



GOOD FOOD
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WINTER 2024

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Hello!

Winter is a time for families to bond through activities, getting out & about and creating cherished memories together. In this issue, we've got lots of ideas to take you through the Winter months, making sure you enjoy every minute. On pages 4 & 5 there's our seasonal Winter activities ideas and as always, there's Raring2Grow, Raring2Read pages to offer suggestions of things to do with the kids. We hope you enjoy reading this edition as much as we did pulling it together. Wishing you all the best of the season!

**Best wishes
The Raring2go! Team**



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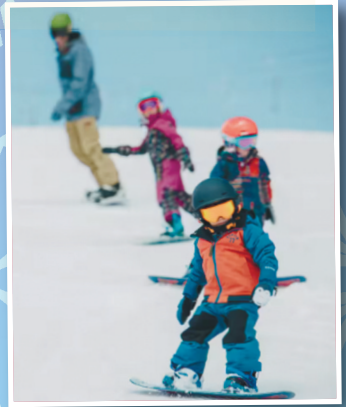


10 fun things to do as



Build a Snowman:

Embrace the winter weather by building a snowman together. Get creative with accessories like scarves, hats and buttons. It's a classic winter activity that brings joy to all ages.



Skiing or Snowboarding:

Head to a nearby (indoor) ski slope and enjoy a day of skiing or snowboarding as a family. Whether you're beginners or seasoned pros, hitting the slopes can be a thrilling winter adventure.



Ice Skating:

Find a local outdoor ice skating rink and spend an afternoon gliding on the ice. Skating is a fun and active way to enjoy the winter weather together.



Winter Nature Walk:

Wrap up and take a nature walk in a nearby park or forest. The landscape can be enchanting, with snow-covered trees and a peaceful atmosphere.



Sleigh Ride:

If available in your area, take a sleigh ride through snowy fields or a winter wonderland. It's a charming and festive way to experience the beauty of winter.

a family this Winter

Snowshoeing Adventure:

Explore trails covered in snow by going snowshoeing. It's a great way to enjoy nature and get some exercise, and it's suitable for various skill levels.



Winter Picnic:

Pack a thermos with hot cocoa, prepare some winter snacks, and have a picnic in the snow. Find a scenic spot and enjoy the winter landscape around you.

Snowball Fight and Fort Building:

Engage in a friendly family snowball fight and get creative by building snow forts or snow sculptures. It's a playful way to enjoy the snow together.



Winter Stargazing:

On clear winter nights, bundle up in warm blankets and gaze at the stars. Use a stargazing app to identify constellations and enjoy the crisp winter air.



Outdoor Winter Bonfire & Marshmallow Roast:

If it's safe and allowed, set up an outdoor bonfire in the snow. Roast marshmallows, make s'mores, and enjoy the warmth of the fire while surrounded by a winter landscape.



Winter is here bringing lots of fun family times, events, awareness days and laughs. Here's our top pick of things to do and get involved in this Winter.

DECEMBER

4th- Tree Dressing Day- For those who haven't put theirs up already, today's the day!

12th Christmas Jumper Day

A great reason to get those colourful Christmas Jumpers out in aid of Save the Children charity. Find out more details on their website savethechildren.org.uk.



17th- Festival of Winter

Walks- One for all the family that gets you out and about to enjoy the beauty of the Winter season.

24th-26th Christmas Time.

All the build up to the big day, it's time to celebrate the big man's arrival...

31st New Years Eve/ Hogmanay.

As we wave goodbye to 2024 and embrace the New year making resolutions and plans

for the year ahead. Visit raring2go.co.uk for some suggestions for you and the family!



Scots poems. The suppers are normally held on or near the poet's birthday, 25 January.

27th National Chocolate Cake Day

- We all love Chocolate Cake am I right? Need a chocolate cake recipe visit here, raring2go.co.uk or want to learn what other National Chocolate Days there are, visit here... www.chocolatier.co.uk

JANUARY

1st- Veganuary- The popular annual campaign and movement that encourages people to try a vegan lifestyle for the month of January...

5th - National Trivia Day-

Did you know that the fingerprints of koalas are so similar to humans that they can sometimes be mistaken for each other! Just like how humans have unique fingerprints, each koala's fingerprints are also distinct...

17th Museum Selfie Day-

A great reason for a family day out, why not visit your local museum and whilst you are there, take a Museum Selfie!

20th National Cheese Lovers Day-

A cheesy day for all you cheese lovers out there!

25th Burns Night-

A celebration of the life and poetry of the poet Robert Burns, the author of many

FEBRUARY

2nd -British Yorkshire Pudding

Day- who's recipe is best? Mums, Grandmas or Chef James Martin... The answer is they all are, enjoy the celebration of the great old Yorkshire Pud!



28th Feb-March 30th- Ramadam

The moon sighting is conducted at the start of the Islamic month to explore the crescent moon (Hilal) that signifies the beginning of Ramadan.

MARCH

1st- St David's Day

The patron saint of Wales, the date of Saint David's death in 589 AD.

