



Winter Ideas



The following ideas were sent in by teachers. I would like to thank every one of you for your time.

Sharing ideas with your colleagues is the very best form of professional development. Everyone uses ideas that were passed on from others, and every teacher puts a personal stamp on the work so the ideas change and improve as they make their way across the country.



Enjoy!

Jean

"A cute idea that I used to do with my class...was to have a small winter carnival one day... and have it just be like a play day. I would have parents come in and help out and I would use the Grade 5/6 students to be leaders.

I created about 6 stations for the kids to move from activity to activity. I made it simple enough that if there was no snow or the weather conditions were terrible on our selected date....we could just move the date ahead.

Stations like:

1. pin the carrot on the snowman
2. carrying ice cubes on a spoon to put into a bucket, etc.
3. find a tiny hill and have little toboggans
4. one station that was for hot chocolate and a story (this could be the one that it in side)
5. Guess what is in the mittens. Have a string of mittens on a little clothesline and have kids guess what is inside the mittens by feeling them
6. Spray bottles with water and food colouring for making designs in the snow
7. Building a little snowman station
8. Making snowmen with marshmallows. (this could also be an indoor activity (the in door breaks allow the kids to warm up. They are short intervals and they really don't need to take off all their clothes, etc.
9. looking at snowflakes with magnifying glasses on black fabric (this only works if it is snowing outside... so it is necessary to have a back up for this one
10. snow angel making
11. have a little obstacle course to follow using pylons, etc.

I named the teams with some special winter titles... Like: 1. the mitten team, 2 the scarf team, 3 the snowmen, 4 the icicles, 5. the boots, 6 the skates, 7 the snowflakes, 8 the snowballs, etc. etc.

Joanne

Winter Lesson (Grade One)

This is actually one of a series of lessons based on the video, "Lost in the Woods". After watching the video we do a series of experiments that demonstrate things they learned. The first is "Lids On / Lids Off". You need two containers (I use plastic yogurt tubs) one with a lid and one without. The containers represent a head. The experiment is designed to show how wearing a lid (hat) will keep you warmer. Fill both containers with boiling water. Add the lid to one container only. Wait for about 5 minutes and then use thermometers to take the temperature of each "head". While you wait out the time I usually make a list on a chart with the kids of things we wear that keep us warm. Once we have completed the experiment we write up our observations in our science book.



Lesson two is called "Survival Bed". You need 2 dolls or puppets to represent kids. Cover one with branches to make a survival bed. Have one child come up and spray both dolls with water from a plant sprayer. Remove the branches and pass the dolls around. The doll under the branches is drier. We also talk about other things a person could do to stay warm and dry when you are lost in the woods.

Lesson 3 is called "Cold Cold Ground". You need two plastic containers (like in first lesson) This time you will be placing them on a cookie sheet of frozen earth. You will need to freeze the dirt the night before. Place one container directly on the ground and the other on a 1 1/2 to 2 inch styrofoam sheet. This time you do not need lids. Fill each container up with boiling water. Place the thermometers in the bowls. Notice that in the beginning both the containers are the same temperature. Check back in five minutes and again in ten minutes. You will be amazed how quickly the one on the ground loses heat. Last year the kids wanted to redo the experiment but this time they wanted to put a lid on the one on the styrofoam. While we waited for the temperatures to drop we wrote up our experiment in our science books and made a list of all the other insulators we could think of that keep us warm. (hats, toques, snow pants, scarves, etc.)



The last lesson is called, "Buddy, Buddy". You need a very cold day to do this one on. Get bundled up and go outside. Have the kids stand apart and still for a few minutes. Then they buddy up with a partner. We give our partner a hug and notice that we feel warmer. The final activity outside to huddle up like penguins. It's amazing how much heat is generated with a class standing huddled together. The pictures they draw for the follow up activity are always great!"

Sandy

"Here is a winter art lesson that I do every year with Grades 1-3.

