

Christmas Activities for weeks 7.12.20 and 14.12.20



This week we will be introducing our Nursery elf who will be very busy helping Santa add names to the `good list`, so make sure you`re trying really hard!

Here's a few simple outdoor activities to do if the weather is ok, or to prepare to use outside:

Decorate a tree or bush outside as a bird feeding tree

- Smear pine cones in salt-free peanut butter or lard and dip in bird seed
- Make strings of popcorn
- Create birdseed fatballs to hang up

Enjoy watching quietly to see which birds come and visit. If you don't have a tree, buy a plastic one or put a branch in a large pot filled with stones or peat-free compost.

Look for Santa's beard

Some lichen grows in hairy tufts. These are traces of Santa. When his beard hair falls out, it lands all over the Earth and creates lichen. Have a hunt for some in your garden or nearby. You will find lichen growing on rocks, old wall, gravestones, trees, roofs and fences. Give the children magnifying glasses to help see the lichen better. Lichen is very slow growing so it's best to let the children take photos rather than pick off lots of clumps.

Set up an outdoor nativity scene for small world play

All the children have learnt the Christmas story. They could make animals or use toy farm animals. Get children to think of substitute possibilities for any animals and people you don't have. For example, the children may enjoy creating animals from natural materials such as sticks and cones. A large cardboard box turned on its side with flaps for the doors makes a simple stable which can be easily taken outside daily by children.

Go for a Christmas light walk

You may have your own lights on display. Look the variety of lights, indoors and out. Compare this with lights that are used all year round (a good reason for another walk in January).

Sing Christmas carols outside

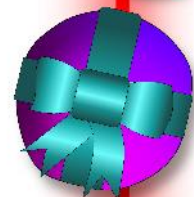
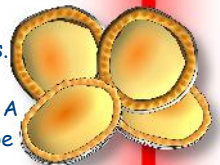
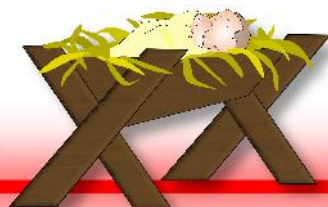
You all know our Christmas Nativity songs and I bet your family know even more they can teach you!

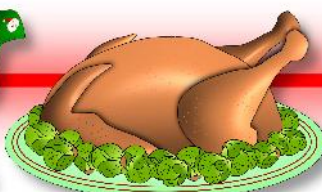
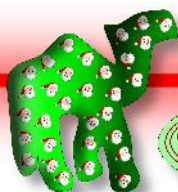
Follow the star

Set up a star trail around the garden. Children have to look for the stars hung in different places and complete the activities written on each star, e.g

- Do 10 star jumps
- Touch the grounds six times
- Walk backward 5 paces, etc.

Better still, the children could create their own ideas for a star trail. This works for all ages.





Create natural decorations and hang outside

It is possible to create simple stars from sticks and other natural materials. It can be useful for practising tying ribbon, weaving and other fine motor skills. Think about where would be a good place



to put the decorations and who would want to enjoy seeing them.



Go on a present hunt

Wrap up a box in gift paper. Take turns at hiding the box in different places outside for other children to find. Children can give clues such as "getting warmer" as a child gets closer to the box and "going cold" if a child moves further away or in the wrong direction.

Re-use unwanted decorations

If your children love the glitzy look of Christmas decorations, then reuse old and unwanted Christmas decorations outside.

Christmas ribbon and shiny material to decorate the features of your outdoor area. Weave ribbon through fences, around hanging baskets and tubs. Just ensure the material won't dissolve in the rain and wet weather. This could be part of the fun, deciding which materials will work best. If a child does choose materials that go soggy then, let them and observe what happens. Most children learn experientially. Hang plastic baubles on the fences and washing lines. Sorting, ordering and making patterns can arise through this sort of play.

Using guttering, roll plastic baubles down the guttering. See what happens when water is added. Use baubles of different shapes and sizes for comparison.

Have a special Christmas outdoor snack

Provide warm drinks such as warm spicy apple juice and warm foods such as mince pies outside. They do seem to taste extra good outdoors.

Reindeer prints

Look online to find the pattern and spacing of reindeer hooves. Create a set of prints in the ground that disappear. Wonder with the children about where they have gone to, how they landed and so on. This is especially exciting after a visit from Santa.

Find out about outdoor traditions, stories and plants associated with Christmas

One last thing.... always remember to tidy up sparkly man-made items that wildlife may find appealing. In particular, leave the glitter indoors as it's hard to tidy up outside and quickly becomes litter that is not okay for wildlife to ingest, edible or otherwise.

