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**Exam Study Hacks**  
**that Actually Work**

**Rekindling**  
**Relationships on**  
**Holiday Break**

**Preparing for the**  
**Holiday Break**



***Create Magic with Holiday Themes!***



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**DECEMBER MONTH LONG THEMES**

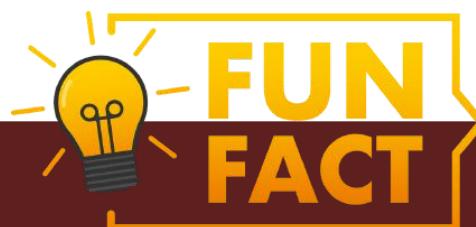
Daily Themes & Fun Days to Celebrate

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**SPREADING CHEER AND GIVING BACK: VOLUNTEER DURING THE HOLIDAYS**

# November Month Long Themes



## Drum Month

The oldest known drums used alligator skins stretched over hollow wooden frames. A variety of animal skins, including goat, cow, sheep, and calf, were used for drums in different cultures, each providing a unique sound. For example, goat skin on the West African djembe produces a sharp tone, while thicker cow hide creates a deeper, warmer sound.



# Is a Focus Group or Survey Right For You?

- International Drum Month
- Aviation History Month
- Model Railroad Month
- Novel Writing Month
- Peanut Butter Lovers Month
- Adoption Awareness Month
- Caregivers Appreciation Month

- Diabetes Awareness Month
- Real Jewelry Month
- Sleep Comfort Month
- Child Safety Protection Month
- Native American Heritage Month
- Epilepsy Month

## November Holidays & Observances Budget Friendly & Easy Events Themes



**Check out these days and use your  
Imagination to Create Fun**

# Daily Themes & Fun Ways to Celebrate



## November 1

### National Play Outside Day

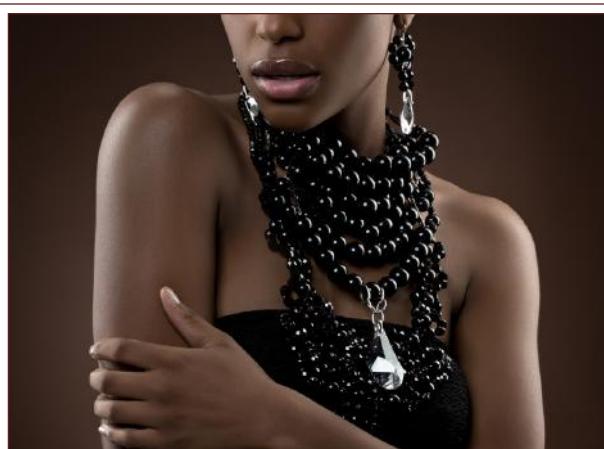
National Play Outside Day is a fantastic opportunity for people of all ages to unplug, connect with nature, and enjoy the great outdoors. Gather a group for a spirited game of Ultimate Frisbee. This fast-paced sport combines elements of soccer, basketball, and rugby, making it a fun and energetic way to spend time outdoors.



## November 2

### All Souls Day

All Souls' Day is a time to honor and remember loved ones who have passed away. Invite friends to bring poems, readings, or quotes that resonate with the spirit of All Souls Day. Spend time reading aloud and discussing the selections. This can spark meaningful conversations and help everyone feel more connected to the memories of their loved ones.



## November 3

### National Accessory Day

Celebrate the day with your girl group by doing an accessory show and tell. Have each person share the story behind their favorite accessory. Whether it's a cherished bracelet from a family member or a trendy hat picked up on a memorable trip, these stories can spark conversation and bring everyone closer.



