

LITERACY IDEAS DURING THE WINTER SEASON

This winter season consider adding some new traditions for your family that will make meaningful memories and strengthen foundations for reading and learning success.

- Listen to audio books while you're traveling to visit family, wrapping gifts or cooking for the holidays.
- Lyrics to holiday songs are fun to read and sing together. It is also good fun and good collaborative writing practice to make up your own lyrics to familiar tunes. Songs can also be used to identify rhyming words.
- Start a story-telling tradition by revisiting holidays of the past. Old family photographs at holiday gatherings will help prompt stories about your own life and family traditions.
- Put reading and writing skills to practical use. Plan holiday meals by reading cookbooks together, writing the shopping lists and finding the needed items at the store by reading signs and labels. Read the recipe and cook together. During the simmering and baking, kids can write and decorate menus or place cards for special holiday meals.
- Set aside time just for reading. Curl up on the couch together and read aloud an old favorite or check out books about another culture's winter celebrations.
- Work on letter writing. Improve writing skills with letters to others and writing thank you notes for holiday gifts to relatives and friends.
- Fresh fallen snow is a blank canvas. Practice writing the letters in the snow, or even walking, letting your tracks form the letters or words.
- If you venture outside take the time to notice nature. Listen to the animals you hear. Create pictures of what you see, using books to label different items you might see. One example might be discovering the different kinds of evergreen trees and their characteristics.
- Go over your family calendar. Read days of the week and activities you already have. You could also create a "word of the day", writing that word on the calendar. Maybe first just writing the words, but on the day finding the meaning as well.

