



THE FIRST DAY OF WINTER

AUTHOR: DENISE FLEMING

ILLUSTRATOR: DENISE FLEMING

See a video of the book read aloud here: [The First Day of Winter](#)

**** REMEMBER: HAVE FUN AND THE KIDS WILL TOO! ****

OVERVIEW

ABOUT THE BOOK

A little boy goes out in the snow to build a snowman. For each of the first 10 days of winter his best friend gives him things that he can add to the snowman to make him “come alive”.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Denise Fleming grew up in Ohio and began putting on neighborhood performances when she was very young. Instead of charging money to see her performances, her Mom suggested she collect buttons or straight pins from friends and family who attended the shows.

ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

Denise started art school when she was in the 3rd grade. The pictures in her books are an art form called papermaking. She makes them by pouring colored paper pulp through hand-cut stencils. She says it is wet, messy and wonderful to do!

THE READ ALOUD

BEFORE READING

Use these before reading the story to help students activate background knowledge and make predictions:

- What do you notice on the cover?
- Tell me more about the snowman.
- When do you think winter begins?
- What does winter look like?

DURING THE STORY

Use these while reading the story to help students interpret the action and content.

- (p. 1) Why do you think this number is circled in red on the calendar?
- (p. 4) Can you find the rhyming words in this sentence? (cap/snap)
- (p. 8) How do we know there are three scarves? What are they used for?
- (p. 14) I wonder what these tiny twigs are for? What do they look like to you?
- (p. 19) WOW! Nine Big Black Buttons! Tell me how the little boy used all those buttons.
- (p. 21) What became of the 10 salty peanuts?

THE FIRST DAY OF WINTER

TOPICS & THEMES:

- Friendship
- Found objects
- Counting
- Creating

Tips for every book!

POWER PHRASES:

I WONDER...

I NOTICE...

TELL ME MORE...

DIGGING DEEPER:

“Tell me more, why do you think that?”

“How do you know that?”

“Why do you think they feel like that?”

“Interesting, did you notice anything else?”

AFTER READING

Use these after reading the story to help students understand what they just read.

- Let's review what the boy received each day (reader: refer to the final illustration of the snowman)

BRINGING THE BOOK TO LIFE!

- Tell me what kinds of things we do during winter.
- If you were building a snowman, what would you put on him/her?

COOPERATIVE LEARNING

- (p. 9) If you know what "prickly" means, scratch your nose. (reader: have several students tell you what they think it means)
- (p. 19) Let's count the buttons together.

EXTENSION ACTIVITY

- Guide students through drawing the outline of a snowman – 3 circles for TOP (head), MIDDLE (chest) and BOTTOM (lower body). Let them add whatever features they choose.