

**Panther Pathway:**  
**Family Connections for a Kinder World**

**Winter Edition**



**Panthers lead with heart - at school, at home, and in the world**

# A New Approach to 'Homework'

These optional activities are intended to promote joy, connection, and engagement during the winter months.

## Connection:

Strengthening relationships and emotional bonds.

- Share a Family Light Reflection: Dim the lights, light a flashlight & have each person name one thing they are looking forward to or grateful for this winter.
- Interview a Grandparent or Elder about their childhood winter traditions or favorite holiday memories.
- Choose a book or film featuring a Black historical figure, community leader, or fictional character that exemplifies values like perseverance, courage, community, or resilience. Discuss the character's challenges and triumphs.
- Discuss the values of characters in a story or film focused on themes of community, giving, or perseverance.
- Learn an Indigenous winter story or teaching and discuss its moral or message.
- Create a "Warmth Calendar" with one small act of generosity or comfort (e.g., making hot chocolate for someone, giving a genuine compliment) each day.
- Host a Family Game Night and focus on collaboration and positive communication rather than competition.

## Creation:

Expressing ideas through art, music, and imagination.

- Make "Snowflake Art" using paper cutting, or create winter scenes using cotton balls, paint, or glitter.
- Create a Family Vision Board for the coming year, showing shared goals and dreams.
- Cook a traditional winter or holiday recipe together from a culture different from your own (e.g., gingerbread, latkes, tamales).
- Paint or draw a symbol representing peace, resilience, or hope and discuss what it means to your family.
- Introduce symbols or artwork from Black history or culture that represent these values (e.g., the Sankofa bird, historical quilt patterns, or a powerful piece of protest art). Create your own art inspired by these themes.
- Write a short poem or song about the magic of snow, cozy moments, or the turning of the new year.
- Craft handmade greeting cards for friends or family, including a personalized message of appreciation.

## **Movement:**

Building wellness through physical activity.

- **Go on a Winter Scavenger Hunt:** Look for signs of wildlife, specific types of tracks in the snow, or winter berries in your neighborhood or local park.
- **Try a "Hygge" Stretching Session:** Do gentle, calming stretches indoors with warm blankets and soft, peaceful music.
- **Build a Snow Sculpture, Snow Fort, or Snowman together!** (If no snow, build a fort inside with blankets and pillows).
- **Learn a simple line dance or social dance that is often done at holiday gatherings** (like the "Electric Slide" or a basic polka) and try it together.
- **Bundle up and take a family walk to appreciate the quiet and the stars on a clear winter evening.**
- **Go sledding, ice skating, or try snowshoeing if local facilities allow.**

## **Reflection:**

Thinking deeply about feelings, experiences, and values.

- **Create a "Winter Wonderings" Journal Page:** Reflect on something you've learned about the changing season or your resilience this year.
- **Reflect on a time you were patient or had to wait for something—how did it feel, and what did you learn?**
- **Read a book about generosity, peace, or patience and talk about the message and how it applies to your lives.**
- **Explore an Indigenous teaching related to Stewardship during the resting winter season** (e.g., honoring the earth's sleep).
- **Share one thing you appreciate about the unique qualities each family member brings to the winter season.**
- **Think about a small change you'd like to make in the new year and why. How will that help you grow?**

## Exploration:

Discovering new ideas, cultures, and places.

- Read a book or watch a video about winter celebrations or traditions from a culture different from your own (e.g., Chinese New Year, Diwali, Kwanzaa, Christmas, Hanukkah).
- Learn a few basic phrases related to the season (like "Happy New Year" or "It's cold!") in a new language together.
- Explore how local plants and animals survive the winter through reading or nature observation.
- Visit the New Brunswick Black History Society Museum to learn about local Black history and excellence. Located on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of Brunswick Square.
- Visit a local library, museum, or art gallery to see an exhibit related to winter, history, or a culture different from your own.
- Try a new seasonal food like a specific winter squash, citrus fruit, or warm beverage from a culture other than your own.
- Research the history and origins of one of your own family's favorite winter traditions.

## Making a Difference:

Helping others and caring for the world.

- Organize a "Cozy Drive": Donate new or gently used hats, gloves, socks, or blankets to a local shelter.
- Make or decorate paper bags for a local food bank's holiday meal or distribution.
- Shovel a walkway or driveway for an elderly neighbour.
- Make a card or write a letter of appreciation for a community helper (like a postal worker or plow operator) who works hard in the winter weather.
- Volunteer as a family for a local winter-themed cause, such as bell-ringing or helping at a community meal.
- Bake some cookies or make a warm meal for a family that could use some cheer.
- Learn about a global issue that is heightened in winter (like homelessness or energy poverty) and brainstorm small, local ways to help.