

Kids Korner

Encourage Children To Help With Holiday Preparations



Rita Moore of Jack and Jill Nursery School said children like to help make this snowman pinata.

LOU ANN GOOD
Lancaster Farming Staff
LEBANON (Lebanon Co.) — If you're searching for ways to include children in Christmas preparations, and to thwart their focus on getting instead of giving, here are some ideas from the Holiday Program presented recently at the Lebanon County Penn State Cooperative Extension. Rita Moore, who operates a nursery school, compiled these.

PINATA PARTY
To make a pinata snowman, inflate a large and small balloon. Use masking tape to fasten together. Make a thin paste of flour and water in a large bowl. Tear, lengthwise, strips of newspaper 2-inches wide. Dip strips of paper into paste and squeeze off excess paste between fingers. Wrap strips around balloon figure, alternating directions. When dry, pinata can be painted, or, if children are older, tissue paper fringed strips can be glued around it. Features can be added with paint or construction paper.

Make a harness of twine around pinata (if using fringed tissue paper, apply harness before adding tissue paper).

Add doll's scarf, twigs for hands, and a paper hat. Cut small hole in top and fill with goodies. Use a rolled newspaper bat to hit paper bag pinata or a plastic bat to break papier mache pinata.

Make sure children are standing or sitting in a large circle so that no one gets hit with the bat. Always reserve a few goodies to give to children who receive none when children scramble for the treats inside the pinata.

HOLIDAY TIC TAC TOE

Make a giant Tic-Tac-Toe board, about 2x2-feet square. Children will enjoy decorating each square with a picture of Christmas. Cut out some large O's and X's for markers. Divide family into two teams, one with O's and the other with X's. Choose some one, not on a team, to read the questions. For each correct answer, a team member places one marker on the board. The first team with three in a row wins. You will need a list of about 20 simple questions based on the Christmas story such as "What was the name of the town where Jesus was born? What gifts did the wise men bring Jesus? Who told the shepherds where the baby lay?"

TRADITIONS

Traditions that are repeated over and over again bring a sense of comfort and joy to families.

- Allow children to select fruit for fruit baskets or items for less fortunate.

- Put names of family in bowl. Allow children to select a name for whom they should make an effort to be kind and do good deeds for the person throughout the week. Whenever they do, allow them to put straw in the manger to make it soft for the baby.

- Prepare an advent wreath. Sit on floor, light candles, turn off other lights, and sing Christmas carols each evening.

- Make popcorn and munch on it while reading the Christmas story.

- Allow children to help decorate wrapping paper.

- Allow children to have a small tree to decorate as they please.

TODDLER'S HANDS

Have children place their hands in finger paints and place on paper with the following poem. Give as a gift to grandparents or to parents.

MY HANDPRINTS

Sometimes you get discouraged
Because I am so small
And always have my
fingerprints
On furniture and wall.

But everyday I'm growing up
And soon I'll be so tall
That all those little handprints
Will be hard to recall

So here's my latest handprint
Just so you can remember
Exactly how my fingers looked
At Christmas in December.



ping, serve with tomato sauce, cheese sauce or pizza sauce that you have heated, if you like. Makes 8 servings.

COOL & CRAZY DOUGH

1 cup all-purpose flour
2 teaspoons cream of tartar
1/2 teaspoon salt
1 cup water
1 tablespoon vegetable oil
About 15 drops of your favorite food coloring

Put ingredients in 1/2-quart saucepan. Cook over medium heat about 4 minutes, stirring very hard, until mixture forms a ball.

Take ball of dough out of saucepan, and let it stand on the counter 5-10 minutes to cool.

Squeeze dough about 30 seconds or until it is mixed and smooth. Cool completely.

Use dough to make fun shapes. Store dough tightly wrapped in refrigerator up to 2 weeks. Makes about 1 1/3 cups dough.

Remember this dough is to play with not to eat!

SHAKE, RATTLE & ROLL PAINT

2 cups water
1/2 cup concentrated liquid starch

1/4 cup all-purpose flour
Food colors
Finger paint paper
2 or 3 golf balls

Put water, liquid starch and flour in 1/2 quart saucepan. Cook over medium heat about 5 minutes just until boiling, stirring all the time. Cool to room temperature.

Pour cooked mixture into several small containers. Stir in few drops of food coloring into mixture in each container to make desired color.

Put sheets of paper in bottom of baking pans. Spoon drops of paint onto paper, then add golf balls to the pan. Shake, rattle and roll the pan to make a fun design. Remove golf balls from pan, and wash them. Let paper dry.

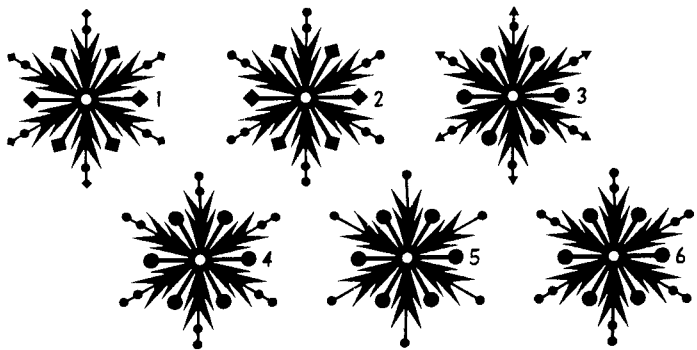
Display your masterpiece or use as wrapping paper or a book cover. Use the paint the same day you make it, and throw away left over paint. Makes about 2 cups.

