



January Theme Snow and Ice



In *Parsnip Meets A Snowman*, Parsnip is filled with fear and wonder at the snowman. Children love snow and ice and it is a good chance to investigate and play with snow and ice themes during this dark and miserable month - even if there is no snow out in the playground!

Try the activities below or some of your own, and check out the web links too.

Activity One: Ice Melting Activities

Which melts fastest?

In this activity children investigate melting of frozen water and what factors affect it.

Freeze some trays of ice cubes in advance.

Before starting the investigation, it can often be fun to let children hold an ice cube, experience how it feels, how the cold feels against their warm hand, how the ice changes to water, how holding it makes it melt more. This can help them to use their vocabulary of words relating to temperature and texture. Have some cloths or napkins handy!

For the melting experiment have 4 bowls handy. They should contain:

1. cold water
2. hot water
3. salt
4. a hot flannel warmed in the microwave

Place an ice cube in each bowl. Encourage the children to guess which cube will melt fastest and why. Then compare this to the results.

You can also use this as a chance to talk about "real life" for example, why salt/grit trucks go out before snow is due, why water thrown on pavements on cold days is dangerous etc.

Ice Melting Art

For this activity, dilute some food colouring in different colours (diluting it will make it go further), and freeze some larger, preferably taller, blocks of ice - for example by filling a mug with water and freezing it, then using warm tap water on the mug to ease the block out (don't use very hot water or it may shatter the mug). A small group can share a block if freezer space is at a premium.

You will also need some coarse or rock salt.

Let the children sprinkle some salt on to the block of ice, and see how it begins to melt channels through the ice block. When the salt has started to work, they can take a teaspoon, paint brush or pipette and sprinkle or squirt a few drops on to the holes in the ice. As the salt burrows through the ice, the food colouring will follow, making interesting patterns. You can continue adding salt and colour.

Activity Two – Snowman Sandwich

This combines food and snow themes for a fun activity. Be aware of any food allergies (e.g. wheat or lactose) when planning this activity.

You will need some white bread, some cream cheese, some short carrot sticks, raisins, breadsticks or twiglets, and anything else which takes your fancy! You will also need a snowman shaped cookie cutter or two different sized circle cutters.

Children should either cut out a snowman shape, or two circles and put them next to each other to represent a snowman tummy and head.

Children can use spreading knives to spread cream cheese on to the bread shapes to make him "snowy".

Then using the raisins, carrots, twiglets etc, they can decorate their snowman.

If you have easy access to a toaster this works very well with toast shapes too.

Activity Three – Make A Snowflake

This activity practises folding and scissor skills and levels of adult help with vary according to the age and skill of the child.

Using squares of paper, fold in half, then half again. Then fold the corners again to make a triangle. Then children can cut shapes out to make snowflake patterns.

To make more complex patterns, make another fold before the cutting stage.

When the flakes are unfolded you can decorate them with glitter and glue, or hang them up.

You can also use them as stencils to paint through onto paper beneath - black or dark paper works well with white paint, or have coloured flakes for fun. If you all use the same paint or glitter, when the pictures beneath have dried you can put them up as a gallery. The children can then use their original paper snowflakes to identify which of the stencilled flakes is theirs. No two real snowflakes are identical and no two children's snowflakes are either!

If you want the children to see the range of snowflake shapes in real life, there is a website gallery in the website links page.

