



# ELEMENTARY LIBRARY IDEAS FOR DECEMBER

## Idea #1: Engage Students with Research Task Cards

by Sonya Dykeman (The Library Patch)

Need a little something to keep those older kiddos focused during "that time of year"?

These research task cards may be just what you need. Each of the twenty cards has a December fact (not all holiday related) that is accompanied by three questions.

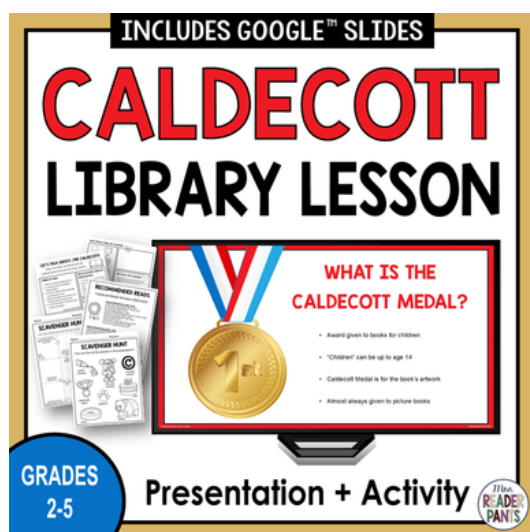
These task cards are perfect for practicing keyword search in your chosen online encyclopedia.

(See these [Research Task Cards from The Library Patch](#).)



## Idea #2: Get Students Excited About the Caldecott

by Leigh Collazo (MrsReaderPants)



Need a library lesson for December or January?

This Caldecott Medal Library Lesson introduces students to the Caldecott Award and Honors, eligibility requirements, and who chooses the winners.

Includes fun facts, trivia questions, vocabulary, sign language, and more!

(See this [Caldecott Award Library Lesson from MrsReaderPants](#).)

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## Idea #3: Decorate a Reading Cookie - FREEBIE



by Cari White (Library Learners)

Your students can decorate a cookie like their favorite book character as a sweet way to celebrate reading this month!

([See this freebie from Library Learners](#))

### Favorite New Book Releases

by Leigh Collazo (MrsReaderPants)

**PreK-Grade 5** **New Books released in November**

#### PICTURE BOOKS

- *At Our Table* by Patrick Hulse
- *Coming Home: A Hopi Resistance Story* by Mavasta Honyouti
- *I Know How to Draw an Owl* by Hilary Horder Hippely
- *Narwhal: Unicorn of the Arctic* by Candace Fleming
- *Santa's First Christmas* by Mac Barnett
- *There's a Ghost in the Garden* by Kyo Maclear
- *ARTificial Intelligence* by David Biedrzycki
- *The One & Only Googoosh: Iran's Beloved Superstar* by Azadeh Westergaard
- *Eli and the Uncles* by Jehan Madhani

#### CHAPTER BOOKS / NOVELS

- *Let It Snow* by Marissa Meyer and Joanne Levy
- *Swing* by Audrey Meeker
- *Mishka* by Edward van de Vendel and Anoush Elman
- *V. Malar: Greatest Host of All Time* by Suma Subramaniam
- *The Best Friend Bracelet* by Nicole D. Collier
- *The Great Lakes: Our Freshwater Treasure* by Barb Rosenstock
- *Beware the Dragon and the Nozzlecock* by Vikram Madan
- *All the Best Dogs* by Emily Jenkins

### But WHYYYY? Kids' Questions About Holiday Traditions...answered!



This is a great collection of links to bookmark on your library website! It includes loads of "why" style questions about December holidays in multiple countries, an Advent Calendar of trivia questions (unlocks one day at a time), a site to watch some relaxing snow, and much more!

## Idea #4: Learn Why NORAD Tracks Santa!

by Julie Olson (That Library Girl)

How did an authentic government agency (shared by the US and Canada) end up in the business of tracking Santa Claus on Christmas Eve?

Learn the back story and how to use this book as a catalyst for a service project/library center! (Includes access to a FREEBIE!)

(Read this article from That Library Girl)



## Idea #5: Energize Your Holiday Storytime!

by Laura Trapp (The Trapped Librarian)



Keep your lessons engaging during a hectic month! These activities for K-2 classes include suggested holiday-themed songs, a book review activity, *Polar Express* and *Night Before Christmas* Bingo, a fun scavenger hunt and more.

Use the suggested Christmas books or your own favorite December reads and your library will be charged with energy!

(See this Holiday Storytime from The Trapped Librarian)

## Check out the research activities from National Geographic Kids

National Geographic Kids' "Celebrations" page includes links to Hanukkah, Christmas, Kwanzaa and more. Perfect for short research activities!



