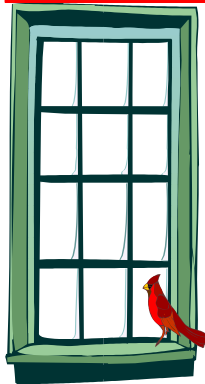


January
2012



MATOAKA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Bird's Eye View

From Our PTA President, Erin Otis

Happy New Year!

2011 was a great year for our PTA. We had many successful events and programs. We ended 2011 with a Chick-fil-A Spirit Night, a holiday treat cart for teachers and staff and a merchandise table in December.

Looking ahead in 2012 there are still great things to come. Our first event of the year will be our William and Mary Family Fun Night. Tickets will be on sale January 3rd through January 6th.

Matoaka's guidance counselor Jennifer Smith will be leading a parenting seminar,

"Bullying Prevention" on January 23rd from 6:30 - 7:30 p.m.

Please join us for our first PTA meeting of the New Year on January 10th at 6:30 in the media center. Childcare is provided. Please contact me at randyerin2@verizon.net if you will be needing childcare.

We look forward to a fantastic rest of the school year. As always, thank you for your continued support.

Warmly,
Erin Otis,
PTA President

December's Chik-fil-A Spirit Night began successfully!



Calendar of Events

January	7	Family Fun Night, W & M Kaplan Arena	4:00 PM
	10	PTA Meeting, Media Center	6:30 PM
	23	Bullying Prevention Parent Night	6:30-7:30 PM



Matoaka Spirit Night is at Moe's Southwest Grill on
**Thursday, February 9th from
11 a.m. to 9 p.m.**

Make sure to tell them you are from Matoaka
for us to get a portion of the proceeds!

MATOAKA FUN-RAISING

Grade level readers. Math and reading computer programs. School plays and costumes. Visiting authors. Professional children's plays and music. Living science exhibits. All-school dinners. Garden programs and supplies. The PTA pays for a lot! So how do we do it?

Simply, through fun and your help! Our goal is to make fundraising painless and seamless for our Matoaka families. We want it to be fun. We don't want our kids to have to sell anything. Our fall Harvest Festival was just plain entertainment for our kids, but it also helps raise money for the school.

In April we will have our largest fundraiser, the Spring Walk-a-Thon. The kids collect pledges for their school and participate in a healthy, fun day. We organize and run the whole thing so that 100% of the money can go directly where you want it to go - into the school, into the programs your kids love. In my opinion, it is these opportunities that help set Matoaka head and shoulders above the rest.

Another layer of easy fundraising is our Boxtop and grocery programs—collecting Boxtops coupons, Farm Fresh receipts, and registering your Martin's card to earn money for the school.

Matoaka hosts a Jump Rope for Heart fundraiser in February. Though similar in style to the Walk-a-Thon pledges, it is a separate fundraiser in which families can donate to the American Heart Association, teaching our kids the value of giving to the larger community.

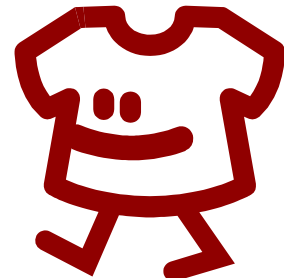
We hope that you will remember these ways to support the school and help when our Walk-a-Thon pledge sheets come home in the spring. As part of this great Matoaka community, we have a strong tradition of providing excellent programs for our kids outside of what the county budgeting can provide. In order to make that tradition continue, we rely on the support of all of our families, and thank-you for all you do to help.



Christian Dunn
VP Fundraising
DunnCLEigh@yahoo.com

Interested in donating your too-small spirit shirt?

Kids can turn in their gently used spirit shirts which are too small for them now and they will be given to others. Just bring them into the office and we'll do the rest!





January's Character Trait of the Month: Fairness

Fairness means taking turns, sharing,
and listening to what others have to say.
I show fairness when I take only my share.
I am fair when I play by the rules.

The Matoaka PTA is holding a
Family Fun Night at

William & Mary's Kaplan Arena to cheer on
the W&M Men's Basketball Team as they
take on Delaware!

DATE: **Saturday, January
7th**



TIME: **4 pm**

Admission:

Students wearing a Matoaka shirt get in free
Additional children, ages 2 - 17: \$5 and Adults: \$7

Join the Griffin Kids Club and pick up your FREE Tribe Prize
Pack at the game including: Tribe Drawstring Bag, Griffin Color-
ing Book, Griffin Face Stickers and Tribe Rally Towel. Join today
at the Fan Zone on tribeathletics.com to ensure that you get your
prize pack at the game!

