

Special

**Monthly Bonus
Units**

Materials for Months Bonus Unit

Baby food jars
Tiny toys
Glue
Glitter
Refrigerator box
Paint and supplies
Coloring supplies
Graham crackers, icing, dried candied fruit
Mixed greens, salad dressing, toppings
Paper plates
Art feathers
Beads
Construction paper
Tongue depressors
Chocolate coins
Pipe cleaners
Fresh fruit
Lemonade
Pole or long, sturdy object
Ribbons
Notecards
Chips and salsa
Pearl
3 identical containers to hold the pearl in
Flag
Blueberries, strawberries, whipped cream, shortbread
Plastic cups
Jingle bells
Spoons
Picture of flag for puzzle
Apple pie
Plastic baggies
Bread, peanut butter, Nutella
Spanish music and player
Apple slices
White fabric and a small baggie with beans
Pumpkin carving template
Pumpkin
Witch's Brew ingredients: Baked Skelton Bones (Pretzel Sticks)

- * Bat Brains (Popcorn)
- * Bloated Ants (Raisins)
- * Boiled Lady Bugs (Red Jelly Beans)
- * Braised Beetles (Milk Duds)
- * Candied Spider Eggs (Gum Drops)
- * Cheesy Owl Eyes (Puffed Cheese Balls)
- * Chocolate-Dipped Houseflies (Chocolate-Covered Raisins)
- * Compressed Cobwebs (Chex Brand or Similar Cereal)
- * Crumbled Bat Wings (Blue Corn Chips)
- * Deep Fried Fingernails (Bugles Brand Snacks)
- * Dehydrated Dragon's Wings (Doritos)
- * Dirty Shoelaces (Black Shoestring Licorice)
- * Dried Seaweed (Chow Mein Noodles)
- * Earthworm Knots (Miniature Pretzel Twists)
- * Flattened Slugs (Corn Chips)
- * Freeze Dried Drops of Blood (Red Hot Candies)
- * Ghost Guts (Mini Marshmallow)
- * Goblin's Belly Button Lint Balls (M & Ms, Any Style))
- * Plops of Pigeon Poop (Yogurt Covered Raisins)
- * Rat Claws (Shelled Sunflower Seeds)
- * Roasted Snack Eyes (Peanuts)
- * Shredded Lizard Gizzards (Coconut)
- * Splintered Turkey Bones (Shoestrings)

Potato Chips)

- * Toasted Cat's Eyes (Blanched Almonds)
- * Vulture Toenails (candy Corn)
- * Witches' Warts (Chocolate Chips)

Gingerbread cookies
Pine cones
Coffee cans
Flexible but strong plastic
Ice cream cones, little cookies, raisins, nuts, M&M's, pretzels

Oranges and cloves

January

Story Time: Hello Snow by Hope Vestergaard

This is a cute rhyming text that brings together the sites, smells, sounds, and experiences of a snow day.

Art Activities

Individual: Snow Globes

Hand out baby food jars. Have students glue in tiny toys. Put glitter in the bottom after the glue has dried. Fill the jar with water and close the lid tightly. Shake and enjoy!

Group: Snowscape

Bring in a large box, such as a refrigerator box. Cut one long side out so that students can fit inside and decorate it. Have them paint and decorate the box so that it looks like a winter wonderland. This will become the backdrop to today's drama activity.

Cognitive Skills

Civil Rights Lesson

Teach students about civil rights and the movement that made Martin Luther King, Jr. famous. Have students write their own version of "I Have a Dream."

Similar and Different

Show students pictures of different people and have them point out differences and similarities between the people. There should be all ages, races, and sizes represented in these pictures.

Dramatic Play: Polar Bear Adventure

Use the winter backdrop to pretend that you are a family of polar bears traveling to a Martin Luther King, Jr. Day celebration. You must travel across frozen oceans and hunt for food during the journey.

