



SCHOOL COUNCIL NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 2019 • VOLUME 42



December is a busy, but usually fun month for schools in Ontario.

This month's newsletter features an extensive article on "Celebrations Around the World" which captures the many ways that people celebrate their culture during these winter months. We hope that this will assist school councils to plan events that embrace all ethnic groups that make up your school community, making this time of year both inclusive and celebratory for all.

In addition, we are including some HOLIDAY MATH SHEETS for parents to share with their children to continue their learning during the holidays.

Lastly, we hope the ideas we are including for School Council topics during the month of December will be helpful to members in planning their last meeting of 2019!!

Parents Engaged in Education wish you a very happy holiday season, from our families to yours!!

Theresa Pastores

Executive Director,
Parents Engaged in Education

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Christmas Around
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CELEBRATE DIVERSITY

December is a great month to celebrate the diversity of your school community. Many cultures celebrate in a variety of wonderful ways during the month often referred to as the “Holiday Season”.

In this month’s Parent council topics and activities, we discuss the value of having a school event celebrating your school communities diversity. Taking advantage of not having a formal meeting scheduled this month. And lastly recognizing organizations with a thank you.

CELEBRATE DIVERSITY

December is a fantastic month to consider having a school event. Take this opportunity to feature an event that celebrates your school communities diversity. Create an event demonstrating how they celebrate this holiday season. In order to support this event, the school council could ask parents for feedback and ideas on putting together a celebration of each cultures diversity. Ideas for celebrating the event could include oral histories of the various different celebrations and how they are celebrated today. It is also a good idea for parent council to prepare a booklet. Remember to give to each individual who attends the event a copy or to send it home with students.

For some interesting information on the various ways holiday celebrations take place around the world, we encourage you to read the Christmas Around The World article starting from page 6.

RECRUITING NEW MEMBERS

A school council could use this activity to recruit parents from the various ethnic groups to participate on the school council. It is really important that all cultures are represented on school council. Remember their voice is important in providing input and planning. It is important to make all cultures feel welcome and included in our schools. If your school is struggling to build a multi-cultural school council, we encourage you to read our blog.

DECEMBER HAS OTHER BENEFITS AS WELL! USE THIS MONTH TO SOCIALIZE!

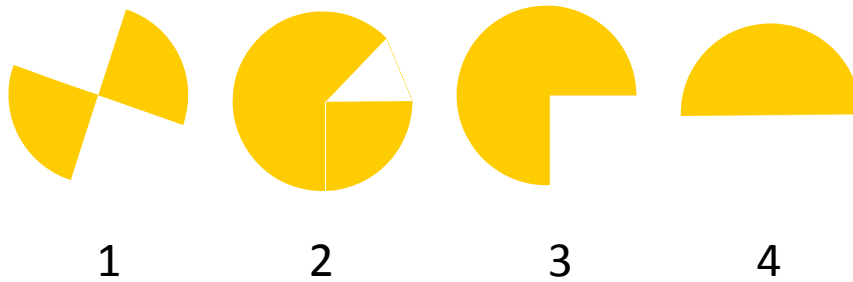
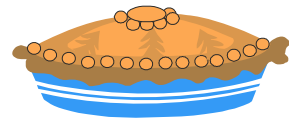
Since many councils may not have a formal meeting in December, consider hosting a teacher and volunteer Holiday Tea. This is a wonderful way to connect with volunteers and show your appreciation for their work. This is also an amazing chance to build good relationships with the educators in your school.

DON’T FORGET TO SAY THANK YOU

If your school council is partnered with any organizations, December is a good time to recognize their value. Sending a card signed by all members of the council will go a long way.

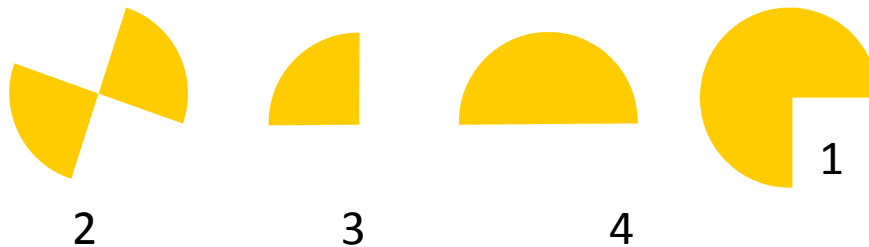
Christmas Fraction Word Problems

1. Ann baked a Christmas pie. She cut it into 8 equal pieces. She gave 2 pieces to Sam. Which graphic resembles the remaining pie?



