to get stale will make it easier to string, because it won't be as crisp and likely to break when you stick the needle in it.
2. It is best to have a needle with a large eye, for easier threading.
3. Waxed dental floss is stronger than thread and it is easier to slide the popcorn down. Silk quilting thread will also work well.
4. For a different look, string popcorn with cranberries. Use unbuttered and unsalted popcorn, and for this the popcorn is best when air popped. Buy a bag of raw cranberries from the grocery store. They do not need to be cooked. Just add several pieces of popcorn in between each cranberry.

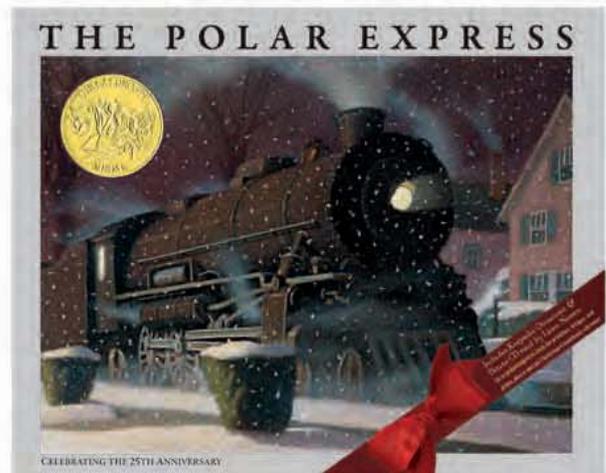
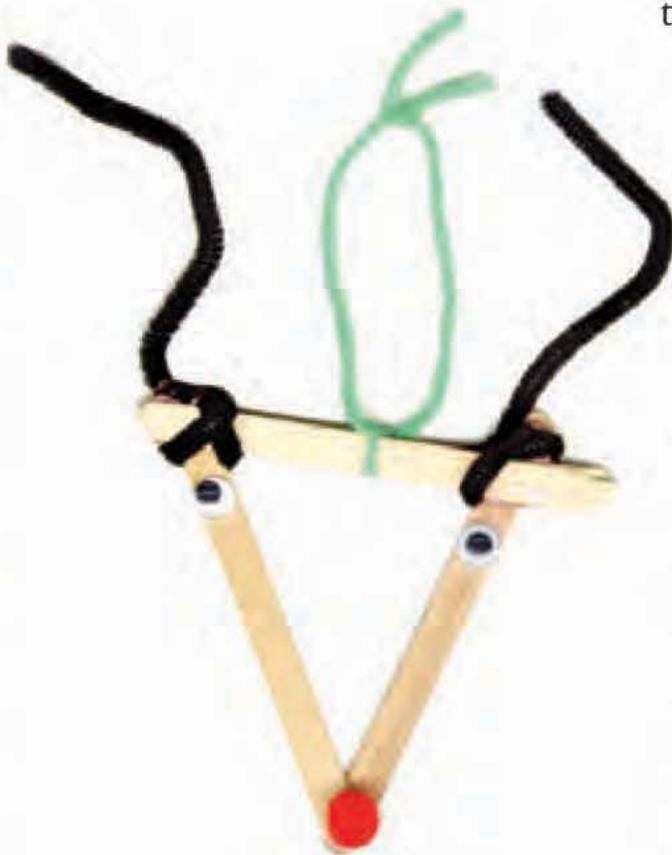
# The Polar Express Party

## Make Your Own Reindeer Craft

### What You Need

- 3 popsicle sticks
- 2 googly eyes
- 2 brown pipe cleaners
- 1 small red pom pom
- 8 inches of yarn (any color)
- glue

1. Glue the popsicle sticks together to form a triangle with the point facing down.
2. Glue the googly eyes on each of the two sides at the top.
3. Wrap the pipe cleaners around the top popsicle stick to form reindeer antlers.
4. Glue the red pompom nose to the popsicle stick at the point of the triangle
5. Tie the yarn around to make a decoration that can hang on your door, a tree or plant, or the bulletin board!



# The Polar Express Party Recipes



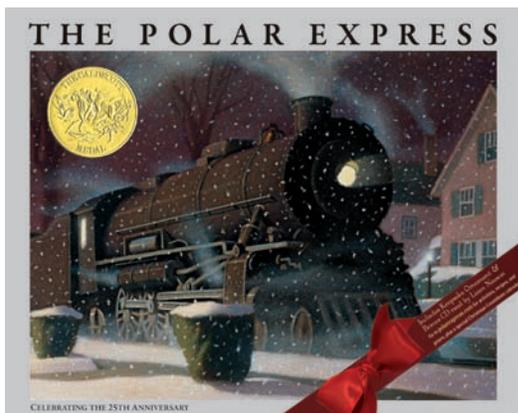
## Candy Cane Sugar Cookies

### Ingredients:

- 1/2 (18 ounce) package refrigerated sugar cookie dough, softened
- 3 tablespoons flour
- 1/2 teaspoon peppermint extract
- 1/2 teaspoon red food coloring

### Directions

1. In a large mixing bowl, beat the cookie dough, flour, and peppermint extract until smooth. Divide the dough in half and mix the food coloring in to one portion.
2. Shape 1 teaspoon of each color dough into 6-inch ropes. Place the ropes side by side, press together, and lightly twist.
3. Place on an ungreased baking sheet; curve into a candy cane shape. Repeat with remaining dough, placing cookies 2 inches apart on the baking sheets.
4. Bake at 350 degrees for 8–10 minutes or until set. Cool for 2 minutes before carefully removing to wire racks.
5. ENJOY with your homemade hot cocoa!



# The Polar Express Party Recipes



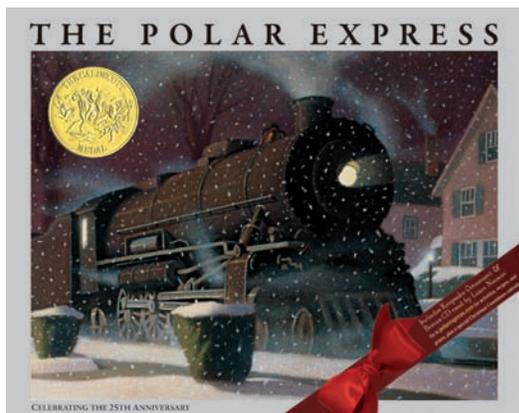
## Polar Chocolate Nougat Caramel Squares

