



## Welcome to Honeybee Homeschool!

Thank you for choosing to join us this month! This curriculum is a combination of all my favorite aspects of Honeybee Playschool, an arts-based preschool I founded in 2014 for children ages 4-5. These projects represent my passion for preschool learning and are all “Honeybee-approved” by many, many children.

At Honeybee I approach each month with a theme in mind. I have bookshelves full of my favorite picture books for preschoolers based on all my favorite themes. This monthly curriculum is a culmination of some of my favorite seasonal activities for preschoolers. I have read all the books on the booklist with my students (some books have been read many times, year after year) and highly recommend them. We have tried the art projects, gathered the nature materials, sung the songs. Some projects are messy, so a dedicated space in the house where kids can create, let projects dry, and not worry too much about the mess, could be important. This could even be outside on a porch, in the garage or on one end of the dining table with a waterproof cloth to protect the table.

Work at your own pace. Some families may turn to this curriculum to engage their young children while older siblings complete their schoolwork. Some will use a project for the whole family to create as a brain break from school or work. Others might plan out an entire month and work to complete all activities and projects. Do what is best for your family!

My suggestion is to get outside every day. Gather natural items as you go so you have materials for the projects and the woodland house project. Take time to draw, paint or write in a sketchbook that can double as a journal to document this time together. This could be daily, weekly, or as frequently as desired.

Each month you will find ideas based on a seasonal theme and will always include the following:

**Book list:** This list will have Amazon affiliate links, but I also encourage you to use your local independent bookstore and library as well. [Bookshop.org](https://www.bookshop.org) links to your local bookstore so they get a small commission from every order. A great way to support the bookstore you love while shopping from home! The titles that

are **bold** are favorites at Honeybee, year after year, and are my recommendations if you want to purchase a few seasonal books for your library.

**Recipes:** Working together in the kitchen is such a great time for learning and fun. Kids of all ages can mix, measure, pour and work together to make something delicious. Have more than one child? Is fairness an issue? Make a double (or triple) batch so they each have a bowl to work with. Take turns adding ingredients. Each child stirs a certain number of times before switching off. Each child chooses a recipe to have special one-on-one time in the kitchen with a parent or caregiver.

**Gather:** Go outside together and see what you can find! Each month brings a different selection of items that are ready to be harvested. Take a walk or a hike, visit a friend's garden if you don't have one of your own, go to your neighborhood park. Chances are, you will notice something falling from the trees, something new in bloom, berries ripening, wild animals behaving differently (migration or hibernation or gathering food for winter). This gathering time helps us tune into the natural world, helps us pause and notice the subtle changes that happen throughout the year, and can provide some beautiful materials to use in the projects of the month.

**Make:** The whole reason I started an arts-based preschool is because of the projects! I love making and creating with kids. Each month you will find a list of projects to try, with instructions and links to find materials. If the materials are very specific, you will also find a link to purchase a kit of materials that I have gathered and prepared for purchase. So clear some wall space, because you are going to want to hang all these projects up immediately!

**Give:** When we finish projects at Honeybee, the kids are encouraged to choose one or more pieces to give away to a friend or family member. Sometimes this is hard, as they easily become attached to their work. As the school year goes on, they tend to create their art or craft with one person in mind, planning who they want to give it to. This section of the curriculum is included in order to encourage that spirit of generosity.

**Sing:** Each month you will find a few songs and or fingerplays to try. I also encourage kids to dance and move during this time, especially on cold or rainy days when outside play is limited.

**Sketchbook:** I like to give children a dedicated time to sit in nature, put their senses to work, and then choose one or more items to add to their sketchbook. It could be a leaf rubbing, a drawing or painting of a flower or insect they saw, a sketch of a bird or animal, a watercolor of the sky. This is a lovely way to spend time outdoors and to engage in nature and the passing of the seasons. We have several watercolor tutorials that are seasonal and theme-specific at [honeybeeplayschool.com](http://honeybeeplayschool.com) that will be linked in each month of curriculum. If you are looking for a sketchbook starter kit, we sell them in our [Honeybee Family Shop](https://www.etsy.com/shop/honeybeeplayschool) on Etsy.

