

Tourist In Your Hometown: Holiday Activities in Victoria

Written by Bren Grundy

Looking to fill those long winter days? Well, Victoria has many exciting activities to celebrate the winter. Whether you're looking to warm up in a cozy craft fair or enjoy the icy winter outside, there are many options that are perfect to spend with family and friends! Unfortunately, by the time you're reading this, many things like parades and other events will already have passed. However, there is still much to do in December!

INDEX

- Community activities
- Artists column
- Water fountains ranked
- DIY Christmas decorations
- Horoscopes
- Original Nutcracker story
- Fur fashion ethics
- Fashion column
- December student poem
- Savoury & sweet recipes
- Games



© Bilston Creek Farm Store

If you need to get your holiday shopping done, then this yuletide craft fair featuring over 65 different vendors over multiple weeks will be the ultimate winter activity for you. Beginning December 5th and going until the 21st, with only a \$5 entrance fee, this incredible market is located at Bilston Creek Farm. Not only housing retail shops, but also fresh food and live music. You can learn more about this craft fair on the Bilston Creek Farm website.

If wandering through picturesque winter scenes is more your speed, then Butchart Gardens will be the perfect place to visit this winter season. From December 1st until January 6th, there will be dazzling lights in the beautiful gardens, outdoor ice skating, carollers, and hot chocolate!



© Traveling Islanders



© Habitat for Humanity Victoria

One of the staples of the holiday season in Victoria are the famous gingerbread house displays. Organized by Habitat For Humanity, the showcase will be hosted at the Grand Pacific Hotel all December long. You'll even get the chance to vote in categories like best first impression, best use of skill & technique, best interpretation of the theme, most creative, and more! With free admission and this year's themes of "Home for All", this gingerbread display will be a great place to visit this winter.



© Sightseeing Victoria

Looking to have an old timey winter? Well, there is no shortage of activities perfect for you in Victoria! Starting at Craigdarroch Castle, you can go on a self-guided tour through the castle fully decorated in holiday cheer. It will also feature live music acts performing Celtic and holiday music.

Furthermore, you can experience Victoria's festive past, with a macabre twist! Hosted by Discover the Past, you can hear about chilling tales including a haunted chocolate shop, a Christmas Eve assassination, and the "Lady in White" who first appeared in Christmas 1861.

You could even check out some of the local tea houses in Victoria, which feature winter tea selections and menus. Options include the Pendray Inn, the Empress, or the Abkhazi Garden tea house.



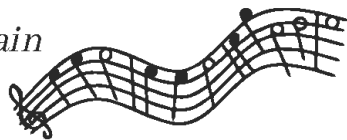
© Discover the Past Walking Tours

From twinkling lights in nature to cozy tea in a classic castle, we hope you enjoy whatever winter activity you choose!

Esquimalt's Artists of the Ages

Written by Kara McIlwain

EVERY GWYN



Avery creates whimsical, experimental music pieces that have a lot of personality, being described as sounding like Toby Fox or Amen Breaks. Esquimalt High has played a huge role in Avery's music path by giving valuable opportunities to meet other talented artists. As mentioned in the interview, the artist has many immediate goals, such as adding lyrics and making a more consistent type of music. Finishing the interview, Avery was excited to announce, "I will be releasing a 4(?) -track EP."

BELLADONNA

Jody Senn and Catalina Chapin-Gauchat recently played at two events, one of which being the View Royal Talent Show. Their new addition, Parker Huneck, will be playing the drums in future

performances. When interviewed, they described their music as "indie alt-rock, kind of like Radiohead." They will be playing at Santa's Breakfast and they are scheduled to start recording some of their songs in the spring. As a band, they strive to connect with their audience, create "wow moments" in their songs, and give people a chance to dance. Be sure to follow them on Instagram! [@belladonna.band.victoria](https://www.instagram.com/belladonna.band.victoria).

SAVANNAH MORRISON

This young singer has performed beautiful renditions of songs from musicals. She also performed at the View Royal Talent Show. During the interview she explained how an inspirational Broadway individual, Sutton Foster, influenced her singing journey. Savannah is hopeful that her future career in musical theatre and as a vocalist will lead her to the New York stage or even Broadway.

The Insider Sip: ESQ's Water Fountains Ranked

Written by Eleanor Hogg

The different water fountains in the school have always been a point of dispute within the student population. Even on my first day at Esquimalt High, I was immediately steered towards certain fountains, being told by older students which ones are the best and which are the worst. Esquimalt Ink feels a duty to report on important and relevant information to our fellow students, which is why we created a qualified jury consisting of myself, Elara Berkhout, and Bren Grundy to get to the bottom of this. Together at lunch, we tested all 7 water fountains in the school, grading them on factors such as temperature, location, flow, and taste. Here are our top findings for some of the fountains.

