HOST A POLAR EXPRESS PAJAMA READING!

BEFORE THE EVENT:

Download a copy of the invitation flyer, reminding children to come wearing their pajamas.
(Whoever is reading the book might also want to wear their pajamas.)

Set up chairs in two rows like the seats of a train, and print out Polar Express train tickets.

Find a bell similar to the boy’s bell in *The Polar Express*.

If you are hosting young children, print out and copy coloring & activity sheets and *Polar Express* bookmarks (click on Fun & Games on www.polarexpress.com to find these). Download *Polar Express* Reading Logs & Stationery

Think about refreshments (there are recipes for hot cocoa & chocolate bars in the Fun & Games section).

Let the fun begin!
Create train tickets. Invite the children to take a seat on the Polar Express and hand them their ticket. Just before the reading, you or a designated conductor can collect the tickets.

Dim the lights and call out “All Aboard the Polar Express,” before you start the reading, inviting young readers into the magic of the story in an accessible, tangible way.

When the boy in the story receives the bell, take out your bell and show the students. When you read that only those who truly believe can hear the bell, ring the bell for the children and ask if they can hear it!

Serve refreshments—hot cocoa “as thick and rich as melted chocolate bars” and candy with nougat centers “as white as snow” will be a big hit! You could also give out cookies in the shape of trains. (Train-shaped cookie cutters are readily available.)

AFTER THE READING:

For older children, you might want to follow the reading with a discussion of the book. (There is a list called “Guiding Questions for a Polar Express Book Conversation” within the Polar Express Teacher’s Guide. Visit the Teacher/Librarian page on www.polarexpress.com for teacher’s guides.)

Ask the children if they have a possession that holds as much meaning for them as the boy’s bell holds for him. Follow the read-aloud and book conversation with a share circle. Discuss how it is not just the objects themselves that we love, but it is the people and ideas that they represent or remind us of.

Invite the children to write about their special objects and what those objects represent. Give them *Polar Express* Stationery to write on.

Younger children may prefer to do an arts-and-crafts activity. Look in Fun and Games for the instructions: “How to Make a Reindeer.” The materials for this craft are inexpensive and easily attainable.

The *Polar Express* Pajama Reading can be a great kickoff for a *Polar Express* Reading Celebration. Give each child a Reading Log to take home; they can advance on the track by reading or being read to for twenty minutes each night.

You might want to provide a goodie bag for children. This could include *Polar Express* bookmarks and coloring pages. You could also provide a bell for each child and a packet of hot chocolate.

May the bell still ring “for all who truly believe.”

Visit the Polar Express site (www.polarexpress.com) and click on Fun and Games for more great ideas and materials.
Polar Express Party Nametags

Hello, my name is

Polar Express Party
Hello, my name is

Polar Express Party
Hello, my name is

Polar Express Party
Hello, my name is

Polar Express Party
Hello, my name is

Polar Express Party
Hello, my name is

Polar Express Party
Hello, my name is

Polar Express Party
Hello, my name is

Polar Express Party
Hello, my name is

Polar Express Party
Hello, my name is

Polar Express Party
Hello, my name is

Polar Express Party
Hello, my name is
All Aboard the Polar Express!

Come to our Polar Express party. We’ll have games, crafts, and, of course, a reading of The Polar Express. Bring your holiday cheer, and welcome aboard!

Date: ____________________________

Time: ____________________________

Place: ____________________________

For more information: ____________________________

__________________________

__________________________

__________________________
The Polar Express Party
Make Your Own Reindeer Craft

What You Need

• 3 popsicle sticks
• 2 googly eyes
• 2 brown pipe cleaners
• 1 small red pom pom
• 8 inches of yarn (any color)
• glue

(not included in this kit: glue and yarn)

1. Glue the popsicle sticks together to form a triangle with the point facing down.

2. Glue the googly eyes on each of the two sides at the top.

3. Wrap the pipe cleaners around the top popsicle stick to form reindeer antlers.

4. Glue the red pompom nose to the popsicle stick at the point of the triangle.

5. Tie the yarn around to make a decoration that can hang on your door, a tree or plant, or the bulletin board!
Polar Express Crossword

Can you solve the crossword puzzle?

Across
2. A holiday in December
5. What the boy wants to hear
8. The first gift of Christmas is a
9. Where is the Polar Express going? _____ Pole
10. What you wear to bed

Down
1. Be careful, don't slip on the
3. Santa rides in a
4. This comes from the smokestack
6. They help Santa make toys
7. The Polar Express is a

Answers:
Across
2. Christmas
5. ring
8. bell
9. North
10. pajamas

Down
1. ice
3. sleigh
4. smoke
6. elves
7. train

REPRODUCIBLE
A Polar Express
Word Search

Can you find the following words from the word vault below? They can go forward, backward, up, down, and diagonally.