# Idea #6: Search and Research Holiday Words - FREEBIE

by Sonya Dykeman (The Library Patch)

Students will have fun finding fifty words associated with, not only Christmas, but Hanukkah and Kwanzaa in this December Holiday Wordsearch!

After searching for the words in the puzzle, challenge students to research the words so they can sort them into their correct December holiday.

(See this holiday-themed freebie from The Library Patch)



## PICTURE BOOKS TO CELEBRATE HANUKKAH



- *Little Red Ruthie: a Hanukkah Tale* by Gloria Koster
- *Hanukkah Haiku* by Harriet Ziefert
- *The Hanukkah Hop* by Erica Silverman
- *Hanukkah Upside Down* by Elissa B. Weissman
- *A Dragon for Hanukkah* by Sarah Mlynowski
- *Gingerbread Dreidels* by Jane Breskin Zalbin
- *Mendel's Hanukkah Mess-Up* by Chana and Larry Steifel
- *Queen of the Hanukkah Dosas* by Pamela Ehrenberg
- *Oskar and the Eight Blessings* by Richard Simon and Tanya Simon
- *Meet the Latkes* by Alan Silberberg
- *The 9 Candles of Hanukkah Tell the Tale* by Noah Press
- *The Parakeet Named Dreidel* by Isaac Bashevis Singer
- *Hanukkah Bear* by Eric Kimmel
- *Uri and the King of Darkness: A Hanukkah Story* by Nati Bait
- *Eight Nights of Lights: A Celebration of Hanukkah* by Leslie Kimmelman
- *Latkes and Applesauce: A Hanukkah Story* by Fran Manushkin
- *Hanukkah Pajamakkahs* by Dara Henry
- *Dino-Hanukkah* by Lisa Wheeler
- *Hanukkah at Valley Forge* by Stephen Krensky



## Idea #7: Ring in the New Year, Sans Laminator

by Leigh Collazo (MrsReaderPants)



Are you a school librarian tasked with laminating everything for the entire school? In this article, I make the case that no certified, degreed school staff should be forced to laminate items for the entire school. That includes librarians!

If you want to kick the laminator to the curb, send this article to your building administrators to show how this practice is a waste of valuable school resources and certified personnel.

[\(Read the full article from MrsReaderPants\)](#)

## Idea #8: Set Up Some Holiday Library Centers

by Cari White (Library Learners)

Christmas library centers will help your students stay engaged in active learning in December, when their energy level is high and schedules and special activities might be interrupting your regular library lessons.

[\(Continue reading this article from Library Learners\)](#)



### [13 Kid-Friendly Hanukkah Crafts](#)

Hoping to do some Hanukkah holiday crafts with students this year? From dreidels to menorahs, these 13 Hanukkah crafts for kids will help light up the holiday season.

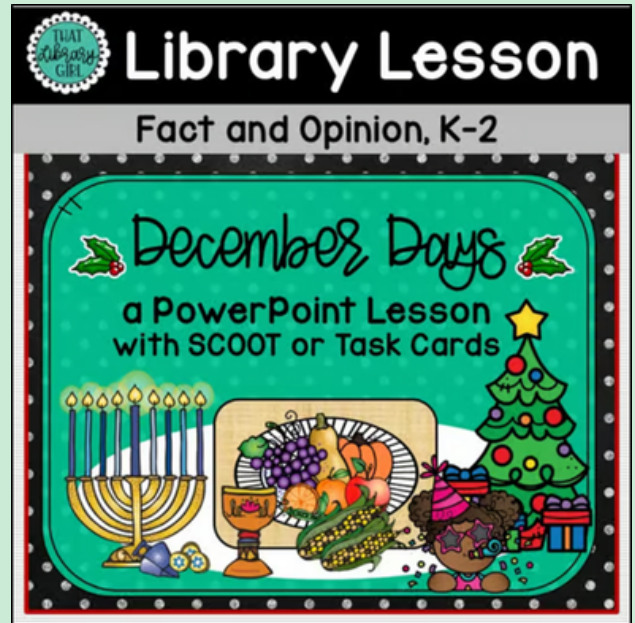


## Idea #9: The Facts & Opinions of December Days

by Julie Olson (That Library Girl)

Many diverse December holidays are represented in this K-2 lesson that targets the differences between facts and opinions -- and also models how to think through the evidence to back up what you think!

(See this library lesson from That Library Girl)



## Idea #10: Research the Holidays (with Flexibility)

by Laura Trapp (The Trapped Librarian)



Keep your December lessons meaningful but flexible with these tips for mini holiday research projects.

A fun, simple way to review research skills during a busy time!

