



THE NORTH POLE FA-LA-LA-LA FOLLIES

Learning Extensions

Age: 3 through Pre-K

Domain: SCIENTIFIC DEVELOPMENT/SOCIAL STUDIES

Content Standards: SD1, SD2, SD3, SD4, SS3

The children will:

- use processes of science to actively explore and increase understanding of the environment (SD1)
- acquire scientific knowledge related to life science (SD2)
- acquire scientific knowledge related to physical science (SD3)
- acquire scientific knowledge related to earth science (SD4)
- express beginning geographic thinking (SS3)

Activity: Blubber and the Arctic—The REAL North Pole

Preschool children may think of the North Pole as the place Santa lives. But they may be surprised to find out what else happens in the arctic. Show the children where the North Pole is located on a globe, and where it is in relation to your own state. Talk about how cold it gets in the arctic and what animals live there. Fill your sensory table or other tubs full of ice cubes and water. Let each child put their hands into the cold water for a few seconds and describe how it feels. Ask how they think that animals such as the polar bear can survive and be comfortable in such cold conditions. Fill two quart size ziplock type bags about half full of lard (Crisco). Zip the bag and have the children squish it until the inside is coated evenly. Have the child put on a pair of plastic disposable gloves, putting their gloved hands into the bags of lard. Talk about how most polar animals have a layer of blubber to help warm them in freezing weather. The child then puts his hands back into the ice water and will be amazed that it isn't cold anymore if there is a layer of fat between their hands and the ice! Write down their findings. Extend this theme by looking up facts and teaching about hibernation and why some animals go into this deep sleep pattern. Be careful and know your facts (some bears are not true hibernators). Warning—teachers also learn facts about the Arctic and hibernation that they never knew before!

Domain: THE ARTS (CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT)

Content Standards: CD1, CD3

The children will:

- explore and use a variety of materials to develop artistic expression (CD1)
- use drama to express individuality (CD3)

Activity: “Shhhhh....We’re Hibernating”

Animals can survive through the harshest winters by hibernating to reserve food and energy. Tell the children that you think they need to hibernate, too! Bring in a big appliance box and let the children create their own hibernation cave. Put out a variety of materials: white paint, white and blue paper, scissors, packing peanuts, cotton balls and glue with the appliance box (on tile floor, or use shower curtain to protect carpet—it will get messy!). This activity can be done with small groups, a few children at a time, or a choice at center time. After the creation is completely dry, bring it to the darkest corner of your room, fill with soft materials, cold-weather books, and arctic stuffed animals. The children can use this cave as a prop to act out stories or as a quiet resort away from the group. It’s also a great cave for the bear to hide when you act out the song “Going on a Bear Hunt.”

Domain: SOCIAL STUDIES

Content Standards: SS1, SS2

The children will:

- develop an appreciation of his/her role as a member of the family, the classroom and the community (SS1)
- develop a respect for differences in people (SS2)

Activity: “Dreidel, Dreidel, Dreidel”

When a child thinks about the North Pole, they usually conjure up images of Santa and reindeer. After the show, the children will probably want to talk about Christmas and how their own family celebrates. But there are different ways that families celebrate the winter season. Children of Jewish heritage often celebrate Hanukkah instead and play the Dreidel Game. This game only requires a Dreidel, some small candies or coins, and the rules. To make a clay Dreidel, form clay into a cube and insert a dowel or short pencil centered in the middle all the way through, until the both ends sticking out, one long and one short. Next put clay around the short end and form into a cone (you may have to help small children with this). Let it dry, then mark each side with a blue pen, N, G, H, or S.

To play, the children take turns spinning the Dreidel. It will land on one of the following:

“N” for nisht (or nothing). Child does nothing

“G” for Gadol (all) Child takes all the candy in the middle

“H” for Halb (half) Child takes half of the candy in the middle

“S” for stel (put in) Child puts back 2 candies in the middle

If your class is not yet ready to use clay, there are hundreds of patterns offered on the internet to make from cardstock or other materials.

Remember to discuss other winter family celebrations like Kwanzaa. If you have a parent that can come in and talk about the way they celebrate winter, invite them in! Make sure you steer away from religious debates and stress respect for our many different in families!