

The H.O.T. Spot

By Jason S. McIntosh, Ph.D.

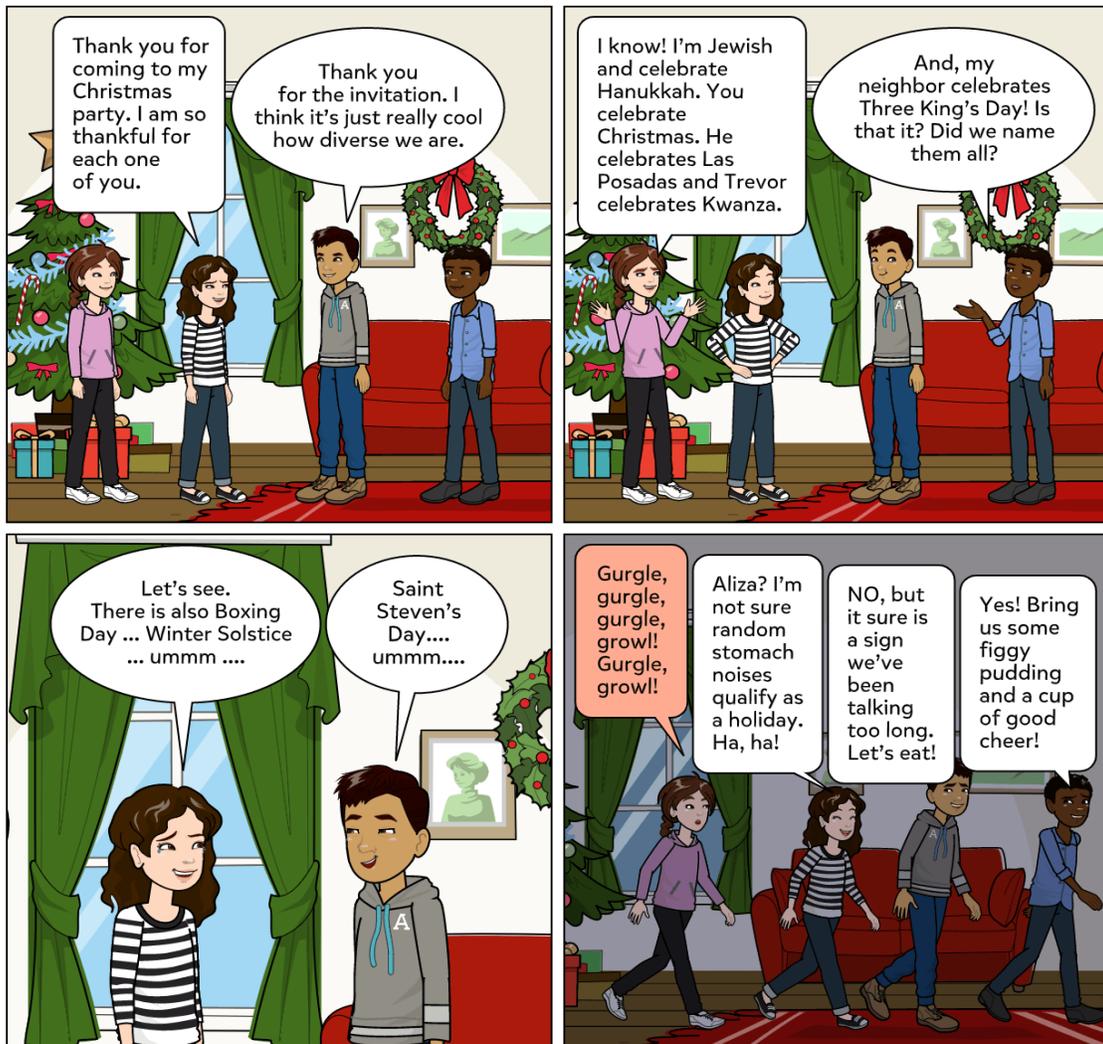
A WEEKLY PUBLICATION FOR CURIOUS KIDS

Issue #20 (December 15, 2020)

CAUTION: Participation may lead to a lack of boredom and a tired brain!

