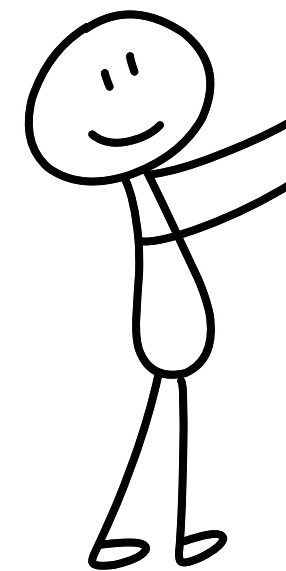


# Winter Holiday Escape Room

Secondary Escape Room featuring Hanukkah, Christmas, & Kwanzaa Activity

Middle and High School



Checkout how to use this resource in your class or library!

light a special candleholder called a menorah, adding one candle each night until all eight are lit. Traditional foods like latkes (potato pancakes) and sufganiyot (jelly-filled donuts) are eaten. Both of these traditional foods are fried in oil to symbolize this miracle. During the celebration children often play with a spinning top called gelt.

Hanukkah is celebrated in Israel to the United States focus on resilience and hope.

Kwanzaa is a religious holiday created in 1966 by Dr. Maulana Karenga, an activist. He developed the holiday promoting unity, self-determination, African community, and matunda ya kwanza, African harvest celebration.

Kwanzaa is celebrated over seven days highlights the Nguzo Saba. Families live by these principles. They reflect on African history.

Though it began in Africa, African descent around parts of Africa. It is a symbol of maintaining hope for the future.

Though Christmas traditions, they all remind us of the importance of these holidays.

## WINTER HOLIDAYS

Winter around the world is a time for people to come together to celebrate many holidays that bring light, joy, and warmth to the colder, darker months. Three of these holidays—Christmas, Hanukkah, and Kwanzaa—have rich histories and meaningful traditions full of fun. Each one is unique but shares the common theme of bringing families and communities closer together.

One of the most widely celebrated holidays in the world is Christmas. It is observed by Christians to honor the birth of Jesus Christ, who is believed to have been born over 2,000 years ago in a place called Bethlehem. The holiday is always observed on December 25th. Its name comes from "Christ's Mass," a special church service held in Jesus' honor.

But, Christmas' origins stretch back to ancient times, blending Christian traditions with older winter festivals like the Roman Saturnalia, which celebrated the Roman god Saturn with feasting and gift-giving. Over time, Christmas grew into a celebration of giving and family.

Christmas traditions vary around the world based on the culture of the people celebrating. For example, in the United States, and many Western countries, people decorate Christmas trees, exchange gifts, and hang stockings for Santa Claus to fill. In Mexico, families celebrate Las Posadas, a re-enacting of Mary and Joseph's journey to Bethlehem that usually involves entire communities and ends in a large party and feast. In the Philippines, giant lanterns light up the streets during the Ligligan Parul festival. No matter where it's celebrated, Christmas is a time for families and friends to come together.

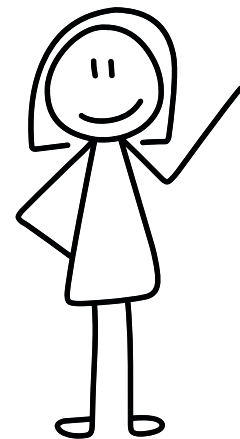
Another winter holiday is Hanukkah, also known as the Festival of Lights.

# Think About It...

- **Want to give your students a fun and engaging activity to do before winter break?**
- **Looking for a way to celebrate more than just Christmas this holiday season?**
- **This activity will foster teamwork and critical thinking.**

# What's Included

- **Teacher tips**
- **4 different challenges**
- **Student Answer Sheet**
- **Answer Key**



**CHALLENGE #4**

Use the reading passage to answer the questions below.

- 1 The name of the holiday has a meaning celebrating the birth of a king.
- 2 Traditional pastries (called donuts) are fried in oil.
- 3 For example, people decorate their homes with lights and trees to honor St. Nicholas (Claus) to bring gifts to children.
- 4 But, Christians in some parts of the world celebrate the birth of Jesus.
- 5 Hanukkah is celebrated in Israel to honor the miracle of the oil.
- 6 Though it is celebrated in many parts of the world, it is observed in a different way in some parts of Africa.
- 7 It is observed in a different way in some parts of Africa.
- 8 Learning about different cultures and traditions helps us appreciate and understand each other.

If your answers do NOT include PARAGRAPH

**CHALLENGE #3**

Answer the multiple-choice questions below. Determine the clue on the bottom as you were answered.

1. Which holiday blended Saturnian and other religious traditions?  
A. Kwanzaa  
B. Christmas  
C. Hanukkah
2. Which winter holiday is the newest?  
D. Christmas  
E. Hanukkah  
F. Kwanzaa
3. What is a menorah?  
G. A candle holder  
H. A type of tree  
I. A special gift
4. In Kwanzaa what are the core principles that are celebrated?  
J. Matunda Ya Kwanza  
K. Kinara  
L. Nguzo Saba

If your answers include

**CHALLENGE #2**

Read each statement below and determine if it is true or false. If true, color the coin that corresponds to that question. If false, do not color the coin. When you are finished add the TOTAL of the coins.

A 75

B 25

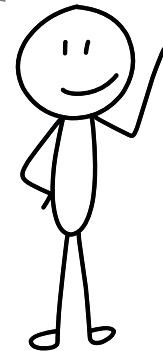
C 100

D

- A. Kwanzaa was created in 1978 by Dr. Maulana Karenga.
- B. Hanukkah is known as the Festival of Lights.
- C. The word Christmas comes from "Christ's Mass."
- D. Kwanzaa is celebrated from December 26th to January 1st.
- E. The days that Hanukkah is celebrated changes annually.
- F. The Ligligan Parul festival is how Christmas is celebrated in the Philippines.
- G. A kinara is a candleholder used during Kwanzaa.

# Ideal For...

- 6th-10th Grades
- Teacher Librarians and classroom teachers who want to give their students a fun, engaging, & inclusive activity before winter break, but aren't quite sure how



**CHALLENGE #1 KEY**

Draw a line from the left-hand column to make a match in the right-hand column. Your line should go THROUGH a letter. When you complete all the matches, use the letters with a line through them to unscramble a mystery word. Start & end at arrow points.

Kwanzaa →

gelt →

Las Posadas →

Hanukkah →

United States →

Saturn →

Christmas →

If your answer is **WINTER** then your clue is

**CHALLENGE #1**

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Kwanzaa →

gelt →

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United States →

Saturn →

B N

Y

E H

D R

C

L A

O

A T

chocolate coins enjoy during Hanukkah

celebrates the miracle of a small amount of light lasting for eight nights

most widely celebrated holiday in the world

created in 1966 to honor African culture and promote unity

country Kwanzaa was developed by M.K. Asante

The name of the Christmas celebration



# Let's Connect!



Hi! I'm Rebeca, a middle school librarian from Texas. I try hard to make sure that my library is a welcoming, inviting, and fun place for students and staff alike to learn. I firmly believe that building and maintaining strong relationships is one of, if not the most, important thing you can do to ensure you, your library, and your classroom are successful.

Follow my store by clicking my logo, or check me out on social media.



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