

## Reading Play

**1. Create Your Own Reading Log:** Help encourage your little reader by creating a reading log inspired by something they love! Make a chart that includes categories like how long they read for that day or how many books they read. You can set a goal for the day like today, read three books. Once they meet the goal, reward them with a sticker or let them color in a star next to the day of the week. You have total control over how creative you want to be with this or what kind of goals you want to set. Once you have written down goals, let your child decorate the reading log!

**2. Sight Word Snowball Fight:** Make learning sight words even more fun by turning it into an indoor snowball fight! Write spelling or sight words onto different pieces of scrap paper. Scrunch them up into snowballs and then have a snowball fight! Throw the snowballs at each other and when you get hit, open up the snowball and read the word. After you read the word, continue the snowball fight!

**3. Letter Run and Grab:** Clear some space on your floor and walls and place letters on one side of the room. Write the letters on paper or notecards and spread them out along one wall. Once everything is set up get ready for some fun! You are in charge of giving the commands for which letter to go and get. You can do this two ways, call out the letter for your child to go and find or give the sound of the letter that they have to find. Once they find the letter have them run it across the room and put it on the other wall.

**Book Suggestion:** Snowball Fight by Jimmy Fallon

## Construction Play

**1. Indoor Catapult:** What child doesn't want to launch a toy across the room? You will need 7 Popsicle sticks, three rubber bands, a milk or juice cap and a cotton ball or small toy to launch. Start by stacking five craft sticks together and hold them together with a rubber band at the end. Then stack 2 craft sticks and wrap a rubber band around them. Spread the two craft sticks apart and place the set of five Popsicle sticks in-between the two craft sticks. Wrap a rubber band around all of the craft sticks to hold the catapult together. Glue or tape the milk or juice cap to the top Popsicle stick. Once you have created the catapult, try launching things across the room and measuring how far they go.

**2. Cereal Box Puzzles:** Here is a fun, environmentally friendly way to build your own puzzles! Start by cutting the cereal box apart, but make sure to keep the front of the box intact. Next have your child draw a picture on the brown side of the cereal box. Then cut

the box into puzzle pieces and have your child put the puzzle together. See if they can remember what they drew on the box and put it together on their own! You can also flip the box over and solve the puzzle with the cereal box title.

**3. Paper Plate Flower Garden:** Bring some springtime flowers into the month of January! You will need paper plates, crayons or paint, a popsicle stick, scissors and glue or tape. Cut small slits into the edges of the plate to make petals. Next you can paint or color your flower and then glue or tape the popsicle stick or something else to the back of the plate to make a stem. You can cut two leaves for the stem of the flower from paper if you want. This will help to brighten up those cold January days!

**Book Suggestion:** Sheep on a Ship by Nancy Shaw

## **STEM Play (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math)**

**1. 21:** This simple card game is an awesome way to help with addition! The goal of this game is to get as close to or even with the number 21 without going over. Start by dealing two cards to each player. Have each player add up how many points they have between the two cards and then ask if they want another card. The cards two through ten have their own face value. Jacks, Queens and King are each worth ten points and the Ace is worth either one or eleven points (the player's choice). Keep adding cards to your pile until you reach twenty-one or come as close as you can to it. If you go over twenty-one, you are out of that round and are bust. Play as many rounds as you want and see who can reach twenty-one the most!

**2. Melting Snow:** Help mother nature get rid of some of that pesky snow! Go outside and collect a tub or bucket of snow and bring it back inside. Brainstorm with your children on how they think snow melts and then give it a try! Some ideas for this activity are if you use a hair dryer, what will happen? What will happen if we put some snow in a pan on the stove? What will happen if we just leave the snow out on the table? Once you have made predictions give it a try and see what happens! You can also do the reverse of this activity and take water and place it outside and see what happens!

**3. Fireworks in a Bottle:** Have a fireworks show right in your own kitchen! You will need a water or soda bottle of any size, a funnel, some vegetable oil, water, food coloring and Alka-Seltzer tablets. Start by placing the bottle on a table with a paper towel underneath, in case anything spills. Fill the bottle about 1/3 of the way with water and then add oil until the bottle is almost full. Once this is done, add drops of food coloring and see how the coloring reacts with the water and the oil. Finally, break the Alka-Seltzer tablets into smaller pieces so they can fit into the bottle. Make sure you don't shake the bottle once everything has been added. Add the tablets and then close the lid to the bottle and watch what happens! If you want to add something more to this experiment, add some glitter to water and oil.

