



# Musing Our Children

*Pages and Pens – your tools to imagination*

**HOLIDAY 2010**

<http://musingourchildren.tripod.com>

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## How to Use *Pages and Pens* in Classrooms

By Lea Schizas and Cheryl Malandrinos

***Pages and Pens*** ~ *your tools to imagination* is a FREE publication offered to parents, children, and teachers. Several writers work hard to bring you interesting material to read and use within your homes and classrooms. Here are some of the ways you can use our newsletter:

### Discussions

Read or have the children take turns reading *Pages and Pens* then discuss with them what they learned. Our interviews with published authors open doors for children to read about the creative process from the artist's point of view. Perhaps one of the published books might spark an interest for a class project: to write their own collaborative book, bind it, and have it on display in the library for other classes to get a chance and read their work.

### Our Wonderful World

Our history and geography section opens up doors to many interesting class projects. This is an interesting subject for children to look up further information on the country/city we are discussing in each issue. Have them draw a map indicating where this country/city is located and compare their own location. Having them see the difference in distance on paper gives them a better understanding of its location. Discuss important historical events that took place there.

### Reading Tips

Implement some of our tips with your students/children and have them write some of their own thoughts on what motivates them to read, what books they enjoy, and so forth. We always welcome letters from students, parents, and teachers to publish in one of our upcoming issues. All you have to do is send us an email to [cg20pm00@gmail.com](mailto:cg20pm00@gmail.com) with "Reading Tips Submission" on the subject line.



### **Reviews for Kids by Kids**

Here is an excellent opportunity to have the class write a short review on any books they've read. All we need is:

The title and author

School name and grade

Their short review

We'll publish them in one of our issues as well as in the Kids Review section found on our Musing Our Children website: <http://musingourchildren.tripod.com/>

### **Authors Circle**

This is a chance to learn more about well known children's authors. Each issue will feature a brief biography and list of works along with links to websites where children find additional information about the author.

### **Poetry Corner**

Use the poems found in this section to encourage children to write their own poetry. Students can compile a poetry collection and hold a poetry reading in their backyard or for classmates and parents. Send us your poems by emailing [cq20pm00@gmail.com](mailto:cq20pm00@gmail.com). Please put "Poetry Corner Submission" on the subject line.

### **Cryptogram Corner**

Author Renée Hand provides fun cryptograms and puzzles in each issue of the newsletter.

### **Game Time**

Learning is fun! Each issue has a variety of puzzles, games and activities that flow into the theme of the newsletter.



Welcome to our HOLIDAY 2010 issue  
of ***Pages & Pens - your tools to  
imagination!***

**EDITORIAL GUIDELINES:**

**If you'd like to contribute to our  
newsletter just send your items to:  
[cg20pm00@gmail.com](mailto:cg20pm00@gmail.com)**

**making sure to place "Musing Our  
Children**

**Submission" on the subject line.**

**We love to hear back from parents,  
teachers and students.**

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PENS" on the subject line and your  
message within the body of the email.

**Letter from the Editor**

**Our Wonderful World – New York City**

**Poetry Corner –by Peggy Fieland**

**Reviews of *Little Shepherd* by Cheryl  
Malandrinos**

**Winter Celebrations**

**Winter Olympics**

**Cryptogram Corner with Renée Hand**

**Game Time**





## Letter from the Editor



**My how time flies!**

**It seems 2010 was just blowing in here, and yet, as this newsletter reaches you, 2011 is knocking on our door. Where does the time go?**

**December is often a time to reflect on the events of a year and to set goals or make resolutions for the year that is to come.**

***Pages & Pens* saw some changes in 2010. We added some features, which we hope you have enjoyed. We appreciate your suggestions and comments.**

**In order to help us move forward, we have created a short survey for our readers. Please take a few moments to let us know what you would like to see in future issues of *Pages & Pens*. You'll find the survey at <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/HPJ668P>.**