**Woodland House:** There is something so magical and special about making a little house in the woods. My children and students both liked to make fairy houses, and we gradually transitioned into calling them

woodland houses. They loved to find natural materials to use to make special little houses outside, and we used little wooden pegs to make dolls/fairies/woodland creatures to live in the houses. This is a great way to encourage outside, independent play all year round! We will make a woodland house and then add to it each month. Some kids might like to add to it every day, while others might check on it weekly or even monthly. Peg dolls and the woodland house basics are included in the Woodland House kit at our Etsy shop, [Honeybee Family Shop](#). Each month we will offer a seasonal add-on kit as well.

**Listen:** We are big fans of the audiobook in our family and in the preschool. There is a huge benefit to taking some time to slow down, quiet our bodies and brains, to just listen. This section will have a short list of fun audio books as well as a read-aloud or two. These are great for kids to listen to independently while drawing or building, or at snack or lunch time. I've noticed that kids eat more food and stay at the table a little longer if I'm reading a chapter book to them! An old ipod or small wireless speaker work great for audiobooks that are streaming. We also check out books on CD from our library and have a portable CD player for that purpose.

**More Ideas:**

At the end of each monthly curriculum, you will find ideas and suggestions for how to go deeper with some of the themes and projects. This is where you will find more complicated projects for older kids as well.

**Resources:**

**Books:**

Crafts through the Year by Thomas and Petra Berger

A Child's Seasonal Treasury by Betty Jones

**Materials:**

Discount School Supply

Dickblick.com

Amazon.com

Want to know when the next month of curriculum is available? Be sure to sign up for our mailing list at [www.honeybeeplayschool.com](http://www.honeybeeplayschool.com) (scroll to bottom of page) and you will be first to know about upcoming releases.

**PLEASE READ!** This curriculum is not available for re-sale or for sharing, it is for personal and individual use only. You do not have permission to copy, share or distribute any of the content of this curriculum. The purchase price is intentionally low so that it is affordable for everyone, and I would appreciate it if you didn't share it with friends and family for free. If you know someone who could benefit from this curriculum but can't afford it, please let me know! I am happy to donate to a family who could use it. If you try these projects and want to share the images with me on instagram please use [#honeybeehomeschoolers](#) or feel free to email me photos, feedback, or questions at [honeybeeplayschoolvashon@gmail.com](mailto:honeybeeplayschoolvashon@gmail.com).

Enjoy the season together!

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## Honeybee Homeschool

# *DECEMBER: Giving.*



# Bookshelf.



(bolded books are favorites and are in our home/school library to read again and again)

[\*\*The Mole Family's Christmas by Russell and Lillian Hoban\*\*](#)

[\*\*Bear Stays Up For Christmas by Karma Wilson and Jane Chapman\*\*](#)

[\*\*Gingerbread Friends by Jan Brett\*\*](#)

[\*\*Presents Through the Window by Taro Gomi\*\*](#)

[\*\*Red and Lulu by Matt Tavares\*\*](#)

[\*\*And Then Comes Christmas by Tom Brenner\*\*](#)

[\*\*The Perfect Present by Michael Hague\*\*](#)

[\*\*A Nutcracker in Harlem by T.E. McMorrow\*\*](#)

[\*\*Santa Claus: The World's Number One Toy Expert by Marla Frazee\*\*](#)

[\*\*A Christmas for Bear by Bonny Becker\*\*](#)

[\*\*Last Stop on the Reindeer Express by Maudie Powell-Tuck\*\*](#)

[\*\*Little Mouse's Christmas by Riikka Jantti\*\*](#)

[\*\*The Animals' Santa by Jan Brett\*\*](#)

[\*\*Walk this World at Christmastime by Debbie Powell\*\*](#)

[\*\*Toot & Puddle: Let it Snow by Holly Hobbie\*\*](#)

[\*\*1001 Things to Spot at Christmas by Alex Frith and Teri Gower for Usborne Books\*\*](#)

[\*\*Cranberry Christmas by Wende and Harry Devlin\*\*](#)

[\*\*Mr. Willowby's Christmas Tree by Robert Barry\*\*](#)

[\*\*Hannukuh Haiku by Harriet Ziefert\*\*](#)

[Samurai Santa: A Very Ninja Christmas by Rubin Pingk](#)