Stage 1

We look at works of artists that use Pointillism to create their work. Usually we go to the computer lab and I do a search on the big screen, but I have also used books from the school library.

We discuss how pointillism is done, moving the brush up and down to make individual dots, rather than brushing side to side.



Stage 2

Then we review the pictures of the snowmen stories we have been reading to gather ideas of types of snowmen. What types of details to include, etc.

Stage 3

Each student gets a regular size piece of blue construction paper (9" x 12"), a white pencil crayon, a small container of white liquid tempera paint, and a few Q-tips to use as a brush.

Demonstrate how to use the Q-tip as the brush and how to move it up and down to create the pointillism effect. Show what happens when the dots are close together or far apart. Then the students create the shape of the snowman with white pencil crayon first and go over it with dots of white paint to create the outline. They fill in the snowman body with white dots (fairly close together or overlapping) and they also make some snow along the bottom of their paper for a base. Then we let it dry overnight. I have also let the students use their fingers if they prefer but I find that so many of my students like the Q-tips better. Remind students that when the Q-tip gets fuzzy, they can turn it over for a fresh brush, and then get another one if necessary.

Stage 4

Add details to the snowman using liquid black tempera paint (buttons, eyes, mouth, etc). Remember orange paint for the carrot nose. Also add colourful hats or scarves, again using the Q-tips to create the pointillism effect.

Also, sometimes I have students go out and gather small twigs that we glue on for arms. They look really cute!

Optional

Use the pointillism technique and Q-tips to create a colourful border around the edge of the page.

I usually do this project over two or three days. They always look great and every one turns out quite unique!"

Nola

"One of my favourite things to do doesn't work out every year. On the first snowfall of the year (if it is a good one and it is decent outside) I drop everything we were previously doing and read **The Snowy Day** by Ezra Jack Keats. Once we have read and discussed the story we will go outside and try some/all of the ideas from the book. When we are finished we often play a big game of Fox and Goose in the clean snow in the playground."

Gwen

"Every winter I have my class make and decorate snowmen using doilies. I take a 12 by 24 sheet of blue or gray construction paper as the background. The student glues down a large doily, medium doily and small doily for the head. Then the fun begins! Each person tries to make the snowman look like him/herself by adding construction paper features such as hair, ear-rings, eyes the same colour, etc. Each child has a lot of fun adding characteristics to his/her snow person. I then display them with a picture of the child in the corner. It is interesting to see how well some of them match up in appearance!

This year, my grade 1 class did the above artwork. However, to bump it up and make it difference for the grade 2's, I gave them the freedom of making a whole snow family or use any combination of doilies. Some of them cut out pieces of doily to make snowflakes and snow hills, etc. It is always a very popular craft!"

Marlene

"I love **Stranger in the Woods** by Carl R. Sames II and Jean Stoick. I take my class out into the playground and we play a few winter games then build a snowman (if we have snow). We find a comfy location and enjoy a cup of hot chocolate while I read the book. It's a great beginning or ending for a theme about snow/winter.

Cheryl

"I just did an art lesson with a grade 1/2 class that turned out well. On a piece of dark blue paper use chalk to sketch a scene with a house or two, some trees and shrubs, and maybe a moon/stars. Be sure to have a line near the bottom to be the ground! Trace over the chalk lines with a black pastel, then colour in with pastels, nice and heavy. Colour a bit of green below the black line for the ground. Be sure to colour the house windows yellow so it looks like the lights are on! When the picture is coloured in, gently sponge paint white snow on the ground, the roof and trees, as well as a few flakes in the air."

Meegan



"Catching snowflakes: When the snow is falling lightly it is the perfect time to have the students catch snowflakes on black paper and observe the beautiful shapes."

Sue

Winter/Snow Art Idea

Snowman (made from a jar)

"(I found this idea on the website of The Two Sisters, who have a book for LA called The Daily Five) I don't know how to send a picture, otherwise I would, but you could sketch one. I will explain the best I can so you have a visual image!")

