



## **Teacher Resource Guide:**

# ***BAM Holiday Traditions!***

**Objectives** Students will be able to demonstrate an appreciation for a holiday that is celebrated by another country or culture by sharing what is learned about the holiday and creating unique symbols to represent the important components of the holiday.

### **Outcomes**

- TH.1.C.1:** Cognition and reflection are required to appreciate, interpret and create with artistic intent.
- TH.1.S.1.1:** Exhibit appropriate audience etiquette and response.
- LAFS.1.RI.4.10** With prompting and support, read informational texts appropriately complex for grade 1.
- LAFS.1.L.1.1:** Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.
- LAFS.1.RI.2.4:** Ask and answer questions to help determine or clarify the meaning of words and phrases in a text.
- LAFS.1.RL.2.5:** Explain major differences between books that tell stories and books that give information, drawing on a wide reading of a range of text types .
- LAFS.2.RI.3.9:** Compare and contrast the most important points presented by two texts on the same topic. .
- LAFS.2.RI.1.1::** Ask and answer such questions as *who, what, where, when, why, and how* to demonstrate understanding of key details in a text.
- WL.K12.NH.7.2:** Use maps, graphs, and other graphic organizers to facilitate comprehension and expression of key vocabulary in the target language to reinforce existing content area knowledge.

### **Opening to Lesson**

Brainstorm American traditions and other traditions for Christmas and other Winter holidays as a class, using a bubble map or other graphic organizer on the white board or smart board.

### **Discussion Questions**

1. What is culture?
2. What are traditions and where do they come from?
3. What traditions and celebrations take place in my family? My community? Different parts of the world?
4. What is a stereotype? How do stereotypes begin?
5. What are the dominant celebrations in certain places and why?
6. How are celebrations and traditions the same and different?
7. How have celebrations changed over time?
8. How are children and human rights affected by the consumer culture so prevalent in December?
9. What other special days occur during December?
10. What role do children play in different celebrations and traditions (around the world)?

### **Kwanzaa**

Kwanzaa, which means “first fruits,” is based on an ancient African harvest festival and celebrates ideals such as family, life and unity. During this spiritual holiday, celebrated from December 26 to January 1, many African- Americans dress in special clothes, decorate their homes with fruits and vegetables, and light a candleholder called a kinara

Watch this video to learn more about Kwanzaa:

 [ALL ABOUT THE HOLIDAYS | Kwanzaa | PBS KIDS](#)

#### **FUN Fact**

**All Ears:** During Kwanzaa, families set out ears of corn to show how many children there are in the family. People without children set out one ear of corn to show that they are parents of their community.

### **Diwali**

Diwali is a Hindu festival that lasts five days. It is one of the happiest of the Indian festivals and is celebrated all over the country. Diwali has similar traditions of Thanksgiving and Christmas rolled into one huge celebration.

Watch this Video to learn more about Diwali:

  [All About Diwali for Kids | 12 November | Twinkl USA](#)

#### **FUN Fact**

**Moooooo!** To celebrate the Hindu holiday of Diwali, farmers dress up their cows with decorations and treat them with respect. The farmers show their thanks to the cows for helping the farmers earn a living.

Additional media Content:

 [Diwali - Festival of Lights | National Geographic](#)

 [Sesame Street: Celebrate Diwali Song! The Festival of Lights!](#)

### **Hanukkah**

For eight days each December, Jewish families light candles in a special candle holder called a menorah. They do this to remember an ancient miracle in which one day's worth of oil burned for eight days in their temple. On Hanukkah, many Jewish people also eat special potato pancakes called latkes, sing songs, and spin a top called a dreidel to win chocolate coins, nuts or raisins.

Watch this video to learn more about Hanukkah

 What is Hanukkah?

Read this passage as class or have students read it individually and then answer the following Discussion Question as a class.

<https://www.commonlit.org/en/texts/the-hanukkah-candle>

#### *Discussion Question*

“In the story, Atara and her mother are celebrating Hanukkah by lighting the candles of the menorah, giving gifts, and saying blessings. Do you have a favorite holiday? What is it? How do you celebrate?” Encourage students to share important details about their special traditions.


Here is another passage about Hanukkah that you may read with your students

<https://www.commonlit.org/en/texts/giving-thanks-for-hanukkah>

#### *Discussion Question*

“In the context of the text, how do the calendars we follow shape our lives? Do you think that the day people celebrate holidays on has an impact on how they celebrate? Why or why not?”

