

At Home with Nature

Nature doesn't just happen in a park; it can happen right at home!



A resource for **PRE-KINDERGARTEN** and **EARLY ELEMENTARY AGE CHILDREN** so they may feel right **AT HOME WITH NATURE**.

Winter in the Wilderness!

Videos, activities, stories and songs celebrating animals and the ways they manage the cold days of winter.

Let's Get Started

Watch and discover how creatures in the wild manage the chilly winter months.

https://youtu.be/7Y6Ai_wwiCo

Literacy Connection

Enjoy the story of Hurry and the Monarch written by Antoine O' Flatharta and discover how Monarch butterflies journey to Mexico in order to escape the cold weather.

<https://youtu.be/-IKUCcGi7G4>

Music and Movement

Sing along and pretend to be animals getting ready for the winter cold.

<https://youtu.be/pRCLgktSVvc>



Math Connection

Measure water and use estimation skills to predict what will happen as water freezes. Then explore the wonders of snowflakes.

Directions are below.

Creative Expression

Build a snowflake mobile and then, once actual snow falls this winter, create sweet maple snow cream.

Directions are below.

Let's Explore Outdoors

Take the learning outdoors with memorable family activities.

Details are below.

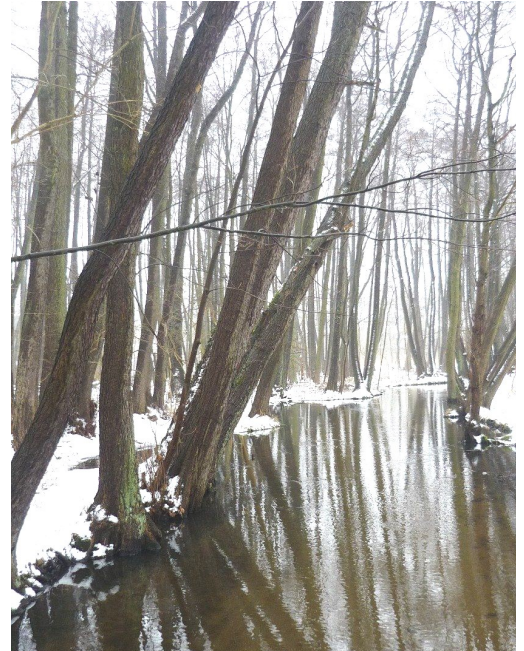


Math Connection

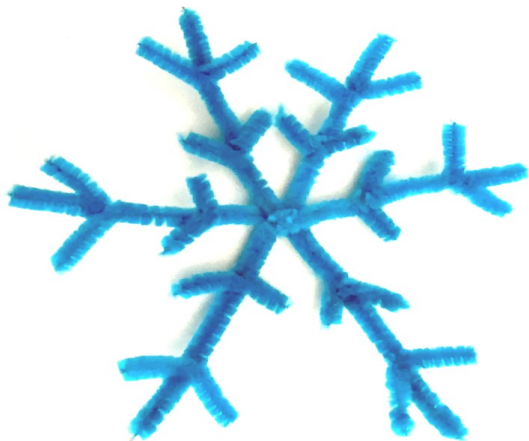


Frozen Fun

Invite your child to measure and pour one cup of water into a plastic disposable cup. Using a permanent marker, mark the level of the water. Ask your child to estimate the level of the water once it has frozen into ice. Mark this level. Now place the cup in the freezer. Once frozen, have your child compare the level of the ice with your child's estimate.



Six-Sided Snowflakes



Using chenille stems, invite your child to twist 3 of them to create a six-stemmed snowflake. Using additional small pieces of chenille stems, add branches to each arm. Invite your child to mirror each stem of the snowflake, counting and replicating the small branches on each one. Snowflake symmetry is a wonder! Hang the snowflake near a window.

Music and Movement



The Animals are Getting Ready!