Questions? Please email PTA Family Fun Night Chair Kim Lish



Our amazing hospitality committee
delivered hot drinks and sweet treats
to our teachers and staff
in December!

Thanks ladies,
for another job well done.

**January has been designated by
WJCC Schools as Bullying Prevention
Month.** In support of our division's efforts,
Matoaka is offering a parent presentation,
***"Parenting to Build Resiliency and Respond to
Bullying"*** on Monday, January 23rd from 6:30-7:30
in the Media Center. The PTA is providing dessert
and childcare for preschool and elementary aged
children. A flyer with a RSVP will go home with stu-
dents next week.

In addition, your child can participate in
the **"Bully-Proofing" Drawing Contest.** Students
can choose one of these two topics: *"Be a Buddy,
Not a Bully"* or *"Take a Stand, Lend a Hand."* Draw-
ings are to be on an 8 ½ x 11 sheet of paper and
turned in to his or her teacher by Monday, January
23rd. (Drawings can be turned in that night at the
parent presentation as well.)

Matoaka is also recognizing **National No
Name-Calling Week** from January 23rd to the 26th.
Students can take the *"Matoaka No Name-Calling
Challenge,"* and participate in *"Stomp Out Bullying
Day"* on Thursday, January 26th by wearing a pair of
boots.

We will be revisiting bullying prevention
strategies in guidance lessons this month. These
strategies were taught in October during National
Bullying Prevention Month when students partici-
pated in Bully-Proofing Pledge Day where they
wore team shirts to "Team Up Against Bullying" and
signed a pledge to follow the Matoaka "No Bullying
Allowed" Rules.

If you would like to know more about our
comprehensive, bullying prevention efforts through-
out the year, you can contact one of the school
counselors, Lisa Fisher or Jen Smith, by calling the
school at 564-4001.

POETRY BOOSTS READING SKILLS

When your child was a baby, you marveled at how she responded to nursery rhymes. Something about the rhythm and cadence just excited her. The good news is that this love of poetry doesn't end when children outgrow Mother Goose. Most kids continue to relate to poetry even into later elementary school and beyond if they are exposed to it. They gravitate toward rich language, imagery, and rhyming. Parents can take advantage of their child's natural affinity for poetry and use it to help them love reading.

"Poems are short, and the rhyme and reason are easy to learn," says Tim Rasinski, professor of literacy education at Kent State University. "They are meant to be performed. We know one of the best ways to develop fluency is through repeated practice, and that works well with the idea of rehearsing for a poetry performance."

Rasinski says poetry is "almost perfect" for helping children struggling with sounding out words. "It helps kids develop an awareness of language fundamentals," he says, adding that because it's fun and a little different, kids learn without realizing it.

Poems are embedded with word families, such as "cat," "hat," "rat," and "mat," where one sound is different and the other sounds are the same. Poems also tend to be short, making them more accessible than chapter books for struggling readers or kids burned out on traditional books.

Rasinski has teamed with poet Brod Bagert in creating books of poems written from a child's point of view and accompanied by lesson plans. Rasinski and Bagert share their ideas for parents who want to use poetry to inspire their kids to read:

- **Alternate lines when reading a rhyming poem.** You read one line and your child reads the next. As you repeat the poem and your child gets more familiar with the words, she'll enjoy reading it more.
- **Work with your child to rewrite the words to a beloved song.** Rasinski recommends "Yankee Doodle Dandy."
- **Write a poem together, then set it to music.** Or write original rap songs with your child. Years ago, families entertained themselves by singing songs together, Rasinski says. "We're trying to bring that tradition back."
- **Look for poems that reflect your child's interests.** There is a large body of contemporary poetry available as well as traditional poems your child might be interested in, even if you think she'll perceive them as outdated. A children's librarian can help you find poetry your child will enjoy.
- **Talk about the poem with your child before reading it, especially if it's a traditional poem.** Provide some of the context that will help her relate to it.
- **Seek out poems written in a child's voice,** recommends Bagert, who specializes in such poems.
- **Talk about the poem after reading it with your child.** Many poems, even those for children, have rich layers of

meaning beneath the surface, even though they are easy to read.

