



Ideas Collected
By Jean Roberts
With Thanks to
Primary Teachers Everywhere!

Groundhog Poems

A Little Groundhog

to "I'm A Little Teapot"

Here's a little groundhog,
furry and brown,
He's popping up
to look around.
If he sees his shadow,
down he'll go.
Then six more weeks of winter
- oh, no!

Or:

See the little groundhog,
Furry and brown.
See the little groundhog,
Look all around.
If he sees his shadow,
down he goes.
There's more winter,
Little Groundhog knows.

To the Ground Hog

Will you
Won't you
See your shadow?
Will it
Won't it
Really matter?
Do you
Don't you
Grin to see
People
Take you
Seriously?

There's only one day the whole long year,
That I hope and pray the sun won't appear.
The second of February, you all know,
The ground hog goes searching for his shadow.
If he should find it, the story is told,
We'll have six more weeks of winter's cold.
But if it's cloudy, his shadow's not there.
There'll soon be warm weather and days will be
fair.
So please, Mr. Sun, for just this one day,
Find a big dark cloud - and stay away!



Groundhog Song

Sung to: Oh, My Darling Clementine
Mr. Groundhog, Mr. Groundhog,
Where are you today?
Mr. Groundhog, Mr. Groundhog,
Are you coming out to play?
If your shadow you do see,
Will you run away and hide?
Then more days of winter
We'll expect to see outside.

Groundhog, Groundhog

Groundhog, Groundhog, popping up today.
Groundhog, Groundhog, can you play?
If you see your shadow, hide away.
If there is no shadow, you can stay.
Groundhog, Groundhog, popping up today.
Groundhog, Groundhog, can you play?

It's the second of February
The air's very cold
When something unusual
Happens, I'm told.

Deep in his burrow
Down under the ground
The groundhog is waking.
He looks all around.

It's dark in his burrow
'Way under the snow.
"Is winter over?"
He wants to know.

He follows his tunnel
Up to the light.
He digs through the snow
Soft, fluffy and white.

He pokes his nose out
Near the roots of a tree.
He looks all about -
What will he see?

If the sun is shining
When he looks around
He'll see his shadow
In front, on the ground.

His shadow will give him
A horrible scare!
He'll dash back down
To his deep dark lair.

He'll be so frightened
He'll scare spring away
For six long, long weeks
It will stay cold, they say.

But, if on this day
There are clouds in the sky
And the sun is hidden
From his brown eye,

There will be no shadow
To scare him away.
He'll think it is spring
And it's time to play.

What people say
Is that spring is now here!
The groundhog is up
And he's full of good cheer.

So on February second
We look skyward a lot.....
Will the groundhog see
His shadow - or not?

Jean

The Five Groundhogs

The first groundhog digs a home in the fall,
And curls up all winter rolled up like a ball.

The second groundhog comes out of his lair.
On February second to get some fresh air.

The third groundhog looks up at the sun.
He then sees his shadow and goes on the run.

The fourth groundhog at his dark shadow peeks,
He goes into his deep home for six more weeks.

The fifth groundhog hopes that skies will be gray
So that he'll know that spring's on its way.



A Groundhog Activity Song

Pop! Goes the Weasel

Mr. Groundhog is inside his home,
Warm, and fast asleep.

(Lie down, rest head on hands, and close eyes.)

But he'll wake up and poke his head out
For one tiny peep.

(Slowly stand up and look around cautiously.)

If the day is cloudy and cool,
He'll go for a stroll.

(Walk around slowly, looking at everything.)

But if the sun is shining bright -
Pop! Back in his hole!

(Jump into a curled-up position with hands covering head.)

The Wake up Song

Wake up, Groundhog,
Time to see

What the weather's
Going to be.

Time to stretch,

Time to think,

Time to eat,

And time to drink.

Wake up Groundhog,

Time to see

What the weather's
Going to be!