## November 4

### National Candy Day

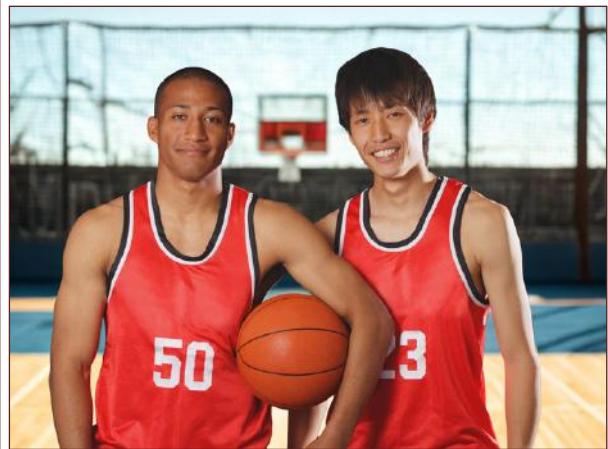
Get creative with some candy crafting activities. Gather supplies and let your artistic side shine by making candy necklaces or building candy sculptures. You could also decorate cookies or cupcakes with colorful candies and sprinkles.

# Daily Themes & Fun Ways to Celebrate



## November 5 Bonfire Night

It's a night filled with vibrant fireworks, flickering bonfires, and a unique sense of camaraderie. The bonfire is the centerpiece of the evening. Gather around the fire with friends to enjoy its warmth and the mesmerizing dance of the flames. It's a great time to reminisce, share stories, or simply relax and enjoy the company.



## November 6 National Basketball Day

One of the best ways to celebrate is by organizing a friendly basketball game. Depending on the number of friends, you can form teams and maybe even have a mini-tournament. Decide on game rules that everyone agrees on, keeping it fun and competitive.

**Tell us about your fun Campus Events! OREG is seeking to feature creative events in our eMagazine showcasing your fun events!**



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## November 7 Hug a Bear Day

Hug a Bear Day is widely recognized as a day to celebrate the warmth and comfort that comes from hugging a teddy bear. Curl up with your teddy bear and watch a series of bear-themed movies. Invite friends over for a movie night filled with laughter and nostalgia.

# Daily Themes & Fun Ways to Celebrate



## November 8 World Pianist Day

Consider organizing a gathering in a local park. Parks offer a natural and serene setting, perfect for enjoying music. Invite fellow pianists and music enthusiasts to join, creating a community atmosphere. Bring a portable keyboard or digital piano, which is easy to transport and set up outdoors.



## November 9 World Freedom Day

Encourage a thoughtful conversation by hosting a discussion circle. Begin by sharing short videos about the significance of World Freedom Day. Then, open the floor for everyone to share their thoughts, personal stories, or reflections on what freedom means to them.



## November 10 Vanilla Cupcake Day

Invite your friends to bring their favorite vanilla cupcake recipes. This will not only make for a diverse selection of treats but also create an opportunity for everyone to learn new baking techniques. Once the cupcakes are baked and decorated, take a moment to appreciate everyone's hard work.



## November 11 National Education Day

National Education Day is a perfect occasion to celebrate its role in shaping a better future. Engaging in discussions with peers about educational topics can be intellectually stimulating and socially rewarding. Join or form a book club or discussion group to explore various educational themes, share insights, and develop critical thinking skills.

# UNLOCK SUCCESS: EXAM STUDY HACKS

## THE ULTIMATE GUIDE TO SECRET STUDY TIPS FOR FINALS

When finals approach, the pressure can feel overwhelming. But what if you could unlock a treasure trove of unexpected tips—little-known tricks that make studying both effective and enjoyable? Get ready to dive into a collection of secret strategies that will help you prepare smarter, boost your memory, and even have a bit of fun along the way.

### 1. TRANSFORM YOUR STUDY SESSIONS INTO GAMES

Studying doesn't have to be a chore. Imagine turning your revision time into an exciting game, complete with challenges, rewards, and even a friendly competition or two. You could set up a points system for each chapter you master, or challenge your friends to see who can answer questions the fastest. Digital tools like flashcard apps let you create quizzes that make reviewing a playful adventure. The motivation to win can make even the toughest subjects memorable, and you'll soon find that learning and laughing can go hand-in-hand.