- **Become the poem's main character.** "Be over the top, not subtle," Bagert says. Poems are meant to be read out loud.
- **Use facial expressions and gestures** to convey the meaning of the poem.
- **Look for funny poems** and use your voice and inflection to bring out the humor.
- **When your child finds a poem she really relates to, help her memorize it,** write it down in her most attractive handwriting, illustrate it, frame it, and display it.
- **Encourage your child to read a poem in character,** using voice, expression and gestures. "When you teach children to put expressions on their faces, they become the language," Bagert says. "When their identity is merged with the language, this is the most powerful language experience a child can have. It's real, and it's complete."
- **When you find books of poetry, read them first** to make sure they are

appropriate for your child. You want to expose your child to the best poetry you can find, so you don't turn him off to the idea of poetry.

- **Practice reading the verses ahead of time** to get a feel for the rhythm and timing.
- **Come up with short, funny poems with your child about everyday events** such as losing a soccer game or burning the pot roast.

Not all parents enjoyed poetry as a child or relate to it as adults. But you can still learn to love it with your child by seeking out a wide variety of poetry and seeing what your family likes. When you're reciting and acting out poems, it may not seem like you are teaching your child. But you are, Bagert says.

"You are creating the desire to write and to read," he explains. "Reading and performing poetry with your child lights a fire under all the things teachers are trying to do."

—www.schoolfamily.com

UNFORTUNATE NAMES

(say them aloud)

Robyn Banks
Dee Zaster
Rosie Peach
Ima Kettle
Hazel Nutt
Daisy Chain

Pearl E. Whites
Justin Case
Dan Druff
Woody Bush
Owen Money
Dwayne Pipe
Doug Graves
Justin Tune
Lowden Clear
Bernd Onions

















Artie Choke
Jay Bird
Sandy Shaw
Rusty Nails
Robin Plunder
Terri Bull
Chris Cross
Jo King

—guy-sports.com

Family Fun Ideas

WINTER NATURE HUNT

- Go on a photo scavenger hunt
- Make a treasure map & go on a hunt
- Make your own memory game & play
- Create puppets & put on a show
- Build a fort
- Write & illustrate your own story
- Make your own movie
- Make a crayon/watercolor painting
- Write some thank you notes
- Make old coins shiny with salt and vinegar
- Indoor bowling
- Play "Hot and Cold"
- Make an obstacle course & time yourselves
- Make a collage of your favorite things
- Make an ABC book
- Go on a color hunt
- Create sculptures using toothpicks and marshmallows
- Learn some origami
- Have a dance party
- Have a pretend "drive-in" theater
- Have an impromptu photo shoot with props
- Draw while blindfolded
- Play musical chairs or freeze dance
- Play charades
- Research a topic on the internet together
- Straw & cotton ball race on the kitchen table
- Do a pretend cooking show
- Make up a secret code and write notes

 Pine Cone (1 point for each different type)	 Cardinal (2 points)	 Bird's Nest (5 points)	 Squirrel (2 points)
 A Berry (3 points for each different type)	 Dried Flowers (3 points for each different type)	 Acorn (2 points for each different type)	 Fallen Twig (2 points)
 Deer (4 points per doe and 5 points per buck)	 Animal Tracks (4 points for each—draw on back and label)	 Feather (5 points for each different type)	 Pine Needles (2 points for each different type)
 Blue Jay (3 points)	 Oak Leaf (4 points)	 Flying birds (3 points)	 Chickadee (3 points)

How to Fit Quality Family Time into Your Busy Schedules

Schedule: schedule your family time for this month on everyone's calendar. Once it's scheduled, protect it like gold. This means saying no to the last minute birthday party invite, no the PTA president who desperately needs you, and saying no to your boss when she asks you to work late.

Plan It: agree as a family ahead of time what you will do and then make your reservations, print your maps, organize your supplies, and fill your car with gas ahead of time.

Make it Fun: discuss together as a family what fun things everyone would like to do. Make sure everyone's voice is heard and negotiate differences. If time or money is a concern, then it may be a good idea for the parents to come up with a pre-approved list from which the kids can choose.

Turn Off the TV, Video Games, and Computer: give your family a chance to connect without all the background noise and you will be amazed at the things you learn and how much you laugh.

—familieswithpurpose.com

So your child wants to be...

an engineer?

Draw a floor plan of your house. Include doors, windows, and stairways. What do floor plan and blueprint symbols look like?

Research how electricity is generated and then gets to your home.

Construct a simple working electrical circuit using a flashlight battery, a switch, and a light.

Make drawings of three kinds of bridges and know their differences. Construct a model bridge.

Build a catapult.

Check out www.discoverengineering.org

a computer programmer?