### Ingredients:

- 1 cup flour
- 1/2 cup firmly packed light brown sugar
- 1/3 cup butter or margarine (room temperature)
- 5 candy bars—chocolate with nougat and caramel (hint: the initials are MW)
- 1/4 cup milk
- 2 eggs, slightly beaten
- 1 tsp. vanilla
- 2 tbs. flour
- 1/2 tsp. baking powder
- 1 can (3 1/2 oz.) blanched sliced almonds

### Directions

1. Preheat oven to 350. Grease a 13 x 9 x 2-inch baking pan.
2. Combine 1 cup flour with the brown sugar in a medium-sized bowl. Mix in the butter until crumbly dough forms. Press dough into greased pan.
3. Bake for 12 minutes or until golden brown. Cool on wire rack.
4. Melt candy bars with milk in small saucepan over medium-low heat.
5. Cool the mixture slightly, then slowly add the eggs. (Beat constantly to keep from curdling.)
6. Add the vanilla, 2 tablespoons of flour, and the baking powder to the candy mixture, then pour every thing over the crust (which has been cooling on the rack). Sprinkle almonds on top.
7. Bake at 350 for 25 minutes or until the top is firm. Let cool. Cut into squares with a sharp knife.



# Let's Play "The Conductor Says!"

That's right!  
The Conductor Says, NOT Simon!



1. Choose one person to be the Conductor. He or she will make up things for the rest of the group to do.
2. The Conductor will instruct the group to do things in two different ways:

He or she will say "The Conductor says" before the command.

For instance:

The Conductor says, "Touch your toes."

The Conductor says, "Raise your hand."

The Conductor says, "Close your eyes."

The Conductor says, "Rub your tummy."

The Conductor says, "Blow a kiss."

The Conductor says, "Chuckle Ho, Ho, Ho."

This is when the group should do just what the Conductor does and perform the action.

**BUT WATCH OUT! THE CONDUCTOR MAY TRY TO TRICK YOU . . .**

Sometimes he or she will NOT say "The Conductor says" before the command.

For instance:

"Touch your nose."

"Raise your hand."

"Close your eyes."

"Rub your tummy."

This is when the group should NOT do what the Conductor says. Whoever performs the action when the Conductor has not said "The Conductor says" is out.

# Christmas Concerns

1. If Santa Claus was born 100 years ago today, how many days old would he be today?

\_\_\_\_\_

2. Santa plans to leave San Francisco at 6:00 P.M. on Christmas Eve. It will take him four hours to fly to Miami, Florida. What time and what day will he arrive in Miami?

\_\_\_\_\_

3. Your mother gives you a choice of how many pieces of candy you would like to have in your Christmas stocking. Look at the following choices. Convert them into the decimal system, and choose the one that represents the most candy.

a. CDLXIV pieces of candy = \_\_\_\_\_

b. 39 dozen pieces of candy = \_\_\_\_\_

c.  $22^2$  pieces of candy = \_\_\_\_\_

4. Rudolph flies three times as fast as Cupid, but only two-thirds as fast as Blitzen. If Cupid flies 320 miles in four hours, at what speed per hour do each of the three reindeer fly?

Cupid = \_\_\_\_\_

Rudolph = \_\_\_\_\_

Blitzen = \_\_\_\_\_

5. Mrs. Claus is concerned about her weight. Last year she weighed  $\frac{2}{3}$  what she weighs this year. This year she weighs  $1\frac{1}{2}$  times what she weighed two years ago. If Mrs. Claus weighed 160 pounds last year, how much did she weigh two years ago and how much does she weigh this year?

2 years ago = \_\_\_\_\_

1 year ago = \_\_\_\_\_

this year = \_\_\_\_\_

Christmas Concerns Answer Key

1. 36,525

2. 1 A.M. Christmas Day

3. a. 464 b. 468 c. 484

4. Cupid = 80 m.p.h.; Rudolph = 240 m.p.h.;

Blitzen = 360 m.p.h.

5. 2 years ago = 160 lbs.; 1 year ago = 160 lbs.;

this year = 240 lbs.

# MANIPULATIVE ACTIVITY 14

For use with Lesson 14-4

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

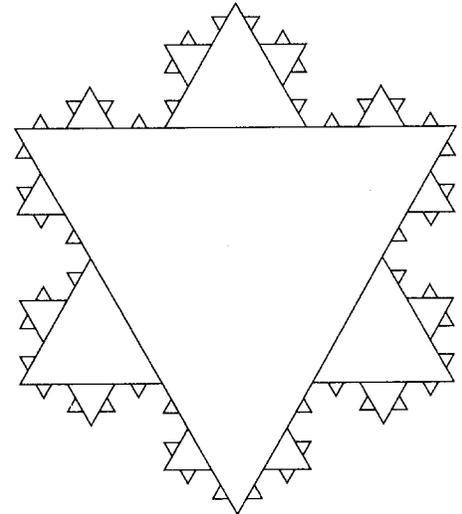
## A Growing Snowflake

The growing snowflake is an unusual construction. Its perimeter is infinite, but its area is finite!

To see how this is possible follow these instructions.

- Cut out a large equilateral triangle and trace around it on a piece of paper.
- Cut the triangle into 9 equilateral triangles and paste 3 of them so that they protrude from the center of each side of the large triangle.
- Cut the rest of the triangles again; this time cut each into 9 smaller equilateral triangles and paste them so that they protrude from the center of each side.
- Continue constructing the snowflake this way until it looks like the snowflake at the right.

- **You will need:**
- *scissors, ruler, paste*



Assume that the length of the side of the original triangle was 1 unit. Its perimeter would be 3 units and its area would be  $\frac{\sqrt{3}}{4}$  square units. Find the perimeter and area of the first 4 snowflakes in the series. Complete the chart below.