4th- Pancake day 2025.

This day is otherwise known as 'Shrove Tuesday' and is 47 days before Easter Sunday. In other cultures, Mardi Gras takes place on this date.

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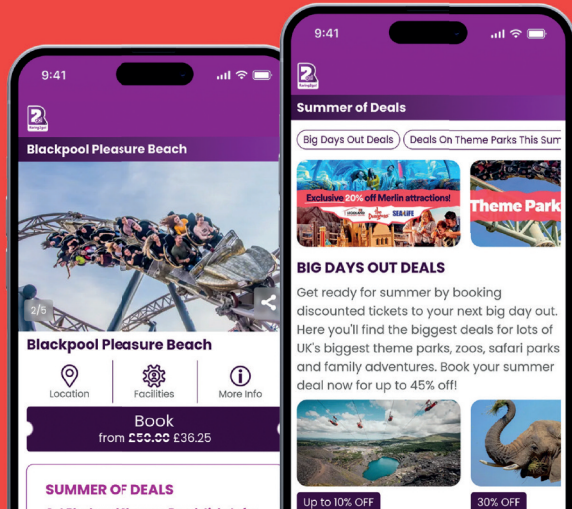


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WHAT'S ON

WINTER

From ideas for fun family time together to some great awareness days.

CLICK HERE to find a selection of ideas that are happening all in your area and across the country this winter.



www.raring2go.co.uk/whats-on



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Raring2grow!

Outdoor fun for budding green-fingers

Make your garden a Winter Wonderland

As winter arrives, family gardening fun takes on a magical quality. There are opportunities for children to engage in activities that help form strong connections with nature. Here are some delightful winter tasks to make the season even more enchanting for the whole family.

Bird Feeding Extravaganza:

Transform your garden into a winter haven for feathered friends. Let children create homemade bird feeders and hang them in key spots for easy birdwatching.

Winter Planting Adventures:

Engage kids in winter planting projects such as frost-resistant flowers like pansies and ever green shrubs. This will add a vivid burst of colour to the winter landscape.

Festive Container Gardens:

Encourage creativity and then design festive container gardens. Try to include winter flowering plants and seasonal decorations for an added touch of festive winter magic.

Crafty Garden Markers:

Continue the autumn tradition of crafting garden markers, using materials like wooden spoons or painted stones to label winter plants.

Winter Veggie Patch:

Grow cold-hardy vegetables like kale and spinach. Teach children the joys of winter

gardening and the importance of seasonal produce.

Winter Pruning Lessons:

Teach the basic winter pruning techniques on dormant trees and shrubs. This will not only maintain plant health but also imparts valuable gardening skills to your eager students!

Create Ice Decorations:

Turn freezing temperatures into an artistic opportunity. Create ice decorations by filling moulds with water, adding berries or leaves, and freezing them to decorate the garden.

Explore Winter Insects:

Investigate winter insects. Lift rocks or logs to discover insects in their sneaky winter hideouts showcasing the great diversity of garden life in colder months.

Winter Wildlife Tracking:

Teach children about winter wildlife tracks. Identify footprints in the snow and discuss the animals that share the garden during this season.

Fairy Tale Garden Storytelling:

Spark imagination by weaving

winter-themed stories that will encourage children to share tales about fairies, gnomes and magical creatures inhabiting the winter garden.

Winter gardening with children transforms the garden into a veritable winter wonderland. By incorporating these engaging activities, you not only maintain the garden but also nurture a lifelong love for nature through gardening. Let the laughter of children touch the magic of winter in your garden, creating cherished memories that last well beyond the season.



Make a Garden Planter out of used Pallets

Creating a garden planter from a wooden pallet is an easy, eco-friendly project that repurposes old materials and adds rustic charm to your outdoor space.

Start by selecting a pallet in good condition, ensuring it's heat-treated (marked with "HT") to avoid harmful chemicals. Next, clean the pallet thoroughly with a brush and mild soap, letting it dry completely.

Decide whether to keep the pallet whole or cut it down to size depending on your desired planter height. Sand down any rough edges to avoid splinters. If you're looking to paint or stain, now is the time to apply your chosen finish and allow it to dry.



Attach a weed barrier or landscape fabric to the back and sides of the pallet, stapling it securely in place. This will hold the soil in. Then, fill the sections between the slats with potting soil, pressing it down gently.

Finally, plant your favourite herbs, flowers, or succulents into the soil-filled sections. Water the plants regularly and place your new pallet planter in a sunny spot. With minimal cost and effort, you've created a functional, stylish planter from a recycled material, giving your garden a sustainable touch.