Materials per student

- 1 large glass jar (variety of sizes are fine), no lid required
- 1 old clean adult size white sport sock
- 1 cotton ball
- White glue
- Black sharpie pen
- White tempera paint and sponge
- Orange tempera paint
- Optional: battery operated tea light



Ensure the jar is clean and dry.

Sponge paint the whole jar white. Let dry overnight.
Dab one end of the cotton ball in orange paint. Let dry overnight.

Cut off the foot part of the sock, just where the ribbing begins.
Cut a 2 cm section off the balance of the foot part and snip it so it's not circular, to use as a tie.

Use the sharpie to draw 2 eyes and a stone mouth on the snowman jar. Put on the cotton ball nose with white glue.

Put the ribbed leg part of the sock over the jar opening, like a hat. Tie the strip around it near the centre.

A battery operated tea light can be placed inside to make the snowman glow.

I hope this explanation is somewhat clear. They look really awesome, especially when displayed as a group. OK, I just looked it up on their website and here is the link:

http://www.the2sisters.com/simple_fun_2007/simple_fun_mrmrs_snowman.htm

Teresa

"A bulletin board idea that I haven't used yet, but saw it on the internet and think it would be neat, is to have children cut out snowflakes by folding paper (or white coffee filters) in quarters, then making little snips to reveal interesting and different snowflakes. Then pictures are taken of each student, cut out and placed at the centre of their snowflakes. The Bulletin title would read, "Like Snowflakes, No Two Of Us Are the Same".



My Kindergartners love it when I bring in real snow from outside and place it in the water table as a centre activity. Children put their gloves on and enjoy making mini snowmen!"

Melissa

"My all time favourite winter art idea is a snowflake snowman. I have cut out round circles that students practice folding and cutting into snowflakes. They can fold and cut 2 or 3 to practice making snowflakes, as we use the extras to put up on the windows, but 1 of the snowflakes we use for the body of the snowman. They decorate a second round circle with eyes, carrot nose, mouth and a hat and glue it to the snowflake. Then they add stick arms, a broom, and boots. Each one is different and unique and they love making them. I've made little sized ones and big giant ones and the grade 1's have always had a fun time making them. Hope this idea is new to someone out there."

Linda

The Snowy Day - Ezra Jack Keats

"Read and enjoy the story. Then, take particular care to look at each picture again and discuss the artist's technique. Give each child a pale blue background paper (letter size). Give each child a half sheet of letter size white paper, cut long and narrow (hotdog style) to cut and shape into a hilly background. However, the white hills must start and end at the pre-cut edge, in order for the horizon to join up when pictures are displayed side by side in one big long row. Cut and paste paper pieces to create characters and features for picture. Cut out small pieces of doily to add for snowflakes over the completed picture. Or, stamp with white paint snowflakes by using pre-cut carrot chunks to resemble snowflakes. Add a small amount of pink or blue paint to mostly white paint to make a pale pastel coloured snowflake to add some interest.

Melted Crayon Waxpaper Snowflakes

Give one square of wax paper to each child. Use one edge of scissors to shave pieces of old wax crayon all over the piece of wax paper. Add different colours and cover the entire area. Cut another piece of wax paper to lay over the crayon shavings. Use an old iron to press two pieces of wax paper together. It's magical to watch the crayon shavings melt between the sheets of wax paper! Avoid smearing too much, as the colours will tend to meld together and just make a muddy brown. Once it is cool, then fold and cut out various shapes to create the typical snowflake. Hang from windows or the ceiling. Enjoy the snowy display!

Cathy

"My favourite winter lesson is probably my painting with epsom salts. Just did it yesterday. The children drew with crayons onto a dark blue piece of construction paper a winter scene (kids sledding down hills) and when they were all done I boiled water and mixed equal parts epsom salt and the kids brushed it on. As it dried it made crystals. Looks so cool."

