



HOST A *POLAR EXPRESS* PAJAMA READING!

BEFORE THE EVENT:

Download a copy of the invitation flyer, reminding children to come wearing their pajamas.

(Whoever is reading the book might also want to wear their pajamas.)

Set up chairs in two rows like the seats of a train, and print out Polar Express train tickets.

Find a bell similar to the boy's bell in *The Polar Express*.

If you are hosting young children, print out and copy coloring & activity sheets and *Polar Express* bookmarks (click on Fun & Games on www.polarexpress.com to find these). Download *Polar Express* Reading Logs & Stationery

Think about refreshments (there are recipes for hot cocoa & chocolate bars in the **Fun & Games** section).

Let the fun begin!

Create train tickets. Invite the children to take a seat on the Polar Express and hand them their ticket. Just before the reading, you or a designated conductor can collect the tickets.

Dim the lights and call out "All Aboard the Polar Express," before you start the reading, inviting young readers into the magic of the story in an accessible, tangible way.

When the boy in the story receives the bell, take out your bell and show the students. When you read that only those who truly believe can hear the bell, ring the bell for the children and ask if they can hear it!

Serve refreshments—hot cocoa "as thick and rich as melted chocolate bars" and candy with nougat centers "as white as snow" will be a big hit! You could also give out cookies in the shape of trains. (Train-shaped cookie cutters are readily available.)

AFTER THE READING:

For older children, you might want to follow the reading with a discussion of the book. (There is a list called "Guiding Questions for a Polar Express Book Conversation" within the Polar Express Teacher's Guide. Visit the Teacher/Librarian page on www.polarexpress.com for teacher's guides.)

Ask the children if they have a possession that holds as much meaning for them as the boy's bell holds for him. Follow the read-aloud and book conversation with a share circle. Discuss how it is not just the objects themselves that we love, but it is the people and ideas that they represent or remind us of.

Invite the children to write about their special objects and what those objects represent. Give them *Polar Express* Stationery to write on.

Younger children may prefer to do an arts-and-crafts activity. Look in **Fun and Games** for the instructions: "How to Make a Reindeer." The materials for this craft are inexpensive and easily attainable.

The *Polar Express* Pajama Reading can be a great kickoff for a *Polar Express* Reading Celebration. Give each child a Reading Log to take home; they can advance on the track by reading or being read to for twenty minutes each night.

You might want to provide a goodie bag for children. This could include *Polar Express* bookmarks and coloring pages. You could also provide a bell for each child and a packet of hot chocolate.

May the bell still ring "for all who truly believe."

Visit the Polar Express site (www.polarexpress.com) and click on Fun and Games for more great ideas and materials.

Polar Express Party Nametags



Polar Express Party
Hello, my name is



Polar Express Party
Hello, my name is



Polar Express Party
Hello, my name is



Polar Express Party
Hello, my name is



Polar Express Party
Hello, my name is



Polar Express Party
Hello, my name is



Polar Express Party
Hello, my name is



Polar Express Party
Hello, my name is



Polar Express Party
Hello, my name is



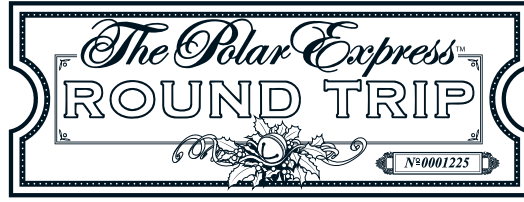
Polar Express Party
Hello, my name is



Polar Express Party
Hello, my name is



Polar Express Party
Hello, my name is



All Aboard the Polar Express!

Come to our *Polar Express* party. We'll have games, crafts, and, of course, a reading of *The Polar Express*. Bring your holiday cheer, and welcome aboard!

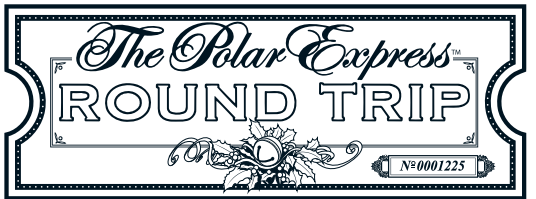
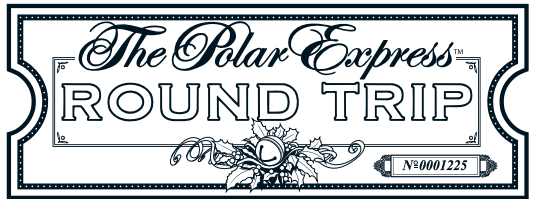
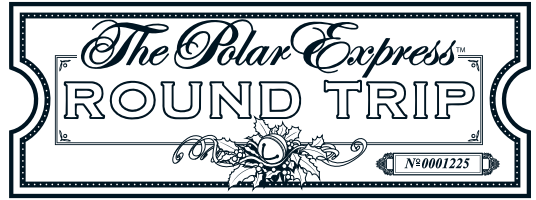
Date: _____