Snack: Gingerbread House

Use graham crackers, icing, and candied dried fruit to let your students make their own gingerbread houses before eating them. They can create whatever shape and design they like.

February

Story Time: Roses are Pink, Your Feet Really Stink by Diane de Groat

Pandemonium ensues after some prank valentines are sent around the room, but there is always time to make up and be friends in this cute Valentine's Day book.

Art Activities

Individual: Mardi Gras Masks

Have kids cut masks from a paper plate and decorate them as they wish, with colors, art feathers, beads, etc. Attach string or elastic to the back to secure the masks.

Group: Mardi Gras Photo Frame

Take a picture of your class in their Mardi Gras masks. Print it out and let students create a photo frame from construction paper. It can be decorated with colors, feathers, and beads, and then hung up with the picture. All the students should sign the frame before it is hung.

Cognitive Skills

How Long is Winter?

Ask students what they know about Groundhog Day. Ask how long winter lasts and what months it takes up. Tell them about the solstices and the official beginning and ending of winter. Talk about the rotation of the earth and how that affects seasons.

Categorization

Show students what a groundhog looks like. Then, create categories of animals to get to the individual animal. Talk about the scientific system of kingdom, phylum, class, order, family, genus, and species. Categorize the groundhog according to these terms.

Dramatic Play: Groundhog Forecast

Let different students be the groundhog and different students be the weather forecaster from a local TV station. Let the groundhog decide the weather by popping up or not. Let the forecaster report the news back to the people at home.

Snack: Groundhog Salad

Groundhogs eat healthy, so provide your students a mixed greens salad and their choice of toppings and dressing.

March

Story Time: Clever Tom and the Leprechaun by Linda Shute

Tom captures a leprechaun, who gets his freedom by promising to show Tom where his gold is. The clever leprechaun finds a way to keep his word and his fortune too, because poor Tom never found the treasure after numerous attempts of digging up ground.

Art Activities

Individual: Leprechaun Bookmarks

Have students decorate tongue depressors to look like leprechauns. They should cut out a face from construction paper and glue it to one end. They should decorate the face and create a head and clothes. Then, they should decorate the “body” of the leprechaun so that no part of the tongue depressor is left bare.

Group: Handprint Rainbow

Have students trace their hands and cut them out in the colors of the rainbow. Glue the handprints together in an arched shape and put the rainbow next to a pot of gold that you have drawn.

Cognitive Skills

3-Leaf or 4-Leaf?

Give a worksheet to students with 3 and 4 leaf clovers mixed together on the page. Ask students to count the number of 3 leaf clovers and the number of 4 leaf clovers. How many are there of each? Which has the most? How many clovers are there altogether?

St. Patrick's Day and Luck

Where did the idea of St. Patrick's Day and luck come from? What did St. Patrick do that made him so historical? How do your students celebrate St. Patrick's Day? What country is St. Patrick associated with?

Dramatic Play: Leprechaun Village

Your students are part of a leprechaun village getting ready for St. Patrick's Day. They must talk in Irish accents and talk about the problems with being tiny and green.

Snack Time: Gold Coins from the Pot of Gold

Serve students chocolate coins from a big black pot, so they think they're getting treasure from a pot of gold!

April

Story Time: It's Spring ! by Linda Glaser

This book has great ideas for nature projects as it describes the transformation of plants and animals when spring arrives.

Art Activities

Individual: Umbrellas

Have students cut out different colored panels to create an umbrella. They should glue the panels together and attach a pipe cleaner to make a handle.

Group: Raindrops

Students should cut out raindrops and put their names on their drop. They should decorate it to make it their own. Have students put the drops in alphabetical order. Then, put them up on a bulletin board with a giant umbrella that you have already made.

Cognitive Skills

April Fool's Around the World

Do other cultures celebrate April Fool's Day? Where did it come from? What is it called in those countries? What is the funniest joke you ever played on someone? What was the funniest joke played on you? Let students share their experiences with the day and their memories.

