

## A Chilly Chick

### SCIENCE

Teach students about the life cycle of penguins.

#### National Standard

Science (NSES)  
Life cycle of organisms

#### Goal

Students will learn about the life cycle of penguins.

#### Objective

Students will be able to place four pictures in the correct order based on a story read aloud to them.

[www.weeklyreader.com/prek](http://www.weeklyreader.com/prek)

Find more penguin lesson ideas.

#### Literature Connection

- *Little Penguin: The Emperor of Antarctica*, by Jonathan London
- *Polar Opposites*, by Erik Brooks
- *Solo*, by Paul Geraghty
- *Tacky the Penguin*, by Helen Lester
- *Tony Baloney*, by Pam Muñoz Ryan

#### A Poem to Share

##### Silly Penguins

In their suits of black and white  
Penguins are a silly sight,  
Diving in the icy blue  
Or catching tasty fish to chew.  
Silly penguins love to go  
Waddling on the crunchy snow.  
Silly penguins slip and slide  
In a silly playful ride.  
Some chilly day why don't you  
Act like silly penguins too?

—Carol Quinn

#### Before Reading

**Set the Stage:** Encourage children to talk about penguins. Ask: What do you know about these birds? Explain that you will be reading about penguins. Invite students to think of questions they might have about the birds.

#### Background Information

- The emperor penguin is the largest penguin. Adults can grow to be about 4 feet tall.
- Emperor penguins eat mainly fish, squid, and crustaceans, which they catch in deep water.
- Emperor penguins can dive as deep as 700 feet and remain there for up to 18 minutes.
- Emperor penguins do not build nests, but they use their bodies to protect and warm their eggs and their young. They live in Antarctica. In May or June, which is midwinter in the Southern Hemisphere, the female lays a single egg. While the mother goes off in search of food, the male keeps the egg warm by placing it on top of his feet and covering it with a warm layer of feathered skin. He does not eat for nine weeks, when the mother returns.
- After the egg hatches, the mother penguin returns from feeding. The male then makes a long journey across ice to the sea to find food.

#### During Reading

**Think Critically:** Remind children that penguins are birds and that they hatch from eggs. Ask: What other animals hatch from eggs?

#### After Reading

**Draw Conclusions:** Explain that the penguin father holds the egg on his feet to keep it warm. Ask: Why might it be important for the egg to stay warm?

**Science Extension:** Demonstrate how penguins use blubber to stay warm. Fill a large bucket with ice and water. Invite children to put their hands in the water. Ask: How does that feel? Then coat the outside of a large zip-top bag with solid vegetable shortening, and put that inside another plastic bag. Seal the opening between the two bags with tape. Help one child put a hand inside the “mitten.” Encourage the child to put his or her hand in the water again. Ask: How does the water feel now? Explain that animals such as penguins have layers of fat like the fat inside the bag. That fat helps the animals stay warm. **Note:** Be aware of allergies.

**Gross Motor Skills Extension:** Review with children that emperor penguins care for their eggs by holding them on top of their feet. Give children small beanbags to represent eggs. Invite some children to place the beanbag eggs on top of their feet and carefully waddle around the classroom to find other “penguins.” Encourage children to pass the eggs to the other penguins.

**Adaptation:** Make the egg-balancing activity above more challenging by giving children golf balls instead of beanbags. The golf balls are smaller and will not stay in place as easily, making the activity more difficult but also more fun.

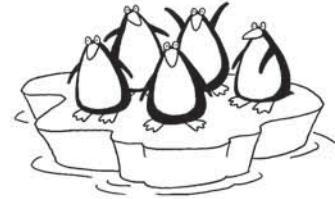
Name \_\_\_\_\_

## Fun With Poetry

Ask children to listen carefully as you read the poem. When you have finished, invite children to complete the activity below.

### Five Little Penguins

Five little penguins, standing on the shore,  
 One walked home, and then there were four.  
 Four little penguins, swimming in the sea,  
 One left to catch a fish, and then there were three.  
 Three little penguins, in water green and blue,  
 One took a dive, and then there were two.  
 Two little penguins, still having a lot of fun,  
 One swam away, and then there was one.  
 One little penguin, missing all his friends,  
 Swam back to shore to find them all again.