**Our Holiday issue is set up a bit differently than our other issues. Our Wonderful World talks about New York City and there is a great winter poem by Peggy Fieland. Renée Hand is back with another puzzle, and there are some reviews of my first children's book, *Little Shepherd*. We'll also talk about winter celebrations. The rest of the issue will be dedicated to having some winter time fun.**

**Happy New Year! Until next time, keep reading and writing!**

***Cheryl C. Malandrinos***



## **Our Wonderful World – New York City**

**My family's recent visit to New York City reminded me why I love the place. Not only does it have a ton of history, but walking down Broadway, seeing skaters in Rockefeller Center, and buying a pretzel or a hot dog from a street vendor, are all treats you have to experience at least once in your life.**

**On numerous street corners there are people dressed up as cartoon characters. We saw SpongeBob Squarepants, Elmo, Cookie Monster, and even Mickey and Minnie Mouse.**

**I'm not one who cares much for shopping, but shopping in New York City is thrilling. The Toys 'R' Us has three floors and there is a 60 foot Ferris Wheel inside. My girls had to make two stops to the American Girl Place on Fifth Avenue at 49<sup>th</sup> Street. We also stopped in at Macy's at Herald Square and rode the escalators all the way up to the 8<sup>th</sup> floor. Most of the escalators are made of wood and have wooden slats, unlike the modern ones you see in stores today. This is the Macy's that is known for the Thanksgiving Day Parade.**



**The picture above is similar to the sight we came into when we arrived that Sunday evening. It was dark by the time we made it into the city, but this whole area was lit up so much that I almost needed sunglasses to drive through.**

**Walking the streets of New York City during the workday is certainly an adventure. The pedestrians and the vehicles share the busy roadways, but they have the traffic light patterns down to a science. As soon as the light turns red, a throng of people step off the sidewalk moving at almost lightening speed to get to the other side of the road before the light turns green again and drivers hit the gas. We heard a lot of horns beeping while we walked around.**



**That's Radio City Music Hall in the picture above. We didn't take in a show while we were there, but I would love to one day soon.**



**This is the set of stairs that if you're real early and lucky, you can sit down on to see the ball drop in Times Square on New Year's Eve.**



**There are tons of other sites we didn't get a chance to see on our overnight trip into New York City. The Statue of Liberty, the United Nations Building, Wall Street, Ground Zero and more. We plan to take a longer trip in the spring when it won't be as uncomfortable to walk around. The wind whips through there during the winter and it can be mighty cold.**

**Here are some websites with information about traveling to New York City and some of the landmarks you'll find:**

**NYC, The Official Guide <http://www.nycgo.com/>**

**Visit New York City <http://visit-new-york-city.com/>**

**Frommer's <http://www.frommers.com/destinations/newyorkcity/>**

**The Metropolitan Museum of Art <http://www.metmuseum.org/> (We walked by it on Fifth Avenue, but didn't have a chance to stop in.)**

**Statue of Liberty <http://www.nps.gov/stli/index.htm>**

**Ellis Island <http://www.ellisland.org/>**

**Empire State Building <http://www.esbnyc.com/>**

**Bronx Zoo <http://www.bronxzoo.com/>**

**NYC trivia: New York City is made up of five burroughs: Brooklyn, Queens, Staten Island, Manhattan, and the Bronx.**



## Poetry Corner by Peggy Fieland

### Night Wind



**A cold wind blows and chills to the bone  
a stranger alone on the road.  
He shivers and thrusts his frozen hands  
inside his threadbare coat.**

**A sliver of moon is all the light  
that filters through the trees.  
A few stars glitter overhead.  
Gusts of wind blow through the leaves.**

**He stumbles, staggers from side to side  
along a path he can barely see.  
He wonders where he will spend the night  
and what he'll find to eat.**

**The crescent moon shines overhead,  
The stars shine on, the chill wind blows.  
No one sees the tramp walk on  
down the empty road.**