Keep in mind real analytical skills often don't start appearing until ages 11-13 in many kids, but there are lots of fun things you can try as early as five or six.

Start with a few games which teach basic problem solving ideas in different ways: Magic Pen, Fantastic Contraption, Auditorium, and Light Bot. All are on the internet.

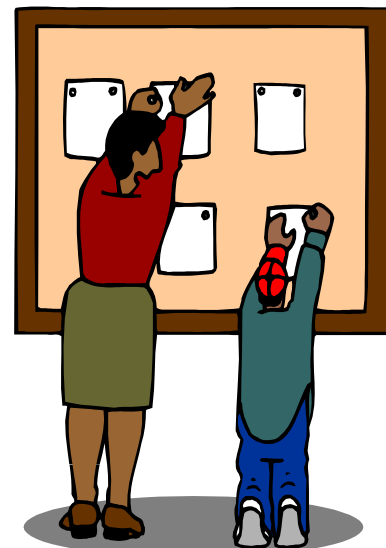
Download a free programming language from www.simplecodeworks.com

Logo is a programming language children can easily learn. There are also free versions of this available.

For some other skill development ideas which do not require the use of a computer, go to csunplugged.org/programming-languages.

more civic-minded?

Encourage them to become a member of a school council
Help them participate in a clean-up campaign
Raise money for disease research
Contribute money to the community
Prepare food packages for others
Visit a Retirement Center or Nursing Care Facility
Donate Blood
Run, Walk, Bike, Skip, Etc. for a Good Cause
Take them to the polls.
Organize a family field trip to the State House.
Encourage them to write their local representative.
Take your kids to a political rally.
Encourage them to volunteer to register voters.
Let them volunteer.