[Richard Scarry's Christmas Mice by Richard Scarry \(board book, great for little hands\)](#)

[Stick Man by Julia Donaldson](#)

[The Tomten by Astrid Lindgren](#)

[Pick a Pine Tree by Patricia Toht](#)

[The Christmas Party by Adrienne Adams](#)

[Too Many Tamales! By Gary Soto](#)

[The Trees of the Dancing Goats by Patricia Polacco](#)

[Little Elfie One by Pamela Jane](#)

\*\*\*A word about December holidays: At Honeybee we celebrate December with evergreens, ornaments for christmas, winter or solstice trees, we think of the animals, of the changing of the seasons. We make gifts, as many as we have time for. In our home we count down until Christmas, we celebrate the 4 weeks of advent, we decorate every flat surface we can find. If you don't celebrate Christmas, you will still find beautiful decoration and project ideas to use in your home for whatever or however your family chooses to celebrate. Add greens to a stair railing and hang "baubles" from it. Find a bare madrona branch, stand it in a vase and decorate it with fairy lights and sparkly ornaments to add a bright corner to your home. Take this month to make and give and enjoy your time together!\*\*\*

## Recipes.



*Stovetop Potpourri (inedible):*

We make these often around here, so they are making a repeat appearance in this month's recipes. They make great gifts for teachers, neighbors, distant family or delivery workers. Last year we even gave one to Santa! Gather herbs and spices (whole is preferable) and package them in a cellophane bag or [waxed paper pouch](#) with simple instructions and voila! Instant gift. Add this note, or something similar: "Empty

contents into a pot of water and place on a wood stove or stove top to simmer. Don't let it run out of water!"

Here are some classic combinations:

- Citrus, cranberry & rosemary: Dried citrus or dried citrus peels/zest, dried or fresh cranberries, sprigs of fresh rosemary (or dried rosemary, sage or mint)
- Dried apple, cinnamon, cloves, star anise: Slice and dry a couple apples, add cinnamon sticks, whole cloves, a star anise.
- Lemon eucalyptus fir/cedar: dried citrus slices, sprigs of fresh or dried eucalyptus, and sprigs of fir or cedar.
- Make up your own!

### *Cinnamon Salt Dough (also inedible)*

#### Ingredients:

1 cup ground cinnamon (Costco and the dollar store sell cheap cinnamon that is great for crafting with and not high quality for eating)

½ cup applesauce

½ cup white glue

- ❑ Mix the cinnamon and applesauce together in a mixing bowl. Add the glue and stir until combined. Knead with your hands when the stirring gets hard. Cover with plastic wrap and let the dough sit for 1 hour to let the glue cure. While this is inedible, it's also very safe for young children because the ingredients aren't harmful in small amounts.
- ❑ After an hour, preheat the oven to 200F. Line a baking sheet with parchment, silpat or foil and set aside. Roll out the dough to about ¼ thick, like sugar cookies. Sometimes it's easier to roll out half the dough at a time, or divide it among your children and let everyone work on a piece. For easy cleanup, roll it out on waxed or parchment paper. If the dough cracks, add a couple drops of water to smooth it out, knead it by hand if necessary.
- ❑ The fun part! Use [cookie cutters](#) to cut out shapes. We like to cut small (quarter-sized) shapes to add to ornaments, garland, and decorations. Larger shapes make beautiful ornaments as well! Re-roll all the scraps and cut shapes until the dough is all used up. Use the end of a plastic straw like a hole-punch to cut holes to use for hanging the ornaments. For big ornaments, cut two holes next to each other so they hang nicely.
- ❑ Move to a baking sheet, placing them close together- they don't rise at all. Bake for 1 hour at 200F, flip over, bake another hour. When they are done, they will be hard to the touch. If they aren't completely hard, leave out overnight to finish drying out.
- ❑ Use twine, wire or ribbon to hang. We like to add cedar, cranberries, dried citrus and cinnamon sticks to make ornaments, garlands and other decorations! They smell amazing. Give as gifts, decorate your home, and enjoy!