(Read the full article from The Trapped Librarian)



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# Idea #11: Decorate the Library for the Holidays

SLJ article submitted by Sonya Dykeman (The Library Patch)

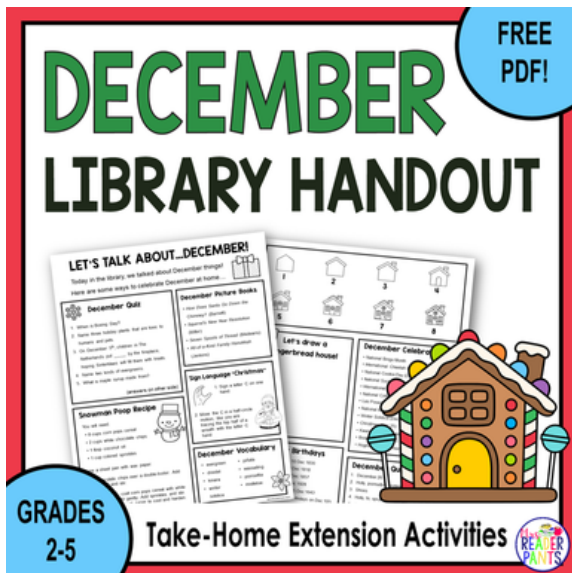
Decorating the library for the holiday season may seem daunting, but these 10 book holiday displays may help put you in the right mood!

(See these display ideas from *SLJ*.)



# Idea #12: Celebrate Lesser-Known Holidays - FREEBIE

by Leigh Collazo (MrsReaderPants)



This December Library Handout Freebie can be used alone or with December Holiday library lessons and activities.

It includes a December quiz, how to draw a gingerbread house, recommended December picture books, a recipe, and December celebration dates.

([Download this freebie from MrsReaderPants](#).)

## Don't forget the Yule log!

December is a great time to keep the fireplace burning on the big screen as your students read and look for library books. The cozy atmosphere can calm your classes during this hectic season.



# Idea #13: Create and Review with Ornaments

by Cari White (Library Learners)

## CHARACTER & SETTING



## ORNAMENTS K-5

by Cari White

Have fun this month creating ornaments for character and setting.

You'll end up with a festive bulletin board and a great review of reading comprehension skills!

(See this activity in the [Library Learners shop](#)).

## LIBRARIAN VIDEOS WE ❤️ ❤️ ❤️

Here are some great finds for December! Links are in the titles and on the images.



### Meet the Latkes Video Read-Aloud

When Grandpa (a Latke) and Applesauce (the dog) argue a bit over the true story of Hanukkah, it takes a bit before Lucy gets the facts straight in this YouTube read-aloud!

### Christmas Traditions from Multiple Countries (5 min)

Do your students learn about Christmas around the world? This 5 minute video shares traditions from Denmark, Ethiopia, the Philippines, Italy, Germany and more!



### 4 Facts to Know About Reindeer (4 min)

Four fun facts about reindeer for kids! Are reindeer and caribou the same animal? Where do they live? How do they find food in winter? How do they stay warm? Why do they migrate?



## Idea #14: Add a BRAVO Board to Your Library

by Julie Olson (That Library Girl)

Combine an over-the-door shoe organizer with a big bag of “warm fuzzies” to promote better behavior in your library!

This FREEBIE provides a banner, similar to the one pictured, as well as instructions for setting up this simple behavior management bulletin board!

(See this FREEBIE from That Library Girl)



## Idea #15: Host an Hour of Code Dec 9-15 - FREEBIE

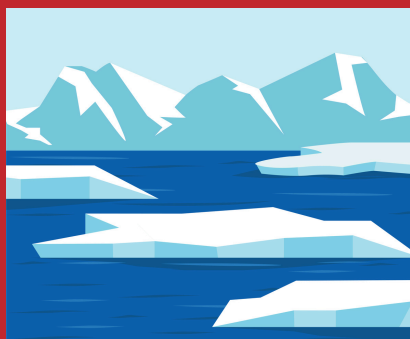
by Laura Trapp (The Trapped Librarian)



Host an Hour of Code during Computer Science in Education Week (Dec. 9-15)!

Download these free bookmarks and tips for coding in your library classes.

(download this freebie from The Trapped Librarian)



### [A Walk in the Arctic for Kids \(4 min\)](#)

What is life like in the Arctic tundra? What kinds of animals live there? Why is there so much ice?

Animals include: beluga whales, seals, Arctic foxes, snowy owls, Arctic hare, Arctic wolves, and polar bears.

# Happy Holidays



...from all of us at the Elementary Library  
Ideas Newsletter! We'll see you in 2025!

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