



**BUT WHY**

# A Lesson Plan Grade 3-5

But Why is led by you, kids! Kids all over the world send us questions, and we find the answers. We've created these learning units to be used in a classroom setting or at home. Watch the video first and then use this guide to deepen your understanding of what you've learned. Find more episodes at [butwhykids.org](http://butwhykids.org).



## But Why: Adventures! Northeast Nature | DECEMBER: SOLSTICE

### DRIVING QUESTION:

How do our longest or shortest days of the year inspire cultural traditions and celebrations?

#### Objectives: Students will

- Understand the concept of the winter solstice and its significance.
- Understand and appreciate diverse cultural associations with the winter solstice.

#### Activities:

1. Teach students the concept of mindfulness and its benefits for mental well-being.
2. Engage them in a short mindfulness exercise before taking them outside.
3. After the mindfulness activity, take students on a nature walk. Encourage them to notice smells, textures, sights and sounds.

### VELS (K-3): SC 3:1, SS 2.1 | Learning Targets Grades 3-5

#### C3

D2.Geo.4.3-5

D2.Geo.10.3-5

#### ISTE

1c.



Learning Target: C3 D2.Geo.4.3-5, D2.Geo.10.305 & ISTE 1c. & VELS SC 3:1, SS 2:1(K-3)



**BUT WHY**

# Watch & Connect

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### WATCH & CONNECT:

**Draw or write  
in the boxes.**



**K (Know).** What do you know about winter solstice?

**W (Want to know).** What do you want to know about winter solstice?

**L (Learn).** What did you learn about winter solstice?



# Watch & Doodle

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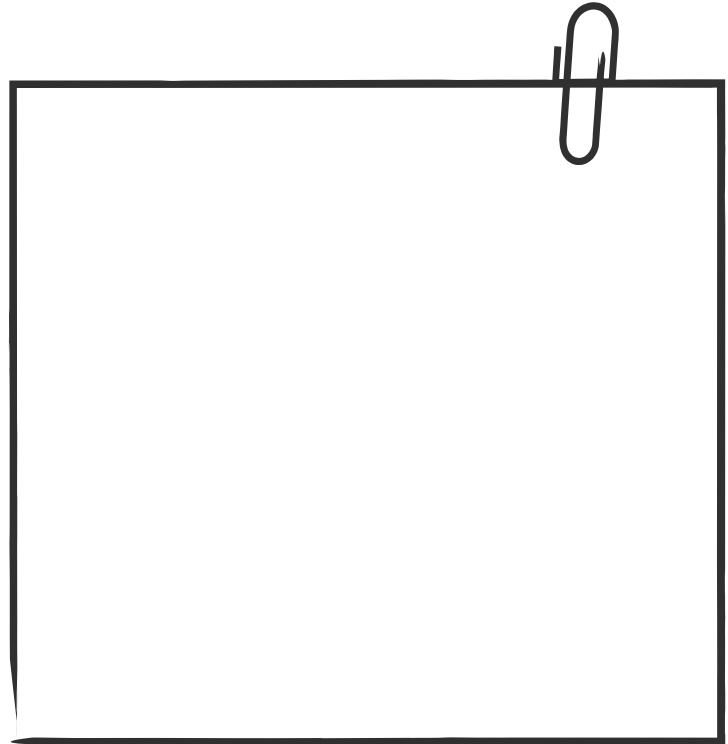
## But Why: Adventures! Northeast Nature | DECEMBER: SOLSTICE

### WATCH & DOODLE:

#### Draw the sun and moon's interaction.

In many cultures around the world, the sun is a symbol of life and light. The moon is a symbol of birth, growth and renewal.

Create a picture of the two interacting. Is the sun higher or the moon? Is it daylight, nighttime or both?



#### Draw a moon phase diagram



First, draw a circle to represent the full moon.

Draw three more circles and color in parts of each circle with your pencil to show how the moon changes over time.



# Web Quest

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## But Why: Adventures! Northeast Nature | DECEMBER: SOLSTICE

**WEB QUEST:** Many cultures across the world celebrate the winter solstice in some way. It's important to honor and learn from each other's traditions. To do this, let's find out more using safe searches and audio as a way of recording what we have learned.

**Do a safe search by choosing key words for the search. Find a server you trust. Words like "solstice" or "traditions" might work as a start.**

### Safe Search Tips:

1. Don't click on items that look like advertisements.
2. Make sure website names are spelled correctly.
3. Check to see if the website you access is secure by looking for the lock image in the search bar.

