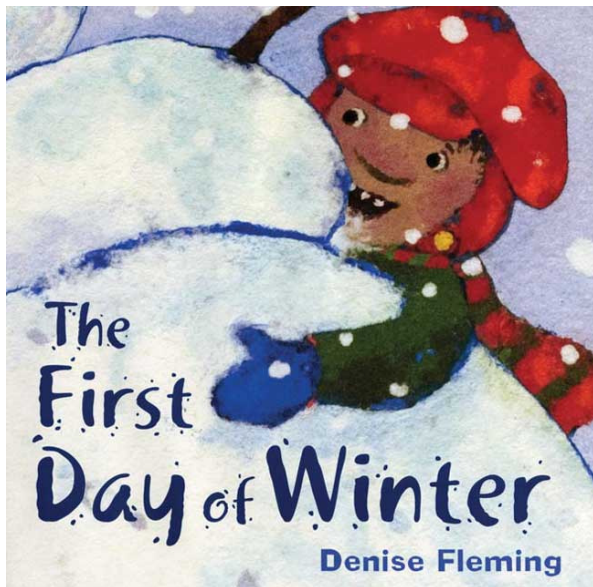


The First Day of Winter

by Denise Fleming
A Choose to Read Ohio Toolkit



About the Book

On the first day of winter my best friend gave to me a red cap with a gold snap....

Along with swirling snow and lots of outdoor fun, the first ten days of winter bring special gifts for a special friend. This cumulative tale will have children chanting along as they discover all the trimmings needed for the most perfect snowman ever!

*Jacket illustration copyright by Denise Fleming from **The First Day of Winter**. Used with permission from Henry Holt Books for Young Readers.*

Book details

The First Day of Winter by Denise Fleming.
Henry Holt Books for Young Readers, 2005, ISBN 978-0- 8050-7384-3, Ages 3-6.
<http://us.macmillan.com/thefirstdayofwinter>

About the Author

Denise Fleming won a Caldecott Honor Award for *In the Small, Small Pond*. She is the author and illustrator of seventeen picture books, including *Sleepy, Oh So Sleepy*. She lives in Toledo.

What is your earliest memory of writing/drawing?

It seems like I was always writing and drawing. I wanted to share my ideas from the beginning. A bit bossy am I.

What inspired you to write/illustrate your first book?

I started collecting picture books in art school. I was crazy about the whole picture book format. I realized, as I was sharing books with my daughter, that making books is what I needed to do.

What are your hobbies and interests besides reading and books?

I work in clay, create art from tin cans, and make art dolls. Right now I am working on combining all three media. I also dye and paint fabric for the dolls. Planting flowers and painting the outside of my house and studio is what I am busy doing right now.

Who are a couple of your favorite author/illustrators? What is it about their work that inspires and interests you?

Chris Raschka is a big favorite. He has the most spontaneous, expressive line. Vera Williams' work is full of soul. I have always loved her work.

Biography and interview excerpts used with permission of Henry Holt Books for Young Readers. Author photo by David Powers, used with permission of Henry Holt Books for Young Readers.



Author Resources:

Denise Fleming's Official Website

<http://www.denisefleming.com/>

This site includes a visit with the author, images of her artwork, insights about her artistic process, instructions for making paper, fun resources for her books, and more!

Author page on Macmillan site

<http://us.macmillan.com/author/denisefleming>

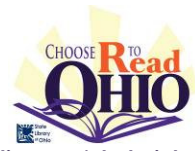
Denise Fleming's Guide to Papermaking video

<http://bit.ly/9jwGA3> (opens Macmillan site)

Denise describes her papermaking and teaches you how to make your own paper.

For publicity and speaking engagement inquiries:

Contact Denise Fleming at denise@denisefleming.com or david@denisefleming.com



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Talk about it!

