

I hope the New Year finds everyone in good health. The children have been keeping busy with creative movements and Zumba. January's Thematic Unit was winter, which was subdivided into units concentrating on the following sections.

Snow (nieve) and the letter "S" (snow) --After reading many "Discovering My World" series, the children were excited to participate in the follow-up science experiments. We watched many shapes of ice melt. We predicted which ones would melt the fastest. Is it the small, short ones; the tall, long ones; or the ones in the cold or hot water? The most popular ice melting experiment was the popsicles melting in our mouths! We talked about where snow comes from, and what conditions it takes to make a snowstorm. We discovered that snowflakes have six points. I brought snow into the classroom so the children could make snowmen and other creations! The children made frost by mixing salt and crushed ice. I have been teaching the children about rulers and measurement in inches. We made a "snow stick" out of a ruler marking it in inches only. We use it to measure the accumulation of snow during our calendar/weather session. We are also learning about temperature and thermometers.

In math we used the laminate snowmen. A numbered hat was placed on their snowmen's head. After they put the same number of buttons on his body. To follow up, the children put the hats in order from 1-10. We also played a similar game with the alphabet snowmen. They matched the coordinating hats to their bodies (upper and lower case) after identifying the letters and sounds. The children enjoyed counting the snowballs after bouncing them off the parachute!

Penguins (pinguino) the letter "P", fish "F"--We read about "Pip" the penguin and discussed where he lived compared to where we live. We used the globe to find Antarctica and even Ohio! How many penguins (children) can fit on one iceberg (white tablecloth)? We counted and estimated the number of penguins that would fit. As the iceberg melted (by folding the cloth in half each time), fewer and fewer penguins were able to fit. We learned penguins are birds that eat fish, krill, and squid, and use their wings as flippers to swim and not fly. We then pretended we were hungry penguins and counted fish (goldfish) and ate them.

Bears (oso) the letter "B", winter "W"-- We shared many stories about animals that hibernate in the winter months. The children counted and sorted bears and put them in their caves to sleep. We used gummy bears and counting bears. The children played a bear track game. They counted forward and backward trying to get to their cave first. We sorted bears by color and size and used them to pattern. The children went on a bear hunt. To prepare, they made binoculars and colored maps with clues to find the bear cave. Once they discovered the cave, the children had to recognize their last names to receive their reward of gummy bears. Using the flannel board, the children read and retold the story "Goldilocks and the Three



Bears". They completed a "Long and Short" booklet. After they ate a bowl of porridge.

Mittens the letter "M"—We read the story "The Mitten" by Jan Brett. The children recalled the story by creating a mitten of their own and added the animals in order by memory. They laced mittens for fine motor development, and danced the Hokey Pokey to reinforce the left and right concept.

The children observed Martin Luther King Day. We talked about likes and differences. We divided into groups according to eye color, hair color, and height. I passed out white raisins and dark raisins. We noted the differences in color. However when the children tasted them, they could not detect a difference!

February's Thematic Unit is Valentine's Day and how God loves everyone.

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