

# STRONGStart DO

Discover Online



## THE COMFORT OF TRADITIONS

### WELCOME MESSAGE

As the crisp winter winds start to weave their way through our days, we find ourselves on the cusp of a season filled with magic, warmth, and cherished traditions. Whether your family tradition is to bundle up by the fireplace, sipping on hot cocoa, or venturing out into the woods to explore and gather, there's a special kind of joy that accompanies time spent together.

Baking is a favorite winter tradition for my family. We love the hunt for a new recipe to showcase to guests and recreate the classics one more time. The time spent in the kitchen fills our house and hearts with warmth and fond memories. If you are looking for a fun way to spend time in the kitchen with kids, we invite you to check out the recipe section shared by Paula on page 3.

If you are wanting to engage in a new tradition as a family, it's the perfect time to celebrate the spirit of giving and kindness with charities such as Everybody Deserves A Smile or contributing to the local Food Bank. Whatever your traditions may be, we wish you comfort, peace, and good health for 2023 and beyond.

Raun Rainbow, Principal of Early Learning and Child Care & Danielle, Kate, Kristal, and Paula, the StrongStart Facilitators

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For more information on Early Learning in qathet School District, please visit our website at <https://www.sd47.bc.ca/page/6/2/early-learning>

# PROGRAM INFO

## STRONGSTART GO! (FORMERLY SD47 ORCA)

StrongStart GO is an outdoor StrongStart program that takes place in a variety of locations around the qathet Regional District. We are excited about providing opportunities to connect with one another and with nature as we explore and learn together outside.

### 2023/2024 Program Details and Schedule:

Location	Days Open	Hours of Operation
Texada Elementary	Every Second Monday	8:30 am - 11:30 am
Lund	Every Second Monday	10:00 am - 12:00 pm
Willingdon Beach	Every Second Wednesday	9:30 am - 11:30 am
Music Academy	Every Second Wednesday	9:30 am - 11:30 am
Lang Bay Fish Hatchery	Every Thursday	9:30 am - 11:30 am
Larry Gouthro Park	Every Second Friday	9:30 am - 11:30 am
Sunset Park	Every Second Friday	9:30 am - 11:30 am

\*All StrongStart programs follow the school calendar and will be closed on statutory holidays, Winter, Spring, Summer Breaks, SD47 Pro-D Days, and the last Wednesday of every month.

Our big StrongStart GO event for December will be at Palm Beach. Join us at 2815 McCausland Road on Dec. 5th.

Look for our bigger,  
bolder logo on the van!

**StrongStart**   
Getting Outside with SD47

## STRONGSTART CENTRES

StrongStart is a free drop-in program offered to families with children ages zero to five years old. Qualified early childhood educators lead learning activities and share valuable information with parents on child development and education in a safe, friendly, child-centered environment

### StrongStart Hours and Locations

Elementary School	Location	Days Open	Hours of Operation
Edgehill Elementary	7312 Abbotsford St.	Tuesday & Friday Wednesday	9:00 am - 12:00 pm 12:00 pm - 3:00 pm
Henderson Elementary	5506 Willow Ave.	Monday Tuesday - Friday	11:45 am - 2:45 pm 8:45 am - 11:45 am
Kelly Creek Elementary	2345 Zilinsky Rd.	Monday - Wednesday, Friday Thursday	8:30 am - 11:30 am 11:30 am - 2:30 pm
Westview Elementary	3900 Selkirk Ave.	Monday, Tuesday, Thursday	8:45 am - 11:45 am
StrongStart GO!	Texada, Lund, Powell River	Monday, Wednesday-Friday & the first Tuesday of every month	Visit our webpage for locations and schedule

\*All StrongStart programs follow the school calendar (starting the second week of September) and will be closed on statutory holidays, Winter, Spring, Summer Breaks, SD47 Pro-D Days, and the last Wednesday of every month. The first Tuesday of every month will only have the mobile StrongStart GO program running.