Sung to the Tune of “Skip to my Lou”

GROUNDHOG is getting ready, what does he do? (extend hands in a questioning way)

Will he wear a hat and boots like you? (pretend to put on a hat and boots)

That’s not something GROUNDHOG would do! (shake head “no”)

He takes a long nap in winter. (pretend to sleep)

TURTLE is getting ready, what does he do? (extend hands in a questioning way)

Will he wear a hat and boots like you? (pretend to put on a hat and boots)

That’s not something TURTLE would do! (shake head “no”)

He hides in his shell in winter. (curl into a ball)

BIRD is getting ready, what does he do? (extend hands in a questioning way)

Will he wear a hat and boots like you? (pretend to put on a hat and boots)

That’s not something BIRD would do! (shake head “no”)

He flies away in winter. (extend arms and pretend to fly)

DEER is getting ready, what does he do? (extend hands in a questioning way)

Will he wear a hat and boots like you? (pretend to put on a hat and boots)

That’s not something DEER would do! (shake head “no”)

He grows thick fur in winter. (rub arms with hands)

SQUIRREL is getting ready, what does he do? (extend hands in a questioning way)

Will he wear a hat and boots like you? (pretend to put on a hat and boots)

That’s not something SQUIRREL would do! (shake head “no”)

He hides lots of food for the winter. (pretend to dig holes)

Creative Expression



Family Fun - Make Maple Snow Cream

Materials Needed:

1/2 Cup Real Maple Syrup
Freshly-fallen Snow

Directions:

- Pour 1/2 cup real maple syrup into a saucepan and cook over low heat until it just begins to boil.
- Add a generous amount of clean snow into a mixing bowl.
- While stirring constantly, add the maple syrup. Continue to add more snow until the syrup is evenly distributed and has frozen.
- Spoon into bowls and enjoy.



Creative Expression



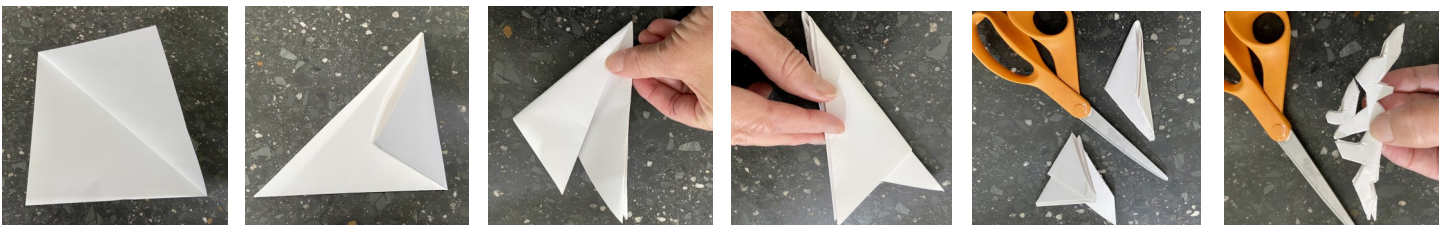
Make a Snowflake Mobile

Materials Needed:

Stick, One to Two Feet in Length
White Paint
Paper
Scissors
Thread

Directions:

- While holding the stick, dab white paint along the top edge to represent snow upon the stick. Let dry.
- For each snowflake, fold a square piece of white paper in half to create a triangle. Fold again to form a smaller triangle.
- Fold the triangle into thirds by folding the corners up as shown below.
- Cut the folded creation into a triangle as shown below.
- Cut notches into the triangle and then unfold.
- Create more snowflakes and hang them with thread from the stick.



Let's Explore Outdoors



Snowflake Sleuths

Head outdoors during a snowfall. As the snowflakes are falling, collect them on a dark piece of cloth. Look closely at the snowflakes. Use a magnifying lens if you have one. You will notice that no two snowflakes are exactly alike.

Tracks and Traces

Some wild creatures migrate in winter. Others sleep during the winter cold. But other animals continue to eat and move during the winter season. Look for signs of animals active during the cold days of winter. Look for animal tracks.

Measure them and use a field guide to determine whose prints they could be. Look for remnants of meals - chewed nuts and pinecones. Search for animal shelters that wild creatures may be using.



Let's Explore Outdoors



Feed the Birds!

Many of our North Carolina birds do not migrate in winter. Leave birdseed for these feathered friends in your backyard. Watch and delight as they come and feast on your generosity.



Scurry Squirrels, Don't be Slow... Winter's Coming, Don't You Know?



Gather acorns and hickory nuts. Dig a shallow hole and place the nuts inside. Cover the hole and its contents. Mark the location of this stored food, called a cache. Check the site regularly to see if hungry squirrels have detected and snatched your treasure.