

## Program 4

## HOLIDAYS IN THE WHITE HOUSE

*Topic:* The White House, George and Barbara Bush

*Level of students:* Grades 1 – 6

*Grouping of students:* Individual

*Skills/knowledge addressed:*

- Creativity
- Artistic skills
- Basic prior knowledge of winter holidays, or spring holidays

*Social Studies TEKS:*

K.1B: The student is expected to identify customs associated with holidays;

K.12ABC: The student is expected to identify family customs and traditions and explain their importance; compare family customs and traditions; describe customs of the local community;

1.2B: The student is expected to compare the observance of holidays and celebrations (past and present)

1.15A: The student is expected to describe various beliefs, customs and traditions of families and explain their importance;

2.14C: The student is expected to explain how selected customs, symbols and celebrations reflect an American love of individualism, inventiveness and freedom;

3.12AB: The student is expected to explain the significance of selected ethnic and/or cultural celebrations in Texas, the United States and other nations;

4.20AB: The student is expected to identify the similarities and differences within and among selected racial, ethnic and religious groups in Texas; identify customs, celebrations and traditions of various culture groups in Texas;

5.23B: The student is expected to describe customs, celebrations and traditions of selected racial, ethnic and religious groups in the United States;

6.19B: The student is expected to explain the significance of religious holidays and observances

*Description, Winter Edition:* Students learn how the Bush Family celebrated the winter holidays in the White House by viewing a video, photographs, and through a discussion led by the docent. Students learn what the Bush Family especially enjoyed about the holidays, including sending/receiving cards and enjoying the tree decorated with special family ornaments. Each student then makes her own special holiday memories by designing a holiday greeting card and making a fake stained-glass ornament. Cards will be designed on pre-scored paper, using coloring pencils, pencils and erasers. Ornament patterns will be colored with permanent markers on transparency film.

*Post-classroom activity, Winter Edition:* Have the students share their cards and ornaments with their classmates back at school. Use the variety of cards to explore the many ways in which winter holidays are celebrated in the U.S. and around the world. For example, teachers can take this opportunity to discuss Christmas, Hanukah and Kwanzaa. In addition, the class may explore Christmas traditions in other nations.

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*Description, Spring Edition:* Students learn about the White House’s annual celebration of spring – the Easter Egg Roll – through the use of video, photographs, and docent-led discussion. Students learn that the Bushes’ favorite aspect of the Egg Roll was families spending time together. Each student then makes her own special holiday memories by designing a holiday greeting card and making a “stained glass” window ornament. Cards will be designed on pre-scored paper, using coloring pencils. Ornament patterns will be colored with permanent markers on transparency film.

*Post-museum activity, Spring Edition:* Have students share their cards and ornaments with classmates; cards may even be mailed. Use this opportunity to explore and discuss how other cultures celebrate spring. Stage a mini spring fling at the school, or within your own classroom, incorporating the traditions of other cultures. Or have your own egg roll.

# HOLIDAYS IN THE WHITE HOUSE

## SAMPLE TEXT

### **Welcoming Children to Bush Library**

Welcome to the George Bush Library and Museum. Is this anyone's first visit? Has anyone been here before? Well, we have special fun in store for everyone here today. Everything we do today will be new for everyone, even if you've visited before.

### **Introduction of Holidays in the White House, Description of Christmas in the White House and Introduction of Video**

Today everyone is in for a special treat. We are going to celebrate the winter holidays, like Christmas, a [few months] early! We are going to watch a video, design a holiday card and make an ornament for the Christmas tree.

What are the holidays we celebrate in December? Some people celebrate Christmas. Other people may celebrate Hanukah or Kwanzaa. In the White House, the Bushes celebrated Christmas.

Christmas is a very special time in the White House, where the President lives. President and Mrs. Bush especially loved celebrating Christmas in the White House. (Give examples of how the White House was decorated, or how the Bushes celebrated. For example, you could say... Every year, the White House is decorated according to one theme. This means all the decorations have something in common. One year, the official White House Christmas tree was decorated with the characters from books, such as the *Pokey Puppy* or *Charlotte's Webb*. [point out the photo of that tree] Each year, the official White House Christmas tree is located in the Blue Room. But there are more than 20 Christmas trees in the White House. Every room has a tree or is decorated for Christmas. The White House becomes even more beautiful than usual!

Look around the room at the photographs on the front and side wall. They all show the White House decorated for Christmas. I want to show you

even more decorations and the people who put them up. So, we are going to watch a special video about Christmas in the White House. You will see lots of decorations. There are no words in the video, just Christmas music.

### **Introducing the Christmas Card Activity**

Did you enjoy that? Weren't all of the decorations beautiful? Is everybody in a holiday mood now? I know I am!

Remember I told you how much President and Mrs. Bush enjoy Christmas? Two of their favorite things about Christmas are (1) sending and receiving Christmas cards and (2) decorating their tree with ornaments that have special meaning to their family.

Today, you are all going to make your very own card for one of those December holidays – like Christmas, Hanukah or Kwanzaa. Make your card for the holiday that your family celebrates. If your family does not celebrate one of these holidays, make a card for a holiday or other special day that your family does celebrate. You get to draw whatever pictures on it that you want. And, you can also write words on the inside of the card. You can design your card for the White House, or for the Bush Library, or for Christmas in general. We are going to use coloring pencils for this. You may want to draw with a regular pencil first, in case you need to erase any lines, and then color your design. Everybody also gets an envelope so that you can mail your card this December.

### **Introducing the Ornament Activity**

All right. We certainly have some pretty cards and a lot of wonderful artists in this room.

The Bushes also love to decorate their Christmas tree with ornaments that are special to their family. Some of their favorite ornaments are hand-made.

Now, each of you gets to make your very own ornament. Your ornament will look like the stained glass windows in a building. We have four ornament patterns. You choose one ornament and color it with markers. When you are finished, the ornament can be cut out from the paper. There is a hole at the top of the ornament. We will give you some yarn and help you put it through the hole. Then, at Christmas time, you can tie the ornament to the tree using the yarn. [As you explain, hold up the sample ornament for them to see and point out how it is colored, the hole and the yarn.]

If you don't celebrate with a tree, you can hang your ornament in a window. The sunlight coming through the window will make your ornament shine and everyone will be able to see it.

Do you have any questions? If you need a color you don't have, or if you need help, please raise your hand.