Meghan

"Have each child make a hand print on a mitten shape (obviously large enough for the hand print to fit in). I paint the child's hand then press down on the paper. Cut out the mitten shape and glue it on the top of a large piece of paper. On the bottom have the children paste a poem that they have printed. I give them lined paper for good printing practise. The poem I often use is:

Thumb in the thumb place
Fingers altogether
This is the song
We sing in mitten weather.

I also take pictures of the children dressed warmly in winter clothes and mount these pictures on snowflakes and place them on display with winter words (like a word wall)."



Sharon

"My favourite winter lesson is Vincent Van Gogh's A Starry Night. I use library books to read to the children about the artist's background first. We use their blank drawing books to practice drawing star and moon shape forms before we start, and practice making swirls around the stars just with pencil. I use a large poster of "A Starry Night" or a large picture from one of the books to show them the full image.

Then we start with very large white paper and crayons, and press heavily to make orange, yellow, etc. stars across the top of the paper (in the same position and colours as the original). We then take our blue, green, etc. crayons (same colours as the original) and make long, broken, swirling lines around all the stars from one side of the paper to the other, circling the stars and making wavy, very thick lines (looks like waves). The secret is to go back and forth, pressing hard to make very thick lines.

Then we do a blue wash across the finished crayon coloured sky (crayon resist) for the night sky (just the right shade of blue looks better than black). Then I pre cut a black rolling landscape silhouette to glue on the bottom of the white paper (goes completely from side to side only across the bottom). Then we cut houses, a very spiky tree (as per original), bushes, houses, etc. to glue along the rolling top edge of the black (construction paper) landscape. This covers about one fourth of the paper. If the children use really bright colors with lots of swirls and waves the final effect is beautiful. This is one of my favourite art activities but it takes several sessions to finish. Many parents like to frame them when done. Have fun!"

Victoria

"Here is a winter lesson that I often use....

I read Snowmen At Night by Caralyn and Mark Bueher. The students brainstorm what their snowmen would do at night if nobody was around. For art, each student takes a piece of black construction paper and creates a scene of what the snowmen would do. To make the pictures we use felt pieces and toothpicks for the snowmen, and fabric scraps, paper and any other materials for the rest of the picture. It really stands out against the black paper. The next day the students write about what is going on in their picture.

I also like to do a Jan Brett author study in the winter. She has many great 'winter stories'."



Heather

"We make snowflake snowmen. It is symmetry in math and makes a lovely art piece. The students are given three different-sized squares of white paper. They cut them out into snowflakes. We mount them on dark construction paper (black, dark blue, purple) of their choice. They look beautiful if you only take them this far. However, it is nice for the students to add details such as eyes, hats, broom, or whatever. A great story to read before you make them is Sadie and the Snowman by Allen Morgan. The students love making them!!"

Kathy

"My favourite winter lesson idea is only good if you have snow. My favourite thing to do is for science. I like to make ice cream. It is great to help teach how matter can change from a liquid to a solid. I have groups of three work together. They each get a large ziplock bag that they fill halfway with snow. Then I pour rock salt into their bag and give them their medium ziplock bag to put inside. Medium Ziplock bag contains whole milk and sweetened condensed milk mixed together. Then they shake/ rock their bag back and forth for about 10 minutes. When they are done they have ice cream. The kids love it!"

Laura

"Some years I do a winter scene with children and snowmen. I provide large pieces of white paper for the students. During the art lesson, I show them how to draw children in winter clothing i.e. jacket, snow pants, touque, mittens, boots. The students draw, outline in permanent felt pen and then paint with watercolours. They do the same with the snowmen. I then take fabric scraps (or I go to the fabric store into the remnants section and buy several colourful pieces of fabric). I have the fabric cut into rectangular pieces to resemble a scarf. Then I cut fringes on either end. Both the children and snowmen are draped in a scarf and the pictures are put up on a hallway bulletin board. This makes an eye-catching, colourful winter display."

Mary

"Here is one of my favourite winter lessons for Kindergarten which we just completed today!