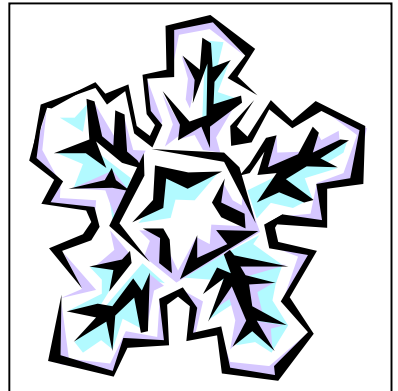
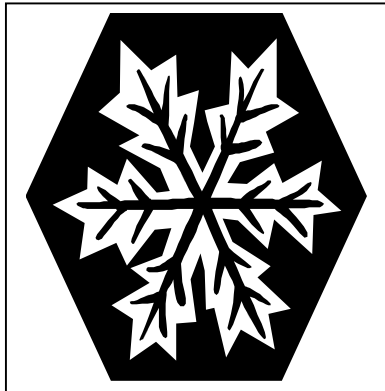
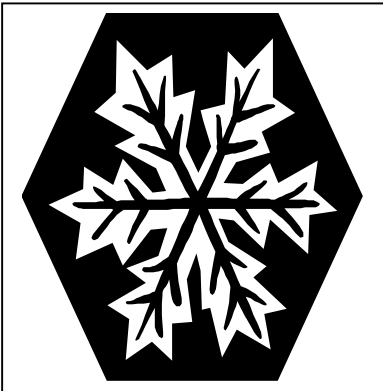
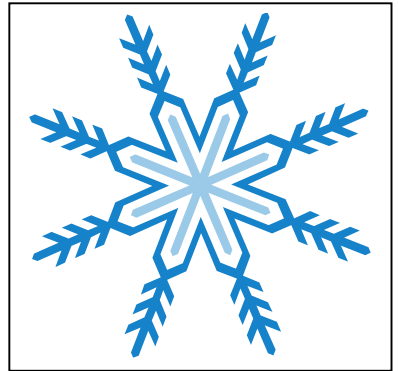
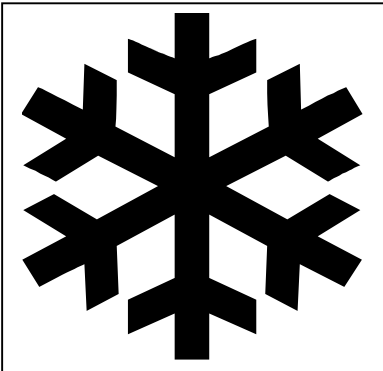
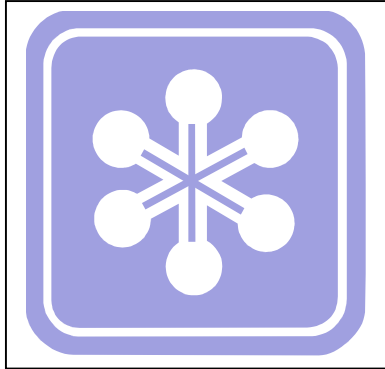
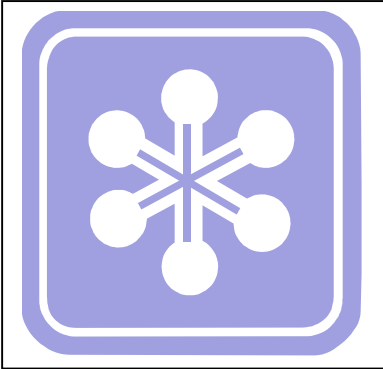
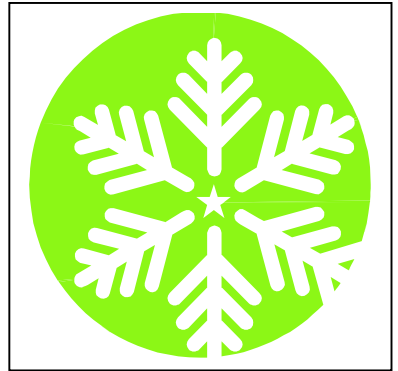
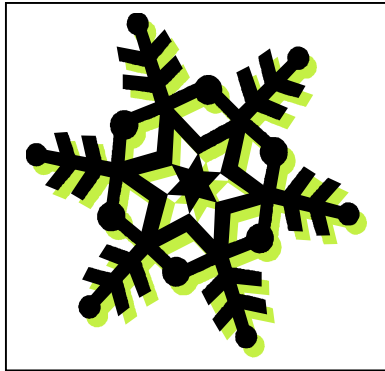
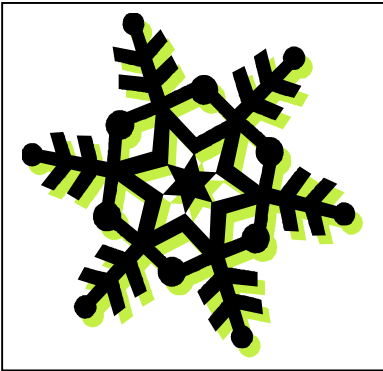
Activity Four – matching game