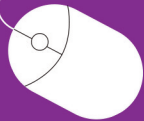


CLUBS & CLASSES

WINTER



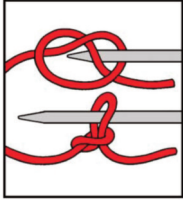
Raring2go! is the place to find the best Clubs and Classes for children aged 0-11 years local to you. Visit raring2go.co.uk/clubs-and-classes



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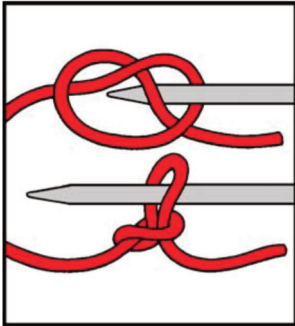
Crafting Comfort: A beginners guide to knitting. Ready to get 'hooked'?

Knitting, with its rhythmic repetition and tactile satisfaction, has been a beloved craft for generations. Whether you're a novice or looking to rekindle your love for wool, here's a step-by-step guide on how to knit and create your cosy masterpieces. This is just an initial guide designed to get you started....

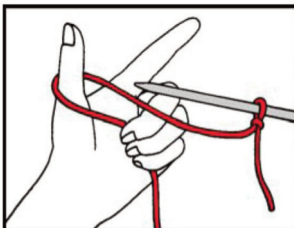


CASTING ON: The first step in knitting is to cast the wool onto the needle. This will provide the first row of stitches which is usually the bottom edge of the piece you're knitting. **Loop Knot:** To start your first row of stitches you need to make a loop knot (slip knot) on the needle. Make the loop knot about 15 cm from the end of the wool. Insert the needle under the short length of the wool then draw the needle through the loop and tighten the knot. There are several methods used for casting on. Each method will produce a slightly different edge look. Below are three main methods.

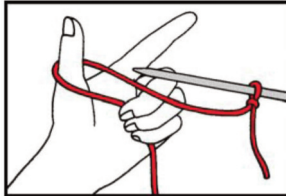
1. The Thumb Method - Using One Needle: Place the needle in your right hand and wrap the wool from the ball around your left thumb, holding onto the wool with your left fingers.



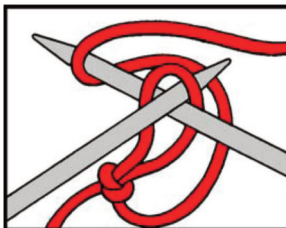
2. Twist your left hand so that your thumb is facing you and point your first finger. Place the needle through the loop from front to back.



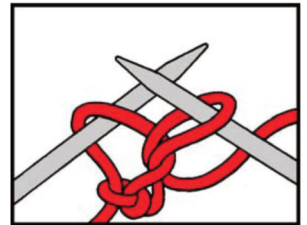
3. Remove your left thumb whilst pulling the wool down. This will close the loop. Repeat these steps until you have cast on the desired number of stitches.



4. Knitting On Method - Using Two Needles: Place the needle with the loop knot in your left hand. Then place the right hand needle through the loop, under the left hand needle as pictured. (below) Holding the wool from the ball in your right hand, place the wool around the point of the right hand needle and back under the point of the left hand needle - as for knitting.



5. Bring the right hand needle up from under the left hand needle and draw the wool up so there is a loop on the right hand needle. Place the left hand needle through the back of the loop on the right hand needle and remove the right hand needle thus leaving two loops on the left hand needle. Repeat these steps until you have cast on the desired number of stitches.



Knitting is far more than a craft; it is a sensory pleasure. The gentle click of needles and the vibrant transformation of coloured wool thread into a warm item of hand made clothing.

This is but a brief glimpse into knitting. Patience and a degree of perseverance are both parts of the knitting tool-kit. See online for endless guidance, techniques, patterns and free content.

Nourishing Our Future: Why a Balanced Diet for Children matters

In a world inundated with choices, ensuring our children receive the nutrition they need is paramount to their growth, development, and overall well-being. As parents, we play a pivotal role in shaping our children's dietary habits, laying the foundation for a lifetime of health. Here's why a balanced diet is crucial and how we, as carers, can make a positive impact.

A balanced diet is like a full symphony of nutrients, with each element playing a unique role in supporting our children's health. From the essential vitamins and minerals found in fruits and vegetables to the energy-providing goodness of whole grains and proteins, every component contributes to their physical and cognitive development.

One of the keys to achieving a balanced diet is variety. Encourage your children to explore the colorful spectrum of fruits and vegetables, introducing them to a diverse range of flavors and textures. Make mealtime an adventure by involving them in selecting fresh produce and experimenting with new recipes.

Whole grains should be the backbone of their diet, providing sustained energy and essential nutrients. Opt for whole grain bread, pasta, and rice over their refined counterparts to ensure a steady release of energy throughout the day.

Protein is the building block of growth, and including a mix of lean meats, fish, eggs, dairy and plant-based sources will ensure

your child receives the necessary amounts of Amino-acids for muscle development and overall health.

Limiting sugary snacks and beverages is crucial in preventing the pitfalls of excessive sugar intake. Instead, encourage water as the primary beverage and use natural sweeteners like fruits to satisfy their sweet cravings.

As parents, we need to lead by example. Children are the keenest of observers and by demonstrating our commitment to a well balanced diet, we instill in them the importance of making nutritious choices.