## *Popcorn Balls*

### Ingredients:

7-8 cups popcorn, popped and plain

1 (10oz) bag of mini marshmallows

4 Tablespoons butter, plus a little more for hands

Optional: sprinkles, mini chocolate chips, shredded coconut for topping

Melt butter in a large saucepan over low heat. Add marshmallows and stir until they are completely melted. Raise the heat a little if needed. Slowly add the popped popcorn to the pot and stir well to coat all the kernels. Let cool until it is safe to touch, but not cold. Put a little butter on your hands, grab a handful and pat into a ball. Set on parchment paper or a plate and keep making popcorn balls until all the popcorn is used. Roll in sprinkles or other fun toppings if you want, or eat plain! Wrap leftovers up or put in an airtight container.

### [\*Cranberry Orange Bread\*](#) by Catherine Newman

This is one of our family's all time favorite December recipes. We make several mini loaves and give them to neighbors and friends. So tasty! Click the link in the title for the recipe.

### [\*Shortbread Bites\*](#) by Delish

These little shortbread cookies are cute, fun to make, and kids love adding the sprinkles! They look great on a cookie platter, in a mason jar as a homemade gift, and they freeze well too! Click the link for the recipe and enjoy.



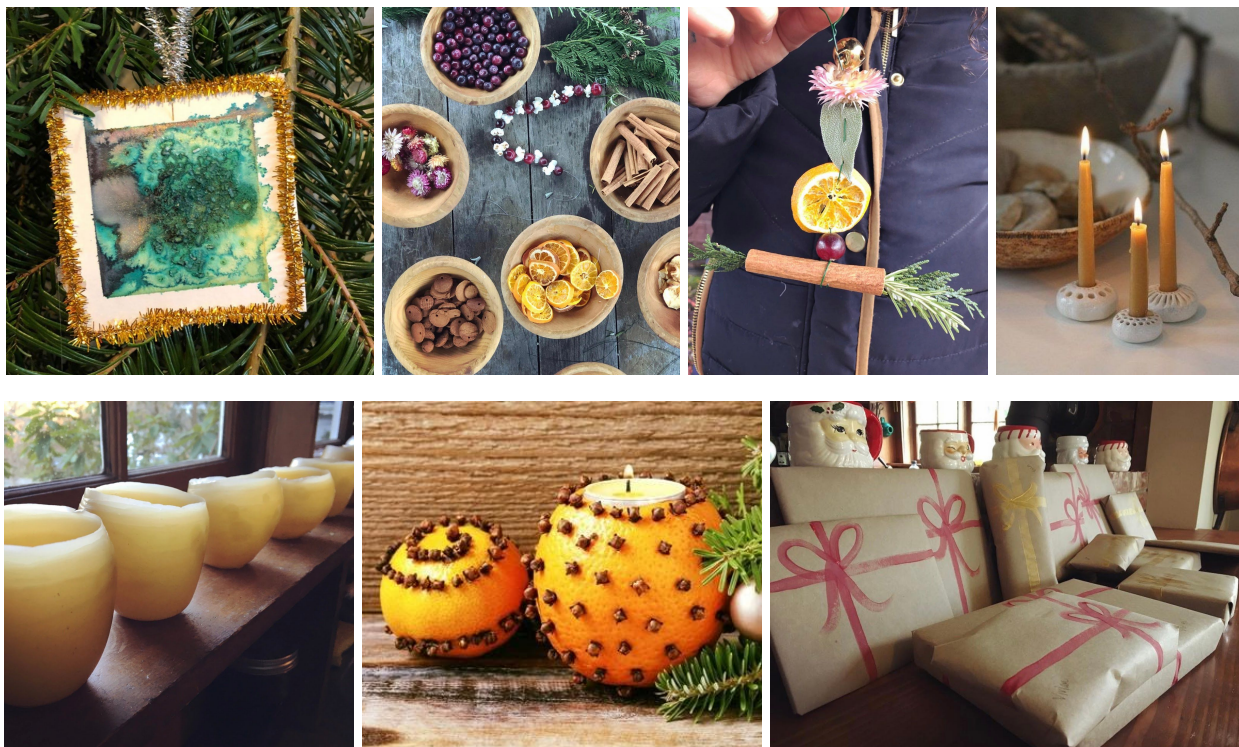
## Gather.



