

# Online holiday fun for kids

November 26, 2011

With the Black Friday shopping weekend in full swing you might be wondering how to keep your kidlings occupied. My suggestion is to let a bit of technology entertain the little nippers. There are all sorts of holiday websites that will delight and amuse children of all ages.

One of my favorite sites is How Stuff Works. The Christmas page ([www.howstuffworks.com/culture-traditions/holidays/christmas.htm](http://www.howstuffworks.com/culture-traditions/holidays/christmas.htm)) tells all about Christmas history and traditions. There are also pages for Hanukkah and Kwanza if you want your kids to have a bit of cross-cultural education.

If the little gremlins grumble about being educated on their free time, you might point out that this is the season where being nice is better than being naughty. This is where the Nice-O-Meter might come into play ([www.claus.com/naughtyornice/index.php.htm](http://www.claus.com/naughtyornice/index.php.htm)). With a simple click your child gets rated. Not only that, ratings come with suggestions of things he or she can do to im-

prove their "nice" score.

Speaking of keeping score, there are a couple of sites that test holiday knowledge. One is the Christmas Quiz at the Brownielocks site ([www.brownielocks.com/Quiz.html](http://www.brownielocks.com/Quiz.html)). Some of the questions are easy, like "In Jingle Bell Rock where is everyone prancing and dancing?" Answer: Jingle Bell Square. Other questions take some thought: "What does Advent mean?" Answer: coming.

Another quiz tests knowledge of the popular television show "A Charlie Brown Christmas." This is not as easy as it seems. For example, do you know what Lucy says she really wants for Christmas? Is it "fame" or "my fair share?" Neither, what she wants is "real estate."

Now, all this brain exercise might be fine for a



Neff  
Zone

Jim  
Neff

while, but what about something more hands-on? A site called Family Crafts (<http://familycrafts.about.com/>) has all sorts of things kids can make using common materials found around the home. Youngsters can find directions on how to make a soda pop can Santa, a dozen different Advent calendars, a pine cone angel and a whole lot more.

While all this quizzing, building, and learning are going on you might want to enliven the festivities by sprinkling in a few laughs. For this point your kids toward the Brownielocks Christmas Jokes page ([www.brownielocks.com/Christmas-Jokes.html](http://www.brownielocks.com/Christmas-Jokes.html)). There's nothing like a good, corny joke to spice up holiday hilarity. What do you get when you combine a rope and Dec. 24? (The Knot Before Christ-

mas.) How do Christmas trees keep their breath fresh? (They suck on an orna-mint.) What do vegetarians wish for at Christmas? (Peas on earth.) What did Adam say on the day before Christmas? (It's Christmas, Eve.) You get the idea.

Finally, if you want your kids to get into the spirit of the season by doing something nice for someone else, show them the Hunger Site ([www.thehungersite.com](http://www.thehungersite.com)). There's nothing to sign up for at this site and nothing to buy; you just click a button once a day and sponsors donate food to the hungry. Also linked to the Hunger Site are similar sites for animal rescue, fighting breast cancer, saving the rain forest and improving childhood health.

All of these websites and more are on a special web page that I've put together for the holidays at [www.neffzone.com/holidays.htm](http://www.neffzone.com/holidays.htm). I hope you and your family enjoy it.

**JIM NEFF** is a local columnist. Read Neff Zone columns online at [www.neffzone.com/cadillacnews](http://www.neffzone.com/cadillacnews).