Crafty Kids

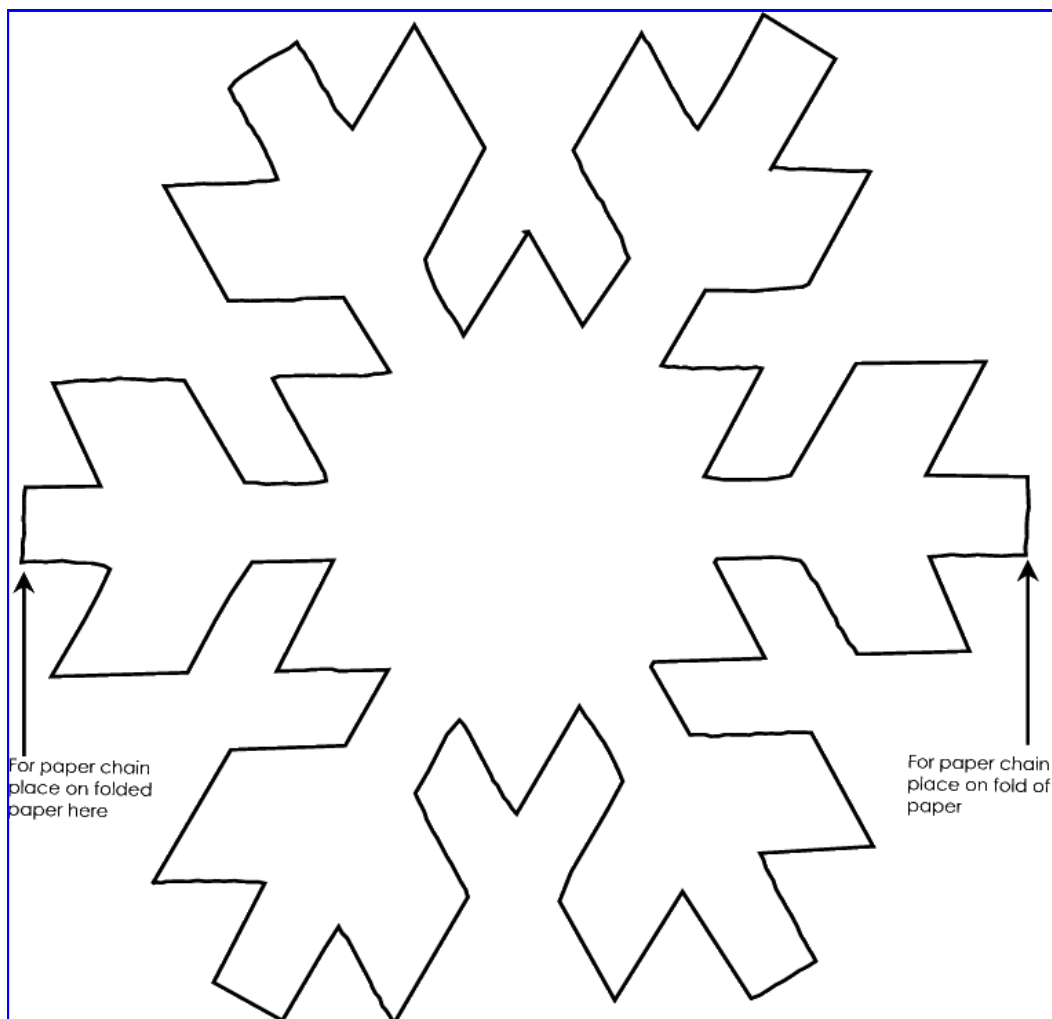
Monoprints



Smooth paint onto a flat surface (the bottom of a pan, a sheet of glass.) Draw a picture/design on the paint. Press a clean piece of paper over the paint. Voila! A beautiful work of art! Note: Any kind of paint will work; wear old clothes if it is acrylic paint though, as it will stain.

MAKE A PAPER CHAIN!

Trace the template once onto the first page close to the left edge and accordion fold the width or a bit less than the template. Cut out making sure not to cut through the folded areas that connect the snowflakes on the left and right side folds.



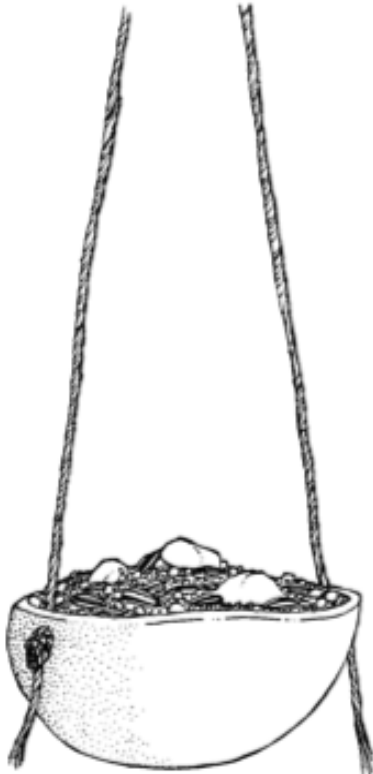
Earth Corner: For the Birds

Feeding the Birds

In the winter, birds often need extra food for fuel and warmth. Suet is an important food source for them. Here are three ideas for you to make to feed the birds in your area.



1. Make a coconut or grapefruit bird feeder. Fill it with birdseed and suet and hang it on a tree.
2. Make a pine cone bird feeder. Cover the pine cone with peanut butter and bacon grease and roll the pine cone in birdseed. Hang the pine cone by a string or colored yarn and watch the birds gather to eat!
3. Make a suet bag feeder. Take a mesh bag from the vegetables at home (such as the onion bag). Fill it with suet and tie the ends with twine and hang it outside.
4. Be sure to hang the feeders high on the tree so other animals do not get the birds' food.
5. Make a "Bird Notebook" by completing the two charts.



© 1990 by Julia Spencer Moutran

MY BIRD NOTEBOOK

This is to certify that I have fed and observed the following birds near my home or in my schoolyard.



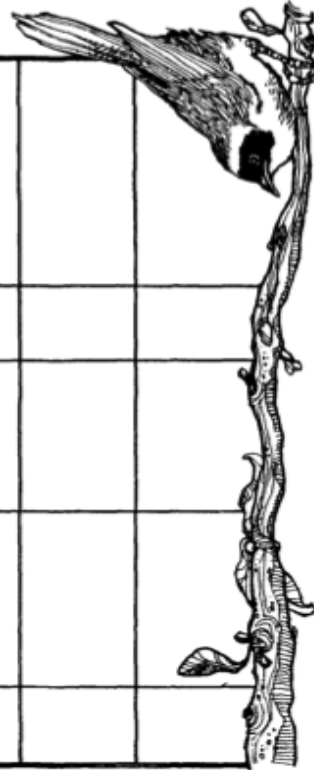
The foods the birds have eaten include the following:
(Check off any of these items)