Time: _____

Place: _____

For more information: _____

Polar Express Train Tickets



The Polar Express Party Recipes



Polar Chocolate Nougat Caramel Squares

What you need:

- 1 cup flour
- 1/2 cup firmly packed light brown sugar
- 1/3 cup butter or margarine (room temperature)
- 5 candy bars—chocolate with nougat and caramel (hint: the initials are MW)
- 1/4 cup milk
- 2 eggs, slightly beaten
- 1 tsp. vanilla
- 2 tbs. flour
- 1/2 tsp. baking powder
- 1 can (3 1/2 oz.) blanched sliced almonds

How to make them:

1. Preheat oven to 350. Grease a 13 x 9 x 2-inch baking pan.
2. Combine 1 cup flour with the brown sugar in a medium-sized bowl. Mix in the butter until crumbly dough forms. Press dough into greased pan.
3. Bake for 12 minutes or until golden brown. Cool on wire rack.
4. Melt candy bars with milk in small saucepan over medium-low heat.
5. Cool the mixture slightly, then slowly add the eggs. (Beat constantly to keep from curdling.)
6. Add the vanilla, 2 tablespoons of flour, and the baking powder to the candy mixture, then pour every thing over the crust (which has been cooling on the rack). Sprinkle almonds on top.
7. Bake at 350 for 25 minutes or until the top is firm. Let cool. Cut into squares with a sharp knife.

Hot Chocolate-Bar Cocoa

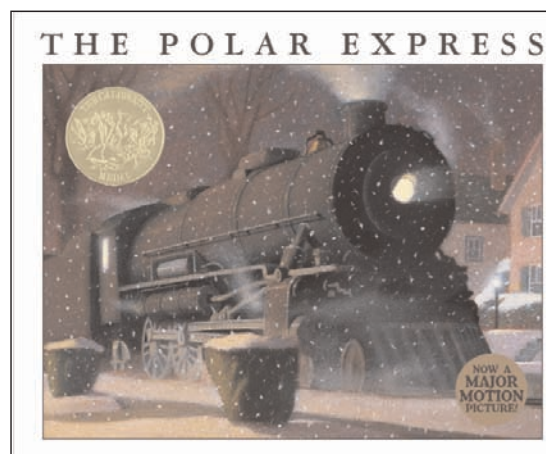
What you need:

- 2 egg yolks
- 2 ounces of a milk chocolate candy bar
- 1 cup of milk

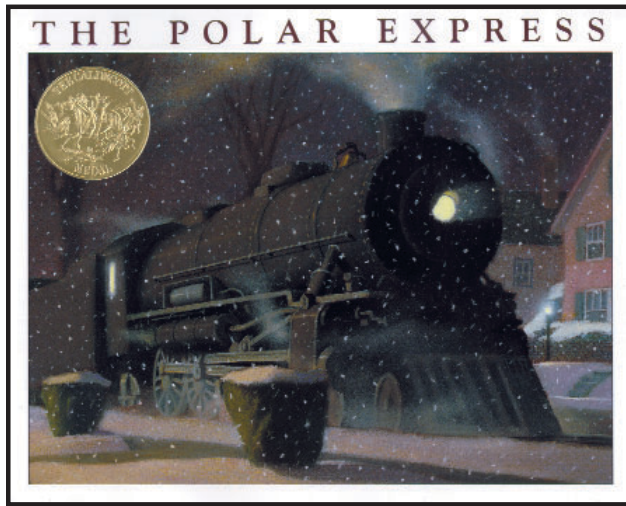
How to make it:

1. Beat the egg yolk in bowl and put aside.
2. Crush candy bar into a medium-size saucepan. Add the milk.
3. Melt over medium-low heat, stirring constantly.
4. Cool the mixture slightly.
5. Slowly fold in the egg yolks. (Be sure to stir constantly to keep from curdling.)
6. Continue heating and stirring until cocoa is hot throughout.

Top with a dollop of whipped cream or marshmallow fluff.



