

A Christmas Carol | Paper Ornaments

Pre-Show Activity | Grades K-12

Alignment

Learning Objective

- Students explore Victorian-era holiday traditions by designing and creating handmade paper snowflakes and holly decorations.
- Students apply imagination, reasoning, and artistic expression to connect historical context with creative craftsmanship, strengthening fine motor skills, design awareness, and cultural appreciation.

NOTE: This activity has been aligned with TEKS and [Universal Design for Learning](#). Demonstrations of Learning and TEKS can be found at the end of this document.

Materials

- White paper
- Green paper
- Red pom-poms, stickers, or red paper circles
- Scissors
- Glue
- String or yarn (optional)
- How-to-videos (optional, links included)
- Templates (optional, included)

Introduction

- Review information on Victorian Christmas traditions on Alley Re-Sourced with the students.
- Explain that Victorian homes often featured homemade paper decorations during the holiday season.
- Introduce the craft steps for making paper snowflakes and holly decorations as a way to connect with Victorian traditions.

Step 1 | Snowflakes

- Take a square piece of white paper.
- Fold it in half diagonally to form a triangle.
- Fold the triangle in half again.
- Cut small shapes (triangles, squares, circles) along the edges of the folded paper.
- Carefully unfold your paper to reveal a snowflake.

Step 2 | Holly Leaves and Berries

- Draw simple holly leaf shapes on green construction paper (pointy ovals or teardrops).

- Cut out the leaves carefully with scissors.
- Use red pom-poms, stickers, or cut small red circles from paper.
- Glue 2 or 3 berries onto each holly leaf.

Step 3 | Assemble and Reflect

- Option 1: Glue snowflakes and holly leaves onto a large piece of paper to make a holiday picture.
- Option 2: Attach snowflakes and holly leaves to string or yarn to create a festive garland.
- Discuss how handmade decorations were important in Victorian times for holiday celebrations.
- Encourage students to share their creations and talk about how making decorations can bring people together (gallery walk or presentations).

Video Resources

- If you would like to follow along with a how-to video guide for your snowflakes, here are a few options:
 - [Video 1](#) - large 3D snowflakes
 - [Video 2](#) - easy snowflakes (great for elementary)
 - [Video 3](#) - regular size snowflakes (slightly more advanced)

Demonstration of Learning

- Grades K–2
 - Students demonstrate comprehension by following folding and cutting steps to create snowflakes or holly decorations.
 - Students identify materials and share how handmade decorations were part of Victorian holiday traditions.
- Grades 3–5
 - Students explain how different folds and cuts influence snowflake shapes and symmetry.
 - Students use art vocabulary to describe their process and discuss how traditions express creativity and community.
- Grades 6–8
 - Students analyze the role of handmade art in Victorian society, comparing it to modern decorative practices.
 - Students design original snowflakes or holly pieces incorporating geometric reasoning, balance, and pattern repetition.
 - Students reflect on how cultural expression evolves through time and materials.
- Grades 9–12
 - Students evaluate Victorian decorative arts as a reflection of social and cultural values.

- Students demonstrate advanced craftsmanship and design principles to reinterpret historical forms with contemporary techniques.
- Students articulate the connection between historical art-making and personal or modern cultural identity.

TEKS

- Theatre Arts (K–12)
 - K–5: (1A–C), (2A–C), (4A–B) – Develop imagination, focus, and creativity; express ideas through dramatic play and performance; respond to and evaluate creative works.
 - 6–12: (1A–C), (2A–C), (3A–C), (4A–C) – Develop concentration and creativity; design and execute artistic works; evaluate artistic choices and cultural context.
- Visual Art (K–12)
 - K–5: (1A–B), (2A–C), (3A–C) – Develop fine motor skills; apply principles of design; interpret art within cultural and historical contexts.
 - 6–12: (1A–C), (2A–C), (3A–D), (4A–C) – Apply design thinking and craftsmanship; analyze art movements and cultural influences; communicate meaning through visual expression.
- Social Studies (K–12)
 - K–5: (2A–C), (3A–B) – Identify cultural traditions and historical celebrations; explain how communities express identity through art.
 - 6–12: (2A–B), (3A–C), (21A–C) – Analyze how culture and technology influence artistic expression; evaluate the impact of historical traditions on contemporary society.