What Makes a Joke Funny?

Why do we laugh at jokes? Ask students about what jokes they find funny and what makes them funny. Do they make fun of something or someone? Do they surprise you and make you laugh? Are they ridiculous? Do they play with language?

Dramatic Play: April Fool's Joke

Give each student a turn to play jokes on each other or tell a time when they had a joke played on them. Students should act out a scenario where a person gets a really good joke pulled on them.

Snack: Lemonade and Fresh Fruit

Spring is well known for its abundance of life and health, so continue the trend by serving your students bite-sized pieces of fresh fruit. You can include berries, melons, and citrus fruits.

May

Story Time: The Spring Equinox by Ellen Jackson

This is a great book about spring that explains the season, the equinox, and several ways of celebrating spring from different cultures.

Art Activities

Individual: May Flowers

“April showers bring May flowers” is the saying for today’s individual craft. Students should cut construction paper, fold it, and tape it to the shape of different flowers. They can attach pipe cleaners to make stems and can write messages on the petals. Or, you can take students outside and have them collect flowers. They can make flower presses by placing the flowers between pieces of tissue paper and putting them inside a large book, where they will dry flat and leave you with a beautiful piece of art.

Group: May Day Pole

Have a pole or a long, sturdy object in the room and tape ribbons to the top. Let students dance around and twist the ribbons around the pole. Talk about the history of May Day and what it celebrates.

Cognitive Skills

Cinco de Mayo History

Explain to the students the importance of Cinco de Mayo for Mexicans and why we celebrate it here in the U.S. Talk about the phenomenon of culture sharing and the impact of Mexicans on American life.

Spanish Word Play

In honor of Cinco de Mayo, teach students some basic Spanish words. With notecards, label everything in the room with its Spanish name. This will help students learn basic Spanish vocabulary and will reinforce their learning through constant reminders.

Dramatic Play: Springtime Festival

Each student will have a part of spring to announce and explain, and everyone will celebrate the end of winter. Have students pick things like flowers blooming, grass growing, birds migrating north again, temperatures rising, etc. They can each explain why this happens with spring and lead the class in a dance or song about the changes of spring.

Snack Time: Salsa and Chips

Keep up the Mexican theme with chips and salsa for a snack. Provide different flavors of salsa with differing levels of spiciness, and let kids dip away!

June

Story Time: Flag Day by Kelly Bennett

This book presents a simple introduction to the traditions and festivities on Flag Day including basic flag etiquette.

Art Activities

Individual: Secret Pearl Coloring Page

Since June's birthstone is a pearl, show students where pearls come from by giving them an underwater scene to color and decorate. Give them a pearl to hold and look at and ask them to draw a secret pearl somewhere on their page. Then, they can trade pages and see who can find the hidden pearl.

Group: Flag Rings

Celebrate Flag Day by making a giant American flag. Take strips of construction paper and tape them into rings. The rings should overlap so they form a chain. There should be one chain for each stripe in the flag. Then, you can make a square of links for the blue section of the flag. Together, your class will create a giant memorial to Flag Day.

Cognitive Skills

Find the Pearl

Bring in three closed containers and put a pearl in one of them. Show the students which container the pearl is in and then mix the containers around. Students must try to follow the container with the pearl in it until you stop moving the containers. You should try to make them forget which one holds the pearl. When you stop, they can guess and you can see if anyone is right. Try this several times to improve their skills at attention and memory.

Fold a Flag

Bring in a flag and teach students the correct way to fold and store a flag. Have them practice the skill and see if they can make their folds just as neat and tight as they do in the military. This is a great way to teach students respect for the flag.

Dramatic Play: Underwater Divers

Send your students on a scuba mission to find valuable pearls at the bottom of the ocean. They must avoid sharks, jellyfish, and other dangerous animals as they venture to the bottom of the sea. They can comment on the types of animals they encounter and what it feels like to be able to breathe underwater.