CHRIS VAN ALLSBURG—MORE BEST-SELLING BOOKS!



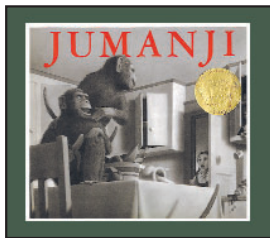
The Polar Express (1985)

ISBN 0-395-38949-6 \$18.95

10-copy Counter Display—Classic Book

ISBN 0-618-02561-8 • \$189.50

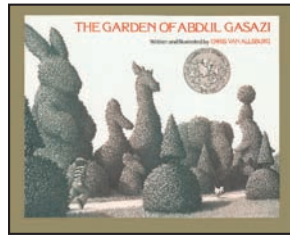
- Caldecott Medal winner, 1986
- 5 million copies sold worldwide
- New York Times Best Illustrated Book
- New York Times Bestseller



Jumanji (1981)

- Caldecott Medal winner
- 1995 blockbuster movie starring Robin Williams

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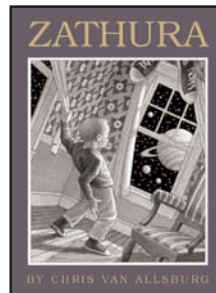
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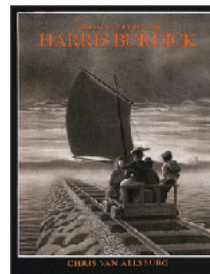
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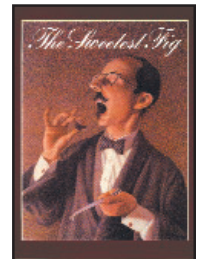
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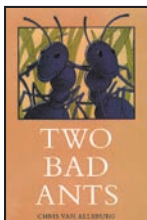
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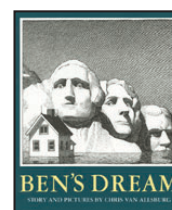
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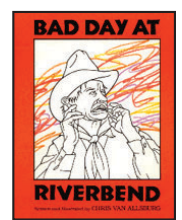
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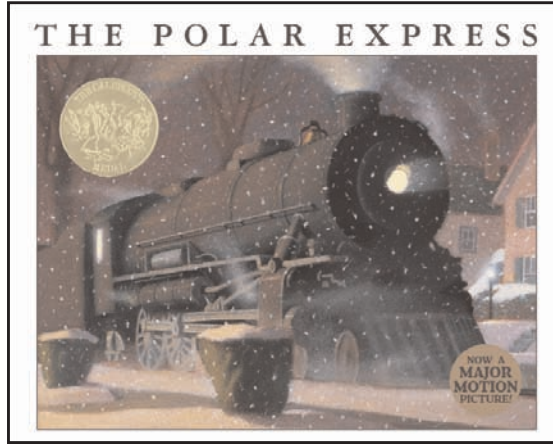
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THE POLAR EXPRESS BOOKS



The Polar Express (1985)

Written and illustrated by
CHRIS VAN ALLSBURG

The Polar Express has become a cherished holiday classic, with 5 million copies sold worldwide, and has solidified Chris Van Allsburg's place as America's most innovative contemporary storyteller.

11¹/₄ x 9 • 32 pages

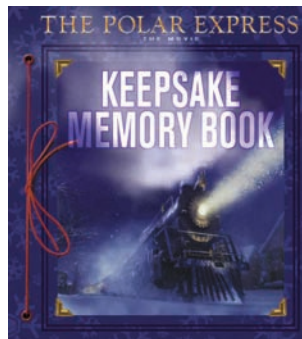
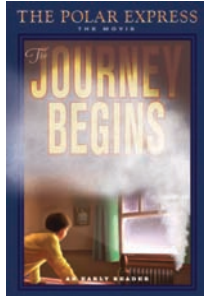
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with
full-color
poster



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For *Polar* fans who are just beginning to read on their own, this book starts readers on an incredible journey.

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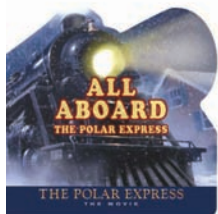
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This train-shaped board book brings the Polar Express to the youngest child.

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Written and illustrated by
CHRIS VAN ALLSBURG

Narrated by **LIAM NEESON**

The classic holiday favorite is now available in a newly designed gift package, featuring a dramatic reading by Liam Neeson (on both cassette and compact disk), a hardcover copy of *The Polar Express*, and a keepsake bell with ribbon.

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