On the third floor, we walk to the north wing, near classrooms 328 and 329. On our walk there, Elara Berkhout claims it is “arguably the best water fountain in the school”. It has an advantage, as it is one of the three fountains in the school with a water bottle filler. The filler is also activated by a sensor, which is modern and easy to use. We liked the location, especially with the painted ceiling tiles and mural. It has interesting information to read on it, such as the count for the amount of bottles it's saved, the filter status, and its serial number. (We find it worth noting that that filter status was at yellow when we tested it, which may have had an effect on our rating.) It does say to let it flush for 30 seconds, and out of the many people we've talked to regarding this fountain, none know what 'flush' means in this context and none have ever attempted to flush it. The temperature was

acceptably cold, reminiscent of bottled water. The flow wasn't very high, but reached far. The smiley face drawn on the side promotes positivity.



It also blows hot air out of the sides after being used, which is perfect for a chilly day or if you spill water on yourself. While documenting our experience with this fountain, teacher Jamie Burren came by for a drink. “Delicious. It's the best water fountain in the school. Rich and full of iron.” He said, and then went back for 3 more sips. This fountain earns a B with an 85%.

We then descended to the second floor, near classrooms 216 and 217. We love that this fountain is located on a mural of beautiful trees, which, as Berkhout describes, “makes you feel like you're a deer drinking from a pond.” However, the placement of the water fountain on the corner of the hallway makes you feel vulnerable. Berkhout notes that “It feels like you're being watched, a little bit. I feel like that deer again, but like I'm being chased.” The flow of the water was a very high and stable arc, which was great to see. We then tasted the water, and we're sad to say we were disappointed. The water was room temperature. Grundy described the taste of the water as “kind of really horrible”.



It's not very hydrating, and there was definitely an aftertaste. "To come back to that deer analogy, after having tasted it I would describe this as a muddy pond. It's not that clear refreshing water we were looking for," says Berkhout. She then notes that many students like to turn off the lights in this hallway, which could leave you drinking water in the dark. This fountain, unfortunately, does not pass, getting an F with a 43%.

On our way to the first floor, we remarked that this water fountain is definitely the fan favourite. The water fountain next to the gym is said by many to be the best in the school, with the "coldest water". There's only one button, but it's a wide button that's easy to press. The flow was noticeably bad, thin and sputtering, which is quite unsatisfactory. It also does not have the same information on it (such as filter status or amount of bottles saved) that the third floor fountain has. When we tested the taste, I realized why so many people love this fountain. The first word that comes to mind to describe this water? Glacial. Like drinking from an arctic river. It's perfect for students in gym class, as it's definitely the most refreshing water. It's also near the vending machines, so you can get snacks to have with your ice-cold water. However, it gets very busy, especially during lunch as it's in a popular area next to the cafeteria. It also often has a line waiting to use it. Though it's the most popular, this fountain got a C+ from us with 72%.

We then left Bren Grundy behind to go and test the water fountain in the girl's locker room. Although it's closed off from about half the population of Esquimalt High School, there's really not much they're missing out on. Elara and I put ourselves in danger by walking through the gym during lunch to get to this fountain, and it was *not* worth it.

After nearly getting hit by a basketball, we were craving some cold and satisfying water, and that is not what we got. Immediately, we noticed a weak flow that was thin and inconsistent, as well as a neon blue fluid around the spout, which is discouraging to drink out of. It's acceptably cold, but it didn't taste great. This fountain does not pass, getting an F with a 35%.

WHAT DO YOU THINK THE BEST WATER FOUNTAIN IS? FILL IN THIS FORM!



As his departing words, Bren Grundy said "My pick of the day is still the one by the gym, followed quickly by the one on the third floor next to the main stairs with all the posters."

As Elara Berkhout's final words, she said "If you're just going for the water, the one by the gym. But if you're going for the whole water experience, the one in the north wing of the third floor with the bottle filler."

My final thoughts? I think the north wing third floor fountain will always be my favourite, as it's near all my favourite classes and it has a bottle filler. But the water next to the gym will always be the coldest.