When ground hog see his shadow
He burrows down below
To hibernate for six more weeks
Away from ice and snow.
I like to see my shadow
It follows where I go
For six more weeks of winter fun
In all that ice and snow.

Here's a Little Groundhog

Here's a little groundhog furry and brown
He's coming up to look around.

If he sees his shadow, down he'll go

Then six more weeks of winter, OH NO!



About Groundhog Day

The legend of the groundhog predicting the weather comes from long, long ago in Europe. It was said that if the sun shone on Candlemas day, there would be a much longer winter, and if it was cloudy on Candlemas Day (no shadow) spring would come early. Candlemas Day is the mid-point between the Winter Solstice and the Spring Equinox. The groundhog is a North American symbol to follow this early legend.

According to the old English saying:

If Candlemas be fair and bright,
Winter has another flight.
If Candlemas brings clouds and rain,
Winter will not come again.

From Scotland:

If Candlemas Day is bright and clear,
There'll be two winters in the year.

From Germany:

For as the sun shines on Candlemas Day,
So far will the snow swirl until May.
For as the snow blows on Candlemas Day,
So far will the sun shine before May.



Groundhog Day is on February 2nd. It is said that if the groundhog sees his shadow, there will be six more weeks of bad weather, and if he doesn't, that spring will be here soon.

The Legend of Groundhog Day

Groundhog Day was founded in the traditions of the Romans, who carried the myth to the Germans during Roman invasions many centuries ago. The story was also based on this Scottish couplet:

If Candlemas Day is bright and clear,
There'll be two winters in the year.

Candlemas Day is celebrated on February 2nd. It was determined that if any animal came out of its underground hibernation on that day, and the sun was out, there would be six more weeks of winter. Thus was born the tradition of the 'two winters' or the 'second winter'.

What began as a tale from ancient times became fact in the early 1880's. A group of residents from Punxsutawney, Pennsylvania decided to celebrate Candlemas Day by going to the woods in search of a groundhog. In 1886, the editor of the local newspaper named the

group the Punxsutawney Groundhog Club. The Club deemed a certain hilltop near the town as 'Gobbler's Knob' proclaiming that, from this knob, Punxsutawney Phil could accurately forecast the weather. Phil (or one of his ancestors) still predicts today. In Canada, Wiarton Willie forecasts the beginning of spring from Wiarton, Ontario.

Ideas

Making Predictions:

Predict what the groundhog will do - graph results of the class's predictions. Why did you predict the way you did?



Divide a bulletin board in half. Decorate one side with a winter scene, and the other side with a spring scene. Ask students to predict whether there will be six more weeks of winter or whether spring will come early. Have each student cut out either a snowflake if winter will stay or a spring flower if spring will come. Put his/her name on and then staple this prediction to the appropriate side of the bulletin board. Have students watch the national news on Groundhog Day to find out what happens when Wiarton Willie makes his annual appearance. Did their predictions match the groundhog's? Then ask a different student each day to record the weather in a class weather log for the next six weeks to see if the groundhog was right.

Predicting and graphing

Most teachers must cover prediction in the year and many find it difficult to think of ideas to make it interesting. Groundhog's Day can give you a six week prediction theme, and if you have a bulletin board for this and do daily updates, you are covering not only prediction, but temperature and graphing, too!

Have a large groundhog picture. Put him on a snowy background. On Groundhog Day discuss the legend and watch the weather to see if the animal has seen his shadow or not. At the top of the bulletin board, put the heading: THE GROUNDHOG PREDICTS..... and then either 'we will have six weeks more winter' or 'soon it will be spring'.

Have the class find out how many days six weeks will be. Make a chart to graph the weather - for each day decide if the weather is like winter or more like spring. Take the temperature. Each day you can count the days of each and see if the groundhog is right or wrong. Use the word 'predict' and 'prediction' as you discuss it.

Reading, Writing and Research

Write a 'Dear Mr. Groundhog' letter. Tell the groundhog why you do or do not want him to see his shadow. Ask him questions about himself, such as how he became groundhog for groundhog day.