POLAR  EXPRESS  TRAIN  CONDUCTOR  STEAM
SANTA  BELL  CHRISTMAS  SLEIGH  NORTH  POLE
SNOWFLAKES  COCOA  PAJAMAS  FROZEN  GIFT  ELVES
WOLVES  BELIEVE  MIDNIGHT  BATHROBE  RING  ICE

REPRODUCIBLE
A Polar Express Maze

Can you help find the bell?
All Aboard
The Polar Express!

A Train Track Reading Log: Chugga chugga READ!

Help THE POLAR EXPRESS reach the North Pole—
advance along the train tracks by reading or being read
to for twenty or more minutes every day!

| TITLE: __________________________ |
| AUTHOR: ________________________ |
| TITLE: __________________________ |
| AUTHOR: ________________________ |
| TITLE: __________________________ |
| AUTHOR: ________________________ |
| TITLE: __________________________ |
| AUTHOR: ________________________ |
| TITLE: __________________________ |
| AUTHOR: ________________________ |
| TITLE: __________________________ |
| AUTHOR: ________________________ |
| TITLE: __________________________ |
| AUTHOR: ________________________ |

REPRODUCIBLE
Letter to Santa
456 Christmas Lane
North Pole, USA 12345

Dear Santa:

From: _____________

___________________

___________________

___________________

___________________

___________________

___________________

Sincerely,
Let’s Play
“The Conductor Says”!
That’s right! The Conductor Says, NOT Simon!

1. Choose one person to be the Conductor. He or she will make up things for the rest of the group to do.

2. The Conductor will instruct the group to do things in two different ways:

1. He or she will say, “The Conductor says” before the command. For instance:
   - The Conductor says, “Touch your toes.”
   - The Conductor says, “Raise your hand.”
   - The Conductor says, “Close your eyes.”
   - The Conductor says, “Rub your tummy.”
   - The Conductor says, “Blow a kiss.”
   - The Conductor says, “Chuckle Ho, Ho, Ho”

   This is when the group should do just as the Conductor does, and perform the action.

   BUT WATCH OUT, THE CONDUCTOR MAY TRY TO TRICK YOU…

2. Sometimes he or she will NOT say, “The Conductor says” before the command. For instance:
   - “Touch your nose.”
   - “Raise your hand.”
   - “Close your eyes.”
   - “Rub your tummy.”

   This is when the group should NOT do what the Conductor says. Whoever performs the action when the Conductor has not said, “The Conductor says” should sit quietly.
The Polar Express Party Recipes

Polar Chocolate Nougat
Caramel Squares

What you need:
1 cup flour
1/2 cup firmly packed light brown sugar
1/3 cup butter or margarine (room temperature)
5 candy bars—chocolate with nougat and caramel
(hint: the initials are MW)
1/4 cup milk
2 eggs, slightly beaten
1 tsp. vanilla
2 tbsps. flour
1/2 tsp. baking powder
1 can (3 1/2 oz.) blanched sliced almonds

How to make them:
1. Preheat oven to 350. Grease a 13 x 9 x 2-inch baking pan.
2. Combine 1 cup flour with the brown sugar in a medium-sized bowl. Mix in the butter until crumbly dough forms. Press dough into greased pan.
3. Bake for 12 minutes or until golden brown. Cool on wire rack.
4. Melt candy bars with milk in small saucepan over medium-low heat.
5. Cool the mixture slightly, then slowly add the eggs. (Beat constantly to keep from curdling.)
6. Add the vanilla, 2 tablespoons of flour, and the baking powder to the candy mixture, then pour every thing over the crust (which has been cooling on the rack). Sprinkle almonds on top.
7. Bake at 350 for 25 minutes or until the top is firm. Let cool. Cut into squares with a sharp knife.

Hot Chocolate-Bar Cocoa

What you need:
2 egg yolks
2 ounces of a milk chocolate candy bar
1 cup of milk

How to make it:
1. Beat the egg yolk in bowl and put aside.
2. Crush candy bar into a medium-size saucepan. Add the milk.
3. Melt over medium-low heat, stirring constantly.
4. Cool the mixture slightly.
5. Slowly fold in the egg yolks. (Be sure to stir constantly to keep from curdling.)
6. Continue heating and stirring until cocoa is hot throughout.

Top with a dollop of whipped cream or marshmallow fluff.
THE POLAR EXPRESS

Color the boy!
Color the boy as the conductor welcomes him aboard.
ALL ABOARD THE POLAR EXPRESS!