DIY Christmas: Homemade Holiday Decor



Written by Molly Hansen

Once upon a time, the holidays were about giving, spending time with loved ones, and eating yummy food. But nowadays, Christmas is filled with franticness, jealousy, and buying things that no one will actually use. This year, we are saying no to commercialized Christmas. This means bringing back the true meaning of the holidays by spending quality time with friends and family while making beautiful homemade decorations and gifts. Here are my top 3 decorations that you can make at home with your friends or family, that are not only cost-effective but make your home a warm and inviting place to spend the holidays.

1) PAPER CHAINS

Paper chains have been all the rage this year, being used as decorations for birthdays and other events. This makes sense due to our generations yearning to bring back our childhoods. For the holidays, paper chains can be made out of patterned or plain coloured paper. You can even make versions out of felt or fabric so you can use them again next year! Hang them around your house, on door frames or wrap around banisters; the possibilities are endless.



2) ORANGE GARLANDS



Homemade Christmas is all about using what you have around the house. There are pretty much only two steps when it comes to this decoration: drying the oranges and threading them together. When it comes to drying your oranges, you can either dry them in the oven or in a dehydrator. Then simply thread the string of your choice through the oranges, and hang them anywhere! You can also use other citrus fruits like lemons or limes and grapefruits, for more variety when it comes to size and colour.

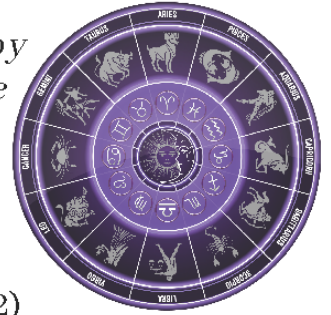
3) PAPER STARS

I think that paper stars are a very underrated way to decorate our homes during the holiday season. You can practically put them everywhere, they cost no money, and they add the perfect amount of whimsy to any room. Paper stars can be made out of newspapers (a good recycling project for the issue you're reading now!), old books and even paper bags. There are also many different ways you can make them: 3D, 2D, 8 points or five. You can find so many tutorials online for this easy craft which can bring any garland to the next level.



November Horoscopes

Organized by
Violet Lane



ARIES (Mar. 21 - Apr. 19)

Watch out for your holiday drink consumption, and maybe go check on your bank account to see if it can handle another sugar cookie oat latte at the moment.

TAURUS (Apr. 20 - May 20)

That decoration that you're not sure if it matches the vibe of the rest of them? Keep it up. Don't succumb to the voices of "aesthetic Christmas," it doesn't exist.

GEMINI (May 21 - Jun. 20)

Do you really think that your relative will truly appreciate a vanilla candle that will only gather dust on the mantle? Reach out to them and see if you can learn more about their actual interests to get them something that they'll value.

CANCER (Jun. 21 - Jul. 22)

Power through the temptations of holiday sales to buy stuff for yourself, try to just put it on your wish list. There's nothing more awkward than opening a gift that's already sitting in your house.

LEO (Jul. 23 - Aug. 22)

Feeling that panic of not knowing what to put on your wish list? As soon as the holidays are over, start a list for next year and add stuff to it all year.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 - Sep. 22)

If you were hoping to make handmade or crafty gifts for your loved ones this year, definitely get a move on with it. Or else it'll get down to the wire and you'll have to re-evaluate how many people you really love.

LIBRA (Sep. 23 - Oct. 22)

Maybe put up some mistletoe up this year and take a risk. You never know what could happen if you take that first step.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 - Nov. 21)

Stand up against the kids table sentence! This is the year that you earn your spot at the adults table.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 - Dec. 21)

Do NOT engage in any political discussions with your family this holiday season. It will not end well.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 - Jan. 19)

If you're a big Christmas person, do yourself a favor and steer clear of the dollar store. That junky mini Christmas tree will not improve your life.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 - Feb. 18)

Make an effort to learn how to cook something new from your family. It might get you out of those awkward estranged family conversations if you're helping with the food.

PISCES (Feb. 19 - Mar. 20)

Maybe that fifteenth santa figurine can stay in the basement this year, strangling your house in festivity can often cause more claustrophobia than holiday spirit.



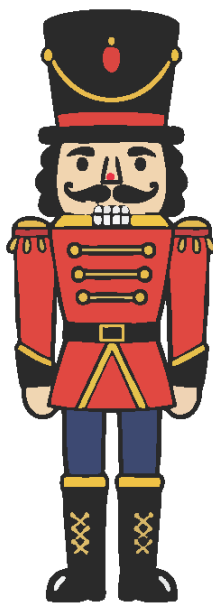
The Original Nutcracker Story

As winter approaches, I thought it would be timely to share one of the most classic Christmas tales. “The Nutcracker”, composed, in 1891 by Tchaikovsky was actually adapted from E.T.A. Hoffman’s “The Nutcracker and The Mouse King” (1816). Now, many know this story performed as a ballet, but do you know the original story?