Snack Time: Red, White, and Blue Snack

Be healthy and fun with this delicious snack! Put blueberries, strawberries, and whipped cream over short cakes or pound cake.

July

Story Time: Apple Pie Fourth of July by Janet S. Wong

This is a mix of cultures as a Chinese girl does not understand how her parents can make Chinese food on this American holiday! Learn a great lesson about melting cultures as you read this book.

Art Activities

Individual: Liberty Bell

Give students a plastic cup and have them make a small hole in the bottom. They should turn the cup upside down and color it, making it look like the Liberty Bell. They should add a crack in it, just like the original. Then, they should string a jingle bell or other small noisemaker through the hole in the bottom so that the bell makes noise.

Group: Fireworks Painting

Get a very large piece of paper and let students drop paint splats on it. They should take a spoon and swirl the paint out from the middle, making it look like fireworks. The colors may overlap, but it will look great and just like a fireworks display!

Cognitive Skills

Declaration of the Class

Talk first about the Declaration of Independence and how it came about. Talk about who signed it and what it has meant for our history. Then, make a declaration for your class about what kind of rules there will be, how people will act, and what kind of rights each student gets. Then, every student should sign the declaration, just like the real one.

Flag Puzzle

Give students a picture of an American flag cut apart and scrambled up. They have to put the pieces back in order so the picture looks like it originally did.

Dramatic Play: Signing the Declaration

Assign each of your students to a Founding Fathers role. Let them talk like our forefathers did and declare their independence from everything that is holding them back in life. They can adapt it for their ages and situations, so they can declare independence from washing dishes and tying their shoes, etc.

Snack Time: Patriotic Pie

Nothing is more American than warm apple pie, so serve up a slice for a snack and let your students think of summer.

August

Story Time: Abe Lincoln - The Young Years by Keith Brandt

Abraham Lincoln was an inventor as well as a president, so teach students about this influential man through this fun and historical book. This is a great segue into a talk on inventions, since August is National Inventors Month.

Art Activities

Individual: Invent Away

Give students a plastic baggie, a pair of scissors, and some tape, and tell them to invent something with it. It can be something already invented, but it is even more fun if they come up with a completely new idea.

Group: Friendship Chain

Give students a piece of construction paper and tell them to cut out a person. They should decorate the person to look like themselves with hair and facial features. Then, all the students should bring their people together and connect their hands with glue. This will make a friendship chain sure to make celebrant of National Friendship Week proud.

Cognitive Skills

Celebrate Inventors Month

August is National Inventors Month, so send your students on a quest to invent the newest must-have product that will make their lives easier. At the end of the day, have an Invention Convention and share your ideas.

Share Your Friendship

Remind everyone to be a good friend by asking them to think of nice things they have done lately that makes them a good friend. National Friend Week is celebrated in August, so you can tell students this is a great chance to act like a true friend for someone.

Dramatic Play: George Carver Washington

Let your students pretend to be George Carver Washington, the incredible inventor who came up with countless uses for the peanut. Give students peanuts and let them come up with their own unique uses, even if it is only a bookmark or other simple innovations.

Snack Time: Peanut Butter Party

Have students spread peanut butter on ½ a piece of bread and Nutella on the other half. This will be a sweet and savory snack that students will love and that will celebrate the importance of invention.

September

Story Time: Amelia Bedelia Goes Back to School by Herman Parish and Lynn Sweat

This is another beloved Amelia Bedelia book about her travels back to school. Since September is the month of starting a new school year and meeting new people, read this book to give your students confidence and excitement.

Art Activities

Individual: Backpack Buddy

Give students yarn or another durable string and plastic beads. Let them create a pattern or whatever else they can with beads and tie it onto a metal ring used for key chains. Tell them this is how they can tell their backpacks apart if they get confused. They can tie it onto one of the zippers to add a cool touch to their school gear.

