

Little learners get hands on, minds on at Tinkering for Tots, a program designed for curious preschoolers to develop an innovative mindset and make connections through storytelling, play, artifact exploration and a take-home STEAM activity kit.

## What connections are we making?

### Highlighted Habit



#### BE EMPATHETIC

**Description:** How would that make you feel? How do you think it makes others feel?

### Story

**Title:** *Let's Celebrate*

**Author:** Kate DePalma

**Why we picked this book:** This book encourages children to experience 13 holidays from around the world with lyrical prose and beautiful illustrations. Understanding how other cultures celebrate helps children Be Empathetic.

### Artifact Spotlight

**Name:** Light and Joy in the Holiday Season

**Location:** Holiday Pop-Up

To learn more about the story behind this artifact, please see the artifact spotlight on Page 2.

### Open Exploration

**Description:** Practice being empathetic while exploring different shapes, textures, and sights in an apple pie themed sensory bin.

**Skills your young learner is practicing:** Sharing, problem solving, working together.

### Questions to Ask Your Young Learner

What do we do that is special for a holiday? Of the holidays we read about in the book, which is your favorite? What is your favorite holiday? Why?

Our Holiday Pop-Up display shows how we celebrate Hanukkah, Christmas, Winter Solstice, Kwanza and New Year's with light and food. What are your favorite examples of celebrations from the display? Why is that your favorite? What is a new celebration you learned about from the display?

### Take-Home Activity

**Title:** Coffee Filter Snowflakes

#### Materials:

- Coffee filters
- Washable markers
- Spray bottle
- Paper clips
- *Scissors not included*

# Artifact Spotlight

**Light and Joy in the Holiday Season:** For many, December is a time of thinking back on the year ending, meeting family and friends, and hoping for good things in the new year. Discover how Hanukkah, Winter Solstice, Christmas, Kwanzaa, and New Years are celebrated through these artifacts.

**Hanukkah** means "dedication" in Hebrew and celebrates taking back the Holy Temple in Jerusalem from an enemy army. Today, the eight-night Hanukkah holiday usually includes lighting one candle in the menorah (candle holder) each night, eating latkes (like a potato pancake), and dreidel-spinning, but Jewish celebrants choose from a wide variety of items and ways to celebrate the traditions and rituals.



**Winter Solstice** is the shortest day and longest night of the year. Where we live, it falls on December 21 or 22 every year. Across the world, people have held festivals celebrating the heat, light, and the returning sun that helps plants grow, like those we grow for food.



This picture shows Stonehenge. It is thought to have been placed to show the sun on its shortest day. Today, Stonehenge attracts thousands of visitors to dance and sing on Winter Solstice.

**Kwanzaa** is an African American holiday which celebrates family, community, and culture. The name comes from a Swahili phrase meaning "first fruits." The seven-day holiday, Kwanzaa, is celebrated from December 26 to January 1. Many African Americans who celebrate Kwanzaa do so in addition to observing Christmas.

Kwanzaa is celebrated using a Mkeka (mat) where the other items are placed: a Kinara (candle holder for seven candles), Mishumaa Saba (seven candles), mazao (crops), Mahindi (corn) to represent the children celebrating, a Kikombe cha Umoja (unity cup) for remembering and giving shukrani (thanks) to African Ancestors, and Zawadi (gifts).



**Christmas** season brings cherished traditions and activities we look forward to each year. Families may decorate a tree with ornaments, lights, and tinsel, and may put other decorations around the house or even in the yard. They may get together with family and friends for big dinners or sing Christmas carols. Christmas cookie cutters are one of many family traditions during the season. Cookies in the shapes of Santa, a Christmas tree, a reindeer, an ornament, bells, holly, a Gingerbread man, and an angel often add to family gatherings or are given as gifts to friends or neighbors. Many families leave cookies and milk for Santa and his reindeer on Christmas Eve.



**New Year's Eve** is celebrated around the world. The celebration in New York City is one of the most famous in America. It includes the "ball" coming down slowly to reach the bottom of the track at exactly midnight. Americans also celebrate with fireworks. New Year's celebrations might also include watching parades, football games, and getting together with family and friends as we look forward to what the new year will bring!

# Take-Home Activity

## Coffee Filter Snowflakes Materials:

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- Coffee filters
- Washable markers
- Spray bottle
- Paper clips
- *Scissors not included*

## Directions:

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- 1.** Flatten the coffee filters and decorate with markers. You can do designs, drawings, or just doodles. The less blank space there is, the bolder your colors will be.
- 2.** Spray decorated coffee filters with water.
- 3.** Let dry completely, at least 2 hours.
- 4.** Fold you coffee filter in half, then in half again.
- 5.** Fold the filter into thirds. It should look like a triangle and the edges should line up.
- 6.** Cut shapes out of the filters however you would like.
- 7.** Unfold the filters to see your snowflakes.

# Coloring Sheet