Set in 1820s Nuremberg, the story begins with the Stahlburn family gathering to decorate the tree on Christmas Eve. Once they’ve finished, they call the children, one of these children being Clara. As they talk and exchange gifts, an old wooden grandfather clock strikes 8:00 PM. As the pendulum swings, a mysterious figure emerges, cloaked in a velvet cape. It is Drosselmeyer; not only is he a councilman, magician, and Clara’s godfather, but also a toymaker with a knack for making his toys feel magical. He has brought toys for all the children, including dancing dolls, a toy soldier, and finally the enchanting nutcracker.

Drosselmeyer must remove the lifelike toys from the parlor for safe keeping, except one: the nutcracker. Clara immediately takes a liking to it. Unfortunately, while playing with the nutcracker, Clara’s brother breaks its wooden arm. Clara is heartbroken, but Drosselmeyer repairs the nutcracker, much to Clara’s relief.

During the night, Clara tiptoes back over the wooden floorboards to return to her nutcracker. As she reaches to pick the toy up, the mysterious grandfather clock strikes midnight. As her gaze drifts from her toy, she sees Drosselmeyer perched atop the Christmas tree. To Clara’s shock, mice begin to scurry into the room and the tree grows to dizzying heights. The nutcracker also grows to life size. Clara finds herself in the



Written by Bren Grundy

midst of a battle between an army of gingerbread soldiers and the mice, led by their king.

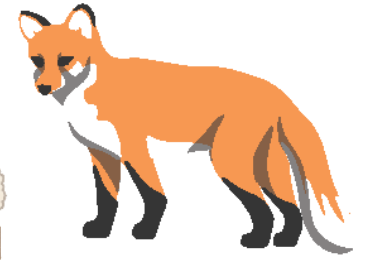
The nutcracker, now life size, leads the gingerbread army joined by tin soldiers and the dancing dolls. As Clara examines the battlefield, she notices a terrifying creature: the mouse king, draped in red and gold, with seven heads emerging from his

body. The nutcracker and mouse king come face to face, so Clara tosses her slipper across the battle to distract the king. This gives the nutcracker a chance to attack.

As the mouse king falls, his army retreats and the nutcracker transforms into a human prince. He takes Clara’s hand and leads them through a moonlit forest to his kingdom, the Land of Sweets. This kingdom is ruled by the sugar plum fairy. The prince recounts the story of Clara’s bravery, which saved the prince from both the mouse king and his life as a wooden nutcracker. In Clara’s honour, the sugar plum fairy creates a celebration of sweets from around the world: chocolate from Spain, coffee from Arabia, tea from China, and candy canes from Russia.

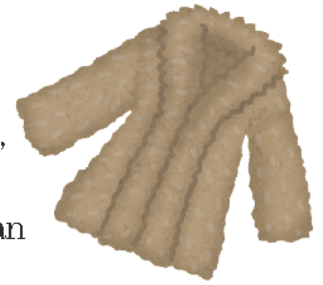
They all dance for Clara’s amusement. Marzipan shepherdesses perform on their flutes, Mother Ginger has her children emerge from under her enormous hoop skirt to dance, and a string of flowers performs a waltz. As the night comes to a close, the sugar plum fairy ushers Clara and the prince into a reindeer drawn sled, where they return to Nuremberg.

Fur As Fashion: A Moral Debate



Written by Annabell Everett

Take a second to imagine popular winter fashions. Think of the most mainstream idea of what pieces should be worn come winter. You probably thought of sweaters, scarves, boots, and of course furs (or at least I did). To be fair, furs are a gorgeous winter staple. I mean come on now, a little fur trim an overcoat? It's impossible to deny the layer of class and elegance fur can bring to an outfit. But is it even possible to ethically wear fur in 2025?



Furs have been a winter staple since the dawn of humanity. Perhaps the early humans didn't have the wide range of ermine coats, mink shrugs, and sable pelt hats available later on, but they certainly did have furs. Back then, humans thought of almost nothing but survival; pelts weren't fashion to them, they were a necessity to stay alive through harsh winter conditions.

