



OVERVIEW

Moonbeams learn about winter and the various activities and special events available at this wonderful time of year.

OBJECTIVES

To earn this emblem, Moonbeams need to complete at least one activity from each section and the Bible lesson.

WORD BANK

- Hibernate
- Winter
- Miracle

DEVELOPMENTAL ASSETS SUPPORTED BY THE ACTIVITIES

- Service to Others
- Play and Creative Activities
- Engagement in Learning Experiences
- Early Literacy

WINTER OUTDOOR SAFETY TIPS:

1. Wear water-resistant clothing. Wet mittens and pants chafe skin and lead to frostbite.
2. Dress in layers. Fasten zippers and buttons. Remove hazardous drawstrings.
3. Wear brightly colored clothing to be easily seen.
4. Cover extremities (ears, nose and fingertips).
5. It's possible to sunburn during the winter. Apply sunscreen at least 30 minutes before going outdoors.
6. Make sure children are adequately hydrated.



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7. Be sensitive to the length of time spent outdoors. In the excitement of play, children may downplay discomfort. Watch for warning signs of hypothermia, such as:

- Complaints about being cold
- Irritability
- Uncontrollable shivering
- Impaired or slurred speech
- Clumsy movements
- Blurred vision
- Stiff muscles
- Dark and puffy skin
- Irregular heart and breathing
- Unconsciousness

GROUP ACTIVITIES

WALKING IN A WINTER WONDERLAND

Take the Moonbeams on a winter walk. Look for signs that winter has arrived. What changes do the Moonbeams see? How does winter affect the wildlife in your area?

NOTE: To better understand wildlife in your region and how animals are affected by the seasons, consult with the local Department of Natural Resources, State Wildlife or Fish and Game authorities.

In addition, www.enature.com/zipguides.com can provide information regarding wildlife in your area.

After the walk, help children list changes they observed by asking leading questions, such as:

- Did the trees look different than during the summer? How?
- What did the flowers and plants look like?
- Did you notice any animals or see any tracks?
- How were people dressed?
- Was the wind blowing? How could you tell?
- Did you see any other signs of winter?

Provide crayons and paper. Allow children to draw or color a picture of something they noticed during their walk.

READ THE MITTEN

As a troop, read *The Mitten* by Jan Brett. Afterwards, perform the story together, using a white sheet as the "mitten."

You can find numerous supplemental activities related to *The Mitten* online.

For a great resource link with songs, games, and other ideas to use to supplement the book, visit: www.teachingheart.net/mitten.html.

Go to the author's website. Enter "Mitten" in the search box to find a number of resources to supplement this activity at this website: http://janbrett.com/activities_pages.htm.

Print adorable masks that can be used to perform the story: www.janbrett.com/mitten_masks_main.htm.

ENJOY A WINTERY ACTIVITY

Provide an opportunity for the Moonbeams to enjoy sledding, playing in the snow, ice skating, or Christmas caroling.

SHARE WINTER CHEER

Have the Moonbeams cut snowflakes and use them to make cards. Share your homemade treasures with those who need good cheer, such as someone in the military, nursing home or the hospital.

SUPPLIES:

- White paper, half or quarter-size sheets
- Colored construction paper
- Crayons
- Pencils
- Glue
- Preschooler scissors
- Glitter

Have the Moonbeams follow these steps:

1. Fold the white paper in half three times. Cut off the corners. Cut simple shapes into the folded edges of the paper. Open to reveal a snowflake.
2. Fold construction paper in half to form a card. Write a greeting at the top and sign the inside of the card.
3. Glue your snowflake onto the cover of the card. Spread a small amount of glue on the top surface of the snowflake. Sprinkle with glitter. Allow time to dry.



Once the cards are dry, arrange to give the cards to shut-ins from your corps or visit a nursing home to distribute them to the clients. Check with corps members to learn the addresses of military personnel who would enjoy notes from home.

LEARN ABOUT HIBERNATION

Sleep, Big Bear, Sleep! by Maureen Wright is a fun picture book to use to teach kids about animals who take long winters naps. In this sweet story it is time for Big Bear to hibernate, so Old Man Winter tries to tell him to sleep. But Big Bear can't hear very well, so he thinks Old Man Winter said to drive a jeep, sweep, or leap. Old Man Winter finally finds a way to make Big Bear understand.