Answer: _____

2. Which graphic resembles the portion which Sam has?



Answer: _____

3. Ann gave Tracy 3 pieces of the pie. What fraction of the pie did Tracy get?

Answer: _____

Holiday Math Worksheets from © www.MathWorksheetsLand.com

Solutions on page 13

The Monster Christmas Tree and Percentages

1. Greg bought a huge Christmas tree. He had to pay a 25% advance to reserve the tree. How much did he pay to reserve the tree if the cost of the tree is \$300?

Answer: _____



2. Out of a total of 2,000 boxes, 40% were red. 50% of the red boxes were sold.

- a. How many red boxes were sold?

Answer: _____

- b. How many boxes were not red in color?

Answer: _____



3. Tracy invited 60 people to her Christmas party. 12 people could not attend.

- a. What percentage did not attend the party?

Answer: _____

- b. Out of the people who attended the party, 12.5 % came late. How many people arrived on time?

Answer: _____

Holiday Math Worksheets from © www.MathWorksheetsLand.com

Solutions on page 13



Counting Presents



Santa asked his elves to count the presents as they put them in his sack. The elves have forgotten some of the numbers. Fill in the missing numbers.

1	2	3	4		6	7		9	10
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71	72	73		75	76	77	78		80
	82	83	84	85	86		88	89	90
91	92		94	95	96	97	98	99	



Solutions on page 13



Christmas Around THE WORLD

The holiday season is celebrated by a wide range of communities in the multi-cultural rich country. This article is to briefly describe how the holiday season is celebrated around the world.



CANADA

With a population that is made up of people from many different cultural backgrounds, there are many different types of celebrations that take place. Many of the traditions and celebrations come from French, English, Irish, Scottish and Native/First Nation influences as these were among the first to call Canada home.

Fun facts:

- Canadians like to decorate their homes with Christmas trees, lights and other seasonal items.
- With the winter weather many Canadian's ski, toboggan, skate etc. during the Christmas holidays
- Turkey, Stuffing, Mash Potatoes, vegetables are among the specialties at a "traditional" Christmas meal.
- The Santa Claus Parade in Toronto is one of the oldest and largest street parades in the world. It started in 1913 and is broadcast around the world.



AUSTRALIA

With this country experiencing the complete opposite weather as Canada, their Christmas is actually celebrated at the beginning of summer!!

Fun facts:

- Australians often go house to house singing carols on Christmas Eve.
- They decorate their houses with bunches of Christmas Bush, a native tree of small green leaves and small cream flowers.
- In each state capital city there are large groups of carolers who sing in a candlelight ceremony.
- Australians love to put on Christmas pageants in halls, parks or take part in parades and firework displays.
- On Boxing Day most people go out and have barbecues and swim at the beach.



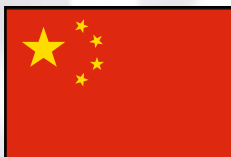
BELGIUM

Children in Belgium believe that “Saint Nicholas” brings them presents on December 6th, which is St. Nicholas Day.

In Belgium there are 3 different official languages, Flemish (Dutch), French and German. This means that saying Merry Christmas might be heard as “Vrolijk Kerstfeest” in Flemish, “Joyeux Noel” in French and “Frohe Weihnachten” in German.

Fun facts:

- Children put their shoes in front of the fireplace, together with some treats for Sinterklass.
- Sinterklass arrives on a horse and comes down the chimney to leave presents in the shoes.
- Just like in Canada, Sinterklass keeps a book with a list of all the children who have been “naughty” or “nice”.
- The visit of “Sinterklass” is a separate occasion than Christmas which is more of a religious festival.



CHINA

There is only a very small percentage of the population in China that celebrate Christmas. Because of this it is often the case that you will only see any kind of celebrations in the largest cities.

In Chinese Happy/Merry Christmas is “Sheng Dan Kuai Le in Mandarin and “Seng Dan Fai Lok” in Cantonese. There are other regional languages which have their own unique way of expressing this greeting.

Fun facts:

- Santa Claus is called “Shen Dan Lao Ren”
- If there are Christmas trees they are usually plastic.
- A tradition of giving apples on Christmas Eve is becoming more and more common.