For up to date information on StrongStart schedules, programs, and special events please visit our [website](#)

# COMFORT OF TRADITIONAL RECIPES

Shared by Paula

## ▶▶▶ GRAHAM CRACKER GINGERBREAD HOUSE



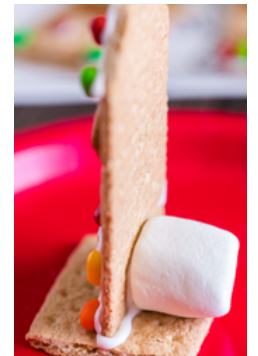
### candy decoration options

M&Ms, candy canes, gumdrops, mini marshmallows, tic-tacs, red or green frosting, red and white mints

Theprintableprincess.com

### Instructions

- Pre-cut a graham cracker for the house (The best way to cut the graham cracker into a roof shape is to use a bread knife, sawing gently back and forth)
- Use 1/8 of a graham cracker for the door
- Use a square pretzel for the window
- Use white frosting (Betty Crocker or a royal icing that hardens)
- Use half a graham cracker for the base
- Place a large marshmallow at the bottom back with some icing if you would like to have the gingerbread house stand on its own
- Decorate with candies, nuts, or dried fruits



## ▶▶▶ HOT CHOCOLATE ON A STICK

### INGREDIENTS:

- 3 cups semi-sweet chocolate chips: I used Nestle Toll House chips
- 4 ounces bittersweet (60% cacao) baking bar.
- 14 oz. can sweetened condensed milk
- ½ cup heavy cream
- 28-30 lollipop sticks
- 1 ½ cups mini marshmallows: You can also use whatever other toppings you would like such as crush candy canes or sprinkles, the list is endless.
- 1 gallon of whole milk



### DIRECTIONS:

- In a large bowl add the milk chocolate chips and the broken up pieces of the semi-sweet chocolate baking bar. Set aside.
- Heat heavy cream and sweetened condensed milk in a saucepan over medium heat. Heat the mixture until it reaches about 120-130°F (about 3-4 minutes).
- Pour the milk mixture into the large bowl with the chocolates. Whisk to completely incorporate the hot milk and chocolate to make a smooth chocolate sauce.
- Add chocolate to a piping bag or plastic storage bag and snip off the end. Pipe the melted chocolate into each of the square openings about ¾ full to leave some space for the toppings.
- Add your favorite topping and the popsicle sticks then refrigerate for up to 3 hours



*To enjoy place a yummy hot chocolate square into a mug and add hot milk, stir until dissolved.*



# A WINTER WALK

By Danielle



➤➤➤ The Winter Solstice marks the longest night of the year, and takes place on December 21st, 2023. There are many traditions that surround the solstice, including taking a winter walk. Pages 73 and 74 of the British Columbia Ministry of Education (2019) handbook, "Let's Play: Activities for Families", offers an activity "Walk On The Wild Side", that builds on a winter walk adventure. This is an easy way to incorporate the great outdoors into a winter tradition that can be developed around the solstice, or any other special holiday day. Finish up with "Hot Chocolate on a Stick" shared by Paula on page 3 and a cozy story shared by Kate on page 8. Looking for more outdoor holiday inspiration? [Click here.](#)

## ➤➤➤ Footprints In The Snow

*(an excerpt from a poem written by Nichola Batzel)*

Have you heard the crunch of the snow as you travel  
on your journey?

Have you taken the time to look at the footprints  
you leave behind?

As I walk and leave footprints in the snow,  
My son follows and jumps in the impressions I leave behind.

What does he see? What does he learn  
From my footprints in the snow?

## Walking on the Wild Side



### What

Exploring outside in the forest, on the beach, in the snow, or in other natural areas can be fun for children. This outdoor activity supports creativity and building confidence.

#### 1 Create the Environment

- On a day you're ready to explore outside, give your child some time to get ready. If possible, give your child a choice about where to go.
- Look at the weather and talk together about what clothing you will need to wear to be comfortable.

