

Sights and Sounds of the Holiday Season

Virginia's Foundation Blocks for Early Learning: Comprehensive Standards for Four Year Olds, 2007.

These standards are beacon lights for my curriculum. I adapt them according to the ability of my students. I use them as goals to strive towards or as background building for my students' future learning. These goals are my focus; but not the only objectives being utilized by these lessons. Language goals are used daily.

I. Virginia Foundation Blocks for Early Learning

1. History (pgs 32-39)

- A. The child will identify ways in which people are like and different
 - Participate in activities and traditions associated with different cultural heritages
- B. The child will develop awareness of change over time
 - Recount episodes from stories about the past

2. Economics:

- A. The child will identify that people have wants and make choices
 - Identify choices
 - Recognize that everyone has wants

3. Civics

- A. The child will participate as a member /citizen of a classroom community
 - Identify the needs of other people by helping them

4. Scientific Investigation, Reasoning and Life Processes (pgs 24-28).

- A. The child will make observations, separate objects into groups based on similar attributes
 - Identify basic properties of objects by direct observations
 - Sequence objects according to size
 - Identify the body parts that correspond with each of the five senses

II. Concepts About Holiday Trees

- Some trees change with the seasons (leaves change colors and fall off some trees)
- Pine trees stay green year round
- Pine trees provide homes for animals
- Pine or evergreen trees provide food for some animals

Sights and Sounds of the Holiday Season

III. Concepts About the Holiday Season

- Christmas is celebrated on December 25
- Christmas is a time of giving and receiving
- We need to be kind to one another
- Symbols of Christmas include: Christmas trees, Santa Claus, reindeer, elves, sleighs and stockings, sending cards to families and friends and enjoying festive dinners and parties
- Holiday colors are red, green and white

IV. Stories and Movies:

A. Books or Magnet Board Stories

1. *The Little Christmas Tree* by Karl Ruhman
2. *The Fir Tree* by Margaret Wise Brown (I use my Charlie Brown tree to tell story)
3. *Noel* by Romero Muller
4. *The Berenstain Bears' Christmas Tree* by Stan and Jan Berenstain
5. *The Polar Express* by Chris Van Allsburg
6. *The Jolly Fellow* Flannel Board Story (so old , I have no idea of author)
7. *'Twas the Night Before Christmas* by Clement Clark Moore
8. *Mouse's First Christmas* by Sally Dohery
9. *Frosty the Snowman* retold by Annie North Bedford
10. *Rudolph, The Red-Nosed Reindeer* by Robert L. May
11. *The Little Match Girl* by Han Christian Anderson : The link below is to a free mp3 download of the story.
<http://literalsystems.org/abooks/index.php/Audio-Book/TheLittleMatchGirl>
12. *The Care and Feeding of a Grinch* by Max the Dog by Bonnie Worth
13. *The Grinch Who Stole Christmas* by Dr. Seuss
14. *Anabelle's Wish* (movie); I have the Color Book
15. *The Gingerbread Man* by Western Publishing Company
16. *Peter Spier's Christmas* by Peter Spiers
17. *The Winter Train*
18. *The Christmas Promise* by Lee G. Smith
19. *Mouse's First Christmas* by Lauren Thompson
20. *Emily and the Snowflake* by Jan Wahl
21. *Santa and the Three Bears* by Dominic Catalano

Sights and Sounds of the Holiday Season

B. Movies:(I own all of these holiday movies)

1. The Grinch Who Stole Christmas (cartoon version)
2. The Bear Who Slept Through Christmas
3. Teddy Bear's Christmas
4. The Year It Nearly Wasn't Christmas
5. Twas the Night Before Christmas
6. Santa Claus is Coming to Town
7. Rudolph, The Red- Nosed Reindeer
8. Frosty the Snowman and Frosty Returns