FEATURED TOPIC THIS WEEK:

Winter Holidays



Winter Holidays



Did You Know?

Christmas first became a U.S. federal holiday in 1870. Now, almost 90% of Americans celebrate it. While Christians celebrate the birth of Jesus on this day, many non-religious families celebrate it as a time to be with family, give gifts, etc. Jewish families celebrate Hanukkah in December as a way to commemorate the rededication of the Second Temple in second century B.C. In fact, the word Hanukkah means 'rededication'. Kwanzaa is an African American holiday that begins the day after Christmas and offers black families time to reconnect with their African roots.

Christmas Quiz

1. *Jingle Bells* originally had a different name and was written for Thanksgiving. (**True or False**)
2. How many people go to the hospital each December because of decorating injuries?
3. Which country invented tinsel?
4. The story of Rudolph the Reindeer was written as a part of an advertising campaign for a department store. (**True or False**)
5. How many packages, letters, and Christmas cards are mailed each winter in the U.S.?
6. Pepsi Cola is responsible for the way we think Santa Clause looks. (**True or False**)
7. How many lights are on the Christmas tree at Rockefeller Center in New York City?

Click the word 'link' to see answers → [LINK](#)

Virtual Field Trip

Many celebrations take place around the world during the time of the **winter solstice**. Take a trip around the sun to find out what it is:

<http://www.viewpure.com/Xt-5GWexHIA?start=0&end=0>

Would You Rather

Give a gift to someone or receive a gift?

Bio-Profile

Charles Dickens (1812-1870) wrote the classic story [A Christmas Carol](#) and at least 19 other books. His main motivation for writing the story about Scrooge was to protest child labor and the unfair treatment of workers. Other notable works include [Oliver Twist](#) and [Great Expectations](#). Click the word 'link' here to learn more about his life. → [LINK](#)



Mystery Picture of the Week

What is the name of this classic British Christmas dessert?
Click ON the picture to find out more!



This is a picture of 'figgy pudding' featured in the second verse of the song *We Wish You a Merry Christmas*. While it is called FIGGY pudding, it actually does not contain figs.



What do you think the featured topic should be next week? Email your teacher with your thoughts.

Project-Based Bonanza

Choose one or more of the projects below to complete this week.

CHOICE A

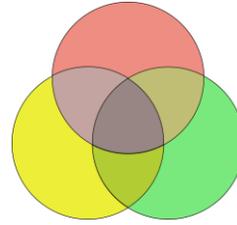
Find a dreidel or make your own spinner using a pretzel stick, marshmallow, and a Hershey's kiss. Play the game with friends using the directions linked here:

[LINK](#)



CHOICE B

Research the relationships between Christmas, Three Kings Day, and Las Posadas. Create a Venn diagram and explain it to a family member.



CHOICE C

Dr. Maulana Karenga, professor of Black Studies at California State University, created Kwanzaa in 1966. That means it is only 54 years old. If you could create a new holiday, what would it celebrate and when would it take place?

To learn more about Kwanzaa, click the word 'link' here → [LINK](#)

Story Starters

Choose one of the story starters below!

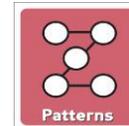
- What is your favorite tradition during the wintertime? Describe it in the form of a poem or short story and then illustrate it.
- (Finish this story!)



I know you will not believe this, but I am probably the only person alive who has ever been stuck inside a miniature snow globe. I know this sounds farfetched, but it DID happen. It all started about a year ago when I

Digging Into Depth and Complexity

Based on what you have learned from this H.O.T. Spot about winter holidays, answer the following questions using the depth and complexity icons.



What PATTERNS did you find between Christmas, Las Posadas, and Three Kings Day?



How does the position of the Earth on its axis CHANGE OVER TIME?



Explain a few PERSPECTIVES about Christmas that are different from your own.



What UNANSWERED QUESTIONS do you still have about Charles Dickens?

Brain Teaser of the Week

Solve this riddle!

Nick has a box of ornaments.
 All of them are green except for six.
 All of them are blue except for six.
 All of them are red except for six.
 How many ornaments does Nick have?