Here is a bonus video for students K-3

 The Chanukah Shaboom! Special - Great Miracles

## Christmas

Christmas, an annual holiday that commemorates the birth of Jesus Christ, is celebrated in unique ways in different countries, even those with few Christians. Christmas in the United States brings together many customs from other countries and cultures. Around the world, family members help to decorate the tree and home with bright lights, wreaths, candles, holly, mistletoe, and ornaments.


Watch this Video to learn more about Christmas:

 [How CHRISTMAS Started ? - The Dr. Binocs Show | Best Learning Videos For Kids | Pe...](#)

## **St. Nicholas Day**

A popular December holiday in many European countries, St. Nicholas Day, celebrates St. Nicholas of Myra, the man whose life inspired the tradition of Santa Claus and Father Christmas. He gave all of his money to the needy and was known for his compassion for children and all those in need. The holiday honors the man on the anniversary of his death, December 6, 343 A.D. Many celebrate with parades, feasts, gift giving, and festivals.

Watch this to learn more about Santa Claus

 [The History of Santa Claus: St. Nicholas and the Origin of Santa - FreeSchool](#)

## **FUN Fact:**

Santa Claus got his name from Saint Nicholas, a bishop of the town of Myra, who was known for being especially kind to all children. Today, Myra is part of the country of Turkey.

Use this link to read more about Saint Nicholas day: [Santa Claus History: How St. Nicholas and Kris Kringle Became Santa - Learning Liff](#)

### **The Night Before Christmas - Poem Text Activity**

Lesson: Poetry Traditions

- Introduction: 'Twas the Night Before Christmas
- Read 'Twas the Night Before Christmas'. Or play this video

 [Twas The Night Before Christmas as told by Perry Como](#)

- Ask:
  - Have you heard this poem before?
  - What do you think it is about?
  - Why do you think the poet wrote about the night before Christmas instead of Christmas day?
  - Do you think it was written recently or a long time ago? What evidence is there in the poem to support your opinion?
  - How does this poem describe Santa Clause? What words does the poet use?

Tell the students that today they will investigate this poem more closely; look at both the story and the rhymes. They will also have the opportunity to write a rhyming poem about an exciting traditional holiday time or event in their own family.

*Poem as a Story*

Read or listen to 'Twas the Night Before Christmas as a whole and listen or read again, this time noting not only the rhyming but also how the poem tells a story with a beginning, a middle, and an end.

- Ask:
  - Where does the poem take place? What is the setting? How do we know? What words in the poem tell us?
  - Who are the characters in the poem? List them.
  - What is the action that happens to start the story? How does it get your attention?
  - What happens in the middle of the story? Who is involved? How are they described?
  - What happens to wrap the story up? Solve the problem? Resolve the action?
  - How does the poem close? Are there famous last words? What would a modern day Santa Claus say?

*Story as a Poem*

Read aloud the first stanza of the poem while students follow along.

- Make sure to read with expression and rhythm.
- Echo read the first stanza with you reading one line and then the students repeating after you.
  - Ask if any students want to try reading the stanza on their own.
  - Ask students if they notice any rhyming in the poem?

Simple definition "rhyming words sound the same at the end."

- Most common example cat and hat- both end with the -at sound.

Provide two colors of pen and model how to mark (circle, highlight, underline) rhyming words at the end of each line. Repeat for the same thing for the second stanza.

- Ask students if they see a pattern.
- The rhyming pattern in this poem is called AABB because the words at the end of lines 1 and 2 rhyme and the words at the end of lines 3 and 4 rhyme.
- Write pairs of rhyming words on chart paper for student reference.

**Activity Instructions:** Write Your Own Holiday Tradition in Poetic Form

- Have students choose a holiday (Kwanzaa, Hanukkah, Diwali, Christmas) or family holiday tradition (opening stockings in bed, cutting down your own Christmas tree, cooking a Kwanzaa Feast or Karamu, lighting the Menorah, etc.).

- Provide students with writing materials and have students list words in one column that are associated with their tradition. In the second column, write any words that rhyme. For example:

bed	head, red, instead, dread
stocking	rocking, talking
light	bright, fight, sight, ignite, good night
feast	beast
tree	free, be, knee
sleigh	play, yay, gray, tray
snow	blow, show, know, below, bow, stow

Tell student poets that it is now their turn to turn their family stories or traditions into an AABB rhyming poem to share with friends and family.