**LITTLE SHEPHERD**

**AUTHOR: CHERYL MALANDRINOS**

**ILLUSTRATOR: EUGENE RUBLE**

**ISBN-10: 1616330856**

**ISBN-13: 978-1616330859**

**AGES: 4- 8**

**PRICE: \$9.95**

**REVIEWED BY:** BEVERLY STOW MCCLURE, AUTHOR OF *CAVES, CANNONS, AND CRINOLINES*

What if your father has just trusted you with watching over your first flock, and you're only five years old? What if one night while you're guarding the sheep to keep them safe from wolves a bright light suddenly glows in the sky, and an angel appears with a message? "Do not be afraid," the angel said. "I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all people. Today in the town of David, a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger." More angels then appear, praising God.

In her debut picture book, *Little Shepherd*, author Cheryl Malandrinos tells the story of Christ's birth through the eyes of a shepherd boy named Obed who witnesses the miracle of Christ's birth. Obed's father and the other shepherds are curious and want to go to Bethlehem to see the baby. But Obed worries about the sheep. Who will protect them while he's gone? His father assures Obed the flock will be taken care of. Since Obed trusts his father, they soon are on their way. Eugene Ruble's illustrations are just right for this gentle tale. The use of earth tones to convey the atmosphere and rough terrain place the reader in the story. As I read, I could almost feel the excitement and joy of the shepherds on their journey to see the newborn, making me wish I were there with them.

*Little Shepherd* is a fresh addition to the many tales that have been written about the birth of Jesus. I think children will love hearing the story of Christ's birth through the eyes of a child. *Little Shepherd* could be read in Sunday school classes and day care centers, and children might also enjoy acting out the story. I recommend that Moms and Dads, Grandparents and friends, cuddle with your little ones, and through Ms. Malandrinos' book relive the miracle that occurred one starry night over two thousand years ago. This book would make a great stocking stuffer, too. So pick up a copy for each of the children in your life. You'll be glad you did.



**REVIEWED BY: ELYSABETH ELDERING, AUTHOR OF THE JUNIOR GEOGRAPHY DETECTIVE SQUAD (JGDS), 50 –STATE, MYSTERY, TRIVIA SERIES**

**Belief. Faith. Miracle.**

In *Little Shepherd*, Obed is given the responsibility of keeping watch over his first flock of sheep. While keeping a watchful eye, the angels from Heaven appear to the shepherds and proclaim the birth of the Savior. Obed and his father and the other shepherds make their way to Bethlehem to see the new King. Obed worries that the flock will not be safe if they all leave, but leaves anyway. Upon returning, he sees that the flock is unharmed and exactly in the same spot he left them.

I have to agree with other reviewers that this is a great Christmas story and is definitely from a different viewpoint. My problem with the story is that the age of 5 seems to be too young to really be given a flock of sheep to herd or to have the fears the Obed experiences when asked to come to Bethlehem to see the newborn babe in the manger.

The story is truly a delight in all other aspects in that it takes the reader through the journey of what those shepherds many years ago experienced. I think Ms. Malandrinos brings a delightful way to tell the Christmas story to readers. A glimpse in the day of a young boy trying hard to find his place in the village.

I encourage families to sit down and read the *Little Shepherd* and then explore the story from reading the Bible. Have a little faith and stay strong to your beliefs and you can witness a miracle.





**REVIEWED BY: DONNA MCDINE, AWARD-WINNING AUTHOR OF *THE GOLDEN PATHWAY***

Wise beyond his years, young Obed has become a seasoned shepherd boy. Acutely aware of the hillside surroundings while tending his flock Obed stares at the sky in wonderment. A single bright light fills the sky. At first afraid, Obed felt a calmness wash over him as the beautiful angels descend, proclaiming “A Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord.”

Unsure what their message means, Obed looks to his father for guidance. With reassurances from his father, Obed and the older shepherds journey to Bethlehem to meet the newborn King. Their journey and meeting Christ the Lord is nothing less than miraculous.