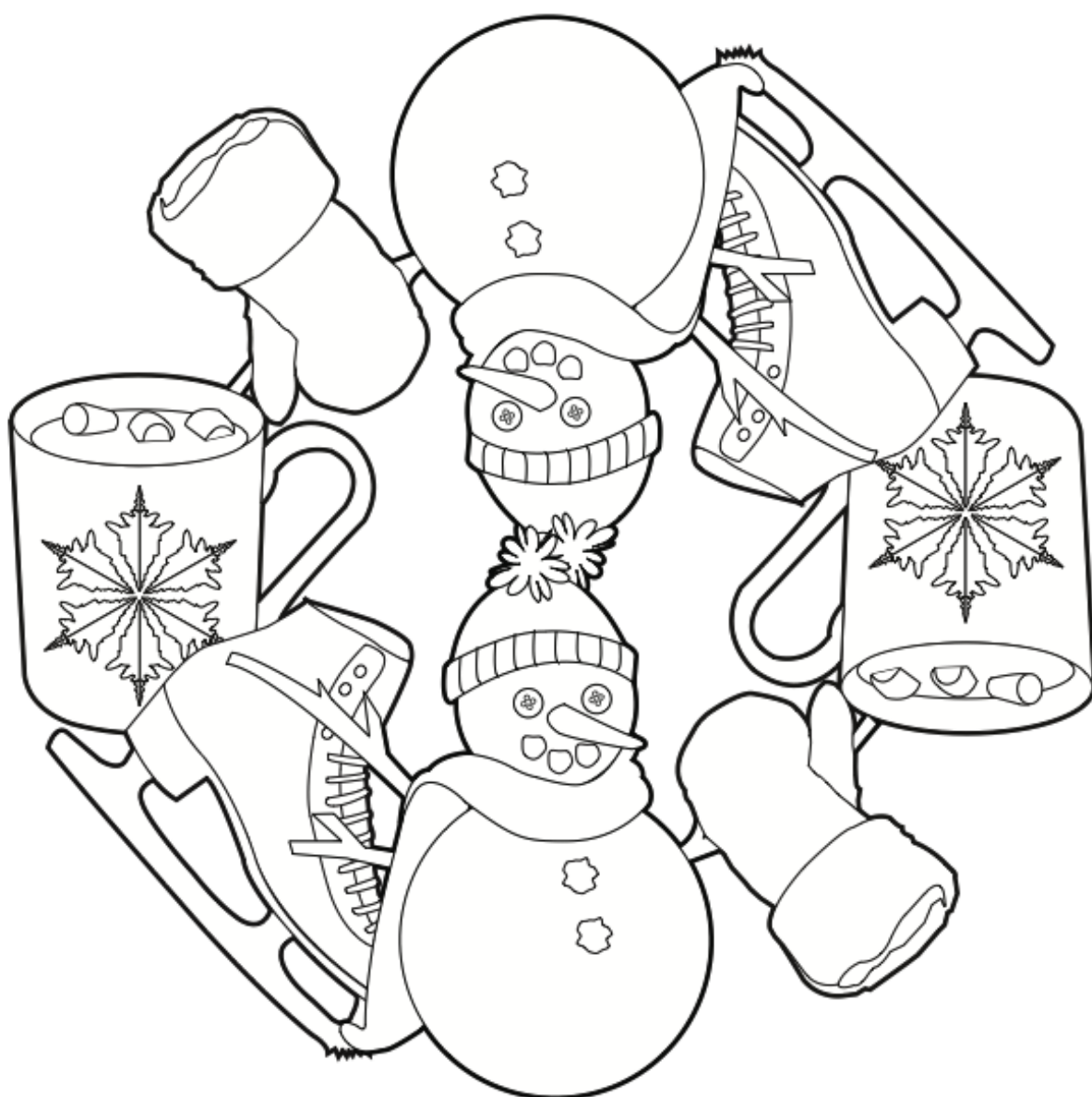
- | | | |
|--|--|---------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bird Seed | <input type="checkbox"/> Peanuts | List any other foods here |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Peanut Butter | <input type="checkbox"/> Pumpkin Seeds | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Suet | <input type="checkbox"/> Sunflower Seeds | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fruit | <input type="checkbox"/> Meat | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Raisins | <input type="checkbox"/> Bacon Grease | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Thistle | <input type="checkbox"/> Cracked Corn | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Egg Shells | <input type="checkbox"/> Toast, Bread, Muffins | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Crackers | <input type="checkbox"/> Cereal | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cooked Potatoes | <input type="checkbox"/> Berries | |

This certificate has been completed by _____
Date _____

My Observations of Birds and Their Eating Habits

Date	Type of Feeder	Food in the Feeder	Number of birds at the Feeder	Type of Birds





New Year's Resolutions

1. I promise to listen to my teacher.

2.

3.

