

Lesson and Activity Excerpted from the Tanenbaum Curriculum *Interreligious Understanding*
Guidebook: *Changing Seasons, Changing World*

The Winter Solstice

Winter – Celebrations of the World

Objectives:

- Expose students to different types of celebrations of the winter season.

Skills Addressed:

Literacy; Art; Geography; Social Studies

Time Needed:

40 minutes

Materials:

The Winter Solstice by Ellen Jackson;
Paper, Pencils, Coloring
Pencils/Markers/Crayons

Preparation:

Write/draw the diagram below on
the board to allude to for the
day's activity.

Students will engage in: Independent
activities, Cooperative learning, Peer
tutoring, Visuals, Pairing, Literature, Hands-
on, Whole Group Instruction, Technology
Integration, Project

Related Activities:

Ancestor Celebrations Survey



PROCEDURE

Anticipatory Set/Hook/Do-Now

Engage a discussion where children talk about their knowledge of the winter season, similar to the autumn discussion. Discussion questions may include:

What was the last season we covered?
What is this new season we are beginning?
What are the differences between the two?
How do you know?

After the discussion, explain that these are some of the things they will learn and explore through the unit.

Review of Previously Learned Material/Connect to Prior Knowledge

People all over the world celebrate the seasons for different reasons. Explain that they will learn about some of these as you read the book *The Winter Solstice*. Read the book to the class/as a class. Ask the children to pay particular attention to some of the places and ways people celebrate the winter.

Mini-lesson

Engage in a small discussion posing the following questions:

Who were some of the people that celebrated the winter solstice?
What were some of the celebrations that they had?
Have you ever celebrated any of these?
What are ways you and your family have celebrated the winter?
How does nature play a part in the celebrations?

Through the discussion emphasize 1) The role of nature in the variety of celebrations the book talks about and 2) The variety of places people come from in the celebrations explored.

Guided Practice

Point to the diagram on the board. Have a short brainstorm where children offer up responses to the questions of "What does winter look/smell/taste/feel like?" Write answers on the board in their appropriate category.



Independent Practice

Explain that everyone is going to do an activity with the elements of winter that they just describe and demonstrate the activity. For the following activity, the children will use paper and coloring pencils/markers/crayons. They are to write their names down on the piece of paper, and use each letter of their name to describe one attribute of winter. The teacher can write his/her name on the board and demonstrate. i.e.:

Jingling bells
Sn **O**w
Hot cocoa
Nature

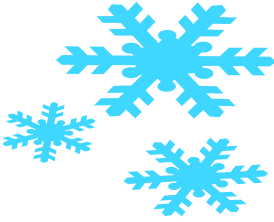
Encourage the children to use as many of the different categories (look, taste, feel, smell) in their descriptions of winter. Have them decorate the page.

Wrap-Up

At the end of the lesson, distribute "Ancestor Celebrations" sheet. Ask students to take it home, fill it out and bring it back for the next lesson. Explain that the goal of the exercise is to see where their ancestors came from, what winter celebrations took place there and the role of nature in those celebrations.

Extension Ideas

Students can share their name winter description drawings and show what they chose for each letter and how many descriptions of winter they were able to include in their name.



Name:

Date:

Ancestor Celebrations

Ask an adult at home the following questions. Write down and consider their answers:

Where were you born? (City/Country)

What celebrations took place in the winter time there? On what date?

How was nature a part of these celebrations?

Where were your parents born?

Where were their parents born?



Do you know of any celebrations that they took part in during the winter time?

How was nature a part of these celebrations?