

Family Bulletin

VOCABULARY:

- Kwanzaa
- Santa Claus
- present
- ornament
- holiday card
- candle
- stocking
- sled
- reindeer
- menorah
- list
- dreidel
- latkes
- decorate
- hung
- unwrap
- wrap
- before
- after
- around

**Target
Sound/Letter**

M m

as in Mom,
mine, hammer,
and came

The Sweet Smell of Christmas

The main book for this unit is *The Sweet Smell of Christmas* written by Patricia Scarry and illustrated by J.P. Miller. *The Sweet Smell of Christmas* is a wonderful story about a bear family that prepares for Christmas. Each event of the holiday—from trimming the tree to Christmas morning—is captured in this story along with scratch-and-sniff holiday aromas. This book was chosen for its story grammar and opportunities for practicing various verb tenses. This book also met the criteria of familiar and meaningful context for learning.

The related book for this unit is *My First Kwanzaa* written and illustrated by Karen Katz. *My First Kwanzaa* is a book about the African American cultural holiday that celebrates the importance of family, friends, and community. In this book, a girl describes how she and her family celebrate the seven days of Kwanzaa. The rhyming book is *The Night Before Christmas* written by Clement Clarke Moore and illustrated by Cheryl Harness. This favorite among children’s Christmas literature was a natural addition to this

unit’s theme. The rhyming poem about the night before Christmas is a treasured favorite. This book was chosen because of its rhyme and rhythm and also because of the vocabulary used to tell the story. Another related book for this unit is *Hanukkah, Oh Hanukkah* by Susan L. Roth. “Join this lovable family of mice at their Hanukkah party! Everyone will enjoy the festival of lights as they sing, dance the HORA, play with DREIDELS, and eat LATKES.”

Bringing it Home—The Home and School Connection

Try these great ideas to bring the key concept of this unit, **Holidays**, into your home! Make simple holiday greeting cards with your child to send to friends and relatives. Fold a sheet of colored construction paper in half. Encourage your child to draw a picture on the

cover. Print a greeting your child suggests on the inside. Encourage your child to print his/her name below the greeting. Have your child watch you print the person’s name and address on an envelope. Make green and red flavored gelatin for a special holiday

treat. Allow your child to help with the preparations. Read the directions aloud. When the gelatin is set, allow your child to help cut it into cubes and serve to your family.

Rhyming Words:

house—mouse
 bow—snow
 snow—below
 belly—jelly
 wreath—teeth
 nose—rose
 work—jerk
 wall—all
 cap—nap
 quick—St. Nick

Other Language**Targets:
Prepositions**

through
 down
 out
 across

Language Forms

regular past tense
 Am/Is

“Tell Me a Story”

Looking for a fun and easy way to build your child’s love of reading? Encourage her to make up short stories of her own. Whether you choose an evening after dinner or time waiting in the doctor’s office, you and your youngster will both enjoy the art of storytelling.

Help your child get started by writing down five words and having her come up with a

story using all of them. Encourage her to use her imagination— the sillier the ideas, the better. You might give her the first sentence. For example, if the words are “park,” “swing,” “monster,” “ice,” and “tail,” the story could go like this: One day a little monster went to the park. He played on the swing. The little green monster fell and hurt his purple

tail. When they got home, Mommy Monster put red and blue ice on the little monster’s tail. Now he looks like a rainbow!

Encourage your child to write the story down or dictate it for you to write in a special notebook. After you’ve collected several, pull out her “book” of short stories at bedtime, and read one or two together.