Make a chart listing good things and not so things about having six more weeks of winter.

Do you think the legend makes sense? Write about it.

Learn about Warton Willie. Go to: <http://www.warton-willie.org/>



Can you find a record of Willie's predictions? Do a web search for information about Willie.

Write a story from the groundhog's point of view. Do you think he wants to get up or go back to sleep? Why?

Research and present reports on other animals that hibernate during the winter.

Discuss other weather lore and how you think they might have started. Here are some more to discuss:

When squirrels bury their nuts early, it will be a hard winter.

Red skies at night, sailor's delight. Red skies at morning, sailors take warning.

If it thunders on All Fool's Day, it brings good crops of corn and hay.

Rings around the moon means that rain will surely come.

When sheep gather in a huddle, we'll soon have a puddle.

Ants travelling in straight lines means rain is coming; ants scattering means clear weather.

Cows lying in the field means rain is on the way.

Hornets' nest built in the top of trees indicate a mild winter is ahead; nests built close to the ground indicate that a harsh winter is coming.

If you hear an owl hoot in the daytime, a storm is approaching.

When clouds look like rocks and towers, the earth will be refreshed by showers.

If berries or nuts are plentiful, it will be a hard winter.

If a turkey has thick feathers at Thanksgiving, it is a sign of a cold winter.

Make all the words you can from 'groundhog' and 'shadow'.

'Groundhog' is a compound word. Brainstorm other compound words.

Read books about the groundhog.

Research the groundhog and write a story of what you have learned.
The groundhog hibernates. Research other animals that hibernate.

Learn about animals that hibernate, and animals that burrow underground. Go to:
<http://www.enchantedlearning.com/crafts/groundhogday/> for information.

Discuss what hibernation means. Talk about animals that hibernate during the winter.

Art:

Draw a picture or a mural of the groundhog legend.

Make a pop-up groundhog. Wrap a paper cup in green construction paper. Add fake grass or moss to the edge of the cup. Have each student make a small groundhog and glue him to a popsicle stick. Punch a hole in the bottom of the cup. The children can move the groundhog up and down in and out of his hole.



Make a groundhog's home:

Find a box large enough for a child to crawl in and let them decorate it like a groundhog's home. Paint it, draw trees on it, etc. Let a child pretend to be a groundhog and pop out of a hole in the top of the box. Light directed at the 'groundhog' will make his shadow. One time the child can see his shadow & pop back down and another time he will not see it so he will stay up to play.

Make a large mural of an underground area including such details as tree roots, rocks, and animal burrows and tunnels. Study the illustrations in the book, *Under Your Feet*, by Joanna Ryder, for ideas. Make a small groundhog to place on the mural. Label all the items found in the mural."

Groundhog Puppets

Using brown construction paper, cut groundhog faces about 1 1/2 inches across. Spread glue on face and attach thin wisps of cotton to represent fur. Glue on paper eyes, nose and mouth. Attach to a popsicle stick. Cut a slit in the bottom of a small paper cup and have the children push the bottom of the stick into it. Show the children how to make the groundhog appear and disappear.

Groundhog Mask

Have children colour a paper plate brown and then cut out holes for the eyes. Cut ears, a nose and mouth from construction paper and glue on plate. Punch a hole on each side of the plate and attach yarn. Tie around child's head.



Make a Groundhog Day mobile. You will need a hanger and string. Have each child draw a picture of a groundhog, something they like to do in the winter, something they like to do in the spring, a sun and a cloud. This makes a cute mobile.

Go to:

<http://www.daniellesplace.com/html/groundhogday.html>

for a groundhog head band and a bookmark.

"A teacher in my building gives the kids a groundhog pattern and they trace it onto an 11 x 18 piece of paper. They draw a background, minus the sun and shadow. Then they put glue all over the groundhog and they cover him with coffee grounds. She hangs them in the hall, nice smell. Then on Groundhog day she has them add the sun or shadow. It's a cute project!"

