

Song: Deck the Halls

Welsh Christmas Carol

Brief Context: "Deck the Halls" is a Christmas carol that dates back to the 16th century. It wasn't always associated with Christmas. The melody comes from a Welsh winter song called "Nos Galan," which celebrates New Year's Eve. In the 19th century, new lyrics were created by a Scottish songwriter named Thomas Oliphant. He penned the lyrics we know today which call for the decoration and merriment of the holiday season.

Activity: Songwriting and Discussion

What do you need?

- **Perfect Harmony "Deck the Halls" video**
- **Lyric/activity sheet**
- **Visual prompts**

Suggested Prompts:

- **Start by singing the original song "Deck the Halls" together to get the traditional tune in your head!**
- **Let's write activities and traditions of the holiday season that we can put in our song. Use the next activity sheet to create new lyrics.**
- **Now to write our song, we are going to steal the melody of a holiday song I bet you are familiar with. Join in! Let's sing "Deck the Halls" once through then add our new lyrics.**



Fill in the blank with your own holiday words.

Deck the halls with _____

fa la la la la la la la la

Tis the season to be _____

fa la la la la la la la la

Don we now our _____

fa la la la la la la la la

Troll the ancient _____

fa la la la la la la la la



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Create your own lyrics.

Baking lots and lots of _____

fa la la la la la la la la

Playing cards and _____

fa la la la la la la la la

Watching all the _____

fa la la la la la la la la

This is how we _____

fa la la la la la la la la



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Song: Draydl Calypso ("I Have a Little Dreidel")

Traditional Jewish Holiday Song

Brief Context: Chanukah lasts for eight days because when the Temple in Jerusalem was reclaimed and rededicated, the priests modeled the celebration on King Solomon's dedication of the Temple, centuries before. That celebration lasted eight days. There is, however, a popular legend that Chanukah lasts for eight days because when the priests went to light the Ner Tamid - the Eternal Light - they had only enough oil to last for one day, but the oil lasted for eight. That gave the priests enough time to make more oil.

Activity: Movement and discussion

What do you need?

- Perfect Harmony "Draydl Calypso" video
- Visual prompt sheet
- Lyric sheet

What is a draydl?

The draydl is a four-sided top with a Hebrew letter on each side. The letters represent the sentence, "A great miracle happened there." The miracle was the defeat of the Syrian-Greek army by the Maccabees, a Jewish militia led by Judah, son of Mattathias. The letters are used for the game of draydl. They tell the players whether to take from the ante or put something in it. Some people play for pennies, others for nuts or candy.

Suggested Movement Prompts:

- Clap along with Janice on the words, "spin" and "draydl"
- Sway along with the music as you sing with our video!



Song: White Christmas (1942)

Songwriter: Irving Berlin

Brief Context: "White Christmas" is not only one of the most beloved Christmas songs, it's also one of the most popular songs ever written. In fact, Bing Crosby's soulful and longing version is the best selling song of all time with over 50 million copies sold. It was featured in two movie musicals, "Holiday Inn" (1942) and "White Christmas" (1954), and became a wartime tune for those fighting abroad and for those on the home front.

Activity: Singing and engaged discussion

What do you need? Perfect Harmony "White Christmas" video, lyric sheet and visual prompts

Suggested Prompts:

Whether you have a white Christmas or a green Christmas, everyone has holiday traditions that get them in the holiday spirit! Follow our discussion questions to learn about your friend's holiday pastimes.

- **What activities do you like to do in the winter when it's cold outside?**
- **What indoor activities do you like to do?**
 - **Watching a holiday movie, drinking cocoa, sitting by the fire, baking cookies**
- **What outdoor activities do you like to do?**
 - **Making a snowman, sledding, ice skating, snow ball fights**



Song: Oh, Christmas Tree

German Christmas Carol

Brief Context: "O Tannenbaum" or "Oh, Christmas Tree" is a 16th century German folk tune that was adapted into a Christmas carol by organist and composer Ernst Anschütz. The words of the song refer to a fir tree not as a Christmas tree, but as a symbol of faithfulness. People began the tradition of decorating evergreen trees for Christmas in the 19th century.

Activity: Movement and discussion

What do you need?

- **Perfect Harmony "Oh, Christmas Tree" video**
- **Activity sheet**
- **Lyric sheet**

Suggested Movements:

- **Pat Lap with both hands, one time, on the word: "Oh"**
- **Clap Hands together, one time, on the words: "Christmas Tree"**
- **Open One Hand Out, on the words: "Your boughs are green..."**
- **Open the other Hand Out, on the words: "And do not fade..."**

Suggested Prompts:

- **What do you put on your tree to decorate it?**
 - **Do you put tinsel, ornaments, lights, popcorn, ribbon, etc.?**
- **Do you have a favorite ornament on your tree? Why is it your favorite?**



Song: Silent Night

Traditional Christmas Carol

Brief Context: "Silent Night" is a song about a calm and bright silent night, and the wonder of a tender and mild newborn child. It was first performed on Christmas Eve 1818 at St Nicholas parish church in Oberndorf, a village in the Austrian Empire on the Salzach river in present-day Austria.

Activity: Singing and engaged discussion

What do you need?

- Perfect Harmony "Silent Night" video
- Activity sheet
- Lyric sheet

"Silent Night" is traditionally sung at Christmas Eve services around the world. Churches dim their lights and each parishioner holds a candle to symbolize unity.

Suggested Prompts:

- Do you go to Christmas Eve mass at your church?
- What is your favorite Christmas carol/hymn to sing?
 - Let's sing it together!
- Why is this your favorite carol?

