

## Winter Wonderland Sensory Activity



**Domain:** Sensory and Cognitive stimulation

**Goal:** To help clients improve physical functioning, social engagement, and cognitive stimulation

**Population:** Geriatrics, lower functioning

**Outcome:** Research suggests that sensory activities for lower functioning clients can assist in improving communication skills, relaxation, cognitive functioning, improve socialization, and increase alertness.

**You will need:** White yarn, tablet or computer (to play sounds and see video), sounds of the winter (wind, jingle bells, howling wolves, sound of ice skates, dog-mushing, etc.), scents of winter (pine, cinnamon, cranberry, campfire, etc.), video of winter nature (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9E8JNf1Fngg>), touch items (parka, gloves, hat, ski boots, hand warmers, ice scraper, sensory snow, etc.), hot chocolate, cups, hot water, Winter Mad Libs, winter poems.

### **Directions:**

Sit activity participants in a semi-circle, and explain to the residents that they are going to take a trip to a winter wonderland. Have the winter video playing in the background and ask the residents what they see and hear and what other elements are a part of winter.

- **Physical:** Begin by doing some winter themed exercises including: having a snowball “fight” with the balls of yarn, “pretend” to do the seated actions of the following winter activities: skiing, ice fishing, shoveling snow, snow shoeing, cross country skiing, ice climbing, ice skating, etc.
- **Cognitive:** Following that, do the winter Mad Libs with the residents and go through a variety of winter themed touch and scent sensory items and have residents identify what they are and what they are used for (i.e. have them touch parka and ask them why you would need it for the winter, etc.).
- **Social:** Following going through all the items, make hot chocolate and serve it to the residents and read through a few winter poems asking for clients input throughout.

End by thanking the residents and wishing them a good day and to keep warm!

### **Winter Mad Libs:**

- Let’s Build a Snowman: First, we need a really big snowstorm! Watching all of that \_\_\_\_\_(color) snow makes me feel \_\_\_\_\_(emotion). Next, we need to gather up \_\_\_\_\_(clothing item), a \_\_\_\_\_(vegetable), and a hat to put on our snowman! Then we go outside where it is \_\_\_\_\_(type of weather). We need to roll the snow until it forms \_\_\_\_\_(number) large snowballs, and then stack 1 on top of another. Now we take (our vegetable, clothing item, and hat) and put it on our

snowman we named Mr. \_\_\_\_\_ (name). We are finished! Now we get to go \_\_\_\_\_ (winter sport) with family and friends!

**Winter Poems:**

- Winter
  - Piles of snow beneath my boots  
chilly winds blowing everywhere  
snow keeps mounting on the posts  
on the windows and on the roads  
shovels outside,  
soups inside  
hot and rich,  
chicken and corn  
coming back from all the work  
this is what I look for  
the warm chestnuts,  
the cracking fire  
this is my winter warmth
    - Sam
- The Snowman
  - One must have a mind of winter  
To regard the frost and the boughs  
Of the pine-trees crusted with snow;  
And have been cold a long time  
To behold the junipers shagged with ice,  
The spruces rough in the distant glitter  
Of the January sun; and not to think  
Of any misery in the sound of the wind,  
In the sound of a few leaves,  
Which is the sound of the land  
Full of the same wind  
That is blowing in the same bare place  
For the listener, who listens in the snow,  
And, nothing himself, beholds  
Nothing that is not there and the nothing that is.
    - Wallace Stevens

- Snowflakes
  - Snowflakes spill from heaven's hand  
Lovely and chaste like smooth white sand.  
A veil of wonder laced in light  
Falling Gently on a winters night.  
Graceful beauty raining down  
Giving magic to the lifeless ground.  
Each snowflake like a falling star  
Smiling beauty that's spun afar.  
Till earth is dressed in a robe of white  
Unspoken poem the hush of night.
    - Linda A. Copp
- Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening
  - Whose woods these are I think I know.  
His house is in the village, though;  
He will not see me stopping here  
To watch his woods fill up with snow.  
My little horse must think it queer  
To stop without a farmhouse near  
Between the woods and frozen lake  
The darkest evening of the year  
He gives his harness bells a shake  
To ask if there is some mistake.  
The only other sound's the sweep  
Of easy wind and downy flake.  
The woods are lovely, dark and deep,  
But I have promises to keep,  
And miles to go before I sleep,  
And miles to go before I sleep.
    - Robert Frost