Snow People Collage on a 'Snow Day'

I had my students paint a snow man (3 ball shapes) on blue construction paper ahead of time. Today, I read them Lois Elhert's story "Snowballs" which illustrates beautiful snow people collages and we discussed all the different materials the illustrator used to make the snow people other than the typical 'carrot for the nose type stuff'. Then our big buddies helped us create our own snow people collages using lots of different materials – i.e. buttons, popsicle sticks, shells, fabric, ribbon, yarn, feathers, scrap paper, cork, cotton balls (for snow and snowflakes), etc. They are all beautiful and not one looks the same as another. Then we played outside in the snow, building more snow people out of snow this time. We finished up our 'Snow Day' with hot chocolate and treats the parents sent, while watching a winter movie. We all had a wonderful day and I took lots of photos which I will display with our collages.

Kindergarten Winter center - I fill my water table with snow and give the children sand/beach toys to play with in the table."

Nicole

"We call this "Snow" Problems. (Math)

1. Give each child a sheet with blank 3-ball snowmen. (10 snowmen on a sheet is usually lots)
2. Each child gets a dice and some counters.
3. The child rolls the dice once and records that number in the top snowball.
4. He/She rolls the dice again and writes that number in the middle snowball.
5. Using the counters, the child finds the sum, records it in the third snowball and puts in the appropriate symbols (addition sign and equal sign) for vertical addition.
6. Below each snowman, the child writes the same addition sentence horizontally.



Variations:

- a. Complete as above, but below the child writes the partner addition sentence.
- b. Same as above but the child writes the corresponding subtraction sentence.
- c. Same as above but the child write the partner addition sentence and the 2 corresponding subtraction sentence."

Jennifer

"I know these 3-D snowflakes have been around for a while..... Here are some photos—these were splattered with blue paint after they were made.



The one below was made with sturdier paper that had colour/sparkles on one side.



I found instructions online:
<http://www.wikihow.com/Make-a-3D-Paper-Snowflake>

These are wonderful for all ages."

Suzanne

"An activity that I do every year is read Ezra Jack Keats story, "The Snowy Day" and I have the children illustrate their favourite part of the book by using tear art. I use dark blue construction paper as the background and different colours of construction paper to create the picture. All parts of the picture is torn.

Tip: Use scrap paper first to teach and for the children to practice tearing shapes. This a great fine motor skill activity. When the children can demonstrate some control with the "tearing of paper", I will then pass on the coloured construction paper."

Shirley



I would get about eight or ten parents to help out (use the older kids if the community does not have supportive parents) and they would help to set up the stations. I would use one of the older kids to be the leader of the teams and then I would use a bell to announce when the teams would rotate. I made a very clear map of the starting station for each team and the directions that they would go when the sleigh bells rang!!! It was an awesome day—it takes a lot of preplanning... but is loads of fun!!!! Follow it up with a beach day the next week!!!! "

Joanne

"I have a grade 1 class and one of my favourites for winter when I need just a quick lesson is Why the Bear has a Stumpy Tail. I have this ready ahead of time so if it is needed I just pull it out. I tell the story using stick puppets. Then I give the pupils a bear pattern with a tail separate. They cut out the bear, trace it on brown construction paper, cut again, add eyes and a nose, then take 1 inch pieces of brown yarn and glue the pieces all over the bear. They glue the tail to the other side of the bear. I have the yarn cut ahead of time. They take turns going over the story with each other then they take the bear home and tell the story at home. I have also done this using dry coffee grounds instead of the yarn, but I add cinnamon to the coffee grounds for a smelly bear. The pupils like this and it is easy to prepare."

Ruth

The Winter Olympics

The Winter Olympics will be held February 12 - 28, 2010. Use these games to teach your students many skills! If you begin studying this in late January, by the time of the Olympics the students will be much more interested.

Learn about the world, and the continents and oceans. Teach your students to use both the globe and flat world maps and be able to find the major countries. Talk about the parade of nations and try to find the different countries.

We want to cheer our own athletes. Who are the highly ranked athletes? Find out about these men and women and keep track of the results in their races.

