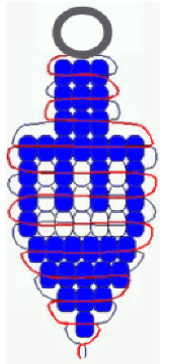


December Topics and Activities

Hanukkah – 08 Dec 21st, 09 Dec 11th, 2010 Dec 1st

Pony Bead Dreidel Craft: You'll need two main pony bead colors - 41 beads and 11 beads (we used blue and white). You can use seed beads and thread instead of pony beads and ribbon/string for a smaller project (good for Girl Guide hat swaps). Start the project by looping the string around the keychain ring. Follow the pattern as shown to the right. Tie a tight knot at the bottom



"A dreidel is a four-sided spinning top, played with during the Jewish holiday of Hanukkah. The dreidel is used for a form of the gambling game Teetotum. Each side of the dreidel bears a letter of the Hebrew alphabet: נ (Nun), ג (Gimel), ה (Hei), ש (Shin), which together form the acronym for "היה לודג סני" (Nes Gadol Haya Sham – "a great miracle happened there")."

St. Lucia day – Dec. 13th

ST. LUCIA BUNS

5 1/2 teaspoons active dry yeast	1 cup milk
4 to 4 1/2 cups all-purpose flour	1/8 teaspoon powdered saffron OR
3/4 cup sugar	1/2 cup (1 stick) butter, cut up
1 teaspoon salt	2 large eggs, slightly beaten

In a large mixing bowl, combine the yeast, 2 cups flour, sugar and salt. In a small saucepan, heat milk to simmering over medium heat, then remove from the heat. Add the saffron and butter; stir until the butter is melted and the mixture and add eggs. Beat with a wooden spoon until the batter is smooth and satiny. Beat in the remaining flour one cup at a time until the dough is stiff but not dry. Cover and refrigerate for at least 2 hours. To bake, preheat oven to 400 degrees. Form the dough into "S" shapes and bake for 8-10 minutes.

"A festival of light that marks the beginning of the Christmas season for people from Scandinavian countries like Sweden, Norway and Denmark. They say, St. Lucia comes to make the darkness disappear. Lucia means Light. To celebrate, the female playing the role of St. Lucia (usually the oldest daughter) wears a white dress with a red sash and a crown of candles. She wakes the family at dawn and serves them a breakfast of coffee and saffron buns. "



St. Nicolas day – Dec. 6th

St. Nicolas Dice Game: Roll the die to draw Saint Nicholas! The number tells you what to draw. Take turns rolling the die. The winner is the first to finish St. Nicholas!

- 1 - Draw St. Nicholas' head
- 2 - Draw St. Nicholas' robe
- 3 - Draw St. Nicholas' crozier (staff)
- 4 - Draw St. Nicholas' Beard
- 5 - Draw St. Nicholas' Miter (hat)
- 6 - Draw St. Nicholas' eyes



"In fourth-century Turkey there was a generous bishop by the name of St. Nicholas, now considered to be the patron saint, or protector, of children. In honor of St. Nicholas Dutch and German communities celebrate. The Dutch say that Sint Nikolaas or Sinterklass and his helper Zwarte Piet or Black Pete would travel by horse to homes. Children would leave out a pair of polished shoes filled with hay and carrots. If the children were good it was replaced with candy and gifts. If the children were not good, Black Pete would leave a piece of coal. "

Kwanzaa – Dec. 26th

Kwanzaa Toilet paper roll candle: This pretend Kwanzaa candle is made with a toilet paper tube, paper, markers and a little imagination..

- Colour (where appropriate) and cut out corn shapes pieces.
- Glue the flame to the top of the "candle".
- Glue on the ears of corn in whatever way you choose to decorate the candle.
- Set the candle on top of a round piece of construction paper or a doily so you don't get imaginary wax all over the place.



"Kwanzaa is an African-American holiday about the festival of the first harvest of the crops. It begins on December 26, and lasts for seven days. The name Kwanzaa, sometimes spelled Kwanza, comes from a phrase which means "first fruits" in Swahili, an East African language. The point of Kwanzaa is not one of gift giving or religious celebration, but a commemoration of heritage and togetherness. Family and friends should find Kwanzaa to be a time of sharing and pulling together."

Winter Solstice – Dec. 21st/22nd

Solstice Cookie Holly wreath: Use some Chocolate mint Girl Guides cookies to make an edible wreath for solstice. "Glue" the cookies together in a wreath shape with icing on a tinfoil lined cookie tray or round pizza pan and add edible embellishments like mint gummy leaves and a red bow of liquorish and red gumdrop berries etc.



"Winter officially begins on the shortest day of the year December 21 (or December 22 in some years) the day of the solstice. Solstice means the sun stands still. The winter solstice is the day when the midday sun is at its lowest point above the horizon. Often celebrated with parties and winter customs. Many seasonal symbols that today are connected to Christmas have their roots in the solstice and pagan celebrations. For example, the yule log came from a pagan ritual. The log was lit on the eve of the solstice—to conquer the darkness, protect against evil spirits, and bring luck—and burned for 12 hours. The log was later replaced by a tree, adorned with burning candles. The Celts thought the sun stood still for 12 days in the middle of winter (could that be the source of the 12 days of Christmas?). Holly, with its bright berries and rich foliage, was an important symbol because it could withstand the harshness of winter and maintain its color and life, as could mistletoe and evergreens."

Christmas – Dec. 25th

Christmas Around the world: Have each girl in your unit pick a different country and research what they do to celebrate Christmas in that country. They can each bring in a food from that culture and share the customs they have discovered.

Sing Christmas Carols: This is a fun part of celebrating Christmas and there are lots of different songs to try and enjoy. Everyone has favorites and there are many from all over the world.



“Christmas is an annual Christian holiday celebrated on December 25 that commemorates the birth of Jesus. Christmas Day marks the beginning of the larger season of Christmastide, which lasts twelve days. Modern customs of the holiday include gift-giving, church celebrations, the exchange of cards, and the display of various decorations—including the Christmas tree, lights, mistletoe, nativity scenes, and holly. Santa Claus (also referred to as Father Christmas, although the two figures have different origins) is a popular mythological figure often associated with bringing gifts at Christmas for children. Christmas is celebrated throughout the Christian population, but has also recently come to be celebrated by many non-Christians as a secular, cultural festival.”
