



# WONDROUS WINTER

Long nights, cold days and the excitement of freshly fallen snow can inspire countless artistic opportunities in your setting, says Judith Harries...

**T**he season of winter provides a rich source of inspiration for artists of all ages. Famous artists and children can be equally excited by bare wintry trees, snowflakes, snow scenes and, of course, winter festivals such as Christmas and Chinese New Year. There are countless ideas that can be linked to the new EYFS expressive arts and design area of learning – and there's no need to wait until the snow is blanketing the ground to get started...

## DRAWING & WRITING!

### Wintry trees

Go outside with sketch books and charcoal. Look at the bare wintry trees and invite children to make sketches of their favourite

tree. Help them to emphasise the spikey shapes of the trees. Compare the thicknesses of the trunk with the branches and the twigs.

### A chalk in the snow

Let children use white chalk on black or dark blue paper to create pictures of snow. Try swirling snow flakes; fat, round snowmen; snowy laden trees and landscapes.

### A winter's walk

Go for a short walk in the local street or park and look at the winter trees, views, landscapes, etc. Take photographs of the different scenes. Let children choose a photo to copy. Provide small pieces of white paper and black pens for children to use. Make photo frames using strips of coloured card.

### Festive envelopes

Explain that at Chinese New Year, children receive gifts of money from their friends and family in festive red envelopes as this is considered a lucky colour. Help children to deconstruct an envelope to see how they are made. Create a template to make new envelopes using wrapping paper or sheets of red paper. Help children to fold and join the paper into envelopes. Let them write their name on the front. Later you can secretly fill them with a small gift for each child to celebrate a winter festival.

## PAINTING & PRINTING!

### Ice cube painting

Sprinkle different-coloured powder paint onto





### Festive gifts!

Celebrate the Christmas season with five festive gift packs, which include a bookmark, pencil and 25mm pin badge (suitable for 36 months plus), all for just £5.95, or individually for £1.25. Your children will love the snowman, tree, reindeer, angel and penguin designs! Visit [thestickerfactory.co.uk](http://thestickerfactory.co.uk) for more information.



paper. Let children use ice cubes on sticks or wear plastic gloves and hold loose ice cubes. Spread the ice cubes over the powder paint to create swirling patterns.

### Evergreen still life

Make an arrangement of evergreen plants in a glass vase. Use holly, ivy, other evergreen shrubs, grass, twigs, pine cones, etc. Ask children to paint pictures of the still life arrangements using shades of green, red and brown paints.

### Making icicles

Cut out some sharp, icicle-shaped pieces of card. Spread runny white paint along the top and then hang them up and watch the paint run down the icicles! Repeat with runny blue or silver paint. When dry, hang up around the room with snowflakes and straw flakes (see below) to create a wintry feel.

### Salty snow

Ask children to paint a picture of a winter landscape on pale blue paper. Use dark brown paint for trees and buildings, white paint for frosty ground, etc. Leave to dry until still tacky and then let children sprinkle snow all over the picture with a salt shaker!

### Fingerprint snow storms

Paint a picture of a bare winter tree using brown paint and thin paint brushes. Then add white snow all over the tree using fingerprints. Let children paint their own picture of a person, animal or building with the brown paint and then cover it in a fingerprint snow storm.

### Winter prints

Let children draw a winter scene on Styrofoam or polystyrene trays using a blunt pencil. Spread a small amount of ink on top of the tray using a roller. Turn the trays over and press down onto clean paper. Make repeat prints until the ink has dried up and then try again using a different colour ink.

### Christmas decorations

Provide some clean aluminium trays and help children use Christmas templates such as stars, moon, candles, snowmen and trees to cut out shapes. Place the shape on a chopping board and using a nail or hole punch make a hole at the top of the shape. Try using the nail to tap the foil and create indentations and patterns all over it. Hang the decorations on the Christmas tree.

## MAKING & MODELLING!

### Snowflakes

Cut folded paper circles or white plastic bags into snowflakes. Help children to fold the paper circles in half and half again. Use scissors to cut shapes along the folded sides. Unfold, sprinkle with glue and glitter and hang on windows around the room.

### Half rocking robin

Cover the back of a paper plate with brown paint and when dry fold in half so that the semicircle rocks back and forth. Paint on a red breast with red paint and add a yellow beak made from a diamond folded in half.

Stick on brown feathers as a wing and add googly eyes.