The Olympics will be held in Vancouver and Whistler, BC. Learn about BC!

Learn about the Olympic history and the symbols - the torch, the rings, etc.

Learn about the different flags of the world.

<http://www.crwflags.com/fotw/flags/>

or <http://www.flags.net/>

If you want flags for your students to colour, go to:

<http://www.lil-fingers.com/coloring/flags.html>



Have small groups or single students research a country and present the information to the class.

Make a list of all the events that are in the Olympics, and find out about them. Graph the ones the students would like most to see or do themselves. There are a great variety of winter sports. Do research on the different sports.

As the Olympics are on, talk about the athletes that win gold, silver or bronze for Canada. Keep track of the medal scores.

Have reading and/or math Olympics! See how many books the students can read in a certain period of time, and graph the results as they come in.

Make gold medals! <http://www.kidsdomain.com/craft/goldmedal.html>

Make a torch. <http://familycrafts.about.com/cs/sportscrafts/l/blolytorch.htm>

<http://www.educatall.com/page/17/Winter-Olympics.html>

Winter Science



Do Winter Experiments

What is the fastest way to melt an ice cube? Talk about things you could try and predict which will be the fastest - wrap it up in a warm mitten, blow on it, leave it alone, sprinkle salt on it, etc. Then have groups of students time each way. Why do they think the ice cube melted at the speed that it did?

Where will a thermometer be warmer - on top of the snow or under the snow? After discovery, how could this knowledge help someone? Help animals in winter?

How do polar bears, seals and other Arctic animals keep warm in the icy water? Put lard or Crisco in a larger baggie and pretend that it is an animal's fat. Then the students put one hand in a smaller baggie and put it into the middle of the lard in the bigger bag. Put the uncovered hand in ice water and the other hand in the 'blubber' in ice water and see how it feels.

How do snowshoes work? Try pressing something small into the snow and then the bottom of a box. Which sinks into the snow easier? Research the size of a polar bear's foot. How about deer in the snow? Rabbits? How will weight and the size of the foot affect this?

"I do a combination of weather and matter units during January.

- I put 2 containers of water outside, one with salt and one without. We observe the freezing every morning.
- We melt an ice cube on a hot plate and watch the water evaporate. (I usually hold a glass above so that they can see the condensation.)
- We fill one cup with snow and another with ice cubes. The kids estimate which will have more water. After letting both melt, we then see how many days it takes for each to evaporate.
- I mix crushed ice and rock salt in a coffee can and watch for frost to form on the outside of the can.
- When we talk about snow being a crystal, we look at other crystals through hand lenses (salt, sugar). Then we make a crystal garden. (Google 'making a crystal garden'.....)

Freeze a piece of glass and a can of hairspray before the next snowfall. (Both may be stored in the freezer until you need them.) When you're ready to collect some snowflakes, spray your chilled glass with the chilled hairspray and go outside and let some snowflakes settle on the glass. When you have enough flakes bring the glass indoors and allow it to thaw at room temperature for about 15 min. Now you have a permanent record of your snowflakes!

Snow Experiments:

- Take an old clear plastic soda pop bottle and cut off the top half. Mark the outside in centimeters with a permanent laundry marker and place it outside in a place where it can collect the falling snow.
- Measure how much melted snow it takes to make water.
- Collect some snow in a container and record the level of snow on the container. Let the snow melt.

How much water is there? Are you surprised at the difference?

- Make your own glacier. Fill a bowl with snow and bring it inside to partially thaw, then add more snow on top. Keep doing this all winter long. You will then have the 'layers' of ice and snow like a glacier.

Winter Vocabulary

Weather - snow snowflakes ice icy icicle cloud cold frost freeze freezing temperature storm

Clothes - coat hat mitts mittens pants boots socks scarf

Sports - skate ski sled hockey toboggan skates skating skis skiing sledding hill rink puck

Snowman - eye nose mouth carrot coal arm ball button

Fun - fire blanket friends window sun cocoa mug cuddle house