Your first reaction may be, oh goodness another story on the birth of Christ. Toss those thoughts away and immerse yourself and your children into the magical arrival of Christ the Lord. Children’s author, Cheryl C. Malandrinos has re-explored and created a beautiful re-enactment of Christ the Lord’s birth in a unique and awe inspiring rendition which surely will become classical reading in Christian religious school studies and home libraries.

The old time illustrations expertly created by illustrator, Eugene Ruble will leave you feeling that you journeyed through the countryside with Obed and his fellow shepherds.

**Writing tip: Have children write out their own thank you notes. It teaches them good manners and will also help them keep up their writing skills over the break from school.**



## Winter Celebrations

**Wintertime is host to many different holidays. Which one of these does your family celebrate?**

- **Christmas**
- **Hanukkah**
- **Kwanzaa**
- **St. Nicholas Day**
- **Boxing Day**
- **Winter Solstice**



**What are some of the symbols of your holiday? Do you know what they mean?**

**Does your family honor any traditions during the holiday? We would love to hear about them. Send us an email with your favorite holiday tradition to [cq20pm00@gmail.com](mailto:cq20pm00@gmail.com). Please put "Pages & Pens" on the subject line.**



## Winter Olympics



**The Winter Olympic Games are a multi-sport event held every four years. The first Winter Olympics was held in Chamonix, France, in 1924. The most recent one was held this year in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada.**

**Through the years, the number of sports included in the Winter Olympics has increased. Alpine skiing, cross-country skiing, figure skating, ice hockey, speed skating, luge, and snowboarding are some of the sports that are part of the Winter Olympics.**

**The next Winter Olympics will be held in 2014 in Sochi, Krasnodar Krai, Russia.**

**Do you watch the Winter Olympic Games? Which sport is your favorite?**

**To learn more about the most recent Winter Olympics, you can visit <http://www.vancouver2010.com/>**

**You can visit The Official Web Site of the United States Olympic Committee at <http://www.teamusa.org/>**



## ***CRYPTOGRAM CORNER***

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*By Renee Hand*

On Cryptogram Corner, you will find lots of fun cryptograms and/or puzzles to engage your time. These are challenging and fun. The theme is Winter. All answers will be provided in the next issue.

### ***ACTIVITY 1:***

In this activity you will need to solve the word puzzle. The message has something to do with the winter season. Unscramble the words. Copy the letters in the numbers cells to other cells with the same number. Good luck and have fun!



# Winter Message

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# FALL ISSUES ANSWERS

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			R	Z											U						K			T	

Y E V E Y E ' D E V E  
 S D T Z K Z F T J G Z H A I N E R F Z G I D K Z  
 E D P D V E  
 D H D V Z D G R U F J R P A X N K Z H A I J J E  
 Y E .  
 T Z D F

May everyone's children have a safe and productive school year.

