**County Commissioner’s Winter Challenge 2021**

*Theme:* **New Year’s Resolutions**

*The new year is often seen as a time for new beginnings and fresh starts. For many people it is a time to make a resolution.*

*Make a resolution and pick at least one activity to help you keep the resolution you have made:*

**Rainbows**: Make a resolution around how you can be more kind and helpful.

**Brownies**: Make a resolution around ‘good turns’. Can you think of 7 different good turns you could do each week (one for each day)?

**Guides**: Think about how you can be true to yourself this year. Set yourself a resolution on this.

**Rangers**: Think about what you could do to help your community this year. Set yourself a resolution around this.

**Adults**: Make a resolutionthat will benefit you personally!

**Activities:**

* Draw a picture to show what your resolution is.
* Design a postcard you can send yourself to remind you of your resolution in a month.
* Write a letter to your Unit Leader to tell them about your resolution.
* Share your resolution with your unit at a virtual meeting, or with your friends or family.
* Make a diary to record how you are keeping your resolutions.
* Create a journal to record your feelings and how you are keeping your resolution.

*Theme:* **Winter Celebrations Worldwide**

*Across the world many nations have celebrations at the beginning of the year. In the northern hemisphere, where it is darker in winter, many of these celebrations involve light.*

*Choose a celebration and pick at least two activities to complete:*

**Burn’s Night – Scotland (25 January):**

* Try some traditional Burn’s Night food or cook a themed meal.
* Have a go at some Ceilidh dancing and listen to some bagpipe music.
* Learn about Robert Burns and recite some poetry to an audience. [Badge link: Rainbow, Storyteller]
* Make a thistle picture. You could use finger prints or tissue paper, what other imaginative ways can you think of to decorate your thistle?
* Play indoor curling.
* Sing Auld Lang Syne.

**Australia Day (26 January):**

* Try Aboriginal Dot painting – why not decorate a tile? [Badge link: Brownie, Painting]
* Find out about Australia’s unique animals, share what you have found out with your unit, friends or family.
* Make a Boomerang, Rain Stick or Didgeridoo.
* Talk to a friend or relative who lives in or has been to Australia; find out what is different about life in Australia compared to the UK.
* Make Anzac biscuits. [Badge link: Guide, Confectionary]
* Cook an Australian themed meal.

## Soyal – native Zuni and Hopi tribes of North America (winter solstice):

[*This*](https://hraf.yale.edu/winter-solstice-celebrations-around-the-world/) *celebration focuses on the return of the sun after the longest night of the year. Ceremonies during the celebration signify bringing the sun back to illuminate the earth, and the entire Soyal lasts for 16 days.*

*Traditional dances done in masks and costumes, along with songs and prayers, are performed to welcome the kachinas, or beneficial spirits that visit people during this time. Gifts, feasting, and traditional cultural stories add to the celebratory atmosphere.*

* Make a sun mask.
* Make shadow puppets / hand shadow puppets and perform a puppet show. [Badge link: Brownie, Performing]
* Make a sun dial or shadow clock.
* Do some star and/or moon gazing. For more information use a stargazing app, such as Sky Map. [Badge link: Brownie, Space]
* Make up a song or poem about the sun and perform it to an audience. [Badge link: Brownie, Performing]
* Hold a sun-inspired ‘feast’ and celebrate all the things we love about the sun.
* Learn about Sun spots (badge link).

## Malanka – Ukraine (mid-January):

*This New Year street festival has been compared to Mardi Gras for its rowdy and masquerade-like traditions.*

*To celebrate, people wear*[*elaborate costumes*](https://www.nationalgeographic.com/news/2016/01/160120-ukraine-malanka-festival-costumes-new-year/)*modelled after bears, goats, and more, and parade through the town while singing, dancing, and performing skits. Between the feasts and costume preparation, this holiday can bring a whole village together.*

*The celebration is heavy on symbolism and humour and loosely tied around kicking off the spring season.*

* Design and make a celebration costume. [Badge link: Rainbow, Drawing]
* Sing a song about an animal (bear, goat, etc) and make up a dance.
* Make some streamers.
* Find out about different types of bear, share what you have found out with your unit, family or friends.
* Hold a joke night / open mike session. [Badge link: Brownie, Performing]
* Find out about traditional Ukrainian food and hold a Malanka-inspired feast. [Badge link: Guide, Conscious Consumer].

*Theme:* **Winter Walk**

*This can be a chilly time of year, but it’s lovely to get out into the cold, and frosty days can be very beautiful. It’s especially good to come home again to the warmth!*

*Go for a walk outside and choose at least two activities to complete:*

* Devise a menu of treats that would keep you warm in the woods. How will you keep the food warm if you are having hot things? Test them out on your walk. [Badge link: Guide, Fitness and Conscious Consumer]
* Play ‘pooh sticks’. There is often more water in streams and rivers in winter, so take advantage and see how fast your sticks can go!
* Collect some sticks, leaves and pine cones (or whatever you can find), use these to create a nature mobile or scavenging stick.
* Create a winter walk picture – if it’s snowy, frosty or muddy you could use your footprints, if it’s dry try creating some ‘woodland art’ with twigs, moss and leaves.
* This is a great time of year for taking photos, especially when the sun is low in the sky; take a series of photographs with a winter theme. [Badge link: Rainbow, Nature; Guide, Photography]
* Make some hot chocolate to warm up when you come inside from your walk. Why not try using some different and interesting flavours or unusual toppings?
* Devise a geocache. Create, hide and register your own cache. [Badge link: Guide, Geocache]

*Theme:* **Wildlife in Winter**

*Winter is a difficult time for the wildlife as it is harder than usual for birds and animals to find food. Some curl up and hibernate – what a great idea! Find out more and maybe give them a helping hand?*

*Choose at least two activities to complete:*

* Register with, and take part in, the RSPB Big Garden Bird Watch (29-31 January).
* Make a bird feeder.
* Find out which animals hibernate; imagine you are going to hibernate for the winter! Make a cosy den, decorate it and fill it with things you might need. (For older members, research the meaning of ‘hygge’ and create a hygge atmosphere at home.) [Badge link: Rainbows, Construction]
* Create a small pond or bird bath that is accessible for birds and other wildlife. Fill it with water, but don’t forget to keep an eye out in case it freezes!
* Find out about plants that flower in colder weather, which provide valuable nectar for insects that come out of hibernation on warmer days.
* Make a bird box, bug hotel or hedgehog house, which you can put in your garden in the spring. With luck by next winter these will have owners! [Skills builder links]

*Theme:* **Have an ‘ice’ time!**

*Winter is the perfect time to use the cold weather in both art and science. You may need to head outside to complete some of these activities, so wrap up warm!*

*Choose at least two of these activities to complete:*

* Blow bubbles when it’s chilly and watch them freeze before they pop.
* Make ice cream using plastic bags.
* Icy experiments; see how many ice cubes you can stick together (tip: use some salt) and test how quickly ice cubes melt on different surfaces.
* Build a mini igloo using ice cubes.
* Freeze water in old juice cartons then use your imagination using salt and food colouring for some impressively creative results.
* Make an ice lantern or ice mobile.