—Marie E. Cecchini

1. Circle the word **penguins** in the first line of the poem.

2. How many penguins are there at the beginning of the poem? **3 4 5**

3. What does one of the penguins leave to catch?



fish



mouse

Circle the picture of the penguin.

▶ TRY THIS



Patrick Girouard



Expose children to the celebrations of different cultures.

### National Standard

Social Studies (NCSS)  
Culture

### Goal

Children will learn about the different ways some holidays during the month of December are celebrated.

### Objective

Children will be able to count holiday cookies and answer math questions.

[www.weeklyreader.com/prek](http://www.weeklyreader.com/prek)

Find holiday crafts and other activity ideas.

### Literature Connection

- *Grace at Christmas*, by Mary Hoffman
- *Hanukkah Lights: Holiday Poetry*, selected by Lee Bennett Hopkins
- *Li'l Rabbit's Kwanzaa*, by Donna L. Washington
- *The Lonesome Dreidel*, by Arthur Feinglass
- *My First Kwanzaa*, by Karen Katz
- *Strega Nona's Gift*, by Tomie dePaola
- *Uno, Dos, Tres, Posada! Let's Celebrate Christmas*, by Virginia Kroll

### A Poem to Share

Holiday Candles

Candles standing straight and tall  
Waiting in a row.

The holiday is coming soon,  
Then they're going to glow.  
Light the candles one by one.  
What a pretty sight.  
Slowly getting shorter now,  
Glowing warm and bright.

—Sharon Siegelman

# Weekly Reader

December 2011/January 2012 • Teacher's Guide • [www.weeklyreader.com](http://www.weeklyreader.com) • Edition Pre-K

## Holidays Are Special

### SOCIAL STUDIES

#### Before Reading

**Tap Prior Knowledge:** Ask: Do you and your family celebrate any holidays in December? If so, which holidays? What kinds of things do you do to celebrate?

#### Background Information

- **Christmas** is a Christian holiday celebrated on December 25. Many people decorate Christmas trees in their homes with lights and other decorations, go to church, and sing carols.
- **Hanukkah** is a Jewish holiday that is celebrated for eight days. Each night, people light candles on a menorah, which is a candleholder with nine candles. This year, Hanukkah begins at sundown on December 20.
- **Kwanzaa** is a holiday celebrated by many African Americans from December 26 to January 1. Each night, people light candles on a kinara—a candleholder that includes seven candles: three red, three green, and one black.
- **Las Posadas** is a Mexican celebration that lasts nine days from December 16 to December 24. The word *posada* means “inn.” People act out the story of Joseph and Mary and their search for an inn by walking through neighborhoods carrying lights and knocking on doors. At the last house, they celebrate.

#### During Reading

**Make Connections:** Point to one of the photos in the issue. Ask: How are these people celebrating? How is what they are doing similar to or different from how you celebrate?

#### After Reading

**Think Critically** Assign each child a partner. It does not matter whether they celebrate the same holidays. Encourage them to find one thing that is the same about how they celebrate holidays.

#### Language Arts Extension:

Invite children to find objects in the photos that are mentioned in the text. Encourage volunteers to circle each object in the picture and its name in the text.

#### Mathematics/Art Extension:

Give children several small balls of clay. You may choose to provide them with specific colors if they are learning about a particular holiday. Invite each child to roll the balls into cylinders to make “candles.” Have children count how many candles they make. Help students count how many candles each table of children makes altogether.

#### Sensory Extension:

Display items such as evergreen branches, candles, and cookies. Ask children to describe how each item can be enjoyed through the senses. Invite children to draw pictures of the items and to list which senses a person would use to enjoy them.

**Adaptation:** Give students clay and cookie cutters to let children make “cookies.” This activity will give students opportunities to develop their fine motor skills as well as encourage creativity.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

# Listening Activity

This *Weekly Reader* listening activity is designed to help assess and improve children’s listening, recall, vocabulary, and comprehension skills.

**Directions:** Ask children to listen carefully as you read the story. Then read each question. Ask children to circle the correct picture answer.