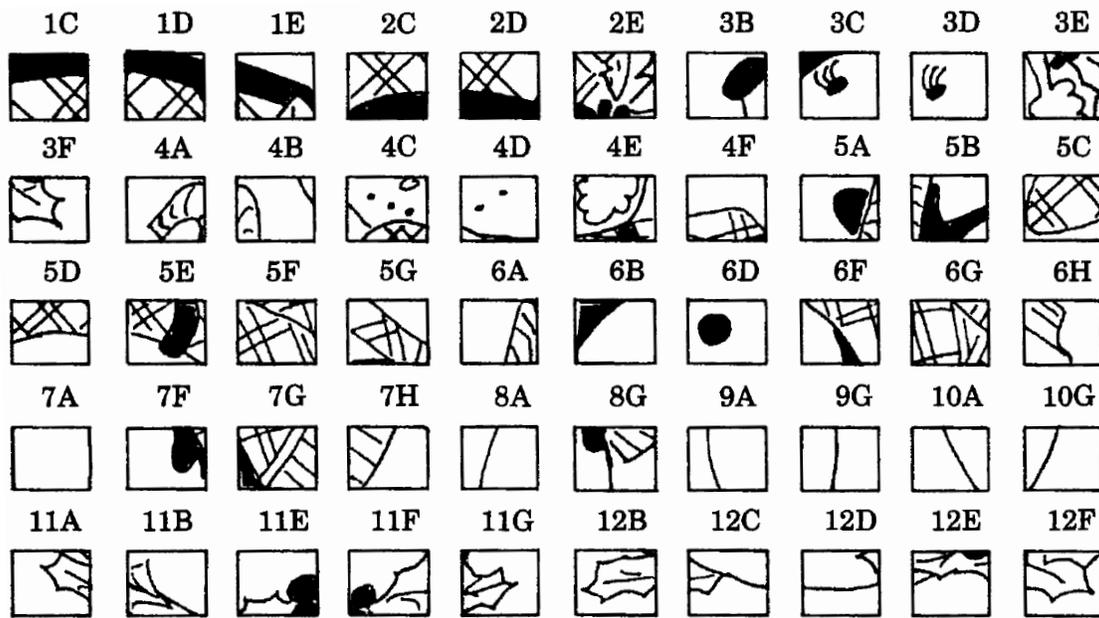
	$a_1$	$a_2$	$a_3$	$a_4$
Number of sides	$3 \cdot 4$			
Length of each side		$\frac{1}{3} \cdot \frac{1}{3}$		
Perimeter			$\frac{192}{27} = \frac{64}{9}$	
Number of triangles added			48	
Area of new triangles		$\frac{\sqrt{3}}{12} \cdot \frac{4}{9}$		
Total area		$\frac{\sqrt{3}}{4} + \frac{\sqrt{3}}{12} + \frac{\sqrt{3}}{12} \cdot \frac{4}{9}$		

1. Does the perimeter increase in geometric sequence?
2. What is the common ratio?
3. How do you know that the perimeter will increase without limit?
4. Does the area increase in a geometric sequence?
5. What is the common ratio?
6. How do you know that the area will converge on a number?
7. What number will the area converge on?



# Wintertime Fun

You don't have to be an artist to draw a wintertime picture. Just draw each code square in the corresponding square on the grid.



	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
1								
2								
3								
4								
5								
6								
7								
8								
9								
10								
11								
12								

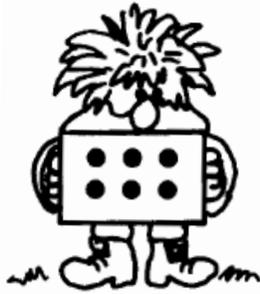
# Wintertime Fun

## Answer Key

The drawing should look like a snowman with a hat and scarf. Holly should decorate the hat and the bottom of the picture.

# The Elves' Chocolates

**Directions:** Write the multiplication sentence shown in the array. Then on the back of this sheet, draw the array of chocolates you would like for yourself and write the multiplication sentence.



$$\_\_ \times \_\_ = \_\_$$



$$\_\_ \times \_\_ = \_\_$$



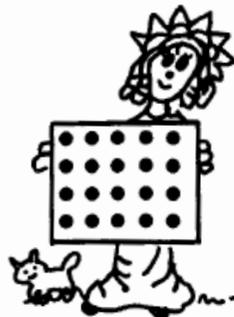
$$\_\_ \times \_\_ = \_\_$$



$$\_\_ \times \_\_ = \_\_$$



$$\_\_ \times \_\_ = \_\_$$



$$\_\_ \times \_\_ = \_\_$$



$$\_\_ \times \_\_ = \_\_$$



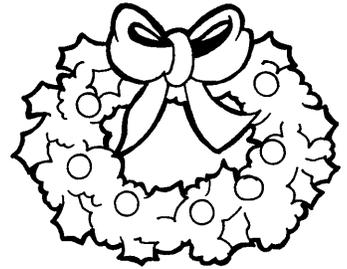
$$\_\_ \times \_\_ = \_\_$$

# Christmas Activities

## Hink Pinks

Hink Pinks are two rhyming words. Beside the clues below, the number of syllables in each word in the answer is shown in parentheses.

1. Santa's teeth cleaner (1, 1) \_\_\_\_\_
2. inexpensive present (1, 1) \_\_\_\_\_
3. complimentary cedar (1, 1) \_\_\_\_\_
4. happy red-berry shrub (2, 2) \_\_\_\_\_
5. "joyful Christmas song" clothing (2, 2) \_\_\_\_\_



## “Christmas” Words

Use the letters in the word “Christmas” to make words consisting of three or more letters each. Place the words in the appropriate columns. Then add your total scores. (You may use the letters only as often as they appear in the word “Christmas.” For example, you may use the letter *s* twice but you may use the letter *a* only once in each word.) Do not use abbreviations or proper nouns.

3 letters (1 point)	4 letters (2 points)	5 letters (3 points)	6+ letters (4 points)

## Christmas Activities Answer Key

### **Hink Pinks**

1. Claus floss 4. jolly holly
2. thrift gift 5. carol apparel
3. free tree

### **“Christmas” Words**

Accept reasonable answers. Possibilities include the following:

**3-letter words:** act, air, arm, art, car, cat, ham, him, his, hat, hit, its, mat, ram, rat, rim, sat, sir, sit, etc.

**4-letter words:** cash, cart, cast, cats, chat, rams, rats, hair, harm, math, mass, mast, mist, mats, miss, char, star, stir, mash, trim, tram, mart, mach, etc.

**5-letter words:** amiss, march, masts, trams, trims, stars, match, hairs, charm, chars, chasm, chats, mirth, harms, etc.

**6-letter words:** smarts, charms, charts, chairs, chasms, starch, stairs, smirch, etc.

# New Year's Eve

## December 31

Most of the western world celebrates New Year's Eve on December 31st according to the Gregorian solar calendar. Many people in Asia, who follow their own lunar calendar and celebrate their own New Year, also recognize the New Year of the solar calendar with an additional celebration.