## Cold Weather Search



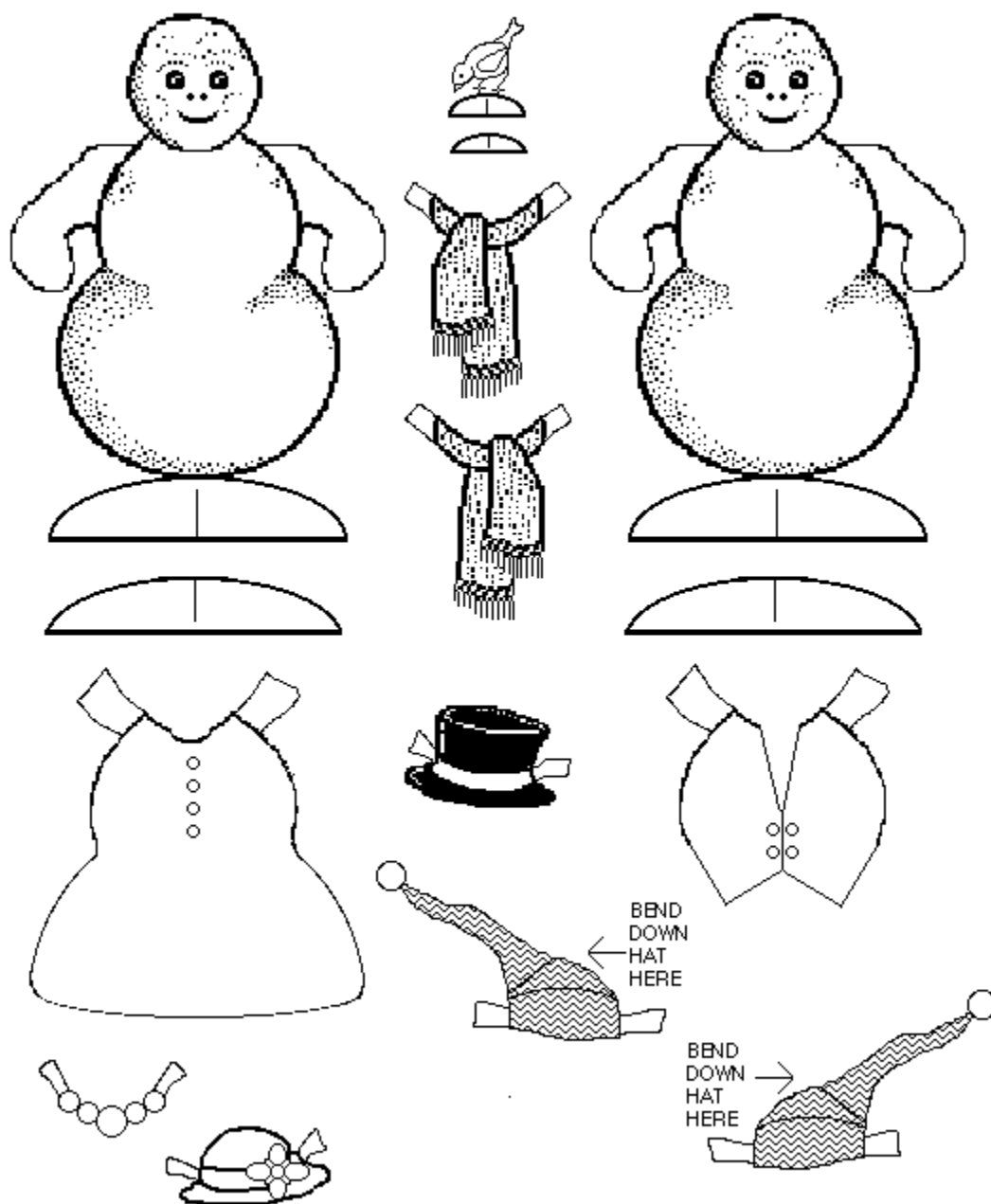
**Boots cold December earmuffs February windy skis**

**Freezing frost icicle snowman jacket January icy**

**Mittens plow scarf shovel skating sled snow**

**Sliding slippery snowball winter snowboard**

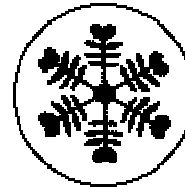
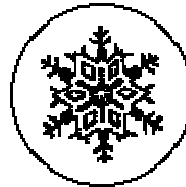
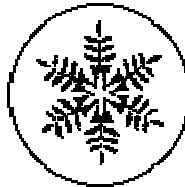
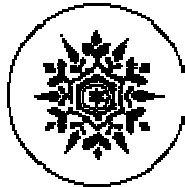
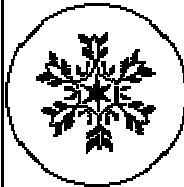
# ENJOY THESE SNOWPEOPLE PAPERDOLLS!