As our civilizations progressed and flourished over millennia, furs became a status symbol for the elite. This was a crucial turning point for humanity and fur. It started being mass produced, to match the high demand, and industries often kept their animals in inhumane conditions as they were farmed for their pelts. At this point, I believe it became unethical to wear fur, as it supported a horror show of unnecessary cruelty. Thousands protested this inhumanity throughout the '80s and '90s, shaming those who wore fur pieces.



Pelts are no longer a necessity in any way and they are actually some of the most expensive pieces on the market. These facts make it very difficult to justify purchasing and wearing fashion furs in this day and age. Thankfully there is quite a wide selection of incredibly realistic faux furs on the market today, just like the real thing but sans animal suffering. You can find vintage furs in thrift shops or your grandma's attic, which is a morally grey option, but I believe it's alright as long as you're not directly supporting any more animal harm. So now you know what to wear to achieve the stunning effect of fur, and avoid the moral and public shame, happy winter clothes shopping everyone!



Bonus cartoon!

DECEMBER POEM

Winter's Blanket

The old rocking chair creaks,
 Gone are the monsters, frights, and freaks
 White tails, now snow capped deer,
 Marks the season of joy and cheer
 Hot coco warms the hands,
 Red from cold, there's no trace of sand
 Stories, tea and blankets,
 With enough food for a banquet
 Lots of fond memories,
 Gathered from many centuries
 Snow fights eventually end,
 So we build a big snowman friend
 Winter break is soon here,
 Let's throw up our hands and say cheers

Written by Kara McIlwain

PSST! BIPOC AWARENESS CLUB HAS AN EVENT COMING UP...



Want to get your club's ad in our newspaper? Email esquimalt.ink@gmail.com!

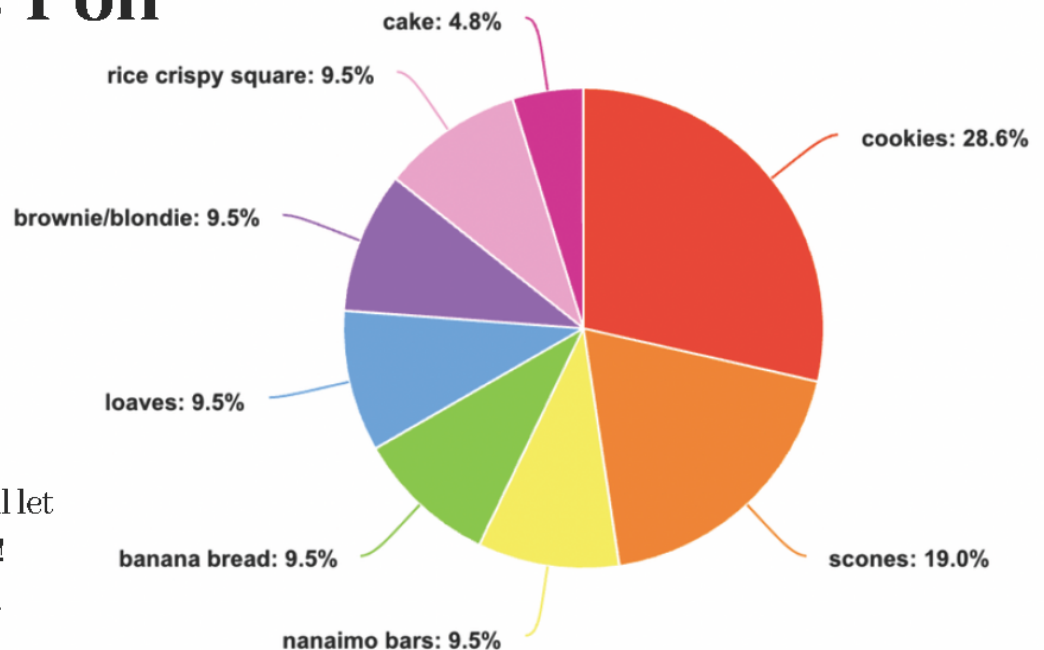
Results From November's Poll

Written by Arden Giles

Last month, we set out to get the student body's answer: What's the most underrated cafeteria bakery item? Here are the results!

I'm not so sure if cookies are underrated, per se, but I guess I'll let the results speak for themselves!

Do you agree with these results?



Ginger, Turmeric, and Carrot Soup

Organized by Bren Grundy

MAKES 4 SERVINGS

When the cold weather rolls around, nothing is better than a cozy soup to warm the body and soul. This flavourful and healing soup is perfect for those chilly nights. Packed with ingredients like garlic, fennel, and ginger, this is a nutrient-rich soup as well. And best of all, you can make it in under an hour!