Hand Paints: Make paint as directed. Drop paint onto paper, and make designs with your hands.

Remember paint is to play with not to eat!

FIND THE TWINS

WHICH TWO ARE EXACTLY ALIKE?



ANSWER FOUR AND SIX

Smart Stuff

WITH TWIG WALKINGSTICK

Do reindeer really live at the North Pole?

Holiday tales might place Santa's workshop and flying reindeer at the most northern spot of the world, but "non-flying" reindeer can't live that far North.

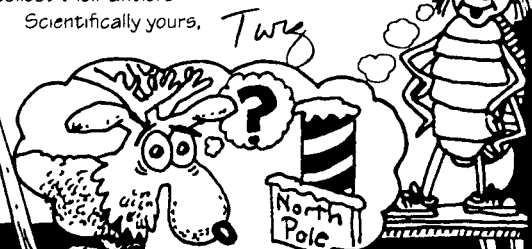
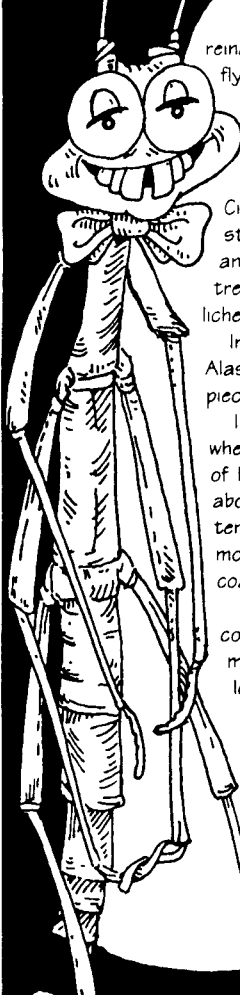
Reindeer, along with caribou or wild reindeer, live just below the Arctic Circle in the tundra regions of North America, Europe and Asia, and on the islands of Greenland and other large northern islands. The Arctic Circle is at the northern most part of the world, and it starts at a line where in the summer the sun never sets and in the winter the sun never rises. Tundra areas are treeless with small bushes, compact plants and many lichen and mosses.

In the United States, all of the reindeer are located on Alaska's Seward Peninsula. If you look at a map, it's the piece of land that juts out and almost touches Russia.

In the winter, herds of reindeer migrate to higher ground, where they survive on lichen. (They can eat up to 50 pounds of lichen a day!) Although the average temperature is about 0 degrees Fahrenheit, the wind chill often makes the temperature feel like it's about -25F. In the summer, they move near the sea, where there's more food and the coastal winds help keep pests such as mosquitoes away.

The National Park Service biologists in Alaska put radio collars on some of the reindeer to track their movements. That also helps the local Eskimos locate the reindeer — once a year they bring the animals in to give them a health checkup and collect their antlers!

Scientifically yours,
Twig



Kids In The Kitchen

Children love to give gifts they made themselves.

Instead of spending hours at the mall helping your child find the "perfect gift," turn your kitchen into a bake shop.

Cooking teaches children to read, follow directions and measure. It teaches simple math skills and nutrition education.

Cooking gives children permission to play with food by touching, washing, and mixing ingredients.

Recipes and activities from the Rainbow Bakery Cookbook promise hours of cooking and creative fun with great-tasting results.

Not every recipe is for eating. Kids can learn to make play dough, sun catchers, paints, and other delightful gifts for others or for themselves.

To order the 75-page colorful Rainbow Bakery book, send \$2.50 to Rainbow Baker, P.O. Box 2052, Milaca, MN 56353-2052.

"Alpha-Bakery" is another children's cookbook, featuring 67-ages of recipes and activities from A to Z.

To order, send \$2 to Alpha-Bakery, P.O. Box 5119, Minneapolis, MN 55460-5119.

Here are some recipes from Rainbow Bakery.

MONKEY SEE, MONKEY DOUGH

2 cups all-purpose flour
1 tablespoon sugar
3 teaspoons baking powder
1 teaspoon salt
1/2 cup shortening
3/4 cup milk

1/2 cup grated parmesan cheese
1 teaspoon Italian seasoning
2 tablespoons butter, melted

Heat oven to 425 degrees. Stir in flour, sugar, baking powder, and salt in medium bowl until mixed.

Cut shortening into flour mixture by crisscrossing with two knives, until crumbly. Stir in milk until a soft dough forms.

Put dough on lightly floured surface, and shape into ball, using floured hands. Knead dough by folding and pushing with the palms of your hands, then make a quarter turn. Repeat these steps to knead 10 times. Divide dough into 32 pieces.

Mix cheese and Italian seasoning. Roll dough pieces in cheese mixture. Put pieces in ungreased round cake pan. Sprinkle with remaining cheese mixture. Drizzle butter over top.

Bake 15 to 20 minutes or until light golden brown. Take bread out of pan, and serve warm. For dip-