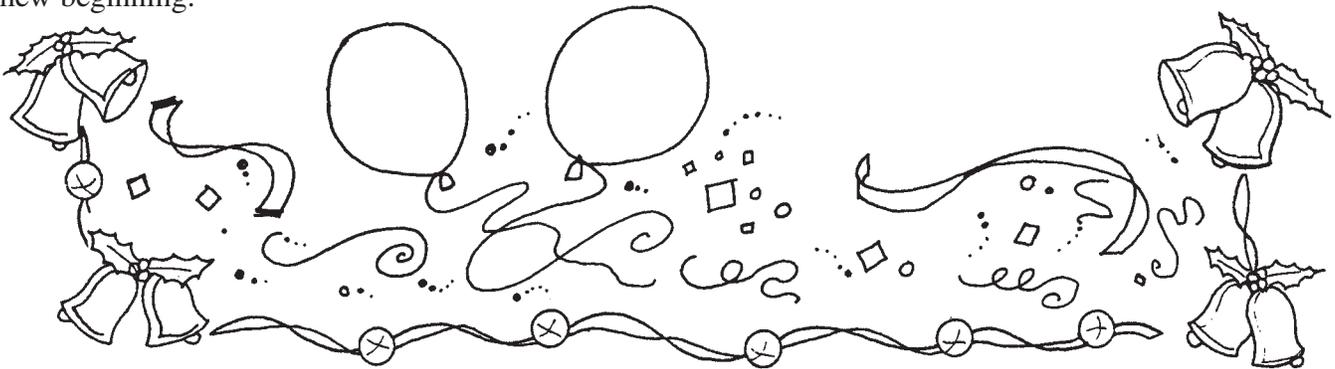
Our New Year's Eve customs come from all over. People make noise like the Danes. They bang pots and pans together and sing "Auld Lang Syne" like the Scots. They drink a toast like the early Anglo Saxons. And they refrain from doing things they don't want to do in the New Year like the Germans.

The custom of making New Year's resolutions goes back all the way to the ancient Romans. The month of January is named for the Roman god, Janus. Janus had two faces so he could look both ways at once. He was the god of doorways and beginnings and endings, a perfect symbol for an old year that was ending and a new one that was beginning. The ancient Romans honored Janus by making promises to him when they started the New Year. When we make resolutions, we make promises too, but now we make them to ourselves.

Almost everyone either stays up until midnight or tries to. At the stroke of midnight, people shout, "Happy New Year!" and hug each other. The telephone lines all over the United States are jammed as people call those they could not be with for the New Year,

Of course, not everyone has a party on New Year's Eve. Some people observe the New Year as a religious occasion. They attend church services and think about what they can do to be better during the next twelve months.

But somehow or another, whether they go to church or to a party, people recognize the chance for a new beginning.



## Making It Work

Go over the customs associated with New Year's Eve when the students come back to school in January. Discuss customs that they may have in their own families.

Talk about resolutions. Brainstorm for help in generating ideas, but let each student decide on his or her own resolution(s). This can be a stressful experience for some students. All of them might find it less threatening to start their resolutions with words like "This year I plan to..." Many students will want to keep their resolutions private. If you use portfolios, they can put their written resolutions away in their portfolios and refer to them as they may wish.

# New Year's Day

## January 1

January 1st is the first day of the year on the Gregorian calendar. The date of the New Year has moved around several times, but it settled at last on the day Julius Caesar had picked for it in about 40 B.C.

New Year's Day is a day of new beginnings. People indulge themselves in superstitions about lucky things to do and lucky foods to eat. For example, a food superstition that originated in America's Deep South is that it is lucky to eat black-eyed peas on New Year's Day. Some people go even farther and say that it is unlucky not to eat them. Other people believe that whatever you do on New Year's Day, you will do all year. These people are careful to do only things that make them happy.

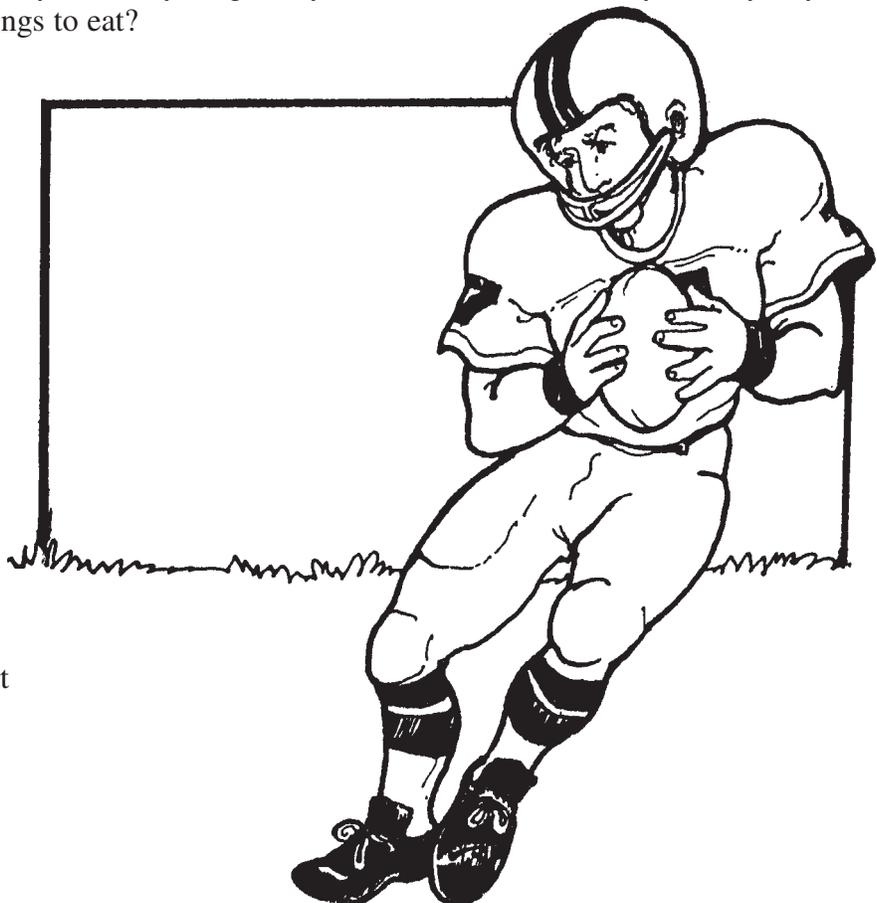
The way in which New Year's Day is celebrated has changed since the middle of the twentieth century when television became a part of our lives. It used to be a day for visiting with friends and family. Now, it is often devoted to televised parades and sports, especially football in the United States. The Rose Bowl Parade in Pasadena, California has become almost synonymous with New Year's Day, as have the various Bowl Games played around the country. This can be a very festive way to spend the day except, of course, for people who really don't like parades or football games.

### Making It Work

Have students write brief accounts of how they like to spend New Year's Eve and New Year's Day. Share these as a class and discuss. Do you do anything really different? Is this a family holiday in your home? Did you have any special things to eat?