Let's nourish our children's bodies and minds with the gift of a well-rounded and wholesome diet, ensuring a vibrant and healthy future for the next generation.





Raring2make!

Recipes to make as a family for the family

Butternut Squash Stew with Curly Kale

Savour the wintery symphony in a bowl that is butternut squash stew and curly kale. A medley of flavours, the sweet richness of butternut squash in gentle harmony with the hearty textures of curly kale. Slow-cooked to perfection, this stew is a tapestry of warmth and nourishment.

Each spoonful reveals the essence of seasonal abundance, and invites you to indulge in a comforting, wholesome experience that encapsulates the very spirit of winter. It is a culinary masterpiece celebrating the fusion of taste, colours and winter allure.

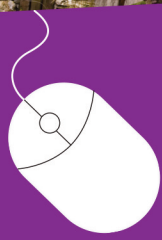
This is how you do it!

1. Add the oil to a large saucepan set over medium heat. **2.** Add the onions, garlic and carrots and cook for about five minutes, until softened. **3.** Stir in the turmeric, cinnamon and ginger and continue to cook for another minute until the spices become fragrant. **4.** Turn the heat down to low and add in the lentils and passata, cooking for a further 15 minutes and stirring occasionally. (You may need to add a little more passata during cooking.) **5.** Add the squash, black-eyed peas and stock to pan, then simmer for 30 minutes until the squash is tender. **6.** Once the squash has been cooking for 20 minutes, steam the kale for about 10 minutes, either over the stew or in a separate pan, until slightly softened but still bright green. **7.** Stir the kale into the squash and lentil mixture, then season to taste with a bit of salt and pepper. **8.** Serve in bowls, either alone or with slices of crusty wholemeal baguette. **Makes 2 Portions, Suitable for home freezing, Preparation 15 minutes, 50 minutes cooking time, 140 C°, 275 F°, Gas Mark 1**



Ingredients

- 2 tbsp olive oil ● 1 onion (diced)
- 1 clove garlic (chopped) ● 1 carrot (diced)
- 1/2 tsp turmeric ● 1/2 tsp ground cinnamon ● 1/2 tsp ground ginger
- 50g red lentils ● 250ml passata ● 350g butternut squash (peeled & cubed)
- 1/2 400g can black-eyed beans ● 750ml vegetable stock ● 80g kale (shredded)
- Pinch of salt ● Pinch of pepper ● 2 slices wholemeal baguette.



Near or far Raring2go! is the place to look for family friendly attractions & places of interest and they're all right here at raring2go.co.uk/places2go



Places to go

WINTER

www.raring2go.co.uk/places2go

6 Reasons to Buy an Annual Pass this Winter

1. Save Money

Check whether there are any restrictions on dates and times that you can use the pass, and work out when you would be available to go. You may only need to visit an attraction twice in the year to cover the cost of the annual pass. Thereafter, you will have unlimited visits which can result in large savings. Work out how much you'll save by dividing the cost of the pass by the cost of a day's admission, so that you know exactly how many times you will need to visit before you start saving money.



2. Year-round access to seasonal events

Lots of attractions hold seasonal events and activities throughout the year, for example Easter Egg hunts, summer trails, Halloween and Christmas-themed events. These events may also be included in the cost of the annual pass, or available at a discount.



3. Discounts in the Gift shop or Cafe

Check whether the annual pass holder benefits from other discounts. Many will offer a discount in the cafe or gift shop, which is great news when you are desperate for a coffee or for when it's time to exit the attraction, and you have lots of pleading eyes from the children.



4. Other Venues

You may be able to use some annual passes at other locations. Check out the passes that you can use at different locations throughout the UK - perfect for the summer holidays!

5. Quicker entrance with fast-track queuing

At busy times of the year, the queue at the entrance of larger attractions can build up. A fast-track entrance is perfect to whizz excited children straight in without delay, and get started on the fun! This is perfect for families just wanting to drop in for an hour or so, which leads on to...

6. Short visits

Unlimited access means that you can go along for just an hour after school and not feel that it's a waste of money. There is no pressure to try to race around and fit everything in each time you visit. Several short visits ensures that smaller children don't get overwhelmed or too tired. Plus... you will be able to see the different theming at the attraction throughout the year.

Why not consider buying an annual pass as a Christmas present? You'll be able to enjoy the spirit of Christmas for 12 months, and it won't be a gift that you are picking up off the floor each day!



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Puzzle Prodigies: Unraveling the Magic of Jigsaw Adventures for Children

Jigsaw puzzles, those seemingly simple and yet endlessly captivating 'things', offer a huge range of benefits that make them an excellent choice for children's development. Beyond just providing a source of entertainment, puzzles engage young minds in a way that promotes cognitive, emotional and social growth.

At a fundamental level, jigsaw puzzles are fantastic for honing cognitive skills. As children manipulate the pieces, they engage in spatial reasoning, recognising patterns and shapes to fit the puzzle together. This process stimulates critical thinking and problem-solving abilities, encouraging them to strategise and make connections between various elements. The gradual progression of difficulty in puzzles also supports the development of logical thought patterns as children work their way through more complex challenges.