#### 2 Walk on the Wild Side!

- Go for a walk with your child or family and create different obstacles out of the natural things you come across. Here are some examples:
  - Jump in or over a puddle
  - Hop over fallen twigs
  - Roll down a hill or through a pile of leaves
  - Balance along fallen trees
  - Climb a tree or hang from a low hanging branch
  - Find a rock to throw into a creek, lake, or ocean
  - Collect a pile of leaves or pinecones. Try picking up one at a time, two at a time....
  - Find a large rock to climb up and over
  - Run to one tree, skip to the next, then walk sideways to another

### Why

Through this experience, children will

- Feel confidence in, and control of their bodies
- Learn ways to keep themselves healthy, including different physical activities
- Explore the outdoors and learn about nature
- Adapt to and enjoy experiences of change, surprise, and uncertainty



### How

Go for a walk with your child, and point out the different natural formations, elements, and growths that you see (e.g., trees, lakes, oceans, rocks).

Support your child if needed, by holding hands, helping them keep their balance, or putting them on your shoulders to feel branches and leaves of trees. Even children who are not yet walking love to climb and be held up high.

Encourage your child to try to balance, hang, or climb without help from an adult. If your child uses a wheelchair or a walker, try zooming fast through a puddle to make a big splash!

When you return home, talk about or write down all the movement or actions you created and see how many different locations you can perform these actions in, such as the beach, forest, mountains, and park.

Read a book with your child about exploring or other ideas that connect with this theme. Here are suggestions:

- *Explorers of the Wild*, by Cole Atkinson
- *Sometimes I like to Curl up in a Ball!*, by Vicki Churchill

### Where

This activity has been created to occur outdoors.

### When

Try this activity during daylight hours wherever it is bright enough to move around safely.



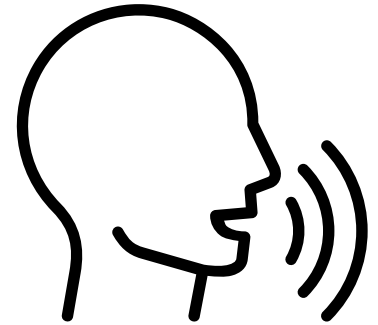
# WORD OF THE MONTH

By Kate

In each publication, the StrongStart team will share a new word to learn in ʔayʔajuθəm (ayajuthem). Ayajuthem is the language of the Tla-amin Nation. In December, we want to share a phrase that talks about tradition..

toχnɛx<sup>wəs</sup> k<sup>w</sup> təʔaws

he\she knows the traditional teachings



As a school district we have a responsibility to create the conditions that will provide the best quality of education for every student to succeed in school and life. Increasing our knowledge of ʔayʔajuθəm (ayajuthem) is one way for us to show how we value all students and are committed to building strong relationships moving forward.

## »»» DID YOU KNOW? By Danielle

According to Discover the Forest, a website for tweens (kids 10 to 14), developed through a partnership between the U.S. Forest Service and the Ad Council, “The average American child can recognize 1,000 corporate logos, but can’t identify 10 plants or animals native to his or her own region.”

The Waxberry (Snowberry) branches stand out distinctly with their white berries. We have been admiring them at Willingdon beach during StrongStart GO. The next time you are out exploring in nature, look for Waxberry branches. Please remember that these berries are edible for squirrels, deer and birds, but not people.

Waxberry (Snowberry)

ʔayʔajuθəm name: šɛsuʔay  
(First Voices, 2023)

To hear the ʔayʔajuθəm word [click here](#).

**FirstVoices**

FirstVoices is a suite of web-based tools and services designed to support Indigenous people engaged in language archiving, language teaching and culture revitalization. [www.firstvoices.com](http://www.firstvoices.com)

For more information about Waxberry (Snowberry) go to: <https://sierraclub.bc.ca/snowberry-waxberry/>



# TRADITIONAL SONGS

Shared by Kate

## ▶▶▶ HANUKKAH, OH HANUKKAH

### TRADITIONAL SONG LYRICS

HANUKKAH, OH HANUKKAH, COME LIGHT THE MENORAH  
LET'S HAVE A PARTY, WE'LL ALL DANCE THE HORAH  
GATHER 'ROUND THE TABLE, WE'LL GIVE YOU A TREAT  
DREYDLES TO PLAY WITH AND LATKES TO EAT.

AND WHILE WE ARE PLAYING THE CANDLES ARE BURNING  
LOW

ONE FOR EACH NIGHT THEY SHED A SWEET  
LIGHT TO REMIND US OF DAYS LONG AGO  
ONE FOR EACH NIGHT THEY SHED A SWEET  
LIGHT TO REMIND US OF DAYS LONG AGO.