Students might enjoy making New Year's cards for their families. Talk about the Roman god Janus and display an artist's idea of how he might have looked. There are all kinds of interesting interpretations of this "two-faced" god. Janus is a wonderful symbol to put on a New Year's card.

Run off copies of a calendar and plan to give students fresh new ones each month. If you use a date book to plan your time, model the activity for them. They can three-hole-punch their monthly calendar and keep it in the front part of an often-used binder.

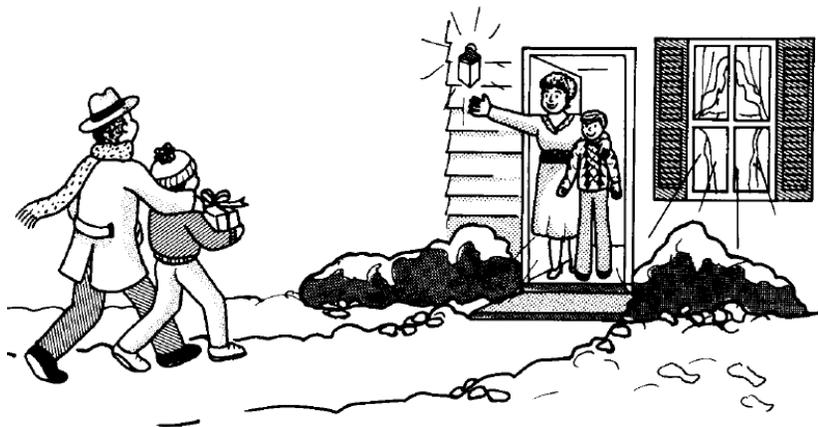


Name ..... Date .....

# Happy Holidays

What holiday do you celebrate in December? .....

On the back of this sheet, draw a picture of your family celebrating the holiday.



Draw a picture of a decoration used during the holiday.

Draw a picture of a special food you eat during the holiday.

# Kwanzaa Terms

**Directions:** Match each Kwanzaa term with its description.

- |   |                      |
|---|----------------------|
| 1. _____ collective work and responsibility                                       | A. green             |
| 2. _____ self-determination   | B. vibunzi           |
| 3. _____ a sense of purpose   | C. black             |
| 4. _____ cooperative economics  | D. imani             |
| 5. _____ faith  | E. ujamaa            |
| 6. _____ creativity   | F. zawadi            |
| 7. _____ unity  | G. kinara            |
| 8. _____ great feast  | H. mkeka             |
| 9. _____ name of the color of the people  | I. nia               |
| 10. _____ name of the color of the fertile land of Africa                         | J. ujima             |
| 11. _____ name of the color of the blood that is shed in the struggle for freedom | K. mazao             |
| 12. _____ creator of Kwanzaa  | L. Dr. Maulana       |
| 13. _____ first fruits of the harvest (in Swahili)                                | M. mishumaa saba     |
| 14. _____ the candleholder, which holds seven candles                             | N. umoja             |
| 15. _____ the seven candles that represent the seven principles                   | O. matunda ya kwanza |
| 16. _____ ear of corn   | P. kujichagulia      |
| 17. _____ gifts   | Q. kuumba            |
| 18. _____ mat   | R. karamu            |
| 19. _____ fruits, nuts, and vegetables  | S. red               |
| 20. _____ the unity cup   | T. kikombe cha umoja |

# Kwanzaa Terms Answer Key

1. J. ujima
2. P. kujichagulia
3. I. nia
4. E. ujamaa
5. D. imani
6. Q. kuumba
7. N. umoja
8. R. karamu
9. C. black
10. A. green
11. S. red
12. L. Dr. Maulana
13. O. matunda ya kwanza
14. G. kinara
15. M. mishumaa saba
16. B. vibunzi
17. F. zawadi
18. H. mkeka
19. K. mazao
20. T. kikombe cha umoja

# Synonym Bells

**Directions:** Read the word on the bell. Then find its synonym in the Word Box and write the synonym on the other bell.

pretty

go

unsafe

like

large

fix

choose

afraid

**WORD BOX**

huge  
enjoy  
dangerous  
leave  
pick  
beautiful  
scared  
repair



Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## BABY DOLL

A week before Christmas, Grace and her family made a visit to the general store. It was 1897, and they had lived in the area for two years. Grace loved to travel to town and see all the pretty things in the store. There were dresses, dolls, and lots of candy. She admired all the beautiful things in the storefront window as she waited for her ma and pa to buy the goods.

Grace was enthralled with one of the items in the window that day. It was a baby doll in a beautiful blue dress. She couldn't take her eyes off it. A man standing nearby noticed Grace. He asked her what she was looking at, and she happily pointed it out to the man.

"Looks like you are going to be one lucky girl on Christmas Day."

"Oh no. I won't, sir. You see, my ma and pa, we don't have very much money. We don't get big Christmas presents, but we sure have fun together."

Christmas Day soon arrived. That morning, Grace was surprised to see the little doll from the store window sitting in a cradle under her Christmas tree. Her parents were just as surprised.

"Wow. Santa brought you a real treat, didn't he?" said Pa.

"Oh, this wasn't from Santa. This is from a special man I met at the store," explained Grace with a twinkle in her eye. She smiled when she thought about this stranger who made her Christmas.

### STORY QUESTIONS

1. How did Grace know the gift came from the man at the store?

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2. What does the word *enthralled* mean?

- |              |                     |
|--------------|---------------------|
| a. opposite  | c. partnership with |
| b. enchanted | d. opened up        |

3. After reading the passage, what is a word that could be used to describe Grace?

- a. studious
- b. forgetful
- c. gracious
- d. spirited



**Baby Doll**

1. Grace had a conversation about the doll with the man at the store.
2. b
3. c

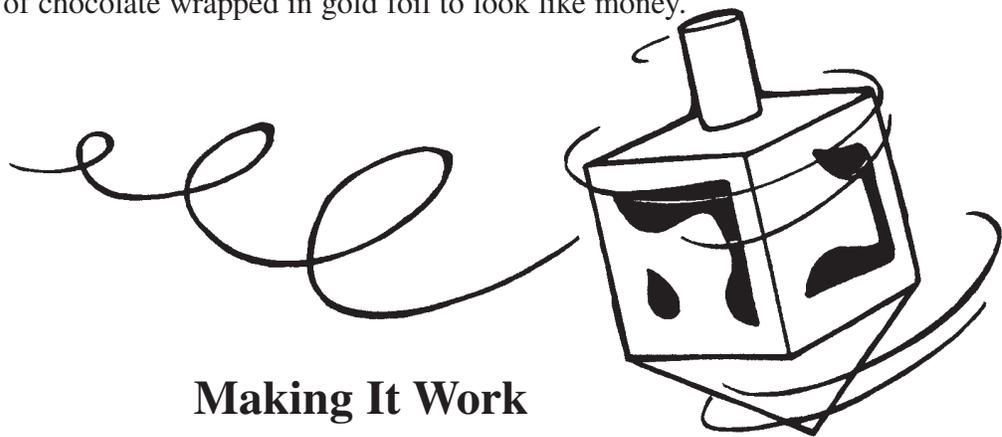
# Hanukkah or Chanukah, the Jewish Festival of Lights