BryBack Manor 1996

# SNOWFLAKE FUN

Cut out the snowflakes and paste on the rectangles where indicated to make finger puppets, adjusting for size if necessary. Use the finger puppets to illustrate the rhyme.



PASTE  
HERE

PASTE  
HERE

PASTE  
HERE

PASTE  
HERE

PASTE  
HERE

Five little snowflakes  
Flying by my door.  
One blew away,  
And then there were four.

Three little snowflakes  
Falling down on you.  
One blew away,  
And then there were two.

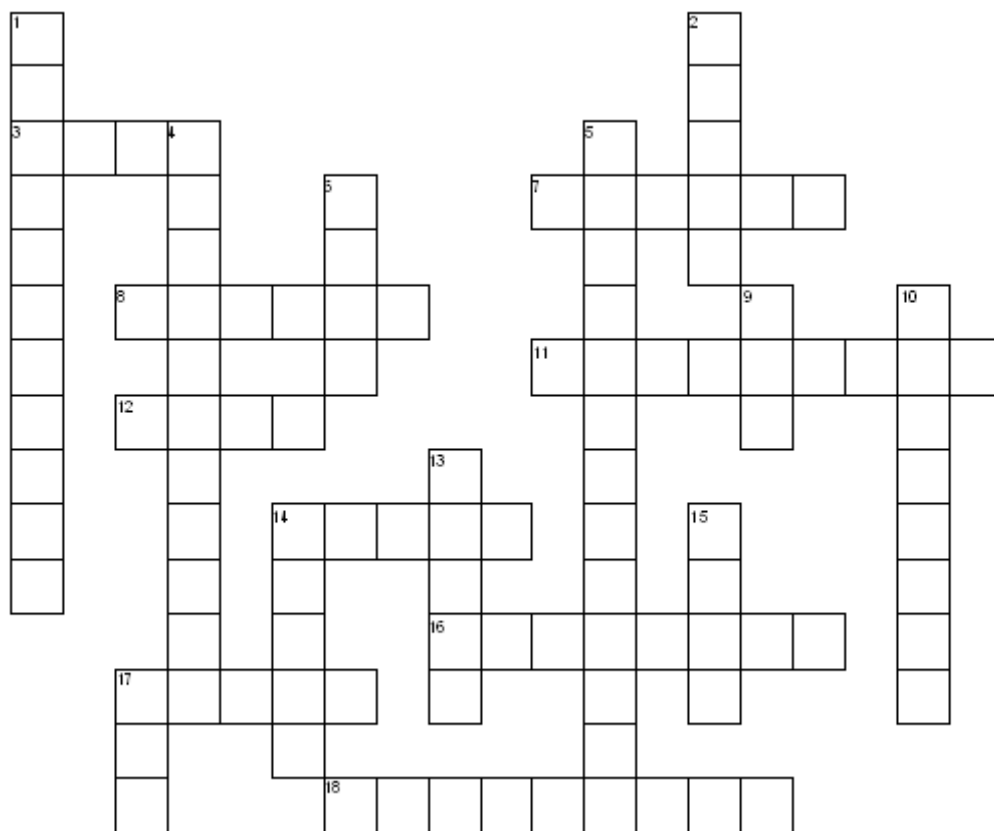
One little snowflake  
Sitting in the sun.  
It melted away,  
And then there were none.

Four little snowflakes  
Falling down on me.  
One blew away,  
And then there were three.

Two little snowflakes  
Having lots of fun.  
One blew away,  
And then there was one.

*Bry-Back Manor 1996*

# Winter Weather



## ACROSS

- 3. The process by which snow or ice changes to water.
- 7. A period of very cold winter weather that damages plants.
- 8. Intensely cold temperature.
- 11. The temperature felt by the human body when wind makes it feel colder than the actual temperature.
- 12. Mildly cold feeling.
- 14. Bright with sunshine.
- 16. Snowfall that is so heavy one can see little or nothing on the horizon.
- 17. Ice crystals on a frozen surface; "Old Jack \_\_\_\_\_."
- 18. A large mass of snow that slides down a mountain.