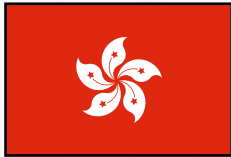


EGYPT

Only about 15% of Egyptians are Christians and they are the only part of the country that celebrate Christmas. Most Egyptian Christians belong to the Coptic Orthodox Church and they have their own very unique traditions to celebrate:

Fun facts:

- Christmas Day is celebrated on January 7th, not December 25th.
- The Coptic month leading up to Christmas is called “Kiahk”.
- For 43 days before Christmas, Coptic Orthodox Christians do a special fast where they basically eat a vegan diet.
- Although not many Egyptians celebrate Christmas as we know it, most celebrate it as a secular holiday.
- In Egypt, Santa is known as “Baba Noel” (Father Christmas)
- In Arabic, Happy/Merry Christmas is “Eid Milad Majid” which means “Glorious Birth Feast”
- “Christmas” in Arabic is “eld almilad”



HONG KONG

Chinese Christians celebrate Christmas with church services in their native Chinese. At most Anglican churches, some of the services are offered in English because of the number of Europeans who work and live in Hong Kong.

Fun facts:

- Poinsettias and nativity scenes decorate homes, churches and other places.
- In Hong Kong, Santa Claus, is known as “Sing Daan Lou Yan” (Christmas Old Man) in Cantonese
- At this time of year Hong Kong celebrates “Winterfest”, a huge winter party. This is also famous for its New Year’s countdown and displays of lights and fireworks are seen all over the city.



JAMAICA

Christmas is a very special time in Jamaica and is celebrated by the majority of the population.

Fun facts:

- People might paint their houses and hang new curtains and decorations to celebrate Christmas.
- The main Christmas meal is usually served on Christmas Eve.
- A traditional meal might include fresh fruits, meat, salt fish, fried plantains, boiled bananas and freshly squeezed fruit juice or tea. An afternoon meal may include chicken, curry goat, stewed oxtail, rice and peas.

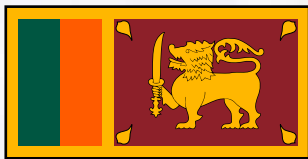


TRINIDAD & TOBAGO

Christmas is a time of great celebration in Trinidad and Tobago with people having parties and celebrating with family, friends and neighbours.

Fun facts:

- Radio stations play Trinidadian Christmas carols and songs as well as carols from the US.
- Most people paint and make repairs to their homes. They often hang new curtains and lights to celebrate the season.
- The Christmas day meal is usually prepared throughout Mid-December and sometimes into the new year.
- New Year's Eve is known as "Ole year's night" in Trinidad, and like in Canada people like to let off fireworks to celebrate the New Year.



SRI LANKA

Sri Lanka is a mostly Buddhist country with only 7% of people who are Christians. Christmas is celebrated as a public holiday by everyone.

Fun facts:

- Christians in Sri Lanka, the Christmas season starts on December 1st and people let off fire crackers at dawn.
- The Christians go to midnight mass all over the country.
- Merry Christmas is "Suba Naththalak Wewa" in Sinhala, which is spoken in Sri Lanka.



ZIMBABWE

Most people in Zimbabwe go to Christmas services first thing in the morning on Christmas Day. After church people party in their homes and often people go house to house, visiting friends and family.

Fun facts:

- Everyone wears their best clothes on Christmas and this may be the only time of the year they get new clothes.
- Children believe that Santa Claus brings their presents in the morning so they can show their friends at Church or at one of the parties they will attend.
- The special food eaten at Christmas is chicken with rice. Chicken is actually very expensive in Zimbabwe and is a luxury enjoyed at Christmas.

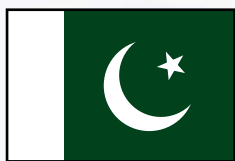


MEXICO

Christmas is celebrated from December 12th to January 6th. From December 16th to Christmas Eve, children will perform the “Posada” processions. “Posada” is Spanish for Inn or Lodging. There are nine Posadas. These celebrate the part of the Christmas story where Joseph and Mary looked for somewhere to stay. During this time, houses are decorated with evergreens and paper lanterns.