## Sometime in December

The Jewish festival of Hanukkah, or Chanukah, is also called the Festival of Lights. It lasts for eight days and usually occurs in December, although in some years it may start in November. It commemorates not only the triumph of the Maccabees over the great army of the Syrian king, Antiochus IV, in 165 B.C., but also the universal message that all people have the right to be free.

After the Jews had won their battle, they went to their temple and found that the Syrians had brought in statues of their own gods. The eternal light had been allowed to go out. The Jews rekindled the light, but they had only enough oil to keep it burning for one day, and it would take eight days for a messenger to get more oil. The miracle of Hanukkah is that the oil kept burning for eight days, long enough for the messenger to return with more. Jews use a candleholder called the *menorah* to symbolize this miracle. It holds nine candles. One, the *shamus*, is used to light the others. They stand for the eight days that the oil kept burning.

Hanukkah is celebrated by lighting the candles of the menorah, playing games of chance with a spinning top called a *dreidel*, and eating special holiday foods such as potato pancakes called latkes. Children often receive a gift on each night of Hanukkah in addition to Hanukkah *gelt* (money). This gelt sometimes consists of chocolate wrapped in gold foil to look like money.



## Making It Work

Invite a parent of one of your students to give a Hanukkah party in your classroom. This can be very simple or very festive, but it should include at least one traditional food, some gelt, and a chance to play the dreidel game.

If no parent is willing or able to give a party for you, you can easily give one yourself with the help of a Jewish delicatessen. Gelt can be purchased everywhere in its little net bags.

Buy inexpensive plastic dreidels for your students or have each student make his or her own.

Beautiful Hanukkah cards can be made easily. Fold blue paper into a card shape. Lay the cut-out shape of a candle on the front of the card. Lightly sponge thin white tempera paint over the entire front. Carefully lift away the candle. Allow to dry and write a message inside.

# Santa's Christmas Route

You will need a map with longitude and latitude to complete this page.

It's almost Christmastime and Santa's on his way.

He'll visit each town and city by the arrival of Christmas Day.

He'll fly south to Europe to a major capital city.

When he arrives at 41° N, 13° E, he'll sing a Christmas ditty. \_\_\_\_\_ (1)

Then Santa will fly southeast over the \_\_\_\_\_ Canal, (2)

And the sea he will cross over matches Rudolph, his reindeer pal \_\_\_\_\_ (3)

He'll travel southwest across Africa to the Ivory Coast. "\_\_\_\_\_ is our capital," is the natives' boast. (4)

Then off to the southeast of Africa to a large offshore island.

"\_\_\_\_\_ is our destination," choruses his tiny reindeer band. (5)

The reindeer change direction and fly north of the Tropic of Cancer.

"Let's fly over eastern Asia to Seoul, \_\_\_\_\_," says the feisty little Prancer. (6)

Momentarily, Prancer thinks a minute and scratches his tiny ear,

"If it's 1:00 P.M. in London, what time will it be here?" \_\_\_\_\_ (7)

Then Santa crosses southern Asia and goes to the country of \_\_\_\_\_, to Bombay. (8)

He crosses the \_\_\_\_\_ Mountains as he proceeds along this way. (9)

He travels southeast to Singapore and wonders where he's at.

"Santa," shouts Cupid, "we're at \_\_\_\_\_ Long. and Lat!" (10)

Then they dash across the sky like lightning and thunder.

They're headed southeast to \_\_\_\_\_, the land "down under." (11)

# Santa's Christmas Route *(cont.)*

They sing happy Christmas carols filled with joy and mirth,  
And they make their way southwest across the continent to the main city of \_\_\_\_\_.  
(12)

Then Santa's off to Alaska and needs the shortest route that's best.  
Will he fly \_\_\_\_\_, or will he fly northwest?  
(13)

How many time zones does Santa cross en route to Anchorage? \_\_\_\_\_  
(14)

At least he won't have to worry if his perishables aren't stored in the fridge!  
Santa travels east across the \_\_\_\_\_ Mountains to the capital of Canada.  
(15)

\_\_\_\_\_ Is the capital Toronto? Is it Montreal? Or is it Ottawa?  
(16)

Santa travels south toward the equator on the same meridian.

When he arrives in Colombia's capital, \_\_\_\_\_, he promises the  
reindeer some fun!  
(17)

He travels south through the \_\_\_\_\_ Mountains,  
(18)

Then due east along the Tropic of Capricorn.

By the time they arrive across the continent in the farthest eastern coastal city of  
\_\_\_\_\_,  
(19)

Santa's looking extremely tired and forlorn.

His last destination is \_\_\_\_\_,  
and Santa can't \_\_\_\_\_ (your home town)  
quite figure it out,

So write at least four more lines  
of rhyme and help Santa plan  
his route!

Merry Christmas!



### **Santa's Christmas Route Answer Key**

1. Rome, Italy 11. Australia
2. Suez 12. Perth
3. Red Sea 13. northeast
4. Abidjan 14. 6 time zones
5. Madagascar 15. Rocky
6. South Korea 16. Ottawa
7. 10:00 p.m. 17. Bogota
8. India 18. Andes
9. Himalaya 19. Rio de Janeiro
10. 3° N 103° E

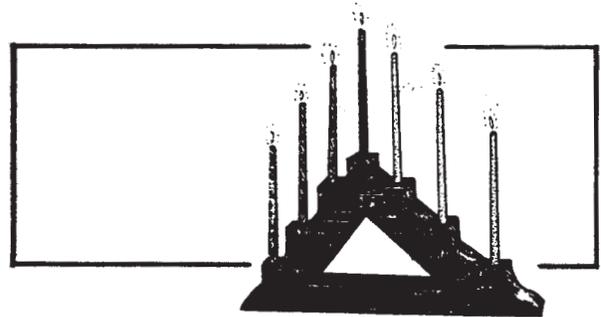
# Kwanzaa, the African-American Celebration of Ancestry

December 26 through January 1

Kwanzaa is an example of a cultural holiday. It is not religious, political, or heroic. It is uniquely American in its recognition of the cultural foundation common to Americans of African descent, and an estimated 18 million people observe the holiday each year. It was originated by Dr. Maulana Karenga, now chairman of the black studies department at California State University, Long Beach. The name itself, Kwanzaa, is taken from the Ki-Swahili language and means “the first fruits of the harvest.” Although it was not purposely designed as a substitute for Christmas and New Year’s Eve and Day, it can be celebrated in that way or it can be celebrated as an enriching addition to other more conventional holidays.

