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HAPPY EASTER

To: _____

From: _____

Background Information for Teachers and Parents



Easter

People have always celebrated the coming of spring, the time in the year when days finally grow longer than nights, animals and plants burst into life, and everything is new. Eggs are one kind of new life. In ancient Persia and Egypt, people found eggs and colored them to celebrate spring. Eggs also became a special gift from landlords to their tenants and parents to their children to celebrate the end of the Lenten fast. People held contests for rolling eggs, just as they do every Easter on the White House lawn in Washington, D.C.

New clothing is also part of springtime. People once believed that *not* wearing something new at spring festivals was very bad luck. Perhaps that's why many people liked to show off new clothes in a parade on Easter Sunday, which always comes within a week of the first full moon of spring. The Easter season is when Christians celebrate the resurrection of Christ. It is close to the time for Passover, when Jews celebrate the liberation of the Jews from Egypt. In Spanish this period in spring is called *Pascua*, which refers to the time of both the Christian

Easter and the Jewish Passover. The name Easter itself comes from the Teutonic goddess of spring, Eastra.

Nothing represents the new life of spring better than rabbits, which are a kind of hare. One legend tells of Eastra's friendship with a hare and how she eventually grew angry with him and banished him to the heavens where he became the constellation *Lepus*, but she also gave him the power, once a year, to lay eggs. Perhaps from this tale has sprung the Easter bunny, who regularly appears with a basketful of eggs and new spring flowers.

The Easter bunny made his first appearance about 500 years ago in Germany, and a couple of hundred years later he made his way to America along with the Pennsylvania Dutch. But Easter as we know it was not much celebrated in the United States until Civil War times, when it became a time for consoling those who had lost loved ones. A flower called the Bermuda lily became so common at such ceremonies that it became known everywhere as the Easter Lily.

Instructions for Assembling the Pop-Up Easter Card

Materials:

Copy of the pop-up Easter card printed or photocopied on 8 1/2" x 11" heavy white or yellow paper. 24 lb. works well.

Yellow, pink or pastel colored construction paper for the backing, 9" x 12" size.

Crayons or markers - Children can color the pictures and write names on the Easter cards.




Scissors with sharp points.

Glue stick or paste.

Ruler - Can be used as a straightedge to hold against the folding line when making folds.

After the children have colored the pictures, an adult or older children will need to handle the cutting and folding. Sharp pointed scissors are used to cut all of the heavy, solid lines, which are shown in blue on the pop-up card picture.

For pop-up pages, the folded lines are always of two kinds. The first kind is folded up like an A. This is a ridge fold like the ridge pole of a house. The second kind is folded down like a V. This is a gutter fold like a drainage gutter. The key below shows the A-Ridge fold as square red dots while the V-Gutter fold is shown as green rectangular dots.

-  Cutting Lines
-  Ridge Fold - Fold up like an A.
-  Gutter Fold - Fold down like a V.



When all the pop-up folds have been made, fold the construction paper in half to be used as the backing. Put a little paste around the edges on the back of the pop-up. A glue stick works well for this. Press the pop-up firmly against the backing. Carefully fold it all down flat and then open it to watch it POP-UP.

You can free hand cut the edge of the construction paper backing to follow the border at the top and bottom of the pop-up picture. See the cut border of the pop-up card on the left.

Since adult help is required, this is a good project for small groups or for older brothers and sisters in an after-school daycare center.

You can also use the Easter cards as a sample to devise your own pop-up projects.