INGREDIENTS



- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 1 leek, cleaned and slice
- 1 cup chopped fennel
- 3 cups chopped carrots
- 1 cup chopped butternut squash
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 tbsp grated ginger
- 1 tbsp turmeric powder
- Salt & pepper to taste
- 3 cups vegetable broth
- 1 can coconut milk (14.5 oz)

DIRECTIONS

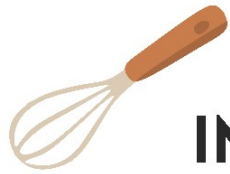
- 1) Heat the olive oil in a large Dutch oven or saucepan. Add the fennel, leeks, carrots, and squash. Sauté for 3-5 minutes until the veggies start to soften.
- 2) Add the garlic, ginger, turmeric, salt, and pepper, and sauté for a few more minutes.
- 3) Add the broth and coconut milk. Bring the mixture to a boil, cover, and simmer for 20 minutes.
- 4) Once the soup is cooked, add it to a blender and blend until creamy. You could also use an immersion blender. Taste and adjust the seasonings to your taste. Serve immediately with a dollop of coconut yogurt and enjoy!

BON APPÉTIT!



Classic Gingerbread Cookies

Organized by Nina Towner



INGREDIENTS



Recipe by McCormick
Spice on Allrecipes

- 3 cups all-purpose flour
- 2 tsp ground ginger
- 1 tsp ground cinnamon
- 1 tsp baking soda
- 1/4 tsp ground nutmeg
- 1/4 tsp salt
- 3/4 cup softened butter
- 3/4 cup packed brown sugar
- 1/2 cup molasses
- 1 large egg
- 1 tsp vanilla extract

DIRECTIONS

1) Mix flour, ginger, cinnamon, nutmeg, and baking soda in a bowl. Beat brown sugar and butter in another bowl with an electric mixer until fluffy. Add molasses egg and vanilla and mix well. Gradually beat in the flour mixture until it's well combined.



- 2) Press dough into a thick flat circle and wrap in plastic wrap. Refrigerate for 4 hours or overnight.
- 3) Preheat oven to 350°F. Roll out the dough on a lightly floured surface to a thickness of about 1/4 inch. Cut into gingerbread shapes and place them on parchment paper on a baking sheet.
- 4) Bake until the edges are starting to brown, 8-10 minutes. Cook on a baking sheet for 2 minutes, then remove racks to cool completely.
- 5) Decorate cookies as desired. Store in an airtight container for up to five days.

ENJOY!

Word Search



Z	P	G	H	M	M	C	W	W	F
T	I	X	O	F	A	O	C	O	C
S	N	K	L	J	N	G	Z	J	Q
O	E	P	I	S	K	A	T	E	S
R	T	B	D	X	R	L	A	J	X
F	E	K	A	L	F	W	O	N	S
X	H	E	Y	K	U	E	L	U	Y
P	Y	S	N	E	T	T	I	M	M
T	N	I	M	R	E	P	P	E	P
E	C	I	T	S	L	O	S	V	A

SNOWFLAKE HOLIDAY MITTENS
 SKATES SOLSTICE YULE
 COCOA PEPPERMINT PINE
 FROST



Organized by Annabell Everett, Nina Towner, and Tabby Towne



Connections

Sort these words into groups of four!

Pound	Baby	Carrot	Whistle
Snitch	Clap	Light	Rat
Bravo	Navy	Tell	Sky
Pan	Tattle	Cup	Encore



Winter Trivia

- Which actor played 6 different roles in the Polar Express movie?

- Where were the first official Winter Olympics held?

- What is the fear of snow called?

- How many sides on a snowflake?

- What animal freezes in the winter and thaws in the spring?

- What is the world's snowiest city?

OUR TEAM

Have any questions or concerns? Contact us at esquimalt.ink@gmail.com!

- Arden Giles
- Eleanor Hogg
- Meganne Stuart
- Annabell Everett
- Bren Grundy
- Sylvie Scott
- Molly Hansen
- Violet Lane
- Cassandre Paul-Hus
- Kara McIlwain
- Nina Towner
- Tabby Towne
- Geoff Orme



Trivia

Ending in -cake: Pound, carrot, pan, cup
 To tell on: Tattle, tell, snitch, rat
 Applause: Bravo, clap, whistle, encore
 Shades of blue: Baby, light, navy, sky

Connections

1) Tom Hanks, 2) Chamonix, France, 3) Chionophobia, 4) Aomori City, Japan, 5) Wood frog, 6) Japan