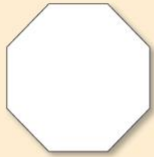## Themes
Mitten Magic
Rockin' Rhymes

Shapes and Colors

Numbers
11, 12

Letters
Mm, Nn, Oo

Alphabet Words
mittens, monkey, mouse, mushroom, narwhal, napkin, newspaper, newt, opal, orchestra, otter, owl

Sign Language

mitten

Use finger to trace over thumb and fingers of base hand to create a mitten shape.

listen

Place open palm behind ear.

Theme Descriptions

Mitten Magic: Keeping warm and snug is the focus of this winter theme. Children will learn about cool-weather accessories while welcoming winter's chill. The science of ice and snowflakes and the fun of making snowmen will also be explored.

Rockin' Rhymes: Nursery rhymes and classic folktales bridge generations and support a love of language. This theme highlights traditional literacy favorites such as *The Three Billy Goats Gruff, The Little Red Hen,* and *Humpty Dumpty*, among others. Children will engage in creative activities related to each tale that supports growth in all early learning domains.

Activities for Home

- How many mittens and gloves are in your home? Note the various sizes, colors, and patterns. Does your child's coat have button holes? Sew a button to each mitten, so that your child can attach his mittens to his coat when removing winter clothing. This will help cut down on lost mittens.

- Build an ice castle outside or inside on a tarp! Use containers found in your home and from food products such as half-gallon milk cartons, plastic soda bottles with the tops cut off, or whipped topping bowls. Fill them with water and freeze. Add food coloring, if desired. Remove the frozen ice chunks, and spray them with water so they adhere together.

- Your child will spend a great deal of time hearing new and old traditional stories this week and next. Cuddle up with your child and share some of your favorite classic tales with her. You are your child's best teacher. By reading to your child every day, you help her gain experience as a listener, which will better prepare her for kindergarten.

Look for Books

The best way to learn which books your child enjoys is to read children's books—lots of them! Check out **funshineextras.com** for Book Lists corresponding to each month's themes. Get to know your local librarians and ask for their recommendations as well.

Duck Skates
   by Lynne Berry

Good Morning, Snow-plow!
   by Deborah Bruss

Bunny Slopes
   by Claudia Rueda

On My Skis
   by Kari-Lynn Winters

The Little Red Hen
   by Byron Barton

After the Fall: How Humpty Dumpty Got Back Up Again
   by Dan Santat

Goldi Rocks & the Three Bears
   by Corey Rosen Schwartz and Beth Coulton

Jack and the Beanstalk
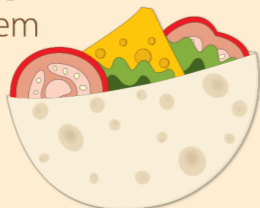   *by Richard Walker*

Cooking Together

When cooking with young children, allow them to help in a safe way with mixing, pouring, rolling, mashing, shaking, etc. Use words to describe what you are doing and what you plan to do next. Talk about what you see, smell, feel, hear, and taste.

Cozy Pitas

Wrap soft whole wheat pita pockets in aluminum foil and warm them in an oven at 300° for ten minutes or so. Set out a variety of fillings such as cooked chopped turkey or ground beef, shredded cheese, chopped tomatoes, sour cream, sliced olives, and grated cheese. Give your child a plate with a warm pita pocket and allow her to fill as she chooses. Enjoy the pita pocket "blanket" with the fillings for a snack or lunch. Enhance your child's cooking skills by allowing her to:

- Wrap her own pita pocket in aluminum foil.
- Help you prepare the fillings and place them in separate bowls.
- Place food items and condiments on the table.

Sing Along with Me

Find these songs at www.funshineexpress.com

My Mittens
Sung to "The Itsy Bitsy Spider"

I push my fingers in,
And poke my thumb right through!
Then I do the same
With mitten number two.
My warm winter mittens
Go on just like so.
Now I am ready to play in fluffy snow!

Once Upon a Time
Sung to "The Bear Went Over the Mountain"

Once upon a time,
Once upon a time,
Once upon a time,
(Three bears met Goldilocks).

(Three bears met Goldilocks),
(Three bears met Goldilocks),
(Three bears met Goldilocks),
Once upon a time.

Repeat with:

Little Red walked through the woods…
Three pigs built their homes…
A troll lived under a bridge…

HAPPY NEW YEAR