Celebrate the holidays at a cozy holiday party where kids can participate in lots of fun activities, including a reading of the classic children's Christmas story *The Polar Express*, by Chris Van Allsburg, now a major motion picture. Come in your pajamas!

Date:
Time:

ALL ABOARD THE POLAR EXPRESS!

*The Polar Express* has become a favorite Christmas tradition for more than 5 million readers, and is now a major motion picture. Please join us to ring in the season at a cozy holiday party where kids can participate in lots of fun activities, including a reading of the classic children's Christmas story.

*THE POLAR EXPRESS*
by Chris Van Allsburg

Date:
Time:
Location:
**The Polar Express** (1985)
ISBN 0-395-38949-6 • $18.95
10-copy Counter Display—Classic Book
ISBN 0-618-02561-8 • $189.50

- Caldecott Medal winner, 1986
- 5 million copies sold worldwide
- New York Times Best Illustrated Book
- New York Times Bestseller

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**Jumanji** (1981)
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- 1995 blockbuster movie starring Robin Williams
0-395-30448-2 • $17.95

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**The Garden of Abdul Gasazi** (1979)
- 25th year anniversary!
- Caldecott Honor Book
- First book by Chris Van Allsburg
0-395-27804-X • $17.95
0-395-71254-8 (book & cassette) • $24.95

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**Zathura** (2003)
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- Movie in development with Columbia/TriStar Pictures, directed by Jon Favreau
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**Widow's Broom** (1992)
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**Sweetest Fig** (1993)
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**Two Bad Ants** (1988)
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**Just A Dream** (1990)
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**Wreck of the Zephyr** (1983)
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THE POLAR EXPRESS BOOKS

The Polar Express (1985)
Written and illustrated by
CHRIS VAN ALLSBURG

The Polar Express has become a cherished holiday classic, with 5 million copies sold worldwide, and has solidified Chris Van Allsburg's place as America's most innovative contemporary storyteller.

11 1/4 x 9 • 32 pages
All Ages • $18.95
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A full-color illustrated picture book retelling of the movie screenplay, with a full-color poster.

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48 pages • 8 x 10
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Paperback Early Reader

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Keepsake Memory Book

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by Ellen Weiss

Straight from the silver screen, the story of The Polar Express, with an eight-page color insert of movie scenes.

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Paperback Fiction

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An Interactive Shadow-Casting Bedtime Story

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(with flashlight, no batteries included)

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All Aboard the Polar Express

This train-shaped board book brings the Polar Express to the youngest child.

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THE POLAR EXPRESS THE MOVIE
The Gift of Christmas

6 die-cut spreads focus on the bell and its magical journey from Santa's sleigh to under the tree.

Ages 0–3 • PreK • 12 pages • 5 x 5
$4.99 • 0-618-47792-6 • Board Book

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(2004)
Written and illustrated by
CHRIS VAN ALLSBURG

Narrated by LIAM NEESON

The classic holiday favorite is now available in a newly designed gift package, featuring a dramatic reading by Liam Neeson (on both cassette and compact disk), a hardcover copy of The Polar Express, and a keepsake bell with ribbon.

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Holiday Carols for your Polar Express Party

DECK THE HALLS

*Welsh Traditional*

Joyful D A D A

1. Deck the halls with boughs of holly
2. Fa la la la la la la la.

1. Deck the halls with boughs of holly
2. Fa la la la la la la la.

Tis the season to be jolly

B7 Em G/B C Am D

1. Deck the halls with boughs of holly
2. Fa la la la la la la la.

G D/F# Em D C G/B

We wish you a merry Christmas and a happy new year.

Am D G G C A7

3. See the blazing Yule before us, Fa la la la la la la la.
Follow me in merry measure, Fa la la la la la la la.
While I tell of Yule tide treasure, Fa la la la la la la la.

Holiday Carols for your *Polar Express* Party

**Jingle Bells**

[Music notation]

**Up On The Housetop**

TRADITIONAL

1. Up on the house-top the rein-deer pause, Out jumps good old Santa Claus; Down thru' the chimney with lots of toys.

2. First comes the stock-ing of lit-tle Nell, Oh, dear Santa Claus; Down thru' the chimney with lots of toys.

3. Next comes the stock-ing of lit-tle Will, Oh, just see what a fill it well; Give her a dol-lar that laughs and cries,

4. Next comes the stock-ing of lit-tle Max, Who wouldn't be glad to see the lit-tle Max,

5. Next comes the stock-ing of lit-tle John, Who wouldn't be glad to see the lit-tle John,

6. Next comes the stock-ing of lit-tle Jane, Who wouldn't be glad to see the lit-tle Jane,

**CODA**