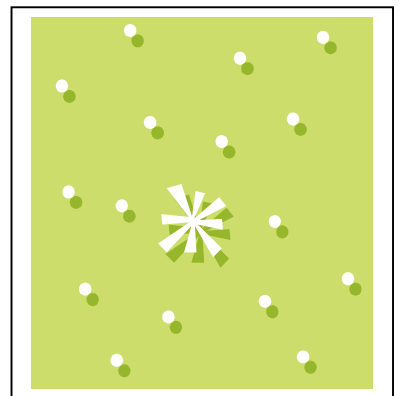
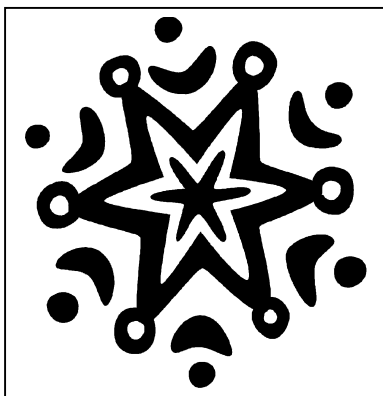
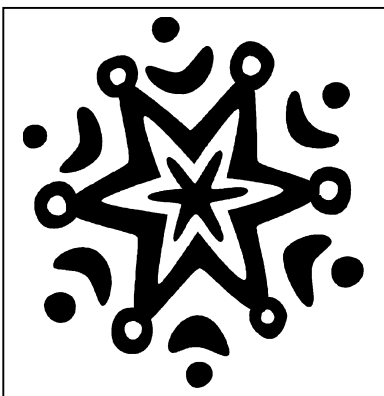
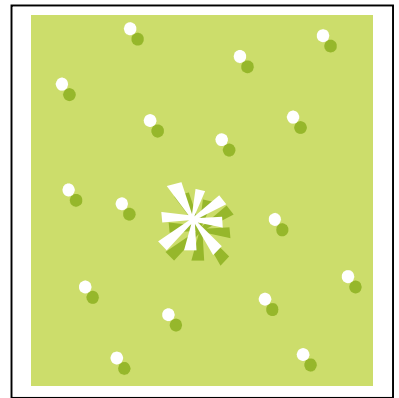
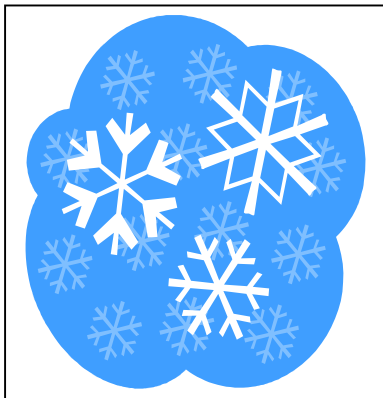
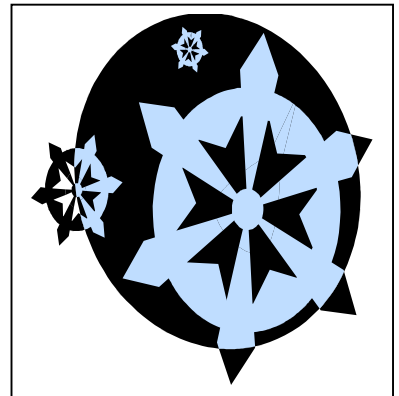
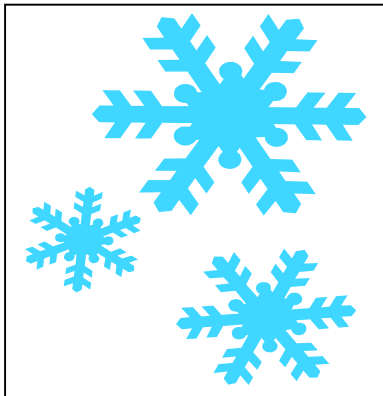
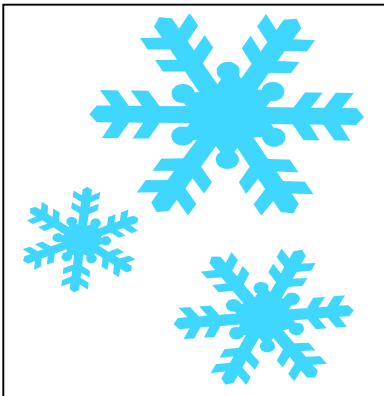
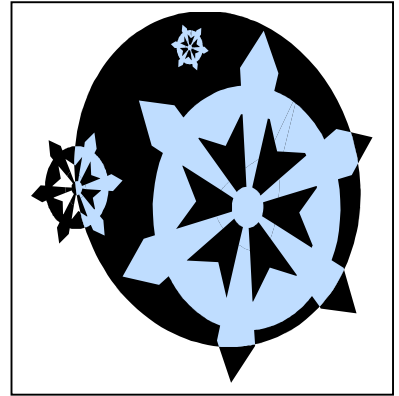
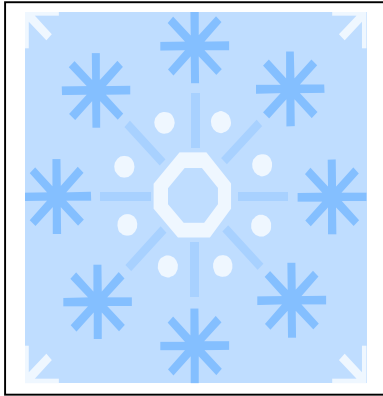
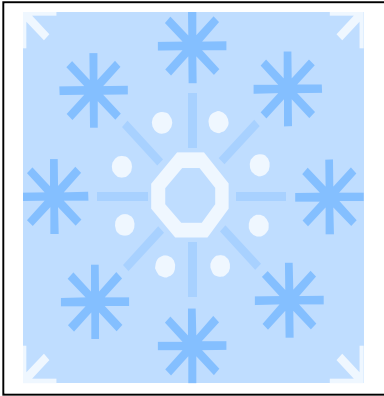
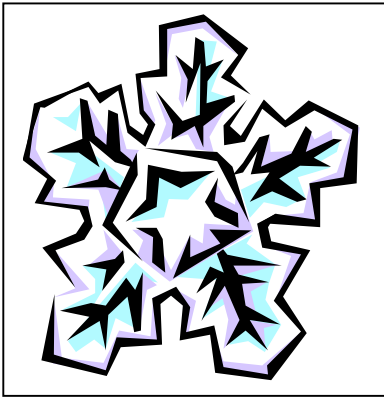
Printing the snowflake pictures on the next sheet onto stiff paper or glue onto card, play a matching game where children turn over two cards and try to find a matching pair.