## DOWN

1. A standardized measure of how hot or cold it is outside.
2. Rain that freezes as it falls.
4. A tool used to measure the temperature.
5. Water that falls to the earth in the form of rain, hail, mist, sleet, or snow.
6. Pieces of ice falling from the sky.
9. A solid form of frozen water.
10. A storm with heavy snow, strong winds, and severe cold.
13. Covered with snow.
14. A mixture of snow and water.
15. Precipitation in the form of small white ice crystals that form inside clouds.
17. Thick water vapor that makes it hard to see.

©2007, Julie Vickery-Smith <http://www.theholidayzone.com/>



Groundhog Day takes places every February 2<sup>nd</sup> in the United States and Canada. The story of the famous groundhog goes like this: If it is cloudy, the groundhog will leave his burrow and that means winter is ending soon. If it is sunny and the groundhog sees his shadow, he hides back in his burrow and that means winter will last another six weeks.

# Answer Key

## ACROSS

- 3. melt
- 7. freeze
- 8. frigid
- 11. windchill
- 12. cool
- 14. sunny
- 16. whiteout
- 17. frost
- 18. avalanche

## DOWN

- 1. temperature
- 2. sleet
- 4. thermometer
- 5. precipitation
- 6. hail
- 9. ice
- 10. blizzard
- 13. snowy
- 14. slush
- 15. snow
- 17. fog

## Winter Wonderland composed by Felix Bernard



Sleigh bells ring, are you listening,  
In the lane, snow is glistening  
A beautiful sight,  
We're happy tonight.  
Walking in a winter wonderland.

Gone away is the bluebird,  
Here to stay is a new bird  
He sings a love song,  
As we go along,  
Walking in a winter wonderland.

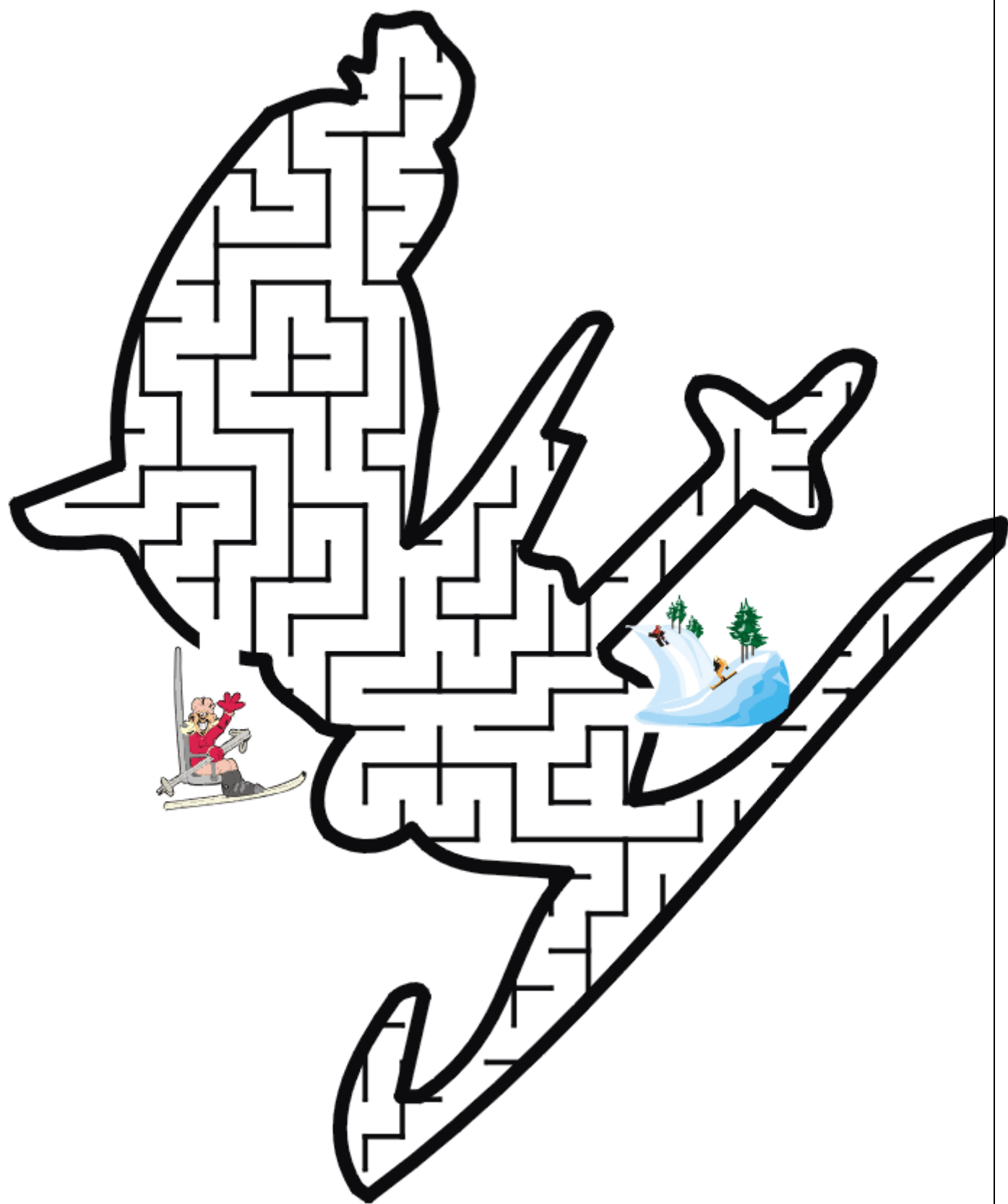
In the meadow we can build a snowman,  
Then pretend that he is Parson Brown