More Groundhog Puppets

"Using brown construction paper, cut groundhog faces about 1 1/2 inch across. Spread glue on face and attach thin wisps of cotton to represent fur. Glue on paper eyes, nose and mouth. Attach to a popsicle stick. Cut a slit in the bottom of a small paper cup and have the children push the bottom of the stick into it. Show the children how to make the groundhog appear and disappear.

Wiarthon Willie

"I live in Ontario and so does our famous Wiarthon Willie, the weather reporting Ground Hog.

Here's a project that I've come up with for groundhog day.

1. Take a 9 x 12 piece of brown construction paper and cut it so that you are rounding the corners and sides into a big oval shape. This will be the head.
2. Take a 9 x 12 piece of black construction paper and cut a 1 1/2 " strip off the long side of it. This will be the hat brim. What you have left of the black should be a rectangle of 7 1/2" x 12". This will be the top part of the hat. Go ahead and glue them to-

gether.

3. Now cut a strip of white $1\frac{3}{4}$ " wide and about 9" long. This will be his hat band. Place it on the hat and wrap the sides of the hat band around to the back of the hat and glue it in place. Now this is optional but since we have Willie - they write Willie with a black marker on the band and draw an outline of a heart with the black marker and colour it in red.

4. Glue the finished hat to the top part of the brown oval head.

5. Make the facial features big! Using white construction paper cut 2 big circles for eyes and then cut 2 black circles to go on top of the white circles. Then, glue the eyes in place. Next cut a black triangle for his nose. Glue it so 1 point of the triangle is facing down toward his chin. Using the black maker draw a line straight down from the nose and then a smile face. Also add 3 whiskers to each side of the nose with the marker.

6. Now he needs a bow tie to finish him off. My bow tie is about 5" long and 3" at the points. The circle that goes in the middle of the tie is about $1\frac{3}{4}$ " wide.

7. Last but not least, I plan to hang these in our hall one week before groundhog day with the title:

Well, Willie, what will the weather be?"

then on groundhog day I'll write:

Willie predicts -----, then write his prediction."

"You will need a paper plate, groundhog, popsicle stick, and crayons.

Have the children colour the bottom of the paper plate brown. Cut a slit into the plate. Photocopy a groundhog picture to the appropriate size. Colour the ground hog and attach him to the stick and let him pop up out from the bottom of the plate. Take these outside on Feb. 2 and let the kids see if their groundhog sees his shadow."

More activities:

Use a lamp and paper and trace shadows or go out in the sunshine.

Make groundhogs out of brown play dough.

Make a groundhog puppet using a lunch-size paper bag.

Go outside and run around and stomp your feet to try to wake up the groundhog.

Starting today, make a weather graph to see what really happens.

On a calendar, count how many days there are until the first day of Spring.

Learn more about groundhogs and their habitat.

Try playing Shadow Tag with a group of friends.



A Groundhog Puppet

"Have each child make a paper or cardboard groundhog stick puppet with a popsicle stick, or for larger ones use a ruler. Attach a cardboard picture of the groundhog to the stick or ruler. First thing in the morning, carefully stick the stick into the ground so that the groundhog is standing up. Then measure the shadows at 1 hour intervals throughout the day. Chart shadow lengths. Then at the end of the day, discuss why the lengths and directions of shadows varied."