Group: Schoolhouse Rock

Have all the students help draw a schoolyard scene with a big red schoolhouse like in older times. Outside, students should each draw themselves and write their names below their drawings. Everyone can work together to make this a great new school year!

Cognitive Skills

Hispanic Heritage Month Celebration

Teach your students about Hispanic Heritage Month by giving them a quick dance lesson. Several dances are native to Spanish speaking countries, such as merengue and salsa. Your students will love the Spanish music and the chance to dance around and have fun.

Hola, Me Llamo ____

Teach students this simple Spanish phrase used to introduce yourself. Say, "Hola, me llamo ____" instead of, "Hello, my name is ____." Students must go around and introduce themselves. When they meet someone new, they say, "Mucho gusto." This means, "Pleased to meet you."

Dramatic Play: First Day of School

Have your students pretend it is the first day of school and they are feeling a bit lost. They can pretend to be in a higher grade if that will make them feel more special, such as a high school or middle school. They can change classes when they hear a bell ring and have nice discussions about books and science experiments.

Snack Time: An Apple A Day

Serve your students apple slices, because students always bring the teacher an apple on the first day of school! Give it back to them for a snack and remind them of this tradition.

October

Story Time: Thirteen Nights of Halloween by Rebecca Dickinson

This is an imaginative take on the “Twelve Days of Christmas” theme where a goblin guy gives his goblin girl presents for each day of Halloween.

Art Activities

Individual: Gobbly Ghosts

Give students a small square of white fabric and a small baggie with beans in it. Students should collect all the beans in one small corner of the baggie and cover the baggie with the white fabric. The beans will become the ghost’s head and the rest of the fabric should hang down like its body. Use ribbon to tie around the ghost’s head. Then, decorate its face with either markers or glue on googly eyes from the craft store.

Group: Pumpkin carving

Find a pattern for pumpkin carving and have students take turns tracing it onto the pumpkin. They can all watch while you carve the pumpkin. They can help clean out the pumpkin and throw the seeds away. Then, you can all watch while it lights up!

Cognitive Skills

Passing Ghosts

Give students a worksheet with different rooms from a haunted house on it. In the rooms there should be differing numbers of ghosts. Students must count the number of ghosts in each room as they look through that room. At the end, they should total up the number of ghosts and write a number on each ghost. Then, they can color the picture.

Sorting Skills

Have the class gather around and lay out different pictures or items associated with Halloween, such as ghosts, mummies, pumpkins, black cats, and witches. Ask students to arrange the items in different piles, putting all the similar items together. Your items can look slightly different so students have to decide which things are most similar.

Dramatic Play: Haunted House

Send students through a haunted house during this play time and see who gets scared the easiest! Make spooky sounds and jump out at your students, all the while narrating a spooky story. Tell students to act like they are not scared as they go through the house, but do your best to get a little scream out of a student now and again as you paint a ghastly story for them.

Snack Time: Witch's Brew

Combine any or all of these ingredients for a nasty snack your students will love!

Ingredients:

- * Baked Skelton Bones (Pretzel Sticks)
- * Bat Brains (Popcorn)
- * Bloated Ants (Raisins)
- * Boiled Lady Bugs (Red Jelly Beans)
- * Braised Beetles (Milk Duds)
- * Candied Spider Eggs (Gum Drops)
- * Cheesy Owl Eyes (Puffed Cheese Balls)
- * Chocolate-Dipped Houseflies (Chocolate-Covered Raisins)
- * Compressed Cobwebs (Chex Brand or Similar Cereal)
- * Crumbled Bat Wings (Blue Corn Chips)
- * Deep Fried Fingernails (Bugles Brand Snacks)
- * Dehydrated Dragon's Wings (Doritos)
- * Dirty Shoelaces (Black Shoestring Licorice)
- * Dried Seaweed (Chow Mein Noodles)
- * Earthworm Knots (Miniature Pretzel Twists)
- * Flattened Slugs (Corn Chips)
- * Freeze Dried Drops of Blood (Red Hot Candies)
- * Ghost Guts (Mini Marshmallow)
- * Goblin's Belly Button Lint Balls (M & Ms, Any Style))
- * Plops of Pigeon Poop (Yogurt Covered Raisins)
- * Rat Claws (Shelled Sunflower Seeds)
- * Roasted Snack Eyes (Peanuts)
- * Shredded Lizard Gizzards (Coconut)
- * Splintered Turkey Bones (Shoestrings Potato Chips)
- * Toasted Cat's Eyes (Blanched Almonds)
- * Vulture Toenails (candy Corn)
- * Witches' Warts (Chocolate Chips)