Fine motor skills, which are crucial for various daily activities receive a significant boost through puzzle-solving. The act of picking up, turning, and fitting pieces into place requires precision and co-ordination. For younger

children who are still refining their hand-eye co-ordination and manual dexterity, jigsaw puzzles provide a fun and highly effective way to enhance these very important motor skills.

The emotional benefits of jigsaw puzzles are equally significant. The satisfaction of finally completing a puzzle instills a deep sense of real accomplishment and boosts self-esteem. This positive reinforcement helps to build a child's confidence and encourages them to take on new challenges. It teaches them the value of persistence and the joy that comes from overcoming obstacles. Lessons that extend far beyond the realm of puzzles and into various aspects of life.

Jigsaw puzzles can be a shared activity, promoting collaboration and communication. When children work on a puzzle together, they learn to share ideas, discuss strategies, and celebrate collective success. This collaborative aspect not only strengthens bonds with peers and family but also lays the foundation for effective teamwork in future endeavors.

Jigsaw puzzles contribute to the development of patience and perseverance. Solving a puzzle requires time and effort, teaching children the importance of persistence and the satisfaction that comes from completing a task. These qualities are essential for navigating challenges in academics and personal growth.

The appeal of jigsaw puzzles for children goes beyond mere amusement. They serve as a dynamic tool for enhancing cognitive abilities, fine-tuning motor skills, fostering emotional resilience, and promoting social interaction. As a versatile and engaging activity, jigsaws offer a well-rounded developmental experience for children, making them an excellent addition to any educational or recreational toolkit.





— PUZZLE PAGE —

Which woodland animal will get to the acorn?



Can you spot the **FIVE** differences between these two polar bears?



WHICH OWL IS THE ODD ONE OUT?



HOW MANY REINDEER FRIENDS ARE HIDING ON THIS PAGE?

All answers at the bottom of the page.

ANSWERS DON'T CHEAT

Maze: The bunny Rabbit wins the race
 Spot the difference Clues - Bottom Polar Bear:
 Blue scarf; Red cup; Green jumper; Pink nose not black; No stripes on hat.
 Odd one out: B - How many Reindeer: 6



Around the World in 10 Chuckles:

Exploring Cultural Quirks with a Giggle

Pack your imaginary bags, young explorers! We're embarking on a global giggle-fest to uncover the quirkiest cultural differences that make our world a kaleidoscope of traditions, tastes and terrific tales. So, buckle up for a whimsical world tour that will leave you laughing and learning.

Greetings Galore:

In Japan, a bow is the go-to greeting, while in Australia, a casual "G'day mate!" reigns supreme. It's a cultural handshake showcasing the diversity in our hello-how-do-you-do dictionary.

Mealtime Madness:

Ever tried spaghetti tacos or kimchi for breakfast? Around the world, mealtime is a cultural playground where taste buds dance with traditions. Who knew that in some places, it's polite to slurp your noodles with gusto?

Shoe Stories:

In some homes, shoes are VIPs, welcomed with open arms. In others, they're the party crashers who must stay at the doorstep. Cultural shoe etiquette – where every step tells a tale.

Language Limbo:

Lost in translation? In Iceland, "Jólabókafloð" means "Christmas book flood" a cozy tradition of exchanging

books and reading on Christmas Eve. It's a linguistic labyrinth where words are cultural treasure maps.

Traffic Tango:

Ever seen a roundabout ballet? In the UK cars dance clockwise, while in the USA, it's an anti clockwise jive. It's a traffic tango that keeps the streets bustling with cultural rhythm. Don't even think about Italy!

Festival Fever:

From La Tomatina's tomato battles in Spain to India's Holi colour explosions, festivals worldwide are a carnival of cultural craziness. It's a party where traditions don costumes and celebrations paint the town red – literally!

Sweet Tooth Tales:

Tooth-friendly or sugar rush? From Japan's fish shaped taiyaki to Mexico's spicy mango lollipops, cultural sweets are the sugary storytellers of each nation's sweet tooth saga.

Time-Traveling Timezones:

In some places, being fashionably late is the norm. In others, punctuality is the cultural superhero that saves the day. Timezones are the backstage pass to the global theatre of temporal traditions.

Expressive Emoticons:

Forget words; let emojis do the talking! From the joyous J-pop star in Japan to the dancing salsa lady in Latin America, emojis are cultural ambassadors of digital expressions.

Celebrity Cousins:

In some places, black cats bring good luck, while in others, they're the stars of superstition. It's a literal cat fight where cultural beliefs turn our furry friends into either the toast of the town or the taboo of the neighbourhood.

Cultural differences become the spice in the melting pot of our magnificent world. It wouldn't do if we were all the same after all. So, young adventurers, keep your curiosity wide awake, your giggles ready, and see how many more differences you can spot.