A Groundhog Theme

- Your students can research the groundhog and find out what it eats, where it lives, what type of animal group it belongs to, etc., and write a 'Big Book' with what they have discovered.
- Research the legend and discuss why the legend makes sense.
- Learn about Warton Willie. Go to: www.warton-willie.org/
- Learn about weather patterns at this time of year.
- Discuss protecting animal environments.
- Make a class chart of predictions whether or not the groundhog will see his shadow.
- How big is a groundhog? Find out and then draw him full size. Use measurement skills.
- Do a science unit on shadows. Measure and record shadow length. Have children go outside several times each day to measure their shadows. Record and discuss why they are longer or shorter at certain times.
- Why are shadows from the sun long at this time of year?
- Research and present reports on other animals that hibernate during the winter.
- Brainstorm words to describe the groundhog and the weather on Feb. 2.
- Write about how the groundhog feels on February 2.
- Write an imaginary interview with Warton Willie.
- Write a class story about what the groundhog might be doing in that hole all winter long if he is not hibernating.
- Memorize and do choral speaking of groundhog day poems.
- Learn the vocabulary in the research.
- Create a winter scene, with sky, trees, snow and the groundhog's den below ground.
- Construct a model groundhog den.
- Play shadow tag.
- Discuss other weather legends and how you think they might have started.

Groundhog Day in Kindergarten

One day ahead discuss Groundhog Day and ask the class "Will the groundhog see his shadow?" Have the children draw a picture of what they think will happen on Groundhog Day. Discuss the two options and what the pictures should contain. Discuss what would be in the picture if the groundhog sees his shadow, and what would be in the picture if he can't see his shadow. When the children have made their pictures, graph how many think that winter will stay and how many think winter will go.

Shadows

Learn About Shadows

A shadow is an image cast by an object blocking light. A shadow forms when light hits an opaque object. An opaque object is anything that doesn't let light through, like a groundhog, a brick wall, a tree, a dog or even you. The most familiar shadow is your own shadow, since it follows you everywhere you go. The most useful use of shadows are sundials.

A perfect shadow will produce a silhouette. This is where the outline of the shadow matches perfectly the outline of the object. A silhouette is generally described as a drawing or picture of the outline of something filled in with a dark colour. The person who started this form of portrait was named Silhouette.



Project #1: Brainstorm things that are transparent and things that are opaque.

Project #2: Make animal shadows with your hand between a lamp and a white wall. Try making different type of animals using one or both hands. You could make a shadow puppet show with friends or play a game making your friends attempt to named your the shadow animal. You will be able to observe that the shadows you make grow bigger the closer your hand is to the light. Another thing to observe is the type of shadows you make depends on your source of light. If your source of light is a frosted light bulb, then the shadow will be grey and blurred. If your source of light is a clear light bulb, then the shadow will be black and sharp. If your source of light is coloured, then the shadow will be coloured also.

Project #3:

Try watching the shadow formed by a tall object (such as a pole or tree) outside. You will be able to determine not only the time of day but also the time of year. In the

morning the sun is in the east, you will find the shadow on the west side of the object. The shadow is at its shortest midway between sunrise and sunset, when the sun is shining down from almost overhead of the object. In the afternoon the sun is in the west, you will find the shadow on the east side of the object. Shadows also vary at different times of the year. At midday in winter the sun is lower in the sky than at midday in summer, and forms a longer shadow.

Hint: Sometimes it is difficult to remember where east or west is. Try this: draw a cross '+' then place a N on top for North and a S on the bottom for south. Then place the word 'WE', the W on the left side of the cross for west and the E on the right side of the cross for east. Just remember that in direction there is the word "WE".

Shadow Science:

Go outdoors and check out the length of shadows at various times during the day. Have the special student of the day stand in a designated spot and measure his/her shadow at various points during the day. Why do the shadows move? Why do they change size? These are interesting questions for discussion and further exploration. Find out why your shadow is longer sometimes.



The next day, bring shadows inside. Use your overhead projector to project various objects onto a screen. Have the students identify the objects by their shadows. The students can make hand shadows. You could take a group of students and see if the rest of the class can identify them by their shadows.

What do you know about the sun and shadows? Look for shadows in the classroom. Discuss what makes the shadow. Does the shadow look like the object? How is it different?

Using the overhead projector demonstrate shadows. Ask for a student volunteer. Turn on the lamp and turn off all classroom lights. Students observe the student's shadow being cast in the classroom. Ask the students where the light source is and where the shadow is cast. Explain that the sun is similar to the light.