Fun facts:

- Nativity scenes are one of the most popular decorations in Mexico and are known as “nacimiento”. They are often life size figures.
- Christmas Eve is known as “Noche Buena” and is a family day.
- Midnight Mass is popular around the country and is known as “Misa de Gallo”
- There are lots of fireworks on Christmas Day.
- Pointsettia flowers are known as “nochebuena” (Christmas Eve) flowers in Mexico.
- Some children believe that Santa Claus comes on December 24th, however in the south of Mexico most expect presents on January 6th at the Epiphany, which is know as “el Dia de los Reyes”.



PAKISTAN

In Pakistan, December 25th is a public holiday, but it is in memory of Jinnah, the founder of Pakistan. Christians make up a very small part of the population. Most Christians in Pakistan live in the country and are quite poor.

Fun facts:

- Christmas is celebrated with a big procession that takes hours to reach the Cathedral to begin the services.
- Christmas is known as “Bara Din” which in Urdu and Punjabi means the “big day”.
- Christian areas will see houses decorated and with a star on the roof.
- The Christmas tree is an important decoration.
- In Pakistan, Santa Claus/Father Christmas is know as “Christmas Baba”.



PHILIPPINES

Christmas is a long and festive season in the Philippines. Indeed it is not unusual for carols to begin being played in September. Most Filipinos are Christians with about 80% of the population being Catholic. It is the only Asian country with so many Christians.

Fun facts:

- Christmas traditions in the Philippines are a mixture of western and Filipino customs.
- “Parol” is a Christmas tradition which is a bamboo pole or frame with a lighted star lantern on it. This is the most popular decoration in the Philippines.
- Most homes have a big open house to welcome family and friends and this is known as “Noche Buena”.
- Merry Christmas is said in eight different ways according to the 8 major languages. A couple of interpretations are; “Malipayon nga Pascua” in Sugbuhanon, “Maugmang Pasko” in Panglatok .



INDIA

Christmas is actually quite a small festival in India, compared to other religious festivals due to the fact that only 2.3% compared to people who belong to other religions.

Fun facts:

- In Hindi Happy/Merry Christmas is “Subh krisamas”, in Urdu it’s “Krismas Mubarak”, in Sanskrit it’s “Krismasasya shubhkaamna”, in Tamil it’s “kiristumas valttukkal”, in Telugu it’s “Christmas Subhakankshalu” and there are many other languages in India which have their own expressions for Merry Christmas.
- Instead of a Christmas tree, a banana or mango tree is decorated.
- Sometimes people use mango leaves to decorate their home.
- In India, Father Christmas or Santa Claus delivers presents to children from a horse & cart.
- Santa is known as “Christmas Baba” in Hindi, “Baba Christmas” in Urdu, “Christmas Thaathaa” in Tamil and “Christmas Thatha” in Telugu

HANUKKUAH

The Jewish population do not celebrate Christmas, but, do celebrate this festive season known as Hanukkuah.

Hanukkah is celebrated around the world for eight days and nights.

Hanukkah celebrates the victory of the Maccabees or Israelites over the Greek-Syrian ruler, Antiochus about 2200 years ago.

A Menorah is a special nine-branched candelabrum, also known in Hebrew as a Hanukiah.

Each night of Hanukkah, an additional candle is placed in the Menorah from right to left, and then lit from left to right. On the last night, all the candles are lit.

A dreidel, or sivion is a four-sided top that has a Hebrew letter on each side.

Traditionally, Hanukkah is a time when children are encouraged and rewarded for their Torah studies. Consequently, it became fashionable to give the children Hanukkah money and presents during the holiday.

Hanukkah is celebrated in the home beginning on the 25th day of the Jewish month of Kislev.

ABORIGINAL CELEBRATIONS

From *Christmas.LoveToKnow.com*, the following list is a small sample of Native American Christmas traditions observed by some tribes.

THE HANDSOME FELLOW

Many cultures have a “friendly figure” who treats children to candy and gifts during Christmas. For many Native Americans, this gentleman is known as the Handsome Fellow.

Legend refers to a Creek leader named Chief Hobbythacco, which translates to English as ‘handsome fellow.’ He was part of the diplomatic efforts in Colonial America and would bestow other tribal chiefs with gifts to share among their people. Some Native Americans encourage children to believe that the Handsome Fellow is responsible for leaving presents on Christmas Day, while others believe Santa comes to visit.