### Next...

1. Audio record your sources, title, authors or website. It is important to share your source.
2. Share a summary about what you learned about. Talk to your teacher to see if you should write this out formally before recording it.
3. Share with your teacher or team as a MP4 file.

**Teachers TIP:** Check out WeVideo or SeeSaw for audio recording solutions.

### Notes:





# Traditions: Connections

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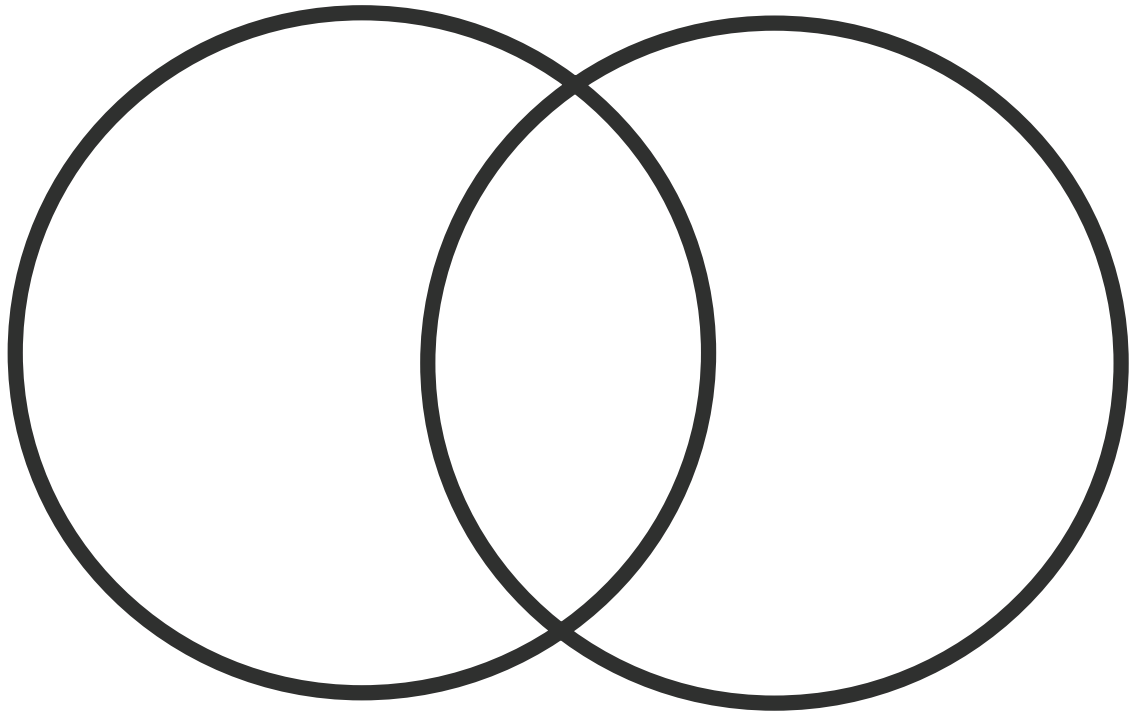


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**SOCIAL EMOTIONAL CONNECTIONS:** We are all connected.

**Reflect.** Choose TWO traditions. What makes these solstice traditions similar and different. What do they have in common?

**Venn Diagram:**



**Find out more about...**

**Example:**

Dong Zhi  
(China)  
Celebrating the shortest day and longest night

**Example:**

St. Lucia Day  
(Sweden)  
A festival of lights



# Traditions: Connections

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**BIG IDEA:** Who are we? What does our community celebrate?

**Create a word wall or collage that represents traditions in your classroom community.**

### Example:



### School tradition in our community:



**Teacher TIP:** Go to *Google Documents > Create New > Choose Extensions* (in top tab) > *Search for Add-on > Word Cloud Generator* and follow directions (FREE). Add all winter celebrations named by your students.



## Solstice

[ SOUL-stiss ] • *noun*

The time when the earth's hemispheres are tilted as close and as far away from the sun as they get. The winter solstice has the shortest daylight of the year and the summer solstice has the longest amount of daylight. The winter solstice marks the exact moment when half of earth is tilted the farthest away from the sun.



## Hemisphere

[ HEM-iss-feer ] • *noun*

Half the earth. The earth can be divided into northern and southern hemispheres or by eastern and western hemispheres.



## Temperature

[ TEM-pruh-choor ] • *noun*

A measurement of how hot or cold something is.



## Dormant

[ DORE-mint ] • *adjective*

When physical functions or activities are temporarily slowed down.

... **What new words did you learn?** Make your own vocabulary cards. ....