- ❑ *Sea glass and driftwood*: Find small, flat pieces of driftwood and bring home to dry. Use green sea glass to make small evergreen tree shapes and hang as an ornament. Don't have a beach or river nearby to explore? Try searching for branches or bark and use paint or permanent markers to decorate. Flat rocks and pebbles are fun to draw or paint on too!
- ❑ *Acorn caps or seed pods for ornaments*: Glue marbles, small bells or wool balls into acorn caps and hang as ornaments. Poppy seed heads and beech nuts are fun to craft with as well. You could paint them in festive colors or add sequins or glitter.
- ❑ *Cedar, eucalyptus, rose hips, fir for garland or swag*: Make a large, fragrant swag for the front door. Honeybee kids like looking for windblown evergreen branches (they feed them to the goats here) and if you layer them and wire them together at the branch ends, add a ribbon and hang on the door or wall, they make a very beautiful seasonal decoration. Make small bunches and attach to twine or rope with wire, overlapping the cut ends as you go, to make a garland. Bob Vila has a great step-by-step article about how to make garland [here](#).
- ❑ *Small evergreen sprigs, berries, small cones for ice lanterns*: Fill an angel food pan, jello mold or muffin pan with water. Add the little bits of nature gathered from your walk through the yard or park, and freeze. If the nights are cold enough, leave them outside to freeze, otherwise put in the freezer. If you take the pans out of the freezer before they are fully frozen, you will be able to drain the water from the middle of each ice "cube" and place a tea light or battery light inside to make ice lanterns. When they melt, all that is left are the branches and bits that are returned to the earth. [This tutorial has great photos for reference](#).

- ❑ *Citrus Slice Ornaments:* If you have some leftover dried citrus, use a needle and thread and hang the slices from a garland, tree or branch. We added some gold paint to the peel on year, a little glitter could be fun, but plain citrus is beautiful in it's simplicity.

## Make.



- ❑ *Star Ornament with Pom-Pom:* This is a project I first saw at [ArtBarBlog](#) and have since adapted to make it accessible and fun for small fingers. Use a pipe cleaner or wire and a festive cookie cutter, beads, yarn and [puff-ball beads](#). Follow Bar's instructions using the link above- hers are great for older kids and adults! Or, give a pipe cleaner to your young child, let them add beads and puff balls, leaving about 1" of room at each end. Then bend and crease the pipe cleaner around the outside edge of a cookie cutter to form the shape. Twist the ends together, add a string to hang and choose a place around the house to decorate!
- ❑ *Acorn Cap Bells:* If you have acorn caps left from your Fall gathering, you can make acorn bells! Take small jingle bells, a piece of ribbon or string and hot glue to make this simple decoration. You can poke a small hole in the top of the acorn cap to add string, or you can lay a length of string across the acorn cap opening before gluing the bell (and the string) in place. Then tie the string ends together to hang.

- ❑ *Mini Masterpieces:* Use small squares of watercolor paper (great use for scraps!) and tape off the edges with masking tape or painters tape to make a frame. This will keep the watercolor paint away from the edges of the paper and will be removed when the paint is dry. Put out watercolor paints, salt (epsom salt makes fun crystal effects) and let kids go wild. When the paint is dry, peel off the tape, punch a hole at the top and use white glue and glitter to add a fancy border to the mini masterpieces. A sparkly pipe cleaner also makes a fun frame!
  
- ❑ *Salt Dough with Sea Glass:* We like to make salt dough Tomten ornaments each year, since the Tomten books are such favorites with the preschool listening audience. Small dough ornaments with sea glass or glass beads are beautiful, make great gifts, and are easier to make than tomten.
  - ❑ Salt Dough recipe: 1 cup salt, 2 cups flour, 1 cup water. This ratio can be doubled if you want to make a big batch. Mix until smooth- add a little more water if needed.
  - ❑ Roll out to about ¼ inch thick. Use cookie cutters to make shapes. Keep the metal cutter in place while you press beads or sea glass into the dough, it will help keep its shape. Use a plastic straw to make a hole at the top of each ornament.
  - ❑ Bake in the oven at 250 degrees for about an hour, then move to a drying rack and let completely dry for a few more days. Spray with clear sealer or paint with a clear varnish to seal the dough and the beach glass. The sealer will help preserve the dough and it will last for years. Unsealed ornaments will last for the season. You might need to glue a few pieces back in, sometimes the dough shrinks a little bit and the glass is displaced. Hang with a ribbon.
  