He'll say: Are you married?  
We'll say: No man,  
But you can do the job  
When you're in town.

Later on, we'll conspire,  
As we dream by the fire  
To face unafraid,  
The plans that we've made,  
Walking in a winter wonderland.

In the meadow we can build a snowman,  
And pretend that he's a circus clown  
We'll have lots of fun with mister snowman,  
Until the other kids knock him down.

When it snows, ain't it thrilling,  
Though your nose gets a chilling  
We'll frolic and play, the Eskimo way,  
Walking in a winter wonderland.



## The Snow Birds

It had snowed very hard. Ralph and Edward, who were visiting Grandma in the country, had to stay in the house all day.

When they went to bed it was still snowing, and every time they woke up during the night, they could hear the wind sighing and whistling around the house, and through the branches of the old pine trees.

But the next morning the sun was shining brightly. Such a glorious day! How the branches of the pine trees did sparkle.

"It looks as if they had been sprinkled with gold dust and diamonds," exclaimed Ralph.

"Oh Grandma! Please do hurry breakfast. We are going out to build a fort," cried the boys, bursting into the dining-room.

Grandma smiled and told them to eat a good breakfast, for building a fort was hard work.



They were soon out in the snow, and what a splendid time they did have.

The fort did not grow very fast, for they had to stop so often to snow-ball each other.

When Grandma called them in to dinner they wondered where the time had gone since breakfast.

After dinner, Ralph was looking out of the window, when he spied two little birds cuddled up on a branch of a pine tree.

"Oh, Edward! come here," he called. "See those poor little birds. They look half frozen and so hungry."

"Poor little things," replied Edward. "Doesn't it make you feel mean to think what a jolly time we had this morning out of the snow which has covered up the places where they get their food?"

"Let us get some food from Grandma and throw it out to them," said Ralph. "Perhaps they will find it."

The little birds were soon chirping and flying about merrily and Ralph said it sounded as if they kept saying, "thank you."

Will not other little children be as kind as Ralph and Edward?





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Happy  
Groundhog Day!