Kwanzaa is based on seven fundamental principles (Nguzo Saba) that can be used all year as guides for daily living.

1. Unity (*Umoja*)
2. Self-determination (*Kujichagulia*)
3. Collective Work And Responsibility (*Ujima*)
4. Cooperative Economics (*Ujamaa*)
5. Purpose (*Nia*)
6. Creativity (*Kuumba*)
7. Faith (*Imani*)



Kwanzaa is celebrated with symbolic objects that reflect both traditional and modern concepts important to the African-American people. There are seven basic symbols and two additional optional ones.

1. Fruits and vegetables (*Mazao*)
2. A place mat (*Mkeka*)
3. The candle holder for seven candles (*Kinara*)
4. Ears of com symbolizing the children in the home (*Vibunzi*)
5. Gifts (*Zawadi*)
6. Communal unity cup (*Kikombe Cha Umoja*)
7. Seven candles-one black, three red, three green-representing the seven principles (*Mishumaa Saba*)
8. The seven principles printed large for all to see (Nguzo Saba)
9. The black, red, and green flag of the modern Black nationalist movement (*Bendera ya Taifa*)

There are many ways to celebrate Kwanzaa, and although it is not a religious holiday, it may be helpful to ask someone who is familiar with its celebration to help. At the very least, a table should be prepared with the symbolic items. Each evening, or each day in school, a candle is lit, beginning with the black one which is placed in the center. As each candle is lit, the principle it represents is recited. The person who lights the candle can tell what that principle means to him or her.

# Kwanzaa, the African-American Celebration of Ancestry *(cont.)*

A feast, the Kwanzaa Karumu, is held on the night of December 31st. People who plan to celebrate New Year's Eve hold the feast earlier in the evening. The table is decorated with the symbolic items, and the gifts, which should be educational and creative and given as a reward for merit, are exchanged. The feast itself usually consists of chicken, fish, rice, yams or sweet potatoes, and other vegetables. Everyone should make some contribution to the feast, bringing a cooked dish or something else that will add to the feast.

The place where the feast is held, whether it is in a school, a church, a community center, or at home, should be decorated. The decorations should be ethnic and reflect the use of the symbolic colors: black, red, and green. The entertainment, which can go on throughout the feast, should consist of African music, dances, stories, and chants. The celebrants are encouraged to wear ethnic clothing and hairstyles.

## Making It Work

Create a Kwanzaa setting in the classroom. Ask students to bring symbolic items from home or create them from ordinary classroom materials.

Turn a piece of driftwood, or even scrap lumber that has been sanded and painted, into a candleholder by gluing on long tacks upside-down. Simply stick the tack points into the bottoms of the candles.

Make placemats from woven strips of paper. Each student can make one for his or her desk in preparation for a feast. Use black, red, and green construction paper.

Have students print the "seven principles" on poster board and illustrate them. Place these posters around the classroom.

Ask groups of students to research, plan, and rehearse African songs and/or dances and perform them for their own class and for other classes.

Plan a Kwanzaa Karamu (feast). Use all of the decorations and the entertainment your students have created. Assign different dishes to groups of students or individuals. Create appropriate invitations and invite the students' parents or another class to join you for the celebration.

Allow students to create gifts for one another and/or for the guests. Since Kwanzaa strives to de-emphasize commercialism, the gifts should be made by the students and should reflect crafts that are relevant to the African heritage.

Prepare and learn one or more African games to play during your party or at free times during school.

# Kwanzaa Background

## What is Kwanzaa?

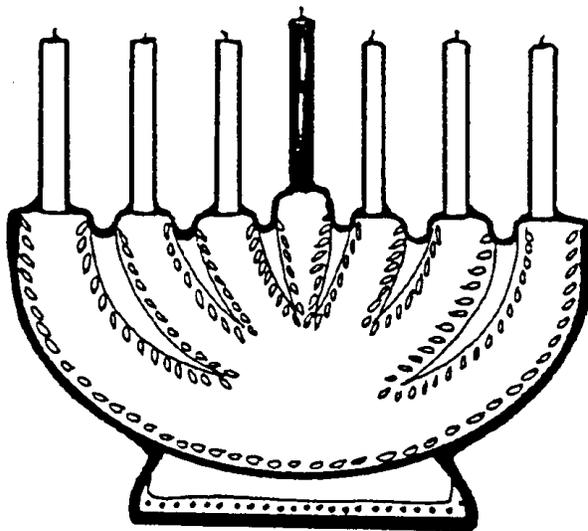
Many cultures have special celebrations. In 1966, Dr. Maulana Karenga decided African Americans should have a celebration that would be uniquely theirs. He wanted this celebration to occur between December 26 and January 1 each year. He thought it would give African Americans a chance to learn about their African heritage, as well as plan for the future.

## From where did the word Kwanzaa come?

In Africa, many tribes celebrate the first harvest of the crops. In Swahili this celebration is called *Matunda ya Kwanza* which means “First Fruits.” Dr. Karenga used this name *Kwanza* to tie the new holiday to this tradition. However, he changed the name of the holiday to *Kwanzaa* by adding an extra “a.” The purpose of this change in spelling was to show that the holiday was built on the old tradition, but also represented the beginning of a new tradition. The spelling now uses seven letters which indicate the number of days included in the holiday.

## How is Kwanzaa celebrated?

There are special objects used for the Kwanzaa celebration. The first is *mkeke* (m-KEH-ka), which is a handmade mat. Next is a *kikombe cha umoja* (kee-KOM-beh chah oo-MO-jah) which is a cup that everyone drinks from to show that African Americans are a united people. One ear of corn, called *muhindi* (moo-HIN-de), is put out for each child in the family and is a reminder that children are the hope of the future. Next is the *kinara* (ki-NAH-rah), a wooden candleholder. It holds seven candles—one candle is black to symbolize African Americans, three candles are red to symbolize hard work and the fight for freedom, and three candles are green to symbolize hope. The last items on the table are gifts. They are called *zawadi* (zah-WAH-dee) and are handmade.