- ❑ *Solstice Ornament:* Gather cedar, eucalyptus, rose hips, cinnamon dough beads (see recipe above), citrus slices, cranberries, cinnamon sticks, jingle bells. I like to put each material in a bowl or tray, cut pieces of wire (maybe 10-12" long) and let the kids make whatever they choose. Some wrap the wire around sprigs, poke the berries and string the beads. Others will only use beads. As more ornaments are made, they will inspire each other to try other ideas and techniques. These look beautiful on a cedar garland with twinkle lights, or they could be used as napkin rings or as part of a gift tag.
  
- ❑ *Dipped Candles:* Dipping beeswax candles is a great, calming activity to do on dark, stormy afternoons. I keep beeswax in a small crockpot and plug it in when we are thinking about crafting or candle making. It takes an hour or two to fully melt but it contains the waxy mess and doesn't require a double boiler. Everyone loves a beeswax candle gift! It smells so good, and it's fun to think of little hands dipping candles. Here's what you need:
  - ❑ [Beeswax](#), [candle wick](#), deep container for water (large plastic yogurt containers are great for this), a [small crockpot](#) or double-boiler.
  - ❑ [\\*This tutorial is great.](#) When I'm making candles with small children, I really stress the fact that they need to hold the candle over the wax until it stops dripping before dipping in cold water, and then make sure all the water has dripped off before dipping in wax again. You don't want water to get in the wax, it can make it bubble and splatter and it's quite dangerous.

- ❑ *Mini Candle Holders:* For those beeswax candles you just made! Here are a few fun ways to make small candle holders for those little dipped candles:
  - ❑ *Metal hex nuts:* take your candles to the hardware store and find some nuts that fit the bottom of each candle. Spray paint the nuts or decorate with a sharpie or glitter.
  - ❑ *[Air dry clay:](#)* Take a long strip of air dry clay and wrap it around the base of each candle several times. Let dry, then paint or leave natural.
  - ❑ *[Wooden beads:](#)* measure the base of your candles and search for a wooden bead that it could fit in. Assorted wooden beads are fun to use for other projects as well.
  - ❑ *[Fimo or oven bake clay:](#)* Roll into a small ball and press the candle into the clay. Flatten the clay to make a sturdy base for the candle. Bake and let cool.
  - ❑ *Mandarin orange:* This is a very temporary candle holder but looks and smells beautiful. Cut a hole in the top of a small orange and push the little candle into it until it feels stable.
  
- ❑ *Walnut Ornaments:* We made a lot of [walnut strawberry ornaments](#) in my childhood, so I was overjoyed to find these fun, festive ways to use walnut shells that weren't strawberries! [Walnut Bear](#), [walnut fox](#), [walnut santa mouse](#), [babies in walnut cradles](#) and [more](#).
  
- ❑ *[Solstice candle:](#)* This takes very simple materials: [whole cloves](#) and an orange. This could be a large, navel orange or a small satsuma or mandarin. We find whole cloves in bulk at our local grocery store, but they are also available on amazon and other online shopping marketplaces. Trace the shape of a tea light at the top of the orange, marking the area to leave empty for the candle to sit. Then gently push the pointy ends of the cloves into the orange. Sometimes it's easier to poke the holes with a toothpick first, then add the cloves. Keep adding cloves to make a pattern or design, or to completely cover the orange, leaving room at the top to cut a hole for the candle. When finished, carefully cut on the traced line to remove the peel. Set a tea light or battery powered candle in the hole and enjoy the wonderful scent of citrus and clove.
  
- ❑ *Wrapping paper:* This is a classic December project and very necessary for gift giving! We use brown kraft paper that is typically sold in the shipping department of office stores. It comes in a 3' wide roll and is great for making a lot of gift wrap. You could make [potato stamps](#), do some free-style painting with a controlled color palette of tempera (red, green and gold, or black, gold and white maybe?) or [print with evergreen branches](#). Or add painted "ribbons" to your already wrapped packages for a twist on packaging this year.