IV. Stories and Movies:

B. Movies continued:

9. Annebelle's Gift
10. The Little Match Girl
11. Franklin's Magic Christmas
12. Charlie Brown's Christmas
13. Mickey's Twice Upon a Christmas
14. Rudolph and the Island of Misfit Toys
15. Winnie The Pooh: The Season of Giving (Thanksgiving and Christmas shows)
16. Winnie The Pooh and Christmas Too
17. The Polar Express
18. Noel

V. Activities

1. Tree and Ornament Activities

- **Nature Walk:** Go outside for a nature walk and note all of the pine or evergreen trees surrounding the school
- **Pine Branch Painting:** Paint with a pine branch. Tape the handle and dip in paint on paper
- **Decorate Class Tree:** Have the students help decorate class tree with unbreakable ornament
- **Noel ornament:** Use red plastic ornament. Decorate with wiggle eyes, draw a nose and a smile: now the children have an "ornament" *with Happiness* like Noel
- **Triangle Trees:** Use graduating sizes of green construction paper triangles to make a pine tree.
- **Pine Cone Trees:** Spray paint in advance. Then students glue on colored pompoms

Sights and Sounds of the Holiday Season

V. Activities

1. Tree and Ornament Activities

- **Pine Cone Ornaments:** Spray with watered down glue with a spray bottle. Then either sprinkle glitter or use confetti snow. Tie it with yarn and ribbon and hang up on a tree.
- **Little Fir Tree Activity:** I tell the story of the little Fir Tree (the book is in the teacher made stories section)
 - Use blue construction paper background
 - Cut out green trees to be glued on
 - I use tiny plastic icicles (I found a garland of icicles for a miniature tree. I cut them off of that for various projects)
 - I made small squirrels and pine cones with sticker computer paper. After I print it , I cut it out and re-stick it so all the kids have to do is place it to the paper
 - I use sticker snowflakes or confetti snow
 - Add a sticker star to the top of the tree.
 - * We retell the story when we do the art project
 - * I initially tell this story with my 2 feet Charlie Brown tree and toy squirrel props snowflake ornaments, and larger plastic icicles and real pinecones (picture is in the activity section)
- **Finger Paint Tree:** (picture included) Dip the tips for 4 fingers in green paint. Let it dry, and add round "punch hole dots" for ornaments ,
- Decorations for Class Tree:
 - *String Fruit Loop Cereal in a pattern.
 - *Spray paint pasta wheels and let the children string it on yarn for garlands

2.The Polar Express Activities

www.teachingheart.net/polar.html

<http://www.houghtonmifflinbooks.com/features/thepolarexpress/tg/polar.shtml>

<http://www.houghtonmifflinbooks.com/features/thepolarexpress/fungames.shtml>

www.kinderthemes.com/thepolarexpress.html

- **Train set:** Polar Express toy train cars from Brio company set up in room
- **Drama Center :** Train Dining Car (see drama plans)- set up 3 sets of 2 chairs side by side for train seats, set up a tea set for hot chocolate to be served with toy cookies for children to eat
- **Pajama Day:** Dress in PJs for the day, watch the movie and have cookies and hot chocolate for snack
- **Design your PJ's:** Construction paper pajamas. Use crayons to color and make stripes, or other designs. Kindergarten *Mailbox* , Dec/Jan 2003/2004 issue

Sights and Sounds of the Holiday Season

V. Activities

2. The Polar Express Activities

- **Train Engine** : I used a pattern for a train engine and copied it on black construction paper. The children's pictures were added in for the engineer mini marshmallows were glued on for smoke . Teachers outlined the train with silver or white crayon
- **Silver Bell**: String a large silver bell on yarn or heavy string, This can also be used for jingle bells in music time.
- **Story Sequence cards**: Color, cut and glue on paper in order : Preschool Mailbox Dec/Jan 2004/2005 issue

3. Santa Claus Activities

- **Write a letter to Santa Claus** : You can take dictations if children can't write. I have parents send in pictures from toy advertisements that children can glue on letter. Some years we let the children cut and paste from the papers themselves.
- **Watch the movie** : "**Santa Claus is Coming to Town**" as it has the history of Santa Claus . I have the miniature characters that go with the movie for kids to retell story.