Each night for seven nights the family gets together, and one candle is lit as someone explains the belief for that day. On the first night, the black candle is lit to celebrate *umoja* (oo-MOE-jah), which means unity. On the second night, a red candle is lit for *kujichagulia* (koo-jee-cha-goo-LEE-ah), which means self-determination. On the third night, a green candle is lit for *ujima* (oo-JEE-mah), which means collective work and responsibility. On the fourth night, a red candle is lit for *ujama* (oo-jah-MAAH), cooperative economics. On the fifth night, a green candle is lit for *nia* (NEE-ah), which means purpose. On the sixth night, a candle is lit for *kuumba* (ku-OOM-bah, which means creativity. It is on the sixth night that the family has a huge feast. However, the last night is thought to be the best. All the candles are finally lit, and the belief is *imani* (ee-MAHN-ee), which means that good will always happen. After the candles are lit, everyone exchanges their *zawadi*, or gifts.

Research Detective \_\_\_\_\_

# Be a Christmas Tree Detective

Use resource books to research the answers to these questions.

1. Who had the first Christmas tree?

\_\_\_\_\_

2. Why are pine trees called evergreens?

\_\_\_\_\_

3. What are the seeds of Christmas or pine trees called?

\_\_\_\_\_

4. What are the baby trees called?

\_\_\_\_\_

5. How many Christmas trees are sold each year in the United States?

\_\_\_\_\_

6. What did the first Christmas trees have instead of lights?

\_\_\_\_\_

7. How long does it take Christmas trees to grow to the right size?

\_\_\_\_\_

8. How does a Christmas tree farm help the environment?

\_\_\_\_\_

# Christmas Haiku Poetry



## Create a Christmas haiku!

- Haikus are poems written about nature.
- There are three lines and they do not need to rhyme.
- The first line has 5 syllables.
- The second line has 7 syllables,
- The third line has 5 syllables.

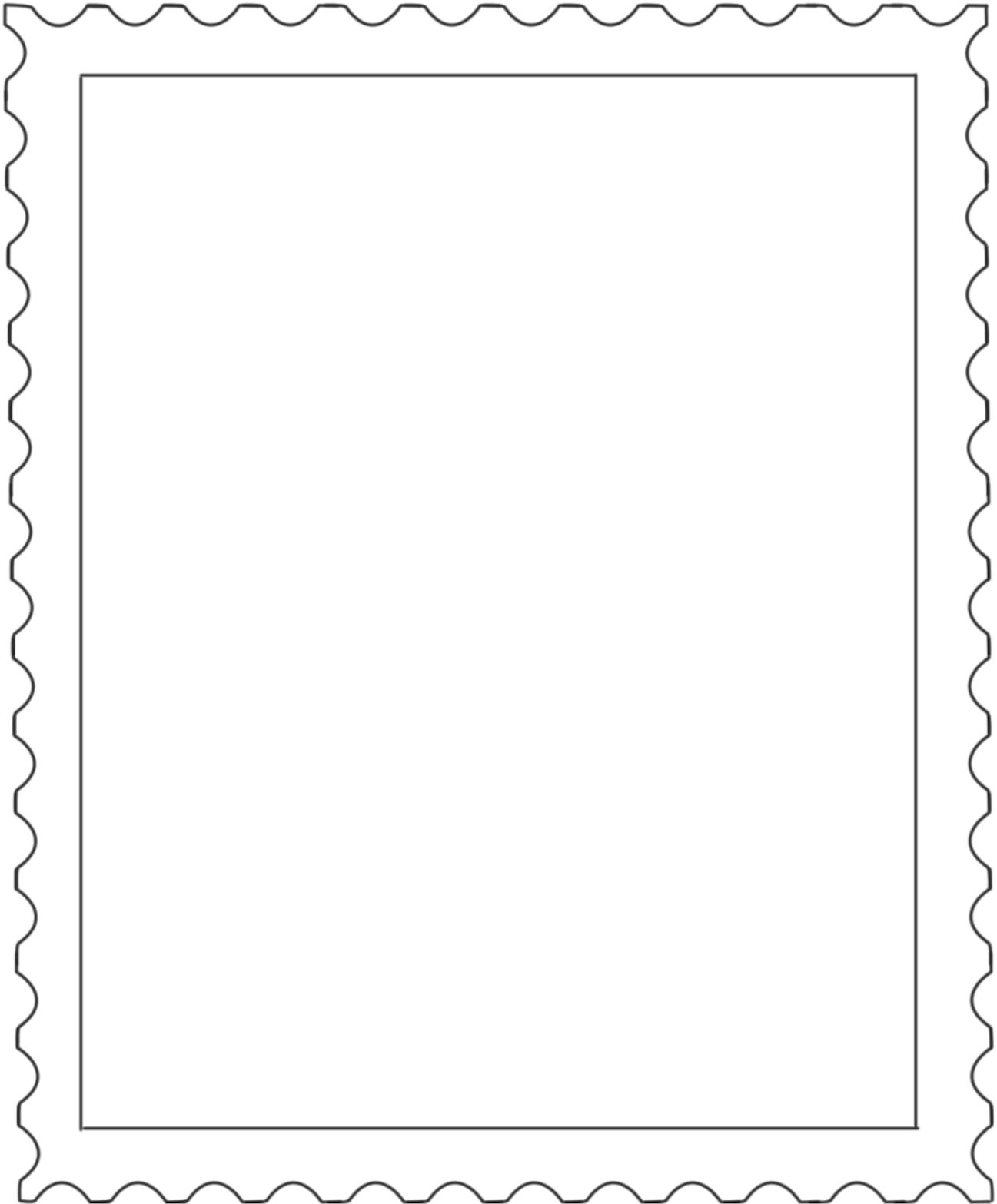
Create your haiku, inspired by winter, the holidays or Christmas, and write the final version on the template so it can be displayed with pride!

# Christmas Haiku Poetry



# Design a Christmas Stamp

Use the template to create your very own stamp for the holidays - don't forget to make it neat and use color!



# Christmas Advent Calendar

## Teaching notes

1. Give students a front cover and a blank template sheet. For an added challenge, give students two blank templates, and they can decorate one themselves.
2. Ask them to write 24 challenges, tasks, revision activities, key features of a text etc. on the template sheet.
3. Encourage students to cut out the numbered windows and then stick the front cover and template sheet together.
4. Encourage them to open a door each day, and complete the challenges, activities or just simply use to revise.