For much older children - print off two sets so you have four of each type and play happy families - for this children will need enough language skills to be able to describe the flake they are looking for - e.g. "it is green and black and has six spikes and two stars in the middle," etc. To make this game much harder for older children print them off in black and white (or change the images to grayscale) so that they can't use colour to describe and have to only use shape. This is pretty tricky!

(Happy families - deal the cards out equally, each person then asks someone else in the game for a card, which they must describe. (They must already hold one of the cards to be allowed to ask.)

If the person they ask has the card, they must hand it over and the asker can ask someone else. If the person they ask does not have the card, it becomes their turn. When someone has four of a card, they place it face down on the table. When all the families have been put together, the player with the most families wins.)





Useful Web Links

Snow related colouring sheets

http://www.myfreecolouringpages.com/snowman_coloring_pages/snowman.htm

<http://www.thesnowman.co.uk/fun/trace4.htm> (from the book and film)

<http://www.boowakwala.com/snowman/snowman-coloring-page.html>

Online Jolly Snowman song

<http://www.uptoten.com/kids/boowakwala-club-flower-snowmansong.html>

Snowball fight game

Online game throwing snowballs at snowmen's hats

<http://www.uptoten.com/kids/boowakwala-club-flower-snowballfight.html>

Catch the snowflakes game

For slightly older children - catching snowflakes which travel at different speeds.

<http://www.uptoten.com/kids/kidsgames-coordination-catchsnow.html>

Snowman build and sing

Short interactive animation, focus on phonic sound "ow", children build a snowman and then it plays a short counting song.

<http://www.starfall.com/n/holiday/snowman/play.htm>

Snowflake shapes

For a gallery of real life ice crystals and snowflakes

<http://www.its.caltech.edu/~atomic/snowcrystals>

and choose the photo gallery

Dot to dots to print

Various levels of difficulty

<http://www.papersnowflakes.com/dottodot.htm>

(scroll down and ignore the adverts!)