10 WINTER JOKES FOR KIDS.



1. What do snowmen eat for breakfast? Frosted Flakes!

2. Why did the boy keep his trumpet out in the snow? Because he liked cool music!

3. What do you call a snowman with a six-pack? An abdominal snowman!

4. How does a snowman get around? By riding an "icicle"!

5. Why did the snowman call his dog Frost? Because Frost bites!

6. What falls but never gets hurt? Snow!

7. How do you know when a snowman is happy? He has a big smile snowing on his face!

8. What do you call an old snowman? Water!

9. Why don't mountains ever get cold? They wear snowcaps!

10. How do snowmen greet each other? "Ice to meet you!"



and the winner is...

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Family Fun Day



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competitions

WINTER

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THE QUICK QUIZ



LITERATURE

- 1 Who stole Christmas in a Dr Seuss book?
- 2 Who has a dog called Snowy and is friends with Captain Haddock?

HISTORY AND POLITICS

- 3 Which city did the ancient Greeks by legend besiege for 10 years?
- 4 What title was given to the rulers of Ancient Egypt?

ENTERTAINMENT

- 5 Sheriff Woody, Buzz Lightyear and Mr. Potato Head are major characters in which series of films?
- 6 Which film had a 2009 follow-up described as "The Squeakquel"?

SCIENCE AND NATURE

- 7 Which is the only vowel not on the top row of a computer keyboard?
- 8 What turns red in the presence of acid and blue in the presence of alkali?

SPORT AND LEISURE

- 9 What is the object hit by the players in ice hockey called?
- 10 Which sport takes place in a velodrome?

GEOGRAPHY AND TRAVEL

- 11 What is the capital city of Spain?
- 12 Liverpool lies on which river?

Answers at the bottom of the page. No cheating.

ANSWERS: 1: The Grinch - 2: Tintin - 3: Troy
4: Pharaoh - 5: Toy Story - 6: Alvin and the Chipmunks
7: A - 8: Litmus paper - 9: puck - 10: Cycling
11: Madrid - 12: The Mersey

Overcoming Reading Challenges with Children

Overcoming reading challenges with your children requires patience, creativity, and a supportive approach that recognises and addresses individual needs. Children may encounter various hurdles on their journey to literacy and it's crucial for parents and caregivers to adapt strategies that foster a positive reading experience.

Firstly, identifying and addressing specific reading difficulties is essential. Whether a child struggles with decoding certain words, comprehension, or maintaining their focus, pinpointing the challenges allows for a targeted intervention. Tailoring the reading activities to the child's level of proficiency ensures that the material is appropriately challenging without causing frustration.

Creating a supportive and encouraging environment is key to overcoming reading challenges. Positive reinforcement, praise for effort and celebrating small victories contribute to building a child's confidence and motivation. Patience is crucial; allowing children the time they need to progress at their own pace creates a deep sense of accomplishment and a more positive attitude towards reading.

Incorporating a variety of reading can also be beneficial. Offering a mix of fiction and non-fiction books, graphic novels or audio books can provide diverse options that cater to different interests and learning styles. Interactive reading, asking open-ended questions, discussing the story, or relating it to the child's experiences, engages them in a way that enhances comprehension and critical thinking.



Utilising technology can be a valuable tool in overcoming reading challenges. Educational apps and online resources designed to support literacy development offer a great interactive and engaging experience. These resources can act to supplement traditional reading methods and provide additional practice in a format that may appeal to more tech-savvy children.

Above all, encouraging a love for reading is paramount. Making reading enjoyable through storytelling, creating a cozy reading nook, or incorporating themed activities can turn reading into a pleasurable experience rather than a daunting task.

By tailoring strategies to individual needs and placing emphasis on the joy of reading we can guide children towards overcoming their challenges and build a foundation for a lifelong love of literature and reading.



Raring2Read!

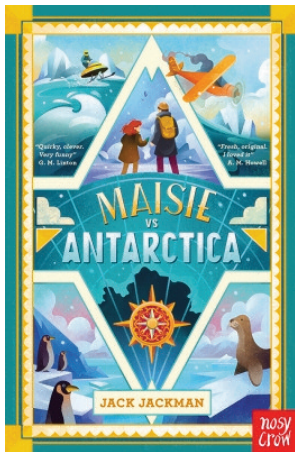
BOOK RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FAMILIES

Brilliant age-appropriate books reviewed by a growing army of amazing junior reviewers. In association with LoveReading4Kids

Maisie vs Antarctica

By Jack Jackman

A great adventure that I completely lost track of time reading as it is great!



story right from the very beginning. Maisie lives with her dad as her mum died when she was a baby, and she thinks that nothing exciting ever happens, that all that happens is that she does 1000 piece jigsaw puzzles until her dad agrees to take her on a trip to Antarctica for research for his new book. When the plane crash lands, the adventures (and strange happenings) begin. I loved all the information on Antarctica and Maisie was a great character who I liked. I really enjoyed reading this.

This is a really exciting adventure with unexpected twists. I completely lost track of time reading this as I got so caught up in the

Raring2go! would like to thank **LoveReading4Kids**, for this wonderful review.

