

Experiences

The holiday season is a wonderful time to introduce new experiences to your child. Each experience is a new learning opportunity. Giving your child a wide range of experiences lays a foundation for expanding your child's vocabulary. The more interactions your child has, the more opportunities your child has to learn.

With the sights and sounds of the season, a drive through your neighborhood becomes a learning experience that will last forever. As a child, I always looked forward to Mr. Wilson's beautiful bright yard with 3 moving reindeer and 10 large shiny silver balls hanging in his tall oak trees. My mom always took time to make an experience of driving through the neighborhood during the holiday season. We would count reindeer, shiny balls, houses with lights and houses without lights. My mom would help me describe what I saw by introducing new vocabulary words. Driving through your own neighborhood can be a new experience for your child also.

Other fun experiences you and your child can do to promote learning in your home include...

- Turning standing in the check-out line a learning experience. For example, count the number of scarves you see or see who can find the color green first.
- Visit your local library and search for seasonal books
- Find ways to include your child in even the smallest of task, those are the ones your children will love the most. For example, stirring the cookie dough or placing red candies on the ginger bread men.

Use the holiday season to introduce new experiences to your child and help build your child's vocabulary. If you have any questions or want to learn more about early childhood literacy and school readiness, please contact Project S.E.E.D at 601-266-5163. Project SEED is a collaborative initiative between the Hattiesburg Mayor's Council for Early Learning Opportunities and The University of Southern Mississippi Institute for Disability Studies. Project SEED is funded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration on Children and Families (Grant # 90L00134/01).

Alicia Westbrook, M.S. Early Intervention and Elizabeth Beavers, M.S. Special Education