Using the overhead projector, place a divider on it to keep students from seeing objects placed on the projector. Choose a student to pick an object from the bag and place it on the projector without the class seeing the object. Have them guess what the object is. Discuss the shadow that the object makes. Show the class the object.

Have the students make shadows on the wall with a partner. Students use flashlights and objects to make the shadow. Make shadows of animals using hands. Share the

story of *Peter Pan and his Shadow*.

Discuss shadows, and how they are different from the real object.

Draw shadows outdoors, and then come back at a later time and see if the shadow is still the same. Why is it different? You could use a digital camera to record the results of the changing shadows.

This can lead to lessons on the earth and the sun, and the earth's movement.

Shadow making

Shadows are caused by objects that get in the way of the sun or a bright light. Shine the light from a film projector or a lamp on a bare wall. Turn off the lights in the room. Let the children stand in front of the bright light and experiment with making their own shadows. Ask them to make big shadows, little shadows, animal shadows and moving shadows.

Shadows

"One shadow experiment that I do with my grade two students is a sun dial. You might set up a miniature using a lamp and a large nail that would allow the students to manipulate the movement of the shadow, and have a large one outside that actually told the time.

"For the outside one I always use the light pole that is in the middle of our playground. We go out at each hour and mark with chalk the line that it creates (shadow) and mark the time with chalk. We make a very long line! It is fun and interesting. They certainly become clock watchers!"

Shadow Hunt:

Go outside and look for shadows. Find shadows of buildings, play structures, trees, etc.

Shadow Trace:

Trace your own shadow with sidewalk chalk. Trace other objects. Trace on paper at different times of the day. Why are the shadows different lengths?

Finger Shadows:

Inside, make shadow puppets with hands. What happens as the hands are closer to the wall or closer to the light? Cut out animal and people shapes from light weight cardboard and glue them to a popsicle stick. Shine a flashlight on them in a dark room to make a shadow puppet story on the wall.

Light Shadows or Dark Shadows:

To do this experiment, you will need a darkened room, a bright flashlight and

things to test, such as: a ball, glass measuring cup, a clear plastic cup, a block, and a glass babyfood jar. You might also want to test an animal toy, pencil, a book and various kinds of paper and cloth. Choose an object such as a ball. Predict whether it will make a light shadow or a dark shadow. Make the classroom dark and shine a flashlight on the object. Have a chart to record your observations by drawing a picture of the object under the word Light or Dark. Why do some objects give us a dark shadow and some a light shadow?

Shadow Tag:

"When it is very sunny and there are clear shadows we often go outdoors and play 'Shadow Tag'. One person is it, of course, and he/she tries to tag someone by stepping on their shadow. The others try to protect their shadow. (If they run into a shady place they can only stay there a little while.) There is lots of laughter as they try to catch shadows."

Sidewalk Shadows

"If the sun is shining on Groundhog Day (and there is no snow on the ground) take the children outdoors to a large paved area (we use the end of our parking lot where there is no traffic during the day). Children work with partners. One child 'poses' while the partner traces his shadow on the pavement with a piece of sidewalk chalk; then they reverse roles. Some children have trouble with the concept that the line they are following is the edge of the shadow, but once **you** point this out to them, they do well. Some children also have trouble standing still long enough but they usually will when they see that they will not have a picture if they keep moving. It helps to allow them to experiment with what their shadow can do before you do the drawing activity. If time and interest allow, the children like to colour in the outline of their shadow, draw facial features, clothes, etc. Be sure to have each child write his name by his picture. Remember to have someone trace your shadow, too!"

After explaining and discussing shadows, use a projector to create a child's silhouette on a piece of black paper. Trace it with a white crayon or chalk. Cut out and mount on contrasting paper. This makes a nice keepsake for parents. Children love to see what they look like in profile!