**The themes for the month of December were:**

* **Families** – We began the month of December discussing families. We talked about all the members of our families and how all our families are the same, being made up of people who love and care for us, and how all our families are different. Some people have brothers, some have sister, some have both, etc! This theme was carried through the rest of the month while talking about the holidays and how and what holidays our families celebrate!
* **Through various activities and books we learned about the following holidays...**
  + **Chanukah** – We talked about the different symbols of Chanukah and what these symbols mean. We discussed that Chanukah lasts for eight nights and each night families who celebrate Chanukah light a candle on the menorah.
  + **Kwanzaa** - We discussed the holiday of Kwanzaa and why it is celebrated, to honor the African-American people and their heritage. We also discussed different symbols associated with Kwanzaa, like the Kinara and Mkeka mat.
  + **Christmas** – The children really enjoyed talking about Christmas. We did our special reindeer t-shirt, that will be an item that is cherished for a long time! We also made other symbols of Christmas such as a gingerbread man, Christmas tree, stocking, Santa, etc.
* **Lively Letters** - This month we learned about the letters Q and A.  We added them to our group of index cards, so the children can practice making them and be reminded of the story that goes with each letter.

**Some of the books we read this month:**

* *Gingerbread Friends* by Jan Brett
* *The Littlest Elf* by Brandi Dougherty
* *Hanukah Hop* by Erica Silverman
* *K is for Kwanzaa* by Juwanda G. Ford and Ken Wilson-Max
* *Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer* by Barbara Shook Hazen
* *The Polar Express* by Chris Van Allsburg

**Some of the activities we did this month:**

* Lively Letter index cards for Q and A
* Menorahs
* Dreidels
* Gingerbread people
* Mkeka (Kwanzaa mats)
* Reindeers
* Candy Canes

**How to reinforce these themes at home:**

* **Letters** - Practice the letters learned this month, Q and A.  Practice writing them in sugar, salt, shaving cream, in the tub, etc.  Remember always start your letters at the top!!! (Don’t forgot to keep practicing the past letters learned as well, P, B, F, V, T, D, K, and G!)
* **Count** - The children love to count! Count the number of steps into your house or on the way up to bed, count the number of steps to get from one place to another, count as high as you can, count the number of presents under the tree or the number of candles on the menorah! This will work on rote counting and one to one correspondence.
* **Families** - With the holidays here, family is so important. The children have demonstrated a great understanding of their families and the people who love them. Continue the discussion of families and traditions celebrated by your family and friends during this special time of year.