THE WINTER SOLSTICE

The Winter Solstice has always been a reverent period for Native people all over the world during the Christmas season. It’s a time to offer gratitude, honour family and ancestors, and follow a ritual observance of beliefs.

RELATED Solstice Show: Last Meteor Shower of Year Ushers in Winter

The fact that Theological historians also place significance on this same time period for the date of Christ’s birth makes the Solstice a vital component in holiday celebrations. A few days before Solstice, members of some tribes make prayer sticks in honour of an ancestor or native deity. They plant the sticks during a ceremony on the Solstice.

Check various American Indian museums in the U.S. for Solstice celebrations. Many state

museums, as well as the National Museum of the American Indian in Washington, D.C. hold events.

DANCING

Numerous Native American tribes host dances on Christmas Eve or Christmas Day. Celebrations can include a manger scene and a recreation of the Wise Men offering gifts to the Christ child.

Some Natives observe the similarity between the Chiefs of the Great Nations and the Wise Men; and the act of bestowing gifts onto the newborn babe to that of the Great Thunderbird offering gifts to braves in the fields.

READ MORE AT:

<http://indiancountrytodaymedianetwork.com/2013/12/25/native-traditions-celebrate-christmas-day-152863>

This is just a quick overview of some of the cultures that make Canada so rich. We hope that you will share this with your parent community and encourage them to talk about how Christmas is celebrated around the world with their children, so they have a better understanding of how other students in their school will celebrate this holiday season.

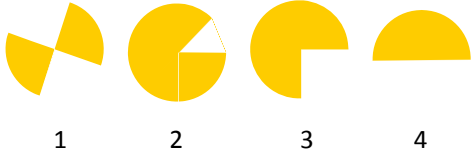
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SOLUTIONS

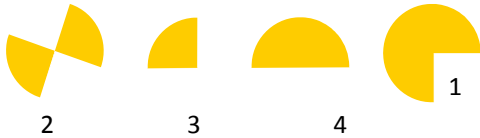
Fractions- Answer

1. Ann baked a Christmas pie. She cut it into 8 equal pieces. She gave 2 pieces to Sam. Which graphic resembles the remaining pie?



Answer: 3

2. Which graphic resembles the portion which Sam has?



Answer: 2

3. Ann gave Tracy 3 pieces of the pie. What fraction of the pie did Tracy get?

Answer: $3/8$

Percentage- Answer

1. Greg bought a huge Christmas tree for which he paid a 25% advance. How much should he pay now if the cost of the tree is \$300?



Answer: \$225

2. Out of a total of 2,000 boxes, 40% were red. 50% of the red boxes were sold.

- a. How many red boxes were sold?

Answer: 400 red boxes

- b. How many boxes were not red in color?

Answer: 1200 boxes



3. Tracy invited 60 people to her Christmas party. 12 people could not attend.

- a. What percent did not attend the party?

Answer: 20%

- b. Out of the people who attended the party, 12.5 % came late. How many people arrived on time??

Answer: 42

Counting Presents



Santa asked his elves to count the presents as they put them in his sack. The elves have forgotten some of the numbers. Fill in the missing numbers.



1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
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91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	100

ORGANIZATIONS THAT SUPPORT PARENT ENGAGEMENT AND SCHOOL COUNCILS IN ONTARIO

Do you know who does what in education?

Various stakeholders play a role in your child's education. Learn more about:

- the Ministry of Education
- the Ontario College of Teachers
- school boards
- principals
- teachers
- and more!

Download our infographic at oct-oeo.ca/whodoeswhat



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Teachers

Setting the
Standard for
Great Teaching



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Don't hire a tutor!

Contact us to get
your child help at school.



Make a Difference

You can make a difference in your child's future. The **Talk With Our Kids About Money** program uses fun activities to engage kids in discussions about money matters that are relevant to their lives. Free resources to help - organized by the age of your child.

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CFEE CANADIAN FOUNDATION FOR ECONOMIC EDUCATION
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Resources are available at **no cost** via the website go to:
talkwithourkidsaboutmoney.com



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A P.E.I.E. Ambassador will...

Promote the mission of the organization.

Share the organization's resources with their school community.

Work to engage other parents with their children and their school.

Be their child's biggest CHEERLEADER in school!

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www.parentsengagedineducation.ca

info@parentsengagedineducation.ca

647-408-2091

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