Read the book. Find out about other animals that hibernate.

Check the children's section of the local library for this and other books about hibernation.

CRAFTS

DESIGN A MITTEN ORNAMENT

Oriental Trading Company has inexpensive many mitten related craft kits. To purchase a kit(s) for an easy mitten craft, check out: www.orientaltrading.com.

MAKE A FEEDER FOR HUNGRY BIRDS ✱

PINE CONE FEEDER

SUPPLIES:

- Pine cones
- Plastic knives or craft sticks
- Peanut butter
- Bird seed
- Yarn
- Scissors

The easiest and most kid-friendly bird feeder to make is biodegradable, inexpensive, and easy.

Guide the Moonbeams through these steps:

1. Cover a pine cone with peanut butter, using a plastic knife or craft stick.
2. Roll the pinecone in bird seed, sunflower seeds (Black-oil sunflower seeds are the #1 favorite of birds), or cracked corn.
3. Attach a piece of yarn and hang feeder near a branch where birds may enjoy a sit-down lunch.

NOTE: Use margarine in place of peanut butter if allergies are an issue for your Moonbeams.

MILK CARTON FEEDER

SUPPLIES:

- ½ gallon milk or juice carton
- X-Acto© knife or box cutter
- Pencils or twigs
- Stapler
- Strong string
- Bird Seed

Guide the Moonbeams through these steps:

1. Rinse out an empty milk or juice carton.
2. Have an adult use a X-ACTO knife or box cutter to cut a large hole in the middle of one side of the carton. Repeat on the opposite side of the carton.
3. To make perches strong enough to support birds, poke a hole under each large hole. Push a long pencil or twig through both small holes.
4. Fill the carton with bird seed. Staple the carton shut.
5. Poke a hole in the top of the carton and run a loop of strong string through it.
6. Hang the bird feeder on a tree.

SONGS & RHYMES

AWAY IN A MANGER

Away in a manger, no crib for a bed,
The little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head;
The stars in the bright sky looked down
where he lay,
The little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.



MARY HAD A BABY BOY

(To the tune of "Mary Had a Little Lamb")

Mary had a baby boy, baby boy, baby boy.
Mary had a baby boy,
His name was Jesus Christ.

Shepherds came to see the child, see the
child, see the child,

Shepherds came to see the child,
His name was Jesus Christ.

Wise men came to honor him, honor him,
honor him,

Wise men came to honor him,
His name was Jesus Christ.

SILENT NIGHT

Silent night! Holy night!
All is calm, all is bright
Round yon virgin mother and Child;
Holy Infant so tender and mild,
Sleep in heavenly peace,
Sleep in heavenly peace.

GAMES

FIND THE MITTEN

Hide a mitten. Tell the Moonbeams there's a lost mitten, just like in the mitten story. Have the children help to find the lost mitten.

MITTEN MATES

Bring in several pairs of mittens or gloves. Mix them together in a box or bin. Have the children sort the mittens to find the mates.

SNACKS ✱

GINGERBREAD HOUSES

SUPPLIES:

- Graham crackers
- Stiff icing (see recipe below)
- Small candies (Red Hots®, miniature chocolate chips, and M&M's®)
- Miniature marshmallows (colored)
- A flat sheet of cardboard covered with aluminum foil (1 per Moonbeam)

Guide the Moonbeams through these steps:

1. Give each child five rectangular graham crackers and a good surface (aluminum foil over a flat sheet of cardboard).
2. Using the stiff icing "glue" to hold the four walls together.
3. Divide the remaining cracker and "glue" together to form a peak. This is the roof.
4. When the house is dry, attach candies and miniature marshmallows with "glue" to decorate.

STIFF ICING:

- 1 pound confectioner's sugar
- ¼ teaspoon cream of tartar
- 3 egg whites
- Baggie

1. Mix all together.
2. Beat slowly until stiff peaks form.
3. Fill a Ziploc® sandwich bag with icing.
4. Cut the bottom corner of the bag so that children can squeeze out icing from there.