## Give.

Every single project, activity or recipe in this guide is meant to be a gift to give to someone in your family, in your neighborhood, your community. At the beginning of the month, make a big list of everyone you and your child/children can think of who you would like to give a gift to: Family near and far, friends,

neighbors, helpers like house cleaners, dog groomers, hair cutters, doctors. Include people you see often but might not know very well like the mail or package deliverers, bus driver, barista. Then think about things you can make to give and share with those people and get to work!

## Sing.

**Reindeer Hokey Pokey:** get those wiggles out!

You put your antlers in, you put your antlers out  
You put your antlers in and you shake them all about  
You do the hokey pokey and you turn yourself around  
That's what it's all about!

More verses:

Hooves, Fluffy Tail, Red Nose.

**Jack Frost:** Link to [youtube poem](#), written by C.E. Pike

Look out! Look out! Jack Frost is about!  
He's after our fingers and toes;  
And all through the night, the gay little sprite  
Is working where nobody knows.  
He'll climb each tree, so nimble is he,  
His silvery powder he'll shake.  
To windows, he'll creep and while we're asleep  
Such wonderful pictures he'll make.  
Across the grass he'll merrily pass,  
And change all its greenness to white.  
Then home he will go and laugh ho, ho ho!  
What fun I have had in the night.

**Do You Know Who Hibernates?** (tune of Do You Know the Muffin Man?)

Do you know who hibernates? Who hibernates? Who hibernates?  
Do you know who hibernates, its GREAT, BIG BEARS.

Who else hibernates? Slithering Snakes, Large Bullfrogs, Buzzing Honeybees, Small Black Bats, who else?

## Sketchbook.



### *Suggested Materials:*

You can purchase a kit from us [here](#) to easily and quickly get started with the sketchbook component of this curriculum. Or you can find similar items from Amazon:

[Watercolor Sketchbook](#)

[Prang Watercolor Set](#)

[Brushes](#)

Pencil

Eraser

[Palette](#)

Water Cup

Sponge

- [Winter foliage watercolor](#): practice painting some evergreen branches and red berries.
- [Winter foliage wreath](#): turn the practice into a wreath for a homemade card, gift or for a festive decoration.
- [Winter candle watercolor](#): paint a pinecone and candle centerpiece.
- [Mistletoe](#) Watercolor tutorial. This is short and sweet but uses the same techniques from the winter foliage video so even though this is a time lapse, it's very do-able!

## Learn.

- ❑ *Winter Solstice*: The shortest day of the year, December 21st, is celebrated around the world in many countries and cultures. Look up some different [traditional celebrations](#) and choose one to add to your family's festivities this year. Luminaries are a favorite way to add more light when the days feel dark. [Here](#) are a few of our [favorite](#) luminary [projects](#) to try.
  
- ❑ *What are Tomten?* Read more about this [Swedish gnome](#) and then make a cute [Tomten paper garland](#).
  
- ❑ *Hibernation and Migration*: What is the difference? What animals in your region hibernate and which migrate? See if you can find 5 animals for each list. Make a drawing - how many hibernating and migrating animals can you include in one picture?
  
- ❑ [Advent poem](#): In our house we celebrate Advent with a chocolate countdown calendar as well as all the advent calendars we have collected over the years. Each day there are many windows to open, and each year we have fun looking inside to see the image inside, even though those windows have been opened and closed many times over the years. We also like to read this poem and arrange new items around our advent wreath, for instance, in the first week we add special rocks, crystals and an odd collection of bones that have been collected from the woods, like an old raccoon skull. It's very beautiful by candlelight, believe me! My children have interpreted the poem differently each year as they grow up and I always let them take the lead, letting them gather any object or item that feels special and important to add to the advent table. Celebrating advent can be a part of the festivities in both secular or religious homes. You'll find the poem linked above.

## Woodland House.



If this is your first month and you are joining us for the first time, then this month we will create a woodland or fairy/gnome house that we will add to all year long. Find a place in the yard or woods that you can visit each day or many times per week. This spot should be sheltered and inviting. Gather branches, bark, moss, grass clippings, wood chips or any other natural materials to make a home for a little creature.

Let the imagination run wild! During the month you might find something that would make a perfect swing for the woodland house, or some beautiful stones at the beach that could make a pathway. A clam shell could be a hot tub or bird bath. Poppy seed heads could be lanterns on a pathway. Take time to notice the natural items around you and imagine what they could be for a woodland creature. We will add to this each month so try to build it in a place that is easy for your child to go to independently.

