

## Home Learning Challenge - Let's make snow!

Welcome back, everyone! It has been wonderful to have the children back with us, and to have heard all about their Christmas celebrations although we have noticed a common theme that the one thing missing from the children's Christmas celebrations was snow! They see it on all the Christmas cards, on all the TV shows and when you're so little it's hard to understand why the Christmas holidays are not spent building snowmen and ice palaces! So, we've decided to help, by showing you how you can bring snow inside and how it can help support development across the various areas of learning.

### Do you want to build a snow man?



Making snow really isn't tricky-all you need is baking soda and conditioner! Using a ratio of three parts baking soda to one part conditioner, all you need to do is combine the two ingredients together in a mixing

bowl. You can substitute the conditioner with shaving foam or water if you need to, although whatever wet ingredient you are using remember to add it slowly as you mix in order to keep the texture and consistency correct. If you want to make it extra exciting, you can add glitter or peppermint essence to the mix. You can even pop it in the fridge for a few hours before you play with it to give it a more realistic feel. This can then be used almost as playdough, to create your own snowmen. Encourage your child to roll and compact the snow together in their hands, just as they would when building a regular snowman. They can then add various household objects to decorate their snowman. If you want to add an extra science flair for your child, you can turn the activity into a snowman volcano! By

adding vinegar, a chemical reaction will be created between the vinegar and the baking soda which will cause the snowmen to fizz and melt. Once your child has figured this out, they will be occupied for hours! This activity is great because, like playdough, it really supports fine motor development. It also supports communication and language skills, as children will be eager to tell everyone about their melting experiment, and it is a wonderful way to help develop their vocabulary, as you can give them new words to describe what has been happening!

### **Crystal Snowflakes**

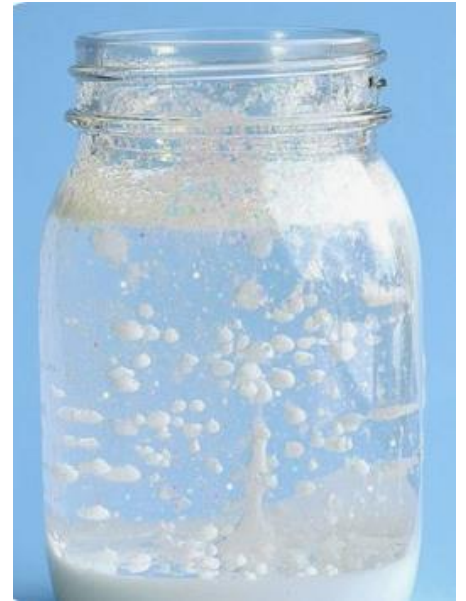
This activity requires a little more patience, but it really does pay off in the long run, and it helps to support children's understanding of the world as they gain knowledge of a change over a period of



time. Show your child how to make a basic snowflake shape using pipe cleaners, and then tie a string around the end of it. Next, heat about  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup of water, and add about  $\frac{1}{3}$  of a cup of Epsom salt, and mix until the salt has dissolved. Put your pipe cleaner snowflake in a shallow bowl, and then pour this solution on top, until the snowflake is completely covered. Next, pop them in the fridge for a few hours, removing them when the solution has set—you'll know they're ready because you will see crystals forming on them. Lift your snowflake out of the solution, and put them on a baking tray to dry. Your child can then explore them using magnifying glasses. If you're really gentle with them, they would also make a beautiful hanging decoration in your child's bedroom!

Snow Storm in a Jar

One way to help make sure your children aren't disappointed by the lack of snow is to teach them how to make their own snow storm! The budding Elsa's out there will love sharing her snow powers! For this activity, fill a jar about  $\frac{3}{4}$  to the top with baby oil (you can use cooking oil, but as baby oil is clear you will get a nicer result!) Then, to make the "snow" for your storm, mix a tablespoon of white paint with some hot water, and add this on top of your oil, leaving a little space in the top of the jar. If you want to add some glitter or food colouring, you can add this in at this stage too. Next, break up an alka-seltzer tablet, and let your child add it to the mix-and see what happens!



Have a great fake snow day everyone!