NOTE: Alternatively, you can add ¼ teaspoon cream of tartar to each cup of canned icing.

MARSHMALLOW SNOWMEN

SUPPLIES:

- Marshmallows
- Thin pretzel sticks
- Chocolate chips (miniature)
- M&M's (plain)
- String licorice
- Hershey's Kisses®
- Stiff icing (see recipe above)
- Paper plates

Guide the Moonbeams through these steps:

1. Use a pretzel stick to anchor three marshmallows together to form snowmen.
2. Use icing as "glue" to attach decorations. Attach miniature chocolate chips to form facial features and M&M's as buttons. Insert pretzel sticks into the marshmallow torso for arms. Use Hershey's Kisses as hats, and string licorice as scarves. String licorice can also be used to form a mouth.
3. Use icing to secure the snowman onto a paper plate.

BIBLE LESSON

DEVOTIONAL (BASED ON *THE MITTEN*)

Ask: How many animals fit inside that little mitten? (Help children to list the animals.) How did the mitten change in order to let all the animals inside? What do you think it was like inside the mitten? Do you think that a mitten could really hold all those animals? Why not?

Say the following as written or in your own words: It's funny to think about a little mitten holding all those animals, isn't it? Everyone knows that a place made for a little boy's hand can't possibly be big enough to hold a great big bear. That's how we know that this story is just "pretend," but, sometimes, things that seem impossible really do happen!

God does things that no one else can do, reminding us that He is God and there's no end to His power. We can read about God doing impossible things, or "miracles" in the Bible. And, though the stories in the Bible sometimes seem like fairy tales, they're 100% true. They really happened.

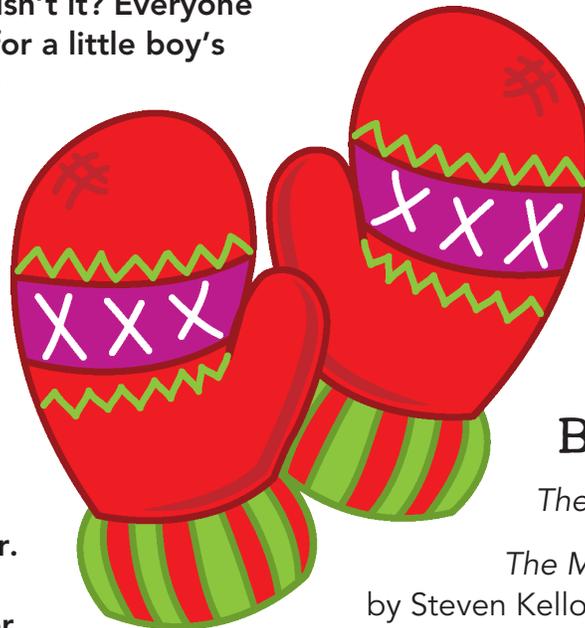
One Bible story reminds me of *The Mitten*. We can read this story in the book of John, which is part of the Bible. (Read or retell John 6:5-13.)

Continue: Everyone knows that a mitten made for a small boy isn't big enough for

a giant bear. And everyone knows that a little picnic lunch made for a small boy isn't enough to feed thousands of people. But it did. Jesus, God's Son, showed the crowds that day that God can do what people can't. He can take something small, like a few fish and bits of bread, and turn it into something great.

Isn't it wonderful that Jesus not only cared about those hungry people, but He had the power to help them? And isn't it exciting that He can take the little things we give Him, and use them in big ways?

Like the little boy in the story who gave his lunch to Jesus, we should be ready to give Jesus whatever is ours—big or small—and let God use it.



LEADERS' RESOURCES

BOOKS

The Mitten by Jan Brett

The Missing Mitten Mystery
by Steven Kellogg

Sleep, Big Bear, Sleep! by Maureen Wright

WEBSITES

To find activities, craft ideas and games to use with this emblem, check out: <http://pinterest.com/samoonbeams/winter-fun/>.

For a free guide to wildlife in your area, or to look at animal tracks that can be found there, go to: www.enature.com/zipguides.com.

