



WINTER IN WISCONSIN



PINE CONE BIRD FEEDER: Make a tasty treat for your animal neighbors

MATERIALS PROVIDED IN THE BAG

- Pine cone
- String
- Birdseed

ADDITIONAL MATERIALS NEEDED

- Peanut or other nut butter
- Butter knife
- Wax paper, baking pan, or plate



Instructions adapted from: www.dnr.state.wi.us

1. Spread the nut butter inside the openings all around the center and bottom of the pine cone.
2. Spread bird seed on the wax paper, pan, or plate. Take the nut butter coated pine cone and roll it in the bird seed. You may also want to sprinkle seeds inside the openings.
3. If you don't want squirrels to eat from your feeder, measure the string to hang down at least 6 inches from the branch. Tie the string to the top of the pine cone and then to the tree branch.
4. Observe who visits the feeder. You can keep a journal and log the activity. Draw pictures of what the birds and animals look like. How long do you think it will take for all the birdseed to be eaten?

FOR CAREGIVERS: Making the feeder encourages fine-motor skill development. It also provides an opportunity to talk with your child(ren) about texture and smell. What does the nut butter smell like? How does the pine cone feel? Observing the feeder builds observation and prediction skills. You can also discuss how animals eat in the winter. For more information about animals in the winter visit the nonfiction +591s, or ask for recommendations at the Children's Desk.



BEADED SNOWFLAKE: Make a snowflake and strengthen your literacy skills by using the provided plastic pony beads and pipe cleaner pieces

Ask your caregiver to help you prepare the snowflake frame. Fold each pipe cleaner in half to find the middle, then unfold the pipe cleaners. Take two pipe cleaners and twist them together at the half way mark. Finally, add the third pipe cleaner by twisting around the spot where the first two are connected. Now, your frame is all set to add beads to!



Fine Motor Practice: If you are looking to practice your creativity, pinching and grasping skills, just add your beads to the frame as you wish to make a snowflake.

Counting: Practice placing a certain number of beads on each pipe cleaner. Can you put 4 beads on each? How about 5? After you finish putting beads on your frame, count how many total beads make-up your snowflake.

Patterns by Color: Try making a pattern with the different color beads. You could try alternating the colors to make an ABAB pattern, or you could alternate the color on each pipe cleaner. How many patterns by color can you make?

Pattern by Quantity: Alternate the amount of beads on each pipe cleaner. For example, 3 beads then on the next pipe cleaner 4. How many other patterns by quantity can you do?

To finish the snowflake, wrap the tip of each pipe cleaner around your finger to curl it and stuff the end back into the hold of the last bead. You can tie a ribbon to one of the ends to make a way to hang it.

Activity adapted from: earlylearningideas.com



FIND BLUE: *FOR CAREGIVERS:* Gather various blue objects in a container. Ask your child(ren) to tell you what the objects are and what color they are. After they connect that all of the objects are blue, have your child(ren) go around and gather items that are blue to add to the container.

Variations: Can you identify blue (or other color) objects as you go about your day?

This activity scaffolds the identification of colors in real objects. It also allows for gross motor activity as your child(ren) collect objects.

WHICH IS THE COLDEST?: Collect various objects. Try to find different textures and materials such as a cotton ball, paper clip, LEGO, or marble. You can also use some of the blue objects from the previous activity. Talk with your caregiver about the different textures. Do they feel soft or hard? Bumpy or smooth? Do they feel warm or cold? Place the objects outside or in a refrigerator/freezer for a few hours. Guess which object will be the coldest after sitting in the cold.

After letting the object get cold (or freeze) touch them and talk about how cold they feel. Do some feel colder than others? Which is the coldest? Do any still feel warm? Do you think the temperature of the objects will change when brought back inside?

FOR CAREGIVERS: This activity encourages your child(ren) to make observations about temperature and predict what will happen next. It also builds comparison skills.



ICE PENS: Use ice to write and draw

1. Either find an icicle outside, or make one! To make an icicle pour 3/4 cup of water into the ziplock baggie the beads were packaged in from the beaded snowflake activity. Put it in a freezer, or outdoors, and you should have an ice pen within a few hours. If it is frozen to the baggie, run warm water over the baggie until you can remove the ice.
2. Use the provided piece of construction paper to write or draw on.

FOR CAREGIVERS: This activity encourages early literacy by either writing or drawing. Touching ice also provides a sensory experience. You can also talk to your child(ren) about how water (liquid) turns into ice (solid) and have them predict how long it will take to melt again. For books about water visit +551.48 in the nonfiction section & for info about solids and liquids check-out the +530s.



SNOW PAINTING: Use the snow as a canvas to paint*. This activity can be done outside or snow can be placed in a large bin and brought inside.

Squirt a few drops of food coloring into a cup of water. The more food coloring used the more vibrant the colors will be. You can also use water colors and mix as the packaging directs.

Use droppers or paintbrushes to paint. Spatulas and spoons can be used to mix-up the snow. The snow will absorb the water and leave the color pigment on the surface of the snow!

You can paint a picture or experiment with mixing colors. What does combining blue with red make? What about yellow and blue? Can you figure out which colors to combine to make orange? Does packing the snow down versus leaving it fluffy make a difference when painting?

FOR CAREGIVERS: This activity provides a sensory experience for your child(ren). If your child is not familiar with snow or hesitate to play outdoors in the winter this activity can provide a way to for them to interact with snow in a fun way. Mixing colors provides an opportunity for your child(ren) to make predictions and develop color recognition skills.