November

Story Time: In November by Cynthia Rylant

This book is about all the changes that happen with the weather in November, including leaves falling, air getting crisp, and animals preparing for hibernation.

Art Activities

Individual: Indian Drums

All students should get a small coffee can and a piece of thick but flexible plastic. The plastic should be put over the open end of the coffee can and secured by tape or elastic. Then, students can decorate the can with construction paper and markers and play their very own Indian drum!

Group: Chain of Gratitude

Have students cut one-inch strips of fall-colored construction paper. On each strip, they should write something they are grateful for. Everyone's strips should be looped into circles and combined, forming a chain of gratitude. It can be hung at the front of the room as a reminder that we always have something to be grateful for.

Cognitive Skills

What's Different?

Give students a fall worksheet with two pictures on it. The pictures should be identical except for a few items that are different, missing, or changed in some way. Students must search through the pictures to find the differences between them.

Mayflower Compact Exercise

Read the Mayflower Compact to students and talk about how language has changed since the 1600s. Then, create a compact for your students and your class. Set it up just as the Mayflower Compact and have a short ceremony where they all swear to abide by its words.

Dramatic Play: On the Mayflower

Pretend that you and your students are on the Mayflower. You are coming to a new continent to start a whole new life in the name of the King of England. You are tired and hungry, and probably bored. You are searching for land. Have your students act out their time on the ship and what happens when they land.

Snack Time: Ice Cream Cone Cornucopia

For this snack, put little cookies, raisins, nut, M&M's, pretzels into an ice cream cone (the ones that are pointed) to make a cornucopia snack. Use icing to hold them in.

December

Story Time: The Polar Express by Chris Van Allsburg

This hugely famous story will keep kids wondering, “Do you believe?” It is a tale of the existence of Santa and all his miracles...if you believe.

Art Activities

Individual: Orange Cloves

Students should get an orange and whole cloves. They stick the cloves into the orange to release both the smell of the orange and the cloves. They cover the entire surface of the orange leaving just a little space in between each clove. When they are finished, they will have a wonderful smelling centerpiece they can take home to their families.

Group: Pine Cone Christmas Tree

Send students outside to pick up pine cones if possible. If not, bring in store-bought ones that they can arrange in the shape of a Christmas tree. They should glue the cones to a large piece of paper, arranging them as they go. Each student should get to place a pine cone or two so that everyone feels involved.

Cognitive Skills

Christmas around the World

Describe Christmas in other parts of the world. Does everyone celebrate the same way? Does everyone have a Santa Claus? What about Christmas trees? Where did the idea of giving gifts originate?

Winter Word Search

Push your students to do their best at spelling with a simple word search with winter words. They should be able to easily see the words. Once all the words have been found, talk about what each one is and how it relates to winter.

Dramatic Play: Santa’s Workshop

Students should pretend to be elves working in Santa’s workshop to get all the toys ready for Christmas. They can sing and dance while they work, but they should be merry none the less! Ask them what it is like working for Santa Claus. What do they do during the part of the year that they are not making toys?

Snack Time: Gingerbread Men

Bake gingerbread men cookies at home and bring them in undecorated. Let your students put faces and clothes on their men with icing.