

December Story Time Ideas from the Elm Grove Library

Create a story time at home using some of the elements below. Whatever your child's age, story time provides an opportunity to play with language and engage with your child.

- Rhymes hold the attention of young children and help early readers identify words. Try substituting different words in some of the rhymes below to listen for the matching sounds.
- Singing simple songs enhances a child's ability to hear syllables and pronunciation. If you aren't sure of the tune, check YouTube or just use the words as a rhyme.
- Point to words on the page as you say them so your child can begin to connect reading and writing.
- Ask questions as you read to help your child think about the story or predict what might happen.
- Coloring strengthens a child's ability to hold a pencil or crayon which is the first step in writing. Take home a coloring sheet and talk about how the picture relates to the stories you are reading. Coloring on a blank page is good, too, because sometimes the process is more important than the final product.

Rhymes

Santa Claus, Santa Claus

Santa Claus, Santa Claus, what do you see?
I see a Christmas sleigh looking at me.

Christmas sleigh, Christmas sleigh, what do you see?
I see Rudolph looking at me.

Rudolph, Rudolph, what do you see?
I see a Christmas stocking looking at me.

Christmas stocking, Christmas stocking what do you see?
I see a Christmas tree looking at me.

Christmas tree, Christmas tree what do you see?
I see a Christmas bell looking at me.

Christmas bell, Christmas bell what do you see?
I see a golden star looking at me.

Golden star, golden star, what do you see?
I see a candy cane looking at me.

Candy cane, candy cane what do you see?
I see a gingerbread boy looking at me.

Gingerbread boy, gingerbread boy, what do you see?

I see children looking at me.

Children, children what do you see?

We see a Christmas sleigh, Rudolph, a Christmas stocking, a Christmas tree, a Christmas bell, a golden star, a candy cane, and a gingerbread boy looking at us!

Five Little Christmas Trees

Five little Christmas trees standing all alone
Their hearts were very sad 'cause they hadn't found a home.

Then chop went the ax and down fell a tree
And off it went with a happy family!

Four little Christmas trees standing all alone
(continue the same way counting down to one)

No little Christmas trees standing all alone
Their hearts were very happy 'cause they all found a home!

Kwanzaa rhyme

(Count off on fingers)
Seven candles in a row,
Waiting to join the holiday glow.

First night we light a candle for Umoja,
It's candle number one,
Kwanzaa has now begun.

The second night we light a candle for
kujichagulia,
It's candle number two,
Kwanzaa's here and there's lots to do.

The third night we light a candle for Ujima
It's candle number three,
Kwanzaa's here and there's lots to see.

The fourth night we light a candle for
Ujamaa,
it's candle number four,
Burning brightly as part of Kwanzaa lore.

The fifth night we light a candle for Nia,
It's candle number five,
Kwanzaa has really come alive.

The sixth night we light a candle for
Kuumba,
It's candle number six,
Kwanzaa's here and there's food to fix.

The seventh night we light a candle for
Imani,
It's candle number seven,
Now the glow of all the Kwanzaa candles
reaches up to Heaven.

Five Little Lattkes for Hanukkah

Five little lattkes sizzling in the pan,

One jumped out and said "Catch me if you
can!"

I chased it, I chased it, I chased it some
more

But that little lattke ran right out the door!

(Continue counting down to one)

One little lattke sizzling in the pan,
It jumped out and said "Catch me if you
can!"

I chased it, I chased it, I caught it with a
plate

And that little lattke tasted so great!

Songs

Kwanzaa's Here

(Sung to "Three Blind Mice")

Red, green, black,

Red, green, black.

Kwanzaa's here,

Kwanzaa's here.

The decorations are quite a sight,

We light a candle every night,

The holiday is filled with light.

Kwanzaa's here!

The Lights on the Tree

(Sung to "The Wheels on the Bus")

The lights on the tree go blink, blink, blink
(flash fingers)

Blink, blink, blink, blink, blink, blink

The lights on the tree go blink, blink, blink,
All Christmas day!

The presents in the house go rattle, rattle,
rattle (shaking box)

(repeat)

...all Christmas Day!

The parents at the house go bake, bake,
bake (scooping cookies off a cookie sheet)
(repeat)

...all Christmas Day!

The grandma in the house goes hug, hug,
hug (hug self)
(repeat)

...all Christmas Day!

For additional songs, there are several holiday CDs for children available at the library and through the library system. Some ideas for singable songs:

A Laurie Berkner Christmas
Disney's Christmas Collection
Kidz Bop Christmas!
Raffi's Christmas Album

For online fun, try sites like
Sesamestreet.org for videos such as "H is for holiday" or "Jingle Bells and Seashells".

Picture Books for December

This is just a sample of the many holiday books for children at the library.

Dream Snow by Eric Carle. First snow on the farm.

Li'l Rabbit's Kwanzaa by Donna L. Washington. Granna Rabbit is sick so they can't celebrate Kwanzaa as usual. Li'l Rabbit tries to help but he might be too little to help on his own.

Kevin's Kwanzaa by Lisa Bullard. Kevin narrates the origin, purpose and rituals of this holiday.

Emanuel and the Hanukkah Rescue by Heidi Smith Hyde. In 18th Century Massachusetts,

Emanuel's family hides their Jewish heritage until Emanuel challenges them to openly celebrate Hanuakkah.

All-of-a-Kind Family Hanukkah (based on the classic books by Sydney Taylor) by Emily Jenkins & Paul O. Zelinsky. A family with five sisters celebrates Hanukkah in New York in 1912.

'Twas Nochebuena: a Christmas story in English and Spanish by Roseanne Greenfield Thong. A bilingual version of the Night Before Christmas poem.

The All-I'll-Ever-Want Christmas Doll by Patricia C. McKissack and Jerry Pinkney. Three sisters are given one doll, but can they figure out how to share her?

Maple & Willow's Christmas Tree by Lori Nichols. The girls love trees, but what if Maple is allergic to the Christmas tree?

It's a Wonderful Life (for Kids)! By Jimmy Hawkins. Do you love the classic movie? This is a simpler version for children.

The Candymaker's Gift: a legend of the candy cane by Helen Haidle.

The Soldiers' Night Before Christmas by Trish Holland and Christine Ford. For kids in military families.

Tree of Cranes by Allen Say. A young boy in Japan celebrates his first Christmas.

Nativity by Cynthia Rylant. Using the text from the King James Bible, this is a new illustrated version of the birth of Christ.

Shooting at the Stars: the Christmas truce of 1914 by John Hendrix. An illustrated retelling of the Christmas truce between German and Allied soldiers in WWI.

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