Topics to share when discussing this book with children

- Before reading, look at the book cover. What do you think this story will be about? How do you know it is winter?
- The first day of winter falls in December just before Christmas. Talk about winter. What is the weather like? What holidays do people celebrate? How do we dress in winter? How do animals prepare for winter?
- Talk about animals in winter. Which animals hibernate? Which do not? How do wild animals find food in winter? Talk about camouflage, what it is and why it takes place.
- **The First Day of Winter** counts up to 10 days. Count the numbers one through ten. Look around you. What do you see one of? Two of...?
- What colors are named in the text of this story? Look at the illustrations. Are colors used in the illustrations that are not named in the story? What are they?
- What types of objects were used to decorate the snowman?
- There are several different types of birds in this story. Find and name them. Some birds stay in the same place for winter and some birds migrate. What is migration? Why does it happen?
- What are the differences between snow, rain, ice and water? What happens to liquids when they get cold?

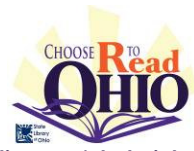
Discussion questions developed by the State Library of Ohio and the Toledo-Lucas County Public Library.

More books to read and share

*These books have similar themes to **The First Day of Winter** and are good companion books.*

Alice Schertle, **All You Need for a Snowman**
Marjorie Cuyler, **Biggest Best Snowman**
Jonathan London, **Froggy Gets Dressed**
Shirley Neitzel, **The Jacket I Wear in the Snow**
Steven Kellogg, **Missing Mitten Mystery**
Louise Ehlert, **Snowballs**
Carolyn Buehner, **Snowmen at Night**
Ezra Jack Keats, **The Snowy Day**

Recommendations provided by the Toledo-Lucas County Public Library youth services staff.



Learn and have fun!

Here are some fun ideas for extending the story

- Make a mashed-potato snow-friend (instant mashed potatoes work well; allow children to measure, pour and mix!)
- Present a flannel board story using ***The First Day of Winter*** items
- Make paper snowflakes, with scissors or just tear them!
- Create a paper collage using the colors mentioned in the text of ***The First Day of Winter***.
- Make bird feeders using pinecones rolled in peanut butter and birdseed. Place them outside in a visible spot, and watch to see what happens!
- Make button necklaces and then play "who has the button" or a similar game using a large button.

Take a Trip!

Weather permitting...go outside and build a snowman!

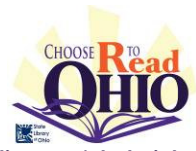
Fun storytimes to associate with ***The First Day of Winter*** might include

- Winter
- Counting/numbers
- Months of the year/seasons
- Animals in winter/hibernation/migration
- Snow and ice
- Colors
- Birds

Winter Rhymes

Royal Penguins

One royal penguin feeling very blue
 Called for his brother, then there were two.
Two royal penguins swimming in the sea,
 Called for their sister and then there three.
Three royal penguins waddle on the shore
 Called for their mother, then there were four
Four royal penguins learning how to dive
 Called for their father, then there were five
Let's count them together: one, two, three, four, five



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The Snow Fell Softly

The snow fell softly all the night (*Flutter fingers down*)
It made a blanket soft and white (*Spread hands to make blanket*)
It covered houses (*Hands make top of roof*)
Flowers (*Ten fingers up*)
And ground (*Hands flat*)
But never made a single sound (*Whispered*)

Snowflakes Falling (Tune: Mary Had a Little Lamb)

Snowflakes falling all around,
All around, all around. (*Flutter fingers for snow*)
Snowflakes falling all around,
Until they covered the ground. (*Spread hands out to pantomime ground*)

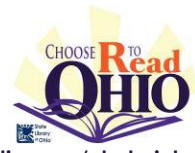
In the Winter Sky

Way up high in the winter sky (*point to sky*)
Two little snowflakes caught my eye (*hold up 2 fingers, point to eye*)
Down to the ground they fall without a sound (*crouch down*)
And before very long, it was snowing all around! (*spin around*)

Dressing for Winter (Pantomime actions as described)

This is how we dress on a cold winter's day.
We put on our snowsuits to go out and play.
Then we put on our boots for walking in the snow.
Next our hats and our mittens,
'Cause the wind begins to blow.
And now we're all ready to go out and play.
We'll stay nice and warm on this cold winter day.