### Giant snowman

Work in a small group to create a giant sculpture of a snowman. Use a cardboard box or large tube as the body. Cover in crumpled newspaper and glue. Then wrap strips of white modroc around the finished shape. Make a big ball of newspaper and modroc for the head. Use a carrot for the nose, small pieces of coal for eyes, buttons down its front and add a knitted scarf and hat.

### Snowflake mobile

Use three equal lengths of white artstraws to create a model snowflake. Fasten the three straws into a six-pointed star shape using glue, staple or tie with cotton. Make different-sized snowflakes. Hang them off a metal clothes hanger using different lengths of string to create a pretty mobile.

### Popcorn treats

Make popcorn wreaths as treats for the birds. Cut the centre out of a paper plate to make a cardboard ring. Thread popcorn onto a long piece of dental floss and wrap it around the ring to create a wreath. Add a red ribbon and hang up outside for the birds to feed on during the cold winter months.

### Extreme play dough

Make some extreme white play dough: 2 cups of white cornflour, 1 cup of salt, 1½ cups of boiling water, 2 tbsp cream of tartar, 1 tbsp veg. oil, silver glitter. Mix together in a





## Inspirational images

### ABRAHAM TEERLINK



Look at Abraham Teerlink's painting *The Snowstorm*. Let children cut out the shape of winter trees, figures and buildings using black paper and stick onto a sheet of blue paper. Create the snowstorm using runny white paint splattered onto the paper using a toothbrush.

### ANDRIES VERMEULEN

*Winter scene with skaters* by Andries Vermeulen shows people skating on the frozen water. Let children cut out a frozen shape from silver paper and stick at the base of a piece of grey sugar paper. Use pens and ink to draw stick characters skating on their own frozen picture.

### CLAUDE MONET



Monet painted many pictures inspired by winter and snowy scenes. Let the

children look at a few of these, particularly *The Magpie* and *Houses in the Snow*. Talk about cold colours and let children select some to use – blue, white, grey, silver, etc. Ask them to paint a snowy scene using their chosen colours.

### STUSHIEART.COM

Go to [stushieart.com](http://stushieart.com) and look at examples of winter art such as *Winter shack* or *Amid the winter snow*, which use chalks on dark backgrounds. Let children use coloured chalks on black paper to create their own scenes. Can they make up titles for their artwork?

bowl until combined into dough. Let children use the snow dough to make snowmen and polar bears.

## Solid snowballs

Half fill empty balloons with some plaster of paris and fasten the balloon with a knot. When the plaster is starting to set, let children have fun moulding the material into a snowball shape. Leave to set for about four hours and then cut and peel off the balloon. Make and display a whole pile of snowballs, but don't try throwing them!

## EXTRA IDEAS! Ice candle

This is a fun activity for when the weather is very cold or freezing outside. Start with an empty ice cream container. Half fill with water and leave in the freezer until solid. Place a plastic cup in the middle, weighed down with glass marbles and then pour more cold water around the cup. Return to the freezer until set hard. Take out the cup and remove the ice block from the plastic container by dipping in hot water. Place a tea light inside the ice and light the candle. Watch as the heat melts the ice candle slowly. Place outside in the cold as it grows dark.

## Sweet snowflakes

Fold and cut shapes from a warm tortilla. Practise on paper first (see 'Snowflakes' above). Brush the snowflake with oil or melted butter and sprinkle on icing or Demerara sugar. Bake the sweet snowflakes for 5–10 minutes until brown and crispy. Share together at snack time.

## Snowstorms

Make a collection of small glass jars with lids such as baby food or herb jars. Stick a small plastic cake decoration or toy inside the base of each jar. Add some water and a few drops of glycerine, some desiccated coconut or silver glitter for snowflakes and secure the lid with glue. Let children shake their snowstorms gently and watch the snow swirl around the scene.

## Felt mittens

Help children to draw round their hands and make a mitten template. Cut out four of the shapes from felt and then decorate them by sticking on sequins, buttons and small pieces of different-coloured felt. Join the pieces into pairs of mittens using needle and thread. Model and marvel.

## Winter lanterns

Clean and dry empty cardboard milk or juice cartons. Carefully cut out different shaped windows up the sides. Make a hole in the bottom. Ask children to cover the outside in dark blue or red paint. Fill with some fairy lights and see how they shine through the open windows to create lanterns.

