

Frosty the Bagel:

Ingredients

- mini bagel
- cream cheese
- 1 baby carrot
- sliced black olives
- sliced red pepper
- celery
- broccoli

Instructions

1. Spread half a mini bagel with cream cheese, then add a baby carrot nose, sliced black olive eyes, and a sliced red pepper mouth.
2. For the earmuffs, simply curve a thinly sliced piece of celery along the top of the bagel as shown and hold it in place with a broccoli floret at the ends.

truth or does she want reassurance that it's okay to keep pretending for awhile longer? Someone once told me that when children ask about Santa it is much like when they ask about where they came from. Some kids want a biology lesson. Some want to know they were born in Cleveland. Similarly, some kids want the whole truth about Santa and some want to be left in reasonable doubt.

- **Consider the age and stage of your child.** A 10-year-old who still believes unequivocally that there is a real Santa will be at a clear disadvantage on the playground where most of the other kids don't. A 4-year-old who insists there isn't a Santa may well become the focus of sandbox hostility (and you the recipient of phone calls from their very annoyed parents). For 3 to 6 year olds, the world of imagination, including Santa's North Pole, is an important place to visit. For older children, reconciling story and reality is part of growing up. It's up to us to know our children well enough to sense where they are on that continuum.

- **Be prepared. Different kids have different reactions.** Some kids respond to the news that Santa is a story with relief. They needed to have their perception of reality confirmed. Others respond with anger at their

When Your Child Asks, Is Santa Real?

By Marie Hartwell-Walker, Ed.D.

On the eve of the big day, stockings are hung and cookies and milk are set out for Santa as well as a carrot for Rudolph. It is part of the magic of Christmas for children and a nostalgic visit back to childhood for adults. For those who had wonderful childhood Christmases, it's a chance to recreate them. What would Christmas be without the story of a jelly-bellied elf who somehow gets around the world in one night to deliver presents and treats to good little girls and boys?

Then comes the thud of reality. "Mom? Is Santa real? Some kids at school said he isn't and I said he is and they laughed at me." Somewhere around 6 or 7 or 8, your child poses that dreaded question. It can mark the end of a certain kind of innocence for the child and an end of a fun chapter of parenting for the adults. Or not. How we respond can make the moment into a tearful, even angry, confrontation or a sweet transition into a new kind of magic.

How to Make the Transition

- It's important to **get clear about what the Santa story means to us.** One of the reasons the question is so hard to answer is that it doesn't really lend itself to an easy yes or no. There isn't a guy at the North Pole with a legion of elves making toys. But there is something important enough about the myth that for a couple hundred years adults have been conspiring to make it seem real. If we can get in touch with why we love the story so much, we can soften the revelation that Santa isn't real but what he stands for very much is.
- **When your child asks if there's really a Santa, it's important to think carefully about what he is really asking.** Does your child in fact want the



parents for having "lied" to them. They need help understanding that participating in a sweet story of childhood is not a fundamental betrayal of trust. Lies are intended to help someone get away with something they know they shouldn't do. Playing "let's pretend" about Santa is intended to make things fun. Still other kids break down in tears. They need comfort and reassurance that no Santa doesn't mean no Christmas.

Whatever the case, the first response is something to ride out with sympathy and understanding. Then it's our job to move past it to another level.

- **True:** St. Nick, Christmas Man, Grandfather Frost, Old Christmas Man, Christmas Brownie...
- **True:** This belief resulted from an old Ukrainian folk tale, which told the story of a very poor woman
- **True:** Frumenty was a spiced porridge, enjoyed by both rich and poor.

Rudolph Paper Cup Craft

What you'll need:

- 1 plastic, paper, or foam drinking cup
- Brown and pink acrylic paint
- 2 3"-square pieces of tan felt
- 2 medium wiggle eyes
- 1 medium red pom pom
- 2 black chenille stems
- Strip of felt to fit the inside rim of your cup
- White craft glue
- Black marker
- Scissors



How to make it:

1. Paint cup with brown paint and set aside to dry.
2. When paint is dry, stand cup upright and glue two wiggle eyes on the front of the cup, about halfway down from the rim.
3. Glue red pom pom on for the nose just above the bottom of the cup, centered under the eyes.
4. Use scissors to carefully poke a slit in both sides of the cup where you want the ears to go.
5. Roll one of the felt squares up like a cone; insert the pointed end into one of the slits on the cup. Repeat on other side. Secure felt to the cup with white craft glue.
6. Bend each chenille stem in half. Form chenille ends into antlers by creating a couple of bends on each one.
7. Glue strip on tan felt inside the rim of the cup, then immediately insert the antlers under the strip on each side. You may need to hold these in place for a few minutes until the glue grabs. You can also secure with clothespins.
8. Dip your fingertip in pink paint and dab the excess off onto a paper towel. Dot pink on for cheeks.

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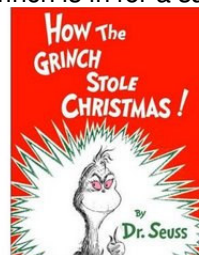
To: Ms. Erin's Lions

The Book Nook:

How the Grinch Stole Christmas

By: Dr. Suess

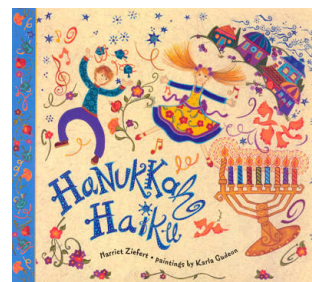
The Grinch *hates* Christmas, and wants to stop it from coming. So he forms a devious plan: to impersonate Santa Claus and to steal the Whos' Christmas presents. But come Christmas morning, the Grinch is in for a surprise.



Hanukkah Haiku

By: Harriet Ziefert

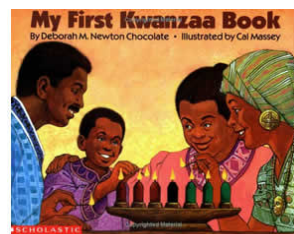
Hanukkah Haiku is one of the most joyous picture books about Hanukkah that I have ever seen. With a combination of poetry in the haiku poetic form and wonderful illustrations.



My First Kwanzaa Book

by Deborah Chocolate, Cal Massey (Illustrator)

During the last week of December, Kwanzaa is a time to dress up in African clothes and gather together with relatives from all over the country.



Lion Lowdown

December 2011

Imagination Learning Center

Editor: MS. ERIN

CLASS: Kindergarten Lions

Quiz: *What do you know... about Christmas?* (Answers on pg 3)

True or False: Santa Claus is know by different names all around the world.

True or False: In the Ukraine, if you find a spider web in the house on Christmas morning, it is believed to be a harbinger of good luck!

True or False: Christmas Pudding originates from an old, Celtic dish known as "Frumenty".

What to Expect in Kindergarten...

Lessons:

Sight words: **to, come, me, with, my**
Letter sounds
Weather
Different holidays
Different cultures
Math Stories
Numbers 6-10

Activities:

12/6 Great Zucchuni @ 10:30
12/9 Last drop off day for ONC gifts
12/16 Classroom Holiday Parties & Pajama Day
12/26 Center Closed
12/23-12/30 Curriculum Closed

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