LoveReading4Kids, the UK's leading children's book recommendation website, is now a bookstore with social purpose, where 25% of the cover price can be donated to a school to buy books. Because books change lives. Buy a Book. Support a School. **Make a Difference.**

Click anywhere on this page to buy this book or visit: www.lovereadings4kids.co.uk



Review for Raring2go! by Rebecca King, age 11



LoveReading
4 KIDS **BUY BOOKS CHANGE LIVES**

www.raring2go.co.uk

1. Get Active Together

After all those chocolates, we all need to burn off the bulk in January, so how about working out as a family? Many gyms offer a discount if you book family membership for the year now.

You could set aside some regular time for a family stomp in your local park or, if the weather is poor, you always have the option of a family swim at your local leisure centre.

Why not try something completely new and visit Flash Climbing. You can have a go as a family and you'll be really surprised what a full body work out Bouldering can be! Or you could pop along to one of our local trampoline centres to wear everyone out with a bounce.



2. Join a Club

Many of our local children's clubs also offer adult classes or opportunities to train or learn a new skill together. Martial arts can be enjoyed by all ages and you're never too old to start. If you've always dreamt of tap dancing on stage, there's no better time to learn. Join your local dance or drama club and you and your child could be performing in the spot lights together at the end of the year!

Many of our local clubs offer free taster sessions so you can 'try before you buy'.



6 New Year Resolutions

4. Start a memory Jar

Start the year with an empty jar (like those giant jars that come packed with pickled onions at Christmas!) and whenever your child has enjoyed a day out, tried a new activity, or achieved a goal, get them to write it on a little piece of paper, fold it up and drop it in the jar.

On New Year's Eve you can enjoy a special moment, opening up that full jar and recalling all the wonderful memories you've made together.



5. Buy an Annual Pass

Many of our local attractions offer annual passes and there are so many benefits to be had. Once you've paid for the pass, even short visits seem worthwhile later on in the year - you can pop along whenever you have last minute time to fill.

English Heritage or National Trust pass holders are often invited to special events, or 'behind the scenes' exclusive access. It's also nice to set a family target of seeing how many of their locations you can tick off in a year.

Some attractions, which are registered charities, like Black Country Living Museum, offer free annual entry if you sign up for Gift Aid. Many annual passes give you additional benefits - Hatton's pass gives you money off birthday parties, a West Midland Safari Park pass gives you unlimited access to the theme park rides in the summer, Thinktank Museum gives you fast track entry. An Ironbridge Annual Passport Ticket gives you access to all 10 of their museums for a whole year.



3. Bake together

They say that one of the best ways to overcome fussy eating is to involve the child in cooking. You could take it in turns to cook a family dinner on the weekend or hold a baking session after school. We have recipes for all occasions on the Raring2go! website; from healthy main meals, to seasonal snacks and party food. You'll also find some strategies and ideas from CBeebies 'I Can Cook' presenter Katy Ashworth, who has teamed up with Neil Walsh, who works with parents of fussy eaters.



for the whole family

6. Give something back

Volunteering for a charity is a rewarding way to support your local community. You could help out with PTA events at your local school, volunteer as school governor, or help out at church. The National Trust are often looking for volunteers to assist with events like the Easter Trail, or to clear pathways, build walls or event to count butterflies!

You could commit to some family fundraising – how about a group challenge to take part in Race for Life in support of Cancer Research or an event like the Bubble Rush in aid of Acorns Children's Hospice?

Gain another family member and do your bit for wildlife conservation by adopting an animal! Opportunities are available at All Things Wild and West Midland Safari Park.



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Winter Warmth: Cosy Indoor Family Games and Activities

As winter blankets the world in a soft layer of snow and chilly winds blow, families find themselves seeking indoor warmth and entertainment. Here's a few ideas for indoor family games and activities that promise fun, bonding and togetherness.

1. Board Game Bonanza:

Winter is the perfect time to dust off those classic board games. From strategic battles in "Risk" to wordplay in "Scrabble," board games deliver hours of fun promoting critical thinking, communication, and healthy competition. No cheating allowed!

2. Family Movie Nights:

Create cosy movie nights watching a favourite film. Rotate responsibility of selecting film among family members, creating a diverse playlist. Add popcorn and snuggle up for an evening of cinematic magic and shared laughter.

3. Winter-Themed Crafts:

Engage in creative endeavors with winter-themed crafts. From snowflake cutouts to paper snowmen, these projects unleash artistic expression and help enhance fine motor skills. Display your creations as festive decorations around the house.

4. Cooking and Baking Extravaganza:

Turn the kitchen into a family cooking or baking workshop. Choose recipes for treats like biscuits hot cocoa or hearty stews. Assign tasks based on age and skill level, creating delicious results while imparting foodie knowledge and teamwork.

5. Scavenger Hunts and Treasure Maps:

Design indoor scavenger hunts or treasure maps to spark excitement and adventure. Hide clues around the house leading to a hidden "treasure." This activity not only keeps everyone entertained but also encourages teamwork, problem-solving, and a sense of exploration.