Challenge students as appropriate for their level and age. For example: Young students may start with the original opening of the poem and only create the next two lines as fits with their holiday traditions.

- **Example:** *Twas the first night of Chanukah, when from across the table Mother began to speak the lines of the Rededication fable.*

*The candles were counted and fitted in tight, Just waiting for the prayers and matches to light*

Older students may write a fuller poem:

- start with retelling a holiday tradition with a beginning, action in the middle, and an ending.



• refer back to their rhyming words and create as many stanzas as they would like to tell their story

- Have students share their traditional holiday poetry.
- Optionally, students can illustrate, sing, or act out their poems.

### Winter Solstice

What exactly is the winter solstice?

It marks the time when one of the Earth's poles has its maximum tilt away from the sun. The result is the day with the least period of daylight, creating the so-called "shortest day of the year." It takes place in the Northern Hemisphere between December 20 and 23. This year it takes place on Thursday, December 21, 2023, at 10:27 PM.

Activity: Study the Weather

Have students use a website like [CNN Weather](#) to study national and regional weather. Ask them to look at winter weather in different locations across the United States. Then, ask students follow-up questions:

- Which states are farthest from the equator?
- Which states are closest to the equator?
- Which states have the warmest temperatures today?
- Which states have the coldest temperatures today?
- Why are winter temperatures in Florida warmer than winter temperatures in Michigan?

Watch this Read Aloud and then discuss the follow questions

 [The Winter Solstice | Holiday Special | Read Aloud + Experiment](#)

- When is the Winter Solstice celebrated?
- How did the Winter Solstice celebrations begin?
- Who first celebrated the Winter Solstice?
- What traditions that began during ancient Solstice celebrations are still followed today?

Fun Fact

There is a town in Florida called Christmas and it is home to the world's largest alligator!

[Tiny town of Christmas, Fla., is home to Swampy, World's Largest Alligator - It's a Southern Thing](#)

**Closing Activity and Discussion Question**

Have students write about a tradition they have in their family, complete with at least one sentence describing it, one colored picture representing the origin of the tradition, and the month or date it is celebrated. Feel free to have students present their traditions with the class once completed then asked students the following closing question:

“Why do you think it’s important to learn about holidays celebrated in other parts of the world?”

**Bonus Media content:**

- ▶ Kids Fun Facts: Christmas From Around the World (With Writing Prompts)
- ▶ Winter Celebrations Around the World
- ▶ Holidays | Holidays Around The World | Made by Red Cat Reading
- ▶ Brainpop Jr. Winter
- ▶ Wilson and Ditch "We Love the Winter Holidays"
- ▶ Holidays All Around the World@BridgesPeaceHope
- ▶ Sesame Street: Kids Talk About Holidays
- ▶ Sesame Street: How Do You Celebrate?
- ▶ Sesame Street: Elmo's World Holiday
- ▶ Christmas around the world.
- ▶ 🎄 Why do we have Christmas Trees? 🎄
- ▶ History of the Christmas Tree
- ▶ The History of Christmas Decorations
- ▶ The History of the Christmas Tree and Ornaments
- ▶ Holidays Around the World
- ▶ Why Do Holidays Fall Around The Winter Solstice?

**Additional activities:**

NatGeoKids Weird but True Winter Facts

[Weird But True!: Winter Facts](#)

Winter Holidays word search

[https://wordmint-pdf-production.wordmint.com/Winter\\_Holidays\\_1ccaa6\\_61636d50.pdf](https://wordmint-pdf-production.wordmint.com/Winter_Holidays_1ccaa6_61636d50.pdf)

Winter Holidays crossword puzzle

[https://wordmint-pdf-production.wordmint.com/WINTER\\_HOLIDAY\\_b3aa3\\_61636d4a.pdf](https://wordmint-pdf-production.wordmint.com/WINTER_HOLIDAY_b3aa3_61636d4a.pdf)

Holiday Traditions word search

[https://wordmint-pdf-production.wordmint.com/Holiday\\_Traditions\\_2e6fc9\\_6163176c.pdf](https://wordmint-pdf-production.wordmint.com/Holiday_Traditions_2e6fc9_6163176c.pdf)

Winter Solstice coloring pages

<https://littlebinsforlittlehands.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/Winter-Solstice-Coloring-Pages.pdf>

Here's a list of what different Countries call the person who brings gifts [Christmas Gift Bringers from Around the World - WhyChristmas.com](#)



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