## Mingo’s Holiday Card

Mingo is making a holiday card for his father.  
 He draws a picture of himself and his father.  
 He writes “Happy Holidays” on the card.  
 Mingo puts star-shaped stickers on the card.  
 He puts the card in an envelope.  
 Mingo gives the card to his father.  
 “Thank you, Mingo,” says his father.



1. Whom is Mingo making the card for?

his mother

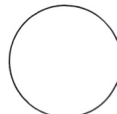
his father

his teacher

2. What shape are the stickers that Mingo uses?



square



circle



star

3. What does Mingo put the card in?



envelope



box



bag

4. Who says, “Thank you, Mingo”?

Mingo

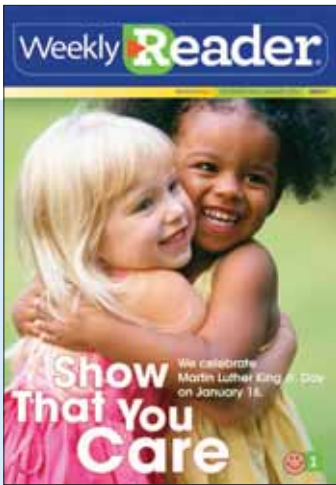
his father

his teacher

What did Mingo write on the card? Write the letter H to complete the words.



\_\_\_ a p p y    \_\_\_ o l i d a y s



## Show That You Care

### SOCIAL STUDIES

**Discuss the importance of caring.**

#### National Standard

Social Studies (NCSS)  
Civic ideals and practices

#### Goal

Children will learn about some of the different ways they can get along with others in the class.

#### Objective

Children will be able to identify the picture in each row that differs from the others.

[www.weeklyreader.com/prek](http://www.weeklyreader.com/prek)

Get more ideas for teaching about Martin Luther King Jr.

#### Literature Connection

- *The Colors of Us*, by Karen Katz
- *I Have a Dream*, by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.
- *Martin's Big Words: The Life of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.*, by Doreen Rappaport
- *My First Biography: Martin Luther King, Jr.*, by Marion Dane Bauer
- *My Uncle Martin's Words for America: Martin Luther King Jr.'s Niece Tells How He Made a Difference*, by Angela Farris Watkins

#### A Poem to Share

Dr. King  
Dr. King believed in our country,  
The land of the free.  
And that all the people here  
Should be treated equally.  
For you should not judge a person  
By the color of his skin.  
Instead, you should get to know  
The person that's within.

—Sheila Forsyth

#### Before Reading

**Think Critically:** What are some ways to be kind to other people? Why is it important to be kind?

#### Background Information

- On Martin Luther King Jr. Day, in January, we celebrate the birthday of a special leader.
- A long time ago, some people were treated unfairly. Martin Luther King Jr. wanted people to learn to treat one another fairly.
- He was living in Montgomery, Ala., when he started working for equal rights.
- King worked to teach people to solve problems without fighting, to help one another, and to share.
- In 1963, King gave a speech to many people in Washington, D.C. The title of his speech was "I Have a Dream." He spoke of his hope for a world of fairness for all people.
- He referred to Abraham Lincoln in that speech as a great American civil rights leader.
- King worked toward passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The act protects the rights of all people living in the United States.
- In 2012, Martin Luther King Jr. Day is celebrated on January 16.

#### During Reading

**Discuss:** Point to the picture of the children sharing the blocks.  
**Ask:** How are the children helping one another? Why might they be doing that? What do you think the children might say to one another?

#### After Reading

**Think Critically:** Invite each child to think of one way he or she has shown kindness to someone else. Ask children to share their stories.

**Language Arts/Arts Extension:** Read aloud the book *The Colors of Us*, by Karen Katz. Then place the following colors of tempera paint in the center of each table: red, yellow, black, and white. Explain to children that, as the story says, everyone can make his or her own skin color with those four colors. Invite them to experiment with colors to try to make their own skin colors on white paper. Then they can make their own portraits. Explain to children that although everyone's own paint looks a little different, they are all made from the same four colors.

**Social Studies Extension:** Create cards with pictures cut from magazines that show children in unfair situations (not sharing, not getting along, and so on). Encourage children to describe what is going on in each picture. Let children vote on whether they think the situation shown is fair or unfair. Ask them to explain their thinking. Help children brainstorm ways of solving the problem without arguing or fighting. Then let children role-play to practice peaceful conflict resolution.