6. Storytelling Sessions:

Gather around a cosy fireplace or create a blanket fort and have a storytelling session. Encourage family members to contribute to a collaborative



story or take turns sharing a favourite winter tale. This activity nurtures creativity, imagination, and the joy of shared narratives.

7. DIY Puzzles and Brain Teasers:

Create DIY puzzles or brain teasers for a mental workout that is both challenging and enjoyable. From jigsaw puzzles to riddles, activities like this enhance problem-solving skills and provide a break from the winter chill.

8. Family Game Night Olympics:

Transform game night into a family game night Olympics. Set up challenges or mini-games, such as charades, Pictionary, or trivia. Award points and celebrate the champions at the end of the night. This not only encourages friendly competition but also creates lasting memories.

As winter winds blow outside, indoor family games and activities become a haven of warmth and of laughter during shared experiences. These will not only combat the winter blues but also nurture strong family bonds, turning chilly evenings into moments of joy and connection. So, gather your loved ones, embrace the coziness and let the indoor winter adventures begin. Enjoy!



Whilst out and about it's always fun to have something to look out for, so why not see how many different breeds of dogs you can spot on your walk?



1. Pugs

Did you know...

- One of the oldest breeds, Pugs could have originated in China some 2,500 years ago.
- They were very fashionable in Victorian times and Queen Victoria loved them.
- A group of Pugs is called a "Grumble"
- Did you notice anything odd about the pug's tail?



7. British or English Bulldog

Did you know...

- Intelligent, stubborn, and independent but also loyal and extremely affectionate.
- But because of their shape and weight (being quite front heavy) they do not swim well so it is best to keep them away from the wet stuff.
- Can you find out how the Bulldog has changed shape over the years?



2. Chihuahua

Did you know...

- Don't be fooled by their small size, these mini dogs are bold and can be feisty.
- They are the smallest breed of dog and are the only breed that has a hole in the skull at birth which closes as they mature.
- What colour was the Chihuahua you saw?



8. Staffordshire Bull Terrier

Did you know...

- The breed was created around 200 years ago by mixing English Bulldogs with small terriers and adding a little bit of collie.
- Staffies* are very friendly and most adore children. They come in lots of colours.

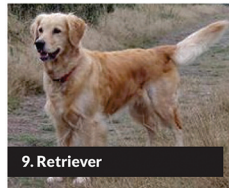


3. Labrador

Did you know...

- Labradors were bred to collect and gently hold birds in their mouths. They love and get comfort from walking around with something in their mouth.
- They come in 4 colours – which colours have you seen today?

Yellow • Chocolate • Red • Black



9. Retriever

Did you know...

- There are two common types of long coated retriever – the golden retriever and the flat coated (black haired) retriever. They look a bit like hairy versions of the Labrador and love to carry things in their mouths.
- Which have you seen today? Golden • Flat coated



4. German Shepherd

Did you know...

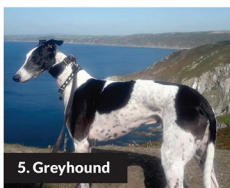
- They are also known as Alsations and are fiercely loyal. These dogs always want to be working.
- They were originally sheep herding dogs but are now often seen working with the police and armed forces.
- They are either short or long haired and are usually black and tan, white or black.



10. Spaniel

Did you know...

- There are so many types of spaniel you could have met on your walk today. Cavalier King Charles Spaniel • Cocker Spaniel • Springer Spaniel
- The small Cavalier King Charles was bred to be company for humans but all other spaniels were bred to work outside with their humans.
- What do they all have in common (think ears)



5. Greyhound

Did you know...

- Greyhounds existed in ancient Egypt making the breed over 4,000 years old.
- They can run at 45 miles an hour but don't need much exercise and love to lounge on a sofa.
- Greyhounds are happy lying down and standing up but don't really like to sit much.
- How old was the greyhound you saw today? Were they wearing a muzzle and did you ask the owner why?



11. Border Collie

Did you know...

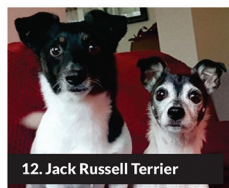
- An active and extremely intelligent breed these dogs just love having a job to do. A Collie holds the record for knowing the most English words – recognising over 1,000 words!
- Originally used for herding they will often try to herd their human family when out on a walk.



6. French Bulldog

Did you know...

- Originated in England as a miniaturised version of the British bulldogs they were taken over to France in the 1800's.
- What do you remember most about the French Bulldog you saw today?



12. Jack Russell Terrier

Did you know...

- Jack Russells are really hard to train. They are energetic, mischievous and independent.
- Most Jack Russells will try to chase anything, they love to dig and will go down rabbit holes.
- These little dogs do not appear to be as common as they once were... have you seen one today?

Please always speak to a dog's owner before you approach a dog and whilst everyone is keeping their distance we recommend you don't touch other dogs at all.



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