Write down questions in advance and have the children listen for the answer. Or you stop the movie when you hear the question being answered. Here are a few sample questions:

1. What is Santa Claus' real name? Kris Kringle
2. Why did children leave out stockings? Originally to dry after washing , but Santa Claus left the children surprises of toys and candy for being good
3. How did Kris Kringle become a toy maker? Because the family that adopted him were toy makers (the family business)'

Below are some Holiday web pages where children can play games and email Santa Claus

- <https://www.claus.com/index.php>
- <http://www.northpole.com/>
- **Santa Puzzle** : Color, cut and paste (sample included in activities section)
- **Santa Color sheet**: color and identify the color red
- **Field Trip to Mall or Santa Village to See Santa**: Take letter the children have written to give Santa

Sights and Sounds of the Holiday Season

V. Activities Continued:

4. Reindeer Activities:

When I use Rudolph story, I point how the other reindeer are not being nice to Rudolph, but were so mean that they hurt his feelings. Then we talk about how we need to always be kind to others.

- **Color Sheet of Reindeer** (I often use holiday color books as they have wonderful pictures)
- **Rudolph Color Sheet:** Preschool Mailbox Dec/Jan 2006/2007 issue
- **Rudolph Puppet :** Color, cut and glue on paper bag
- **Reindeer Graph:** [How Does Santa's Reindeer Fly?](#)
[Magic Food](#), [Magic Harness](#), [Magic Dust](#) or another way
I glue pictures to bulletin board paper, and then place the children's names below their choice. We then display results in the pod area
- **Paper Antlers:** Xerox on brown construction paper, attach to a brown construction paper headband. Tape or staple antler headband to fit each child's head.

5. Being Kind and Giving

Stories I use :

1. **The Little Match Girl**
 2. **Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer**
 3. **The Grinch Who Stole Christmas**
 4. **Annabelle's Wish**
- **Canned Good Donations:** Gather up canned goods to give to a needy family. If your school doesn't do that for Christmas time, I simply take what the class has gathered and take it to a food donation drop off place.
 - **Booklet : What I need to Live;** Preschool Mailbox/ 2002 glue on pictures (it has a space for house, clothes , food and I think family or love).
 - **What I want List:** Pictures glued on page or Santa Claus letter
 - **Grinch Color Sheet:** color sheets in the Activity Section
 - <http://www.seussville.com/grinch/>
 - **Have "Who Pudding"** (recipe included)

VI. Gifts Children Can Make

- **Tree of Life gift** by Doris Wyatt (see separate section) **And will add in any other teacher's ideas as they come in .**
- **Wrapping paper:** we use bulletin board paper, and sponges to sponge paint holiday designs on paper

Sights and Sounds of the Holiday Season

VI. Gifts Children Can Make continued:

- **Kitchen Towel Hand Prints:** Use paint to hand print on kitchen towel. Use puffy paint to write the name
- **Christmas Cards:**
 1. **Christmas Wrap Collage:** Use different designs of Christmas paper torn in small shapes , glue on piece of construction paper folded in half. Place a pretty holiday bow in the middle . Inside should say; "Wrapped up with love to you" love _____ Preschool Mailbox Dec/Jan 2004/2005
 2. **Deer Card:** Picture of a Reindeer Face on Front of card: Inside says, " From your special deer" love _____
 3. **Recycled Cards:** I have taken used Christmas cards fronts (with its back being empty) , hole punch the card. Hole punch a half a sheet of construction paper and line the construction paper and card together, then lace them together on the left side or top. Use fancy scissors to make a pretty edge on the construction paper and front of the card. Inside can say, "Made with love" from _____
 4. **.Candy Cane ornament:** Recipe included from Preschool Mailbox 04/05
2 cups flour, 1 cup salt, 2 cups water, 2 tsp of peppermint extract, 2 tbsp vegetable oil, 2 tsp. cream of tartar, red food coloring:
Combine all ingredients in a large pot. Cook over low heat, stirring until dough forms and pulls away from the sides of the pot. Remove the dough from the heat and allow it to cool before using. Divide the dough in half and tint one half red and leave the other half white. Twist into a candy cane. Poke a hole at the top and string with red ribbon .Let dry .
 5. **Scented Gingerbread ornament :** from Cooks.com
4 oz can of (or approx. 1 cup) of cinnamon
1 tbsp ground cloves
1 tbsp nutmeg
 $\frac{3}{4}$ applesauce
2 tbsp of white glue
Combine ingredients. Work/ Knead 2 to 3 minutes or until smooth. Roll out to $\frac{1}{4}$ th inch thickness. Do not roll any thinner. Use cookie cutter . Let air dry up to 24 hours or in a low oven bake at 200 degrees for a couple of hours until dried out. Be sure to put hole in ornament prior to drying the gingerbread ornament.