## ▶▶▶ I'M A LITTLE SNOWMAN

I'm a little snowman short and fat (Stand with arms in circle above stomach)  
Here are my buttons(Point down front of shirt)  
Here is my hat (Pat top of head)  
When the sun comes out (Make sun with hands in circle above head)  
I cannot play (Shake head "no")  
Slowly I just melt away (Bend slowly down to floor)



## ▶▶▶ UP ON THE HOUSETOP

### TRADITIONAL CHRISTMAS CAROL

Up on the housetop, reindeer pause  
Out jumps good ol' Santa Claus  
Down through the chimney with lots of toys  
All for the little ones, Christmas joys  
Ho, Ho, Ho! Who wouldn't go?  
Ho, Ho, Ho! Who wouldn't go?  
Up on the housetop, click, click, click,  
Down through the chimney with good Saint Nick  
First comes the stocking of little Nell  
Oh, dear Santa, fill it well  
Give her a dolly that laughs and cries  
One that will open and shut her eyes  
Ho, Ho, Ho! Who wouldn't go?  
Ho, Ho, Ho! Who wouldn't go?  
Up on the housetop, click, click, click,  
Down through the chimney with good Saint Nick  
Next comes the stocking of little Will  
Oh, just see what a glorious fill  
Here is a hammer and lots of tacks  
Also a ball and a whip that cracks  
Ho, Ho, Ho! Who wouldn't go?  
Ho, Ho, Ho! Who wouldn't go?  
Up on the housetop, click, click, click,  
Down through the chimney with good Saint Nick



## THE HOKEY POKEY <<<

You put your right foot in,  
You put your right foot out,  
You put your right foot in,  
And you shake it all about.  
You do the hokey-pokey,  
And your turn yourself around.  
That's what it's all about.

You put your left foot in...  
You put your right arm in...  
You put your left arm in...  
You put your head in...  
You put your whole self in...

Variation: Snow Pokey - boots,  
toque, mittens, scarf, snowsuit

## CELEBRATING KWANZAA <<<

MARLA LEWIS

From our roots deep in Africa  
Springs the greatness of who we are  
Habari gani – now what's the news?  
There's a celebration!

Seven Principles, seven days  
We light kinaras and sing in praise  
Teach traditions and ancient ways  
Hailed for generations (foundation)

Kwanzaa – we're celebrating Kwanzaa

Kwanzaa – celebrating Kwanzaa

First, Umoja means unity

Family and community

Second Kujichagulia

Self determination

Third, Ujima, collectively

We solve our problems responsibly

Fourth, Ujamaa, prosperity

Through cooperation

Kwanzaa – we're celebrating Kwanzaa

Kwanzaa – celebrating Kwanzaa

Next is Nia, so purposeful

We feel the power within us all

Kuumba means creativity

And anticipation

Last, Imani means faith and trust

In our leaders and each of us

Seven Principles, wise and just

Give us inspiration

Kwanzaa – we're celebrating Kwanzaa

Kwanzaa – celebrating Kwanzaa

Umoja, Kujichaguli, Ujima, Ujamaa,

Nia, Kuumba, Imani

(REPEAT)





# GAMES AND ACTIVITIES

Shared by Paula

## CHRISTMAS TREE BOWLING

All you need is:

- Small Recycled Green Bottles
- Foam Ornament Stickers
- Star Stickers
- Small ball

*after decorating your Christmas tree bottles have fun lining them up and bowling them down!*



## DON'T RING THE BELLS OBSTACLE COURSE

**Obstacle #1**, Hang a hula hoop from beam a beam on the roof or door way, or you can tie it on the side of a chair, then tie Christmas bells to the top of the hoop (make it even trickier by tying them too the bottom too!)

**Obstacle #2** is for crawling under. Use a piece of plastic pipe, a pool noodle or your broomstick to hang the bells from.

**Obstacle #3**, I used a short length of skirting board as a balance beam. You could also use a piece of decking board. Laying it directly on the floor is perfect for little ones. Place your bells along the beam for the children to step over. If they roll off too easily, place a small piece of tape underneath each one to help stabilize it a little.

