

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Informative Holiday Essay Writing**

### **Directions:**

- **Each student will choose an informative holiday essay to write during the holiday season.**
- **Informative essays may be funny, sad, serious, happy, creative, but will be informative.**
- **Use fantastic word choice.**
- **Students may either write their essays in their writing notebook, or may type them on Office 365.**
- **Please see Mrs. Looney if there is a special holiday that your family celebrates in December or January that is not on the list below.**
- **Have fun!**

### **1. Helping the Less Fortunate**

- During the holiday season, many people focus on giving to those less fortunate.
- Think about the reasons why we should help out those less fortunate throughout the year, as well as during the holiday season.
- Write an informative essay to explain the different ways you could help someone less fortunate during the holiday season and throughout the year.

### **2. Supporting a Charity during Hanukkah**

- One tradition of Hanukkah and all year round is for people to give money and time to charity, which is called Tzedakah in Hebrew.
- What charity would you most want to support and why?

### **3. The Story of Hanukkah**

- What is the story of Hanukkah?
- Research and write about the history and the beginning of Hanukkah.

### **4. Foods of Hanukkah**

- Popular foods during Hanukkah include fried potato pancakes called latkes and fried donuts called sufganiyot.
- Why do you think the Jews eat so many fried foods during the holiday?
- Would you enjoy that part of the Hanukkah menu?
- What other foods are traditional foods that are enjoyed during Hanukkah?

### **5. The Importance of the Dreidel during Hanukkah**

- What is the importance of the dreidel?
- What are some games that are played using the dreidel?
- What are the lyrics to songs written about the dreidel?
- The Hebrew letters on the side of the dreidel mean "A great miracle happened there." Have you ever witnessed something you'd call a miracle? If so, what was it and how did it affect you? If not, imagine you saw something miraculous and write about why it impressed you.

### **6. The Importance of the Menorah during Hanukkah**

- What is the history of the menorah?
- Why is the menorah important during Hanukkah?
- Hanukkah is known as the festival of lights in part because of all the beautiful candle holder menorahs.
- Describe a richly decorated menorah filled with eight lighted candles. Make sure to detail how you feel about the design and the brightly shining lights.

## **7. Imaginary Christmas and Hanukkah Party**

- Imagine that you and your friends have decided to go to a Hanukkah party and a Christmas party on the same night.
- What might be some of the differences between the two?
- Why do you think both holidays are important?

## **8. The Story of Christmas**

- What is the story of Christmas?
- Research and write about the history and the beginning of Christmas.

## **9. The Symbols of Christmas**

- What are the symbols of Christmas?
- What are the meanings of the symbols of Christmas?
- What is your favorite symbol of Christmas? Why?

## **10. Christmas Around the World**

- Christmas Day is celebrated as a major festival and religious and public holiday in many countries around the world.
- Research how other countries celebrate Christmas.

## **11. Decorating for the Holidays**

- Many people decorate their houses in different ways for the holidays.
- What are some ways that people decorate their homes for the holidays in the United States?
- What are some ways that people decorate their homes for the holidays in different countries?
- Write about how you decorate your home.

## **12. Holiday Traditions**

- Families have many traditions at holiday time. Some families cook special foods. Others shop for and wrap gifts, decorate the house, and have many other fun times together.
- Write an informative essay to tell your class about some of the things that you like to do with your family during holiday time. Give details and examples to help make your writing more interesting.

## **13. The Three Wise Men and the Christmas Story**

- What is the story of the Three Wise Men at Christmas time?
- Why are the Three Wise Men important?
- Imagine that the Three Wise Men knocked on your door and stayed with your family to eat dinner. What would the Wise Men and your family talk about? Where would these three brilliant wanderers be off to and why?

## **14. Family Holiday Celebrations**

- What would your holiday celebration be like if everyone from your entire extended family came over for the holiday?
- How many family members would there be?
- Who might you enjoy spending time with the most and why?

## **15. The Story of Kwanzaa**

- What is the story of Kwanzaa?
- Research and write about the history and the beginning of Kwanzaa.

## **16. Foods of Kwanzaa**

- What are some of the popular and traditional foods that are eaten during Kwanzaa?
- What part of the Kwanzaa menu would you enjoy?

## **17. Kwanzaa and Unity**

- Kwanzaa was established by Dr. Maulana Karenga as a holiday of African-American identity and community in 1966.
- Do you think it's important for a group of people to have a collective identity? Why or why not?

## **18. Kwanzaa and Family Origin**

- The holiday of Kwanzaa was established in part so that African-Americans could reconnect with their African roots.
- Do you know where in the world your family is originally from?
- If so, how do you think it has affected the way you've grown up? If not, why might it be important for you to find out?

## **19. The Seven Principles of Kwanzaa**

- Kwanzaa is centered around seven principles, known as the Nguzo Saba.
- Each of the seven days of Kwanzaa corresponds to a different principle: unity, self-determination, collective work and responsibility, cooperative economics, purpose, creativity, and faith.
- Which of these seven principles do you think is the most important and why?

## **20. Decorating for Kwanzaa**

- Households celebrating Kwanzaa decorate their households with colorful African cloths, the colors black, red, and green, and a candle holder with seven candles, called a kinara.
- What is the symbolism behind the way people decorate their homes for Kwanzaa?
- Describe what it might be like to be invited to the house of a friend who celebrates Kwanzaa. What might you enjoy about it and why would you like it?

## **21. Veteran's Day and Memorial Day in the U.S.**

- The United States celebrates our veterans on two separate holidays each year.
- The holidays are Memorial Day in May and Veteran's Day in November.
- Research what the difference is between the two holidays and write an essay on what the differences are.