Sights and Sounds of the Holiday Season

VII. Recipes:

- **Christmas Tree Cones** : Preschool Mailbox , Dec/Jan 2001-2002
Sugar cones, cover with green icing, and add either mini mm's or Skittles candy, tinsel can be decorators writing gel
- **Sugar Cookies** in various shapes: The ready to bake ones are wonderful. Just bake and ice
- **Who Pudding** : Instant pudding, add in Holiday Sprinkles (special Who Seasoning)
- **Holiday decorated cupcakes** : If you have no time to bake, most stores have the cupcakes ready made and decorated
- **Christmas Cake**: Small slice of angel food cake, Green Tinted whipped cream, cherry pie filling. Layer the ingredients in a clear cup
- **Wreath Cookie**: Preschool Mailbox: Dec/Jan 96/97
1 Butter cookie per child, add green icing, put red cinnamon candies on it, and eat
- **Candle Cookie**: Kindergarten Mailbox: Dec/Jan 00/01
1 butter cookie per child, 1 Pepperidge Farm Chocolate Pirouette cookie
Green icing in a squirt tube, small cinnamon candies, yellow jelly bean or gumdrop:
Squirt icing on butter cookie, Put 4 candies on the icing, Place candle (Pirouette cookie) in the middle, Put icing on the top, add the light to your candle : the which is the jelly bean or gumdrop
- **Reindeer Pops**: Kindergarten Mailbox : Dec/Jan 98/99
push a pop cycle stick into $\frac{1}{2}$ of a banana, dip in melted chocolate, place on waxed paper. Add on 2 mm's for eyes, and 1 mini gumdrop for mouth. Dip knot pretzel in peanut butter, add to top of banana, freeze or refrigerate for 2 hrs, then eat.
- **Santa Mix**: (Preschool Mailbox , Dec/Jan 04/05
Mini candies (elf noses), mini bow pretzels (reindeer antlers) mm's (Santa's buttons), colored ringed cereal (reindeer chow)

VIII. Props I use in Holiday Unit

- Classroom tree (mine is a small Charlie Brown tree), ornaments, tinsel , and a star
- Santa Claus (I bring in one of my Possible Dreams Santa's since its not easily broken)
- A small sleigh that my Santa can stand in or stand beside

Sights and Sounds of the Holiday Season

III. Props I use in Holiday Unit continued:

- A small red velvet bag that is filled with tiny wrapped packages (purchased separately)
- A tiny Rudolph, his nose lights up
- A small deer with antlers (I found at a CVS about 15 years ago)
- Small flashing lights to place around Circle area
- The Stuffed Toy of The Grinch (about 15 inches high)
- Different size wrapped presents that one can use to teach size with
- The Santa Claus is Coming to Town toy set
- The Christmas caboose for Thomas Train set
- Various cloth or plastic snowmen
- Small village Christmas trees .
- We decorate our wooden doll house with the tree, presents and miniature lights.
- **Flannel board story props for the following stories :**
Twas the Night Before Christmas ,The Jolly Santa and The Little Fir Tree