Winter rhymes provided by the Toledo-Lucas County Public Library youth services staff.



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Tie It In!

Using this book with the Ohio Pre-Kindergarten Content Standards

The Ohio Department of Education adopted revised Pre-Kindergarten Content Standards in 2011. These standards describe what young learners should know and be able to do in English language arts, mathematics, science and social studies before entering kindergarten. Early childhood educators are implementing these standards in their schools and centers. For more information, including the complete set of standards, follow this link to the Ohio Department of Education site: <http://bit.ly/tBOIQP>.

Every Choose to Read Ohio book for young children may be used to support the English and Language Arts Reading Standards for Literature and Reading Standards: Foundational Skills. Here are examples of activities using **The First Day of Winter** that align with Pre-K standards.

English Language Arts

- Phonological awareness – clap to the rhythm/tune of “The Twelve Days of Christmas” as you read the book aloud.

Mathematics

- Counting and cardinality - Understanding the concepts of counting and numbers. Use a visual such as a felt board with cut-outs to demonstrate the red cap, blue mittens, etc.
- Geometry - Identify and describe shapes. Use the felt pieces to identify shapes – circles to represent the snowman, berries, buttons; triangles in the leaves, etc.
- Operations and algebraic thinking - Understand subtraction as taking apart and taking from. Use the felt pieces to demonstrate subtraction at the end of the story. Start with the peanuts and count as you remove the pieces.

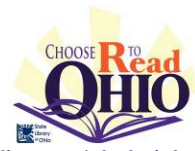
Science

- Earth and Space Sciences – observations of nature and the exploration of the natural environment. Discuss changes in weather. Why is it cold out? Where does snow come from? How is ice formed?
- Physical Science – making sound/observing, exploring and describing properties of objects and material that can be found in nature, classrooms, and homes. Bring the snowman to the classroom – bring a red cap, blue mittens, a scarf, buttons, etc. and allow the child(ren) to feel the objects and describe the objects and their purpose.

Social Studies

- History Strand – words associated with time are meaningful in the context of daily classroom routines. After you have read through the story ask the children what happened first, second, third, etc. Ask the students to describe a time they built a snowman or made something. What did they do first, second, third, etc.?

Other PreK Content Standards may also apply. See the Ohio Department of Education website (<http://education.ohio.gov>) for further information.



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Get Ready To Read!

Encouraging early literacy skill-building in young children

Many of the ideas listed in this toolkit incorporate the **six early literacy skills** that help children get ready to read. Recognizing letters (Letter Knowledge) and understanding that they make sounds that form words (Phonological Awareness). Knowing that things have names and being able to name them (Vocabulary). Telling a story or describing events that happened in a story (Narrative Skills). Noticing and recognizing text (Print Awareness), and the interest in and enjoyment of books (Print Motivation). All of these things lead to children being ready to learn how to read when they begin school.

For more information:

Ohio Ready to Read

<http://ohreadytoread.org/>

The early literacy initiative developed by the Ohio Library Council's Children's Services Division and the State Library of Ohio has many great resources for librarians, educators and parents on teaching early literacy skills.

Explore more!

The First Day of Winter page on Macmillan site

<http://us.macmillan.com/thefirstdayofwinter>

The First Day of Winter activity sheets from Denise Fleming's website

<http://www.denisefleming.com/pages/activitiesfirstdayofwinter.htm>

BLAST Early Learning: Counting

<http://bit.ly/bnEt3m> (opens Carnegie Library site)

The Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh's resources for **The First Day of Winter** include a "Counting" storytime outline, activities and recommended books.

About Choose to Read Ohio

Choose to Read Ohio (CTRO) spotlights Ohio authors and promotes reading across Ohio. The State Library of Ohio, in partnership with Ohioana Library Association, developed this initiative to encourage Ohioans of all ages to share literature by authors native to, residing in, or associated with Ohio. CTRO is adaptable for use in classrooms, libraries, bookstores, by book discussion groups, families, and other community groups.

Explore Choose to Read Ohio resources & toolkits: <http://oh.webjunction.org/ohctrointro>.

This toolkit revised January 2012.