*Enjoy making this fun for the whole family.*



# SNUGGLE UP AND READ

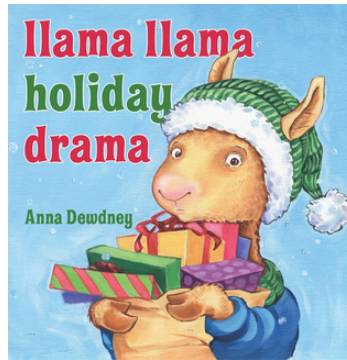
Shared by Kate

Check out one of these great books!

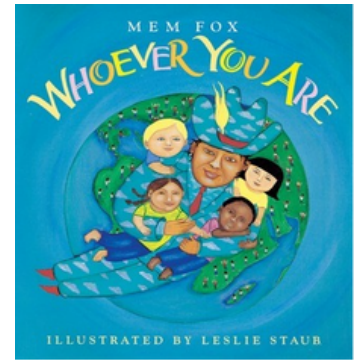
Ask for them at the library or just click a book to listen to the story on Youtube.



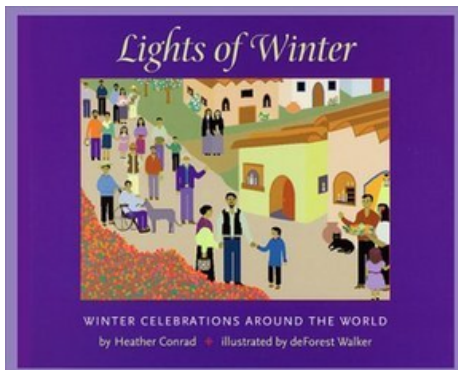
Daddy Christmas & Hanukkah Mama  
by Selina Alko



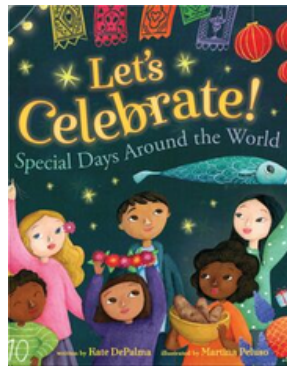
Llama Llama Holiday Drama  
by Anna Dewdney



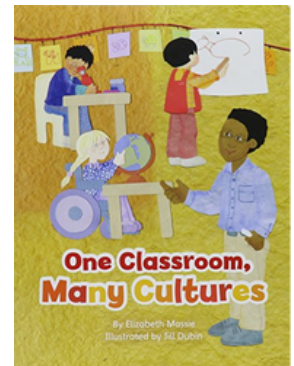
Whoever You Are  
by Mem Fox



Lights of Winter  
by Heather Conrad



Let's Celebrate  
by Kate DePalma



One Classroom, Many Cultures  
by Elisabeth Massie





# B.C. EARLY LEARNING FRAMEWORK: RESOURCE LIST

## About B.C. Early Learning Framework: Resource List

The B.C. Early Learning Framework is designed primarily for use by early childhood educators, primary school teachers, principals and vice-principals, college and university educators, researchers, post-secondary students in early childhood and elementary education programs, pedagogists, other early years professionals, communities, governments, and families. Parents and caregivers may find the framework useful in their efforts to foster their children's early learning, and in their dialogues with professionals. This list provides suggested resources complementary to the framework.

For more information on early learning in BC, you can visit: [Click here](#)

**▶▶▶ [CLICK HERE TO ACCESS: B.C. EARLY LEARNING FRAMEWORK: RESOURCE LIST](#)**



# Living inquiry: Engaging with others, materials and the world

Shared by Kristal



## Living inquiry: Engaging with others, materials and the world

Living inquiries” (known as “areas of learning” in the B.C. Ministry of Education [2008] framework) is used to describe the processes of thinking and learning that happen as children, educators, materials, and ideas interconnect. The term “living” suggests that these processes are ongoing and always evolving. “Inquire” means to pay attention in multiple ways – to study, explore, experiment, and ask questions. (Atkinson & Dockendorf, 2019, p.63)

