

All About Winter



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What Happens in Winter?

Winter is one of the four seasons. It is the season that comes after fall.

Winter begins on December 21st and ends in March.



During the winter there is less sunlight, which means the days are shorter and colder than during any other season.

Most trees and plants stop growing in the winter.



Many animals hibernate.



Many festivals are celebrated during the winter including Christmas, New Year, Hanukkah, and Valentine's Day.

There are several outside activities that people enjoy in the winter season such as making snowmen, sledding, and ice skating. Cold weather and snow can be a lot of fun!



What Happens in Winter?

In winter the deciduous trees lose nearly all of their leaves. Tiny buds can be seen tightly wrapped together on tree branches. When the weather begins to warm in spring, the buds lengthen and begin to grow.



Evergreens keep their leaves. People bring evergreen trees inside and decorate them as Christmas trees.



What Happens to Animals in Winter?

The weather becomes much colder in the winter.

People can wear warm clothes and buy their food from stores.

This is not possible for animals, so how do they survive?

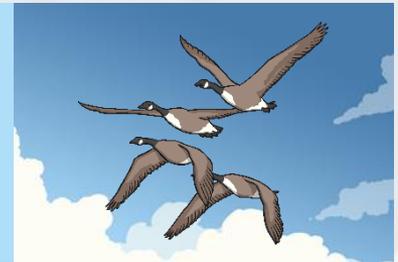
Hibernation:

Hibernation is the way that some animals survive through the winter. They find a safe place and fall into a very deep sleep. When the temperature is warmer, in the spring, they wake up again.



Migration:

Some birds fly south for the winter, where it is warmer. This is called migration. They go to a warmer place to find food.

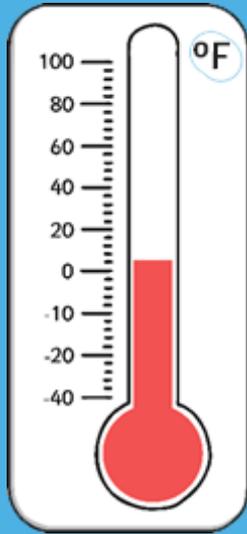


Adaptation:

Not all birds migrate - some stay in their homes all winter. People can help these birds by feeding them. Other animals stay active in winter such as squirrels, rabbits, and foxes. It is more difficult for them to find food. Some animals grow more fur in winter to help them stay warm.



Winter Weather



The temperature outside drops during the winter.



When the temperature outside becomes very cold, water freezes and turns to ice.

Staying Warm



To stay warm, people wear extra clothing such as warm coats, hats, scarves, and gloves.



To keep our houses warm we light the fire or turn on the heating system.

Winter Activities

Snow can be great fun. People take part in many activities such as building a snowman, having snowball fights, and sledding.



These sports all need snow:

- snowshoeing
- skiing
- snowboarding



Celebrations in Winter

Christmas

Many people around the world celebrate Christmas Day on December 25th. This is a time that Christians remember the birth of Jesus.

Many people decorate their houses with lights, Christmas trees, and decorations. Christmas cards are exchanged sending good wishes. Children look forward to a visit from Santa Claus on Christmas Eve. On Christmas Day presents are opened and family and friends often join together to share a special meal.



Celebrations in Winter

New Year

New Year's Day is the first day of the new year. It is celebrated as a holiday in almost every country in the world. It is a time of fun, remembering the past, and hoping for good things in the future.

Many people celebrate New Year's Eve by spending time with family and friends, eating, watching fireworks, and dancing.

In New York City, the Times Square Ball drops to welcome the New Year.



Celebrations in Winter

Hanukkah

Hanukkah is a Jewish winter holiday.

Hanukkah is the annual Festival of Lights which can occur from late November through late December. The date changes yearly as it follows the Jewish calendar.

The festival is a reminder of the recapture of a temple which had been taken from the Jewish people. When the temple was cleaned, the Ner Tamid, or everlasting light, was lit. But there was only enough oil to burn for one night. Eight days later the lamp was still lit. This was seen as a miracle, showing that God was on their side in the fight against evil.

Hanukkah is a time for family and friends to get together. There are special meals, songs, stories, and games. Food is cooked in oil to celebrate the miracle of the oil which burned in the temple.



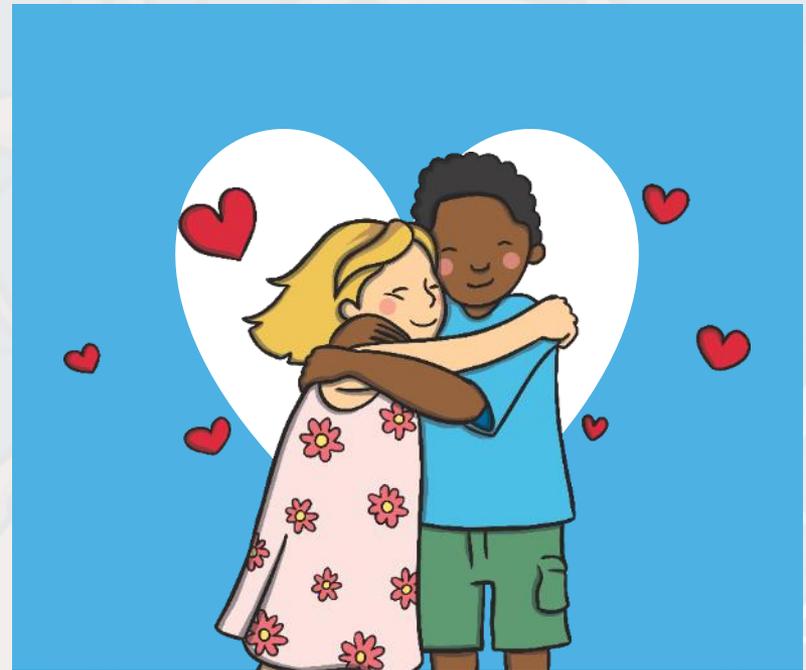
Celebrations in Winter

Valentine's Day

Every February, in many parts of the world, flowers, cards, and gifts are exchanged between loved ones, all in the name of St. Valentine. But why do we celebrate this holiday?

St. Valentine was a doctor and a Christian priest.

There are different versions of the Valentine's Day story. One version is that Valentine was loved so much by the children of the town where he lived that they wrote him notes telling him how much they liked him. People believe this is why Valentine's Day cards are exchanged today.





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