Our woodland house starter kit and kits for past months are [available here](#), in our Etsy store.

### *New additions for this month:*

Bottlebrush tree, a peg doll snowman kit, and supplies to make a walnut shell baby. Click the link above to learn more.



## Listen.

### *Audiobooks:*

- ❑ [\*Tumtum & Nutmeg: A Christmas Adventure\*](#): Tumtum and Nutmeg are back with another fun, holiday adventure.
- ❑ *Life and Adventures of Santa Claus by L. Frank Baum*: This is a short and interesting book about Santa, starting with his birth and giving insight into how he became the jolly old man he is today. This one might be better for older kids, I suggest pre-reading to be sure your young child will like it.
- ❑ *Moomin Winter by Tove Jannsen*: We love the Moomin books! I read them aloud to my kids and even though they are relatively slow moving, they are sweet and compelling stories.
- ❑ *Enid Blyton's Christmas Stories*: Pick and choose from these stories, they are just long enough to read at snack, quiet time or bedtime.

### *Music:*

- ❑ [\*Elizabeth Mitchell: The Sounding Joy\*](#) and [\*James Taylor: At Christmas\*](#) are both soothing and calm to listen to. Both have songs that I skip over or remove from the playlist for preschool because they are religiously- based, but the albums are great and a lovely break from the typical “pop music” christmas songs we hear on the radio.
- ❑ We also listen to [\*Raffi's Christmas\*](#) and [\*John Denver & the Muppets: A Christmas Together\*](#), and [\*The Charlie Brown Christmas Album\*](#) (wordless) is fabulous as well.

## More Ideas.



- ❑ eBooks for Christmas Crafting: I bought both of these ebooks and have tried so many of the projects included. They are both definitely worth purchasing!
  - ❑ [Oh Creative Days of Christmas \\$10](#) : Based in Australia, Oh Creative Day focuses on beautiful children’s books and art projects. The eBook includes process art as well as the cute cardboard trees pictured above.
  - ❑ [Art Camp LA Holiday Craft](#): I first noticed Art Camp LA a few years ago when their cardboard wreath caught my eye. We have made these wreaths in preschool for several years now and it is always a favorite. It is included in the holiday craft ebook now along with many other beautiful projects to try. Make one as a tree topper!
- ❑ Stocking game: This is a fun game to play after dinner or when the whole family is home. Get a stocking or large sock or hat. One person will start by holding the stocking and while the others have their eyes closed, the stocking holder will choose a small item from the room to put in the stocking. Each person then takes a turn to feel the item by reaching into the stocking. After everyone has had a chance to feel it, take turns guessing what it is. As the game goes on, and others have a turn to choose an object, you’ll find that it gets harder and harder to guess.
- ❑ [Beeswax Luminaries](#): This is a great project for older kids to try (with adult supervision) for beautiful results. Follow the tutorial closely, being sure to only dip the balloon as high as the water level inside it, otherwise it could pop. Use water balloons as a mold for beeswax, by dipping the balloon in the hot wax. The end result is like a natural, imperfectly beautiful Glassybaby!
- ❑ Snowy Scene Watercolors: Want more watercolor ideas? [Ellen Crimi Trent](#) has some very fun and quick tutorials like this [snowglobe](#), these mini [winter cabin](#) paintings and this [winter landscape](#).

## Sources for Materials.

[Dick Blick](#) : is my favorite place to buy art supplies. The prices are great and the quality is high. I love to put good, quality art supplies in children's hands, it's so worth it and they deserve to use nice materials!

Watercolor Paper: Canson XL

Watercolor Paints: Prang Semi-Moist or washable

Sketchbook: Canson XL spiral bound watercolor pad

**Amazon:** links are included in the body of the curriculum.

[Discount School Supply](#):

*Activity Paint*- great for apple prints, easel painting, color mixing.

*Liquid Watercolors*- you can't beat the price. The colors mix well, can be diluted and maintain a deep color, and the bottles last for a long time. I recommend starting with primary colors plus white, black, turquoise, magenta and one metallic color like gold or silver. Gold activity paint can be diluted heavily with water to make a shimmery liquid gold paint that can also be added to primary colors to make them shimmer.