## Material: Clay Plainsman M370

## Pathways: Spaces, Objects and Materials

For each of the living inquiries, there is a subsection called “pathways” (formerly called “learning goals” [B.C. Ministry of Education, 2008]) that will help educators engage with the living inquiries. The term “pathways” evokes a sense of movement that is not linear. (Atkinson & Dockendorf, 2019, p.63)

## Reflective question: What might emerge to consider children as artists?

Think about the many ways artists approach and engage with clay

For each of the pathways, there is a series of critically reflective questions that can provoke thinking and invite discussion of meanings and perspectives of pedagogy and practice (Atkinson & Dockendorf, 2019, p.63)

## Have fun and play with clay together, share your discoveries

## Check out how artist- Andy Goldsworthy engages with clay!

[Andy Goldsworthy at work](#)

Atkinson, K., & Dockendorf, M. (2019). British Columbia early learning framework. Ministry of Education.





# NEW YEARS OUTDOOR FUN



Many cherished traditions are ones that involve nature and the great outdoors

By Danielle

»»» There are many common and traditional ways that people ring in the New Year, and many families have personal traditions that are meaningful for them. Here is a idea to start a new tradition with your family, by “adopting” a neighbourhood tree. This is NOT a programme that you must subscribe to or pay for, but rather an opportunity to increase awareness and appreciation of a tree in your own area or neighbourhood. Tracking the changes and growth in trees helps to connect us to the natural world that surrounds us.

Click here <https://pltcanada.org/en/environmental-education/>



**ADOPT A TREE**  
CONNECTING KIDS TO NATURE

Nature is a great teacher and getting kids outside to learn and play is good for their brains and bodies. Try this outdoor activity from Project Learning Tree Canada (PLT Canada) – it's safe, fun, and educational!

In this activity, children “adopt” a tree, deepening their awareness of individual trees over time and encouraging a greater understanding and appreciation of their local environment.

The next time you are in your yard or on a walk in a familiar area, invite children to choose a particular tree to observe. Suggest they become better acquainted with it by using their senses of sight, touch, hearing, and smell to describe the tree.

**CRITICAL THINKING**  
Encourage critical thinking by asking:

- Is this tree alive? How do you know?
- How is this tree similar to and/or different from other trees around it?
- How does this tree help the environment around it?

**ACTIVITIES**  
Complete the *Adopt a Tree Journal Entry* below. Revisit this tree on a regular basis throughout the year and in a variety of weather conditions. Have children guess reasons for the changes they see and then predict changes for the future.

**ADOPT A TREE JOURNAL ENTRY**  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_  
Location: \_\_\_\_\_  
Describe the tree: \_\_\_\_\_  
What colour is the bark? \_\_\_\_\_  
Why did you choose this tree? \_\_\_\_\_  
What type of tree is it? \_\_\_\_\_

**HOW MANY SEASONAL SIGNS CAN YOU FIND?**

Fall

- Leaf colour change
- Fallen leaves
- Cooler temperatures

Spring

- Birds nesting
- Birds on branches
- New leaves growing
- Warmer temperatures

**MY ADOPTED TREE**  
In the box, draw a picture of your tree or use a crayon or pencil to complete a leaf or bark rubbing.

**MAKE LEARNING FUN!**  
For more activity ideas and materials, visit [pltcanada.org](https://pltcanada.org).

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© Sustainable Forestry Initiative Inc. \* Adopt a Tree Activity (2). Adapted from Activity 21: Adopt a Tree from Project Learning Tree's PreK-8 Environmental Education Activity Guide.

**ADOPT A TREE**  
CONNECTING KIDS TO NATURE

**MAKE LEARNING FUN!**  
For more activity ideas and materials: Visit [pltcanada.org](https://pltcanada.org).

From: Sustainable Forestry Initiative Inc. Adapted from Activity 21: Adopt a Tree from Project Learning Tree's PreK-8 Environmental Education Activity Guide.

Here is another resource from Sustainable Forestry Initiative Inc. that expands on the “Adopt a Tree” activity.



Many families bring evergreen boughs into their homes during the holidays, and celebrate the tradition of hanging evergreen wreaths on their doors. The November winds brought down so many branches and we recently used them to create wreaths during StrongStart GO.

We are outside four days a week in all kinds of weather.  
**Dress warmly and come out to play!**

