



2-495 Wallinger Avenue Kimberley BC V1A 1Z6 • t 250-427-9325 • f 250-427-3535

Suggested Activities for Pre- and Post- Wildsight Winter Wonder Field Trip

1. **Cold Talk:** Give each child some ice cubes in a container. They may feel the ice while discussing the questions of feeling the sensation of cold. How do you feel when you are cold? What feels cold when you touch it? When you feel cold, what can you do to feel warm? What do animals do when they feel cold? Would you rather feel hot or cold? Put your hand in a bucket of ice-cold water for as long as you can. Now put your hand inside a Ziploc bag with lard and place it in the water. How is it different and why?
2. **Paper Snowflakes:** Start with a circle of white paper. Fold it in half then again in thirds so it looks like a teepee. Cut out a large triangle where the door would be. Nip out designs on the edges. Unfold and hang throughout the classroom. Reinforce the different types of snowflakes, have students make stellar dendrites (classic shape cut out of paper), needles using pipe cleaners, plates (using paper plates, plastic yogurt lids), columns and capped columns (use toilet paper, paper towel tubes and construction paper) and graupel (using cotton or styrofoam ball).
3. **Snow job:** Explores the physical states of water. Bring snow in from outside. What will happen to the snow? Encourage speculation. Why is snow melting? What is the temperature inside and outside? Mark the much lower water level. The reason can be demonstrated using crumpled papers vs. flat ones stacked. What happens when it goes back outside? Speculate. Do it and examine what happened. Observe.
4. **My Mitten Book** – Create a winter memories book in the shape of a mitten, with a decorative heavy cardstock cover and back with holes punched along the side and sewn with yarn.
5. Set up a **Winter Weather Watch station**. Record daily temperatures and snow fall using a snow gauge. Designate a snow plot, where the snow will not likely be disturbed at your school for weekly readings. Weekly read snow pack temperatures on surface, middle and ground. Describe the layers and their depth. As winter progresses every week take a look at the colour of the snow in the layers. Describe snowmelt dates. Keep the data

from year to year for other classes to add their data to see if there are any trends occurring. Have students go to the Environment Canada website www.weatheroffice.ec.gc.ca to see the forecast for their community.

6. Start a study of the **Common Winter Constellations**. Study the mythology, both Greek and Aboriginal, behind the constellations. Have students create 'canned constellations'. Students bring a can with a flat bottom to class. Using a nail and hammer they make a replica of the constellation by first marking the pattern of dots on the can bottom, then hammering a nail through the dots denoting the location of the stars. In the dark, put a flashlight behind the can and the holes will look like stars and the students can help their friends and family to see the celestial patterns in the sky.
 - Orion
 - Big (Ursa Major) and Little Dipper (Ursa Minor)
 - Polaris or North Star
 - Taurus
 - Gemini
 - Cassiopeia
 - Pleiades
7. Create a **Winter Resident Bird Checklist**. Set up three types of feeders outside the classroom winter – Niger seed, black sunflower seed/or mixed grains and suet. Build different bird feeders from milk cartons, half a grapefruit or coconut, mess onion bag with suet or fat from the butcher, drill holes in a log and fill with peanut butter. Record the types of birds that visit the feeders. Study the different beaks on birds and how they relate to the food they eat.
8. Celebrate the dance of the **Snow Bugs** or *springtails* in late February or March. Research other winter dances like the Nutcracker and watch the video. Make up your own winter snow dance movement in PE.
9. Research the **Secret Lives of Insects** and take the students out to find insects in winter. Look for egg masses, wooly bear caterpillars hibernating in the leaf litter, cattail moth larva inside cattails, ladybird beetles under logs and bark, bark beetles under bark in wood, insects in the woodpile. What stage do insects winter in? All stages – egg, larva, pupa and adult. The gall of insects to lay their eggs inside plants that grow a protective casing protecting and sheltering insects. Look for willow galls housing the single orange fly maggot, rose galls and spiny witch hazel galls.
10. Develop a classroom set of **Winter in my Backyard - Track and Scat Cards**. Research animals in your community that are active in winter. Create cards with the animal track, print stride and scat. Laminate and keep together on a single clip ring with a carabineer. Sign out the sets to students to track wildlife in their backyard in winter.

11. Research local wildlife and whether they migrate south or to a different part of the region e.g. elk from subalpine meadows in summer to low valley grasslands; hibernate, can go dormant or are active during the winter. Describe their winter habitat and how they acquire food, water, shelter and find the necessary space. Interesting animals include Monarch butterflies, hummingbirds, elk, snowy owls, Swainson's hawks.
12. Write a story called '**Bearly Dreaming**'. What does a bear dream about during their long winter nap? If you were a bear what would you dream about? Bears are deep winter sleepers but can wake up periodically and have been known to come out of their dens during winter.
13. Using an inkpad, make fingerprints on a page and draw on the ears, whiskers, paws, hind feet, creating a cozy mouse nest snuggling under the snow.
14. Research mountain caribou populations in the Columbia Basin region to show students they 'care about the 'bou'. www.wildsight.ca
www.caribounation.org
Caribou need large areas of old growth forests as they survive by floating on the snow surface eating the abundant arboreal lichens up high in the tree. They will scatter if food is too scarce. Caribou females and young over-winter together while the bulls separate from the herd. If the population of females and young is small, they have less protection from predators namely wolves. Caribou are very sensitive to motorized vehicles and can expend unnecessary energy to run away from these machines, which also pack down tracks making it easier for predators to hunt down caribou.
15. Participate in **Ice Watch**, monitoring the freeze and melt of water bodies in your community. For more information contact:
www.naturewatch.ca/english/icewatch
16. **Learn about Avalanches**, regional avalanche reports, etc. at the Canadian Avalanche Association website www.avalanche.ca
17. **Marshmallow Sculpture Contest**. Use large and small marshmallows and toothpicks. Make snowflakes and other sculptures. Who can make the biggest, the funniest, or the most creative.

Resources

Bastedo, Jamie. **Falling for Snow: A Naturalist's Journey into the World of Winter.** Calgary: Red Deer Press. 2003.

Bennett, Paul. **Hibernation.** New York: Thompson Learning. 1995.

Canadian Avalanche Association: Avalanche Bulletins www.avalanche.ca

Canadian Wildlife Federation. **Below Zero.** Ottawa: A Wild Education Publication. 2003.

Castaldo, Nancy F. **Winter Day Play – Activities, Crafts and Games for Indoors and Out.** Chicago: Chicago Review Press. 2001

Charner, Kathy ed. **Everything for Winter.** Bletsville, MA: Gryphon House. 1997.

Drake, Jane and Love, Ann. **The Kids Winter Handbook.** Toronto: Kids Can Press. 2001.

Environment Canada Weather Office: www.weatheroffice.ec.gc.ca

Halfpenny, James E. and Ozanne, Roy Douglas. **Winter: An Ecological Handbook.** Boulder, CO: Johnson Books. 1989.

Hayley, Dianne and Wishart, Pat. **Knee High Nature Winter: A Guide to Nature Activities and Fun.** Edmonton: Lone Pine. 1993

Lawlor, Elizabeth P. **Discover Nature in Winter: Things to Know and Things to Do.** Mechanicsburg, PA: Stackpole Books. 1998.

Meyer, Mary L. **Winter.** North Mankato, MN: Smart Apple Media. 2003.

Nielsen, Nancy J. **Animal Migration.** New York: Franklin Watts. 1991.

Warner, Alan and Taylor, George. **Winter Treasures.** Halifax: Halifax Regional Adventure Earth Centre. 2001.