**Book Suggestion:** Olivia Builds a Snowlady by Ian Falconer

## Creative Arts Play

**1. Homemade Puffy Paint:** Make your own puffy paint! You will need one cup of flour, one cup of salt and half or three quarters of a cup of water. Mix the ingredients together, but make sure it isn't too watery or not too thick. Once you have mixed everything together separate it into different plastic bags. Add some food coloring to each plastic bag and then mix it together. When you are ready to paint, cut the one of the bottom corners of the bag off. The amount you cut off really depends on how thick you want the paint to come out. Experiment with color combinations and have fun!

**2. Ice Ornaments:** Embrace the snow and ice and use it to make some beautiful outdoor decorations! Go outside for a few minutes and collect things like holly, berries, pine needles or leaves. Fill a few paper plates with water and place the outdoor items in the water. Find a piece of string or ribbon and place part of that into the water. Put the plates outside and let them freeze overnight. In the morning, rip the paper plate off of the ice block and head outside. Use the remaining piece of string to tie it to a tree and admire your ornament!

**3. Egg Carton Penguins:** Invite some penguins into your house for the winter! Find an old egg carton, some sheets of construction paper, a sharpie and some markers or paint. Start by cutting out individual egg carton cups. Next bring out the markers or paint and let your child color their penguin. When they are done, add eyes using googly eyes or a marker. You can add feet and a nose using orange construction paper and a white circle for the belly!

**Book Suggestion:** Stella Queen of the Snow by Mary-Louise Gay

## Active Play

**1. Catch with a Catch:** Play a game of catch, but with a catch. Have each player toss a ball, bean bag or crumpled up newspaper into the air and try to catch it, But, before you catch it you have to do an action like touch your nose and high-five another player. You can start out simple with touch your nose or clap your hands and gradually make it harder like do a jumping jack. Try and do an action all before the ball hits the ground or you catch it!

**2. Indoor Obstacle Course:** Go over, under, around and through the house with this fun indoor obstacle course! Use the furniture in your house as a way to create a fun activity. For example, you can have them climb through the legs of a dining room chair,

underneath the table and then over the arm of the sofa. You can move some furniture to make a path for them to go through or you can simply yell out some commands and have them play!

**3. Snow Construction Site:** Make shoveling the driveway or sidewalk so much more fun by having your child help you! While you all are doing this, let them turn the area into their own maze. Help them make pathways to move around in the snow. Bring some toy cars or simply pretend to be their own car. You can take all the snow that you have shoveled away and make a snow castle or snowballs!

**Book Suggestion:** The Snowy Day by Ezra Jack Keats

## Music & Dance Play

**1. Water Bottle Shakers:** This is a fun, musical craft! Find a few empty water bottles and grab some paint. Let your child paint the bottles and add a few decorations to the bottles (scraps of paper, pictures from magazines, etc. Fill the water bottle with pasta, rice, beans or beads. Turn on some music and shake along!

**2. Snowflake Movement Game:** Move around like a snowflake! All you need for this activity is some music and a little cloth or something your child can dance with. Give your child the cloth and turn on some music. Try something from Frozen to keep with the theme! Let your child move around the floor acting like a falling snowflake. The cloth is an accessory to this activity. There are big snowflakes and there are light, feathery snowflakes. What kind of snowflake are you?

**3. Snowflake Song:** Since snow is all around, sing a song about it! This song is to the tune of Twinkle Twinkle, Little Star. Feel free to add some movements to the song and move around like falling snowflakes!

Snowflake, snowflake dance around  
Snowflake, snowflake touch the ground  
Snowflake, snowflake landing on my noes  
Snowflake, snowflake landing on my toes  
Snowflake, snowflake dance around  
Snowflake, snowflake touch the ground

**Book Suggestion:** Snowflake Bentley by Jacqueline Briggs and Mary Azarian