**Adaptation:** To develop language skills, invite students to look at one of the pictures on the back page. Encourage a volunteer to tell a story based on the picture. Give each child a chance to tell a short story based on one of the pictures.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

# You Can Rhyme It!

Draw lines to connect the pictures whose names rhyme.



fox ●



● cake



goat ●



● box



snake ●



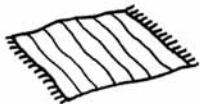
● bug



fan ●



● boat



rug ●



● ball



wall ●



● man

Which picture's name rhymes with **fair**?

TRY THIS



coat



blocks



chair

Patrick Gileward



# Weekly Reader®

December 2011/January 2012 • Teacher's Guide • [www.weeklyreader.com](http://www.weeklyreader.com) • Edition Pre-K

## Winter Playtime

### SCIENCE

Teach students about the many activities children can do in the snow.

#### National Standard

Science (NSES)  
Changes in Earth and sky

#### Goal

Students will learn about some of the activities children take part in when it snows.

#### Objective

Children will be able to identify the appropriate clothing for playing in the snow.

#### [www.weeklyreader.com/prek](http://www.weeklyreader.com/prek)

Find winter-themed activities to share with students.

#### Literature Connection

- *One Winter's Day*, by M. Christina Butler
- *Peter and the Winter Sleepers*, by Rick de Haas
- *Snow Happy!* by Patricia Hubbell
- *Snowbots*, by Aaron Reynolds
- *Winter Woes*, by Marty Kelley

#### A Poem to Share

##### Sliding

Hooray, hooray for frosty cold  
That brings the crunchy snow.  
Hooray! It's finger-tingly cold—  
Now over the snow we'll go.  
Puff, puff up the hill  
This is how we slide:  
We trudge, trudge up the hill  
Then down, down we glide.

—Connie Unsworth

#### Before Reading

**Activate Prior Knowledge:** Talk about winter weather in your area. **Ask:** What do you think about when you think of winter? Is winter weather the same everywhere?

#### Background Information

- Winter in the Northern Hemisphere begins around December 21 and lasts until about March 21. It occurs after autumn and before spring.
- In some parts of the country, winter weather can be cold, snowy, and icy. In the winter, some changes occur in the environment.
- In other parts of the country, the weather may still be warm during the winter months.
- Winter days have fewer hours of sunlight.
- Many plants and animals become dormant and rest. Some animals hibernate, while others adapt or migrate to warmer places.
- People wear layers of clothing to keep warm.
- Snow or ice can make traveling by car difficult, causing schools and businesses to close.
- Some people stay indoors to avoid the cold temperatures.
- Some people enjoy outdoor winter sports such as ice-skating, skiing, and sledding.
- Many doctors recommend that children wear helmets when engaging in winter activities such as sledding and ice-skating.

#### During Reading

**Reading Readiness:** Display the issue. Point out that you will begin at the front of the issue. Track text with your finger as you read. Continue with each page.

#### After Reading

**Think Critically:** Review that people who live in cold areas wear many layers of clothing to keep warm. **Ask:** What pieces of clothing might you need on a very cold day?

**Science Extension:** Fill your water table, and invite students to collect, pour, or measure water. Give students a small cup of clean water to taste, smell, and feel. Next, freeze water into cubes or other shapes. Help children see, taste, and feel water in its solid state. Students may be interested to know that water expands when it freezes. Boil water, and let students see the steam. Explain that steam is water vapor. Finally, ask children to think of kinds of wet weather (snow, rain, sleet, hail, fog) and to draw pictures of one or two examples on waterdrop-shaped pieces of paper. Bind the pictures into a class book called *Wonderful Water*.

**Adaptation:** Display the issue and use it as a guide. Ask children to act out different winter experiences. Invite children to pretend to be cold, to catch snowflakes, to build a snowman, and so on. They can also act out what animals do during winter. Children can pretend to hibernate or to migrate.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

# Build a Snowman

Look at the pictures below. Write the numbers 1, 2, 3, and 4 to put the pictures in the correct order.










Circle the two snow things.

TRY THIS



Patrick Girouard