

Celebrations of Light Around the World

Light plays a part in many holidays and traditional celebrations during the wintertime. Throughout history, humans have celebrated the return of longer days and the end of the harvest season around the Winter Solstice. Many religious or cultural holidays, throughout the year, incorporate light using candles or lamps. Find out more below about some of these celebrations!



Hanukkah

End of November into December

Also called the Festival of Lights, during this holiday the Jewish people commemorate a special miracle and the building of the second temple in Jerusalem. A candle is lit on the menorah each evening over 8 nights.

Learn more about Hanukkah here: www.pbs.org/food/hanukkah/



Christmas

December 25

During the Christmas holiday, many families put an evergreen tree in their house, decorated with colorful lights and festive ornaments. In the past, candles were used to deck the tree with bright light, to imitate the stars shining at night.

Discover more about the history of Christmas trees here:

www.history.com/topics/christmas/history-of-christmas-trees



Kwanzaa

December 26 – January 1

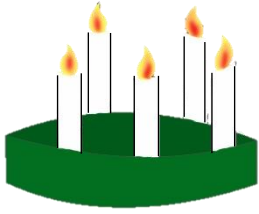
This 7-day holiday unites and celebrates African communities in the United States and worldwide. Each candle that is lit on the kinara represents one of the Nguzo Saba, or Seven Principles.

Find out more here: www.officialkwanzaawebsite.org

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St. Lucia Day

December 13



Celebrated on one of the darkest days of the year, this holiday honors St. Lucia, the patron of Sweden. A young girl dresses as the saint, wearing a wreath of candles on her head while leading a procession.

Learn more by visiting: <https://www.scholastic.com/teachers/blog-posts/ruth-manna/a-december-celebration-santa-lucia-day/>

New Year Lantern Festival

January/February



Also known as the Spring Festival, this holiday marks the end of the Chinese Lunar New Year. Red lanterns are lit and hung outside to welcome the future year.

Find out more here: www.chinahighlights.com/festivals/lantern-festival.htm

Diwali

October/November








This 5-day festival originated in India and is celebrated by Hindu, Jain, and Sikh people. Clay oil lamps, or *diyas*, are lit and placed outside, symbolizing the victory of light over darkness.

Find out more here: kids.nationalgeographic.com/explore/diwali/

Follow our directions to create your own candles from recycled material. Use your candles to celebrate one of these holidays, or to mark a special meaning that light has for you!

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MATERIALS:

Cardboard Tubes 	Color paper/ Tissue paper 	Scissors 	Glue 	Flashlight/Tea Lights 
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STEP 1: Gather as many cardboard rolls as candles you want to make. You can take a paper towel roll and cut it to different sizes for candles of different heights.

STEP 2: Cut a few strips of color, tissue or recycled paper. You will want the strips to be long enough to wrap around and cover your cardboard tube completely. You can make your candle one color, or multiple colors!

STEP 3: Glue one end of the paper to your cardboard tube. Wrap the paper around so it completely covers the cardboard. Glue the other end to keep the paper in place. Let your glue dry.

STEP 4: To create the flame of your candle, cut out 1-2 small oval shapes about the size of the top of your thumb. Glue the small ovals in place on the top side of your cardboard candle.

STEP 5: It's time to light things up! Once your glue as dried, put your candles on display for all to see. You can shine a flashlight through the tube or place small electronic tea lights at the bottom to "light" your candle. ***Reminder:*** Do not use real flames to light your cardboard candle. Young learners should always ask an adult for help with lighting real candles!