## 2. TEACH YOUR STUFFED ANIMAL OR PET

One incredibly effective way to reinforce your learning is by teaching what you've learned to someone—or something—else. Picture yourself standing in front of your stuffed bear, loyal pet, or even your own reflection in the mirror, explaining key concepts like a seasoned professor. This practice forces your mind to organize ideas clearly, strengthens your understanding, and quickly reveals any gaps in your knowledge. Plus, the act of speaking aloud can make dry material feel more lively, and you might even enjoy the quirky reactions from your “students.”



## 3. POWER-UP WITH SMART SNACKING

The foods you eat while studying can make a surprising difference in your ability to focus and remember information. Instead of reaching for sugary snacks or salty chips, keep a bowl of brain-boosting treats nearby. Blueberries, pieces of dark chocolate, and a handful of nuts are delicious options that can nourish your mind and keep you energized. For a secret memory trick, try chewing a specific flavor of gum while you study, and bring the same gum to the exam. The familiar taste can help cue your memory and boost recall right when you need it most.

## 4. REFRESH WITH MOVEMENT BREAKS

Staring at your notes for hours on end can leave you feeling foggy. That's why it's essential to take regular breaks that truly re-energize you. Instead of scrolling on your phone, try getting up and dancing to your favorite song, stretching, or even doing a few quick jumping jacks. Physical movement helps shake off fatigue, brings fresh oxygen to your brain, and sharpens your focus when you return to your books. After a few cycles of study and movement, reward yourself with a longer break like a walk outside or an episode of your favorite TV show.

## 5. CREATE A SECRET STUDY SANCTUARY

Sometimes, a change of scenery can work wonders for your motivation. Seek out a hidden corner in your library, a cozy café table by the window, or even transform your closet into a private nook with pillows and soft lighting. This special spot becomes your dedicated study hideaway, signaling to your brain that it's time to focus. The novelty of your "secret base" can add excitement to your routine and help you associate studying with a sense of adventure.



## 6. LET SLEEP WORK ITS MAGIC

A good night's sleep is more powerful than you might think. As you drift off, your brain is still hard at work, sorting through and solidifying what you've learned during the day. Reviewing difficult material right before bed can help you retain it more effectively, turning your nighttime rest into a secret weapon for academic success. Instead of pulling an all-nighter, trust in the power of restful sleep to help you wake up refreshed and ready for your exam.



## 7. SOUNDTRACK YOUR STUDIES WITH A FOCUS PLAYLIST

Music can do wonders for your concentration. Curate a special playlist filled with tunes that help you focus—maybe it's soothing classical melodies, steady lo-fi beats, or calming sounds of nature. Listening to the same playlist during both your study sessions and, if possible, while taking your exam can help trigger your recall and ease your nerves. The right soundtrack transforms your workspace into a zone of inspiration and productivity.

## 8. UNLEASH CREATIVITY WITH MIND MAPS

Traditional outlines can feel monotonous, but mind mapping brings a splash of creativity to your notes. Grab some colorful pens and start drawing connections between ideas, using doodles, arrows, and illustrations to show how concepts relate. This visual technique allows your brain to see the bigger picture, making complex topics easier to understand and remember. By transforming information into a vibrant, creative map, you'll find that studying can spark your imagination.

## CONCLUSION: MAKE YOUR FINALS LEGENDARY

Preparing for exams doesn't have to feel like a struggle. By adopting these secret tips and infusing a sense of joy, creativity, and play into your study routine, you'll be ready to shine when exam day arrives. Remember, the best strategies are often those that blend hard work with a dash of fun and a sprinkle of curiosity. So take these secrets, make them your own, and turn your next final exam into a legendary achievement.

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## Daily Themes & Fun Ways to Celebrate



**November 12**

### National Happy Hour Day

National Happy Hour Day is the perfect opportunity to unwind, catch up with friends, and enjoy some delicious beverages and snacks. Plan fun activities like trivia, board games, or karaoke. Use this day to strengthen bonds, share laughter, and enjoy the camaraderie that comes with good company.



**November 13**

### World Kindness Day

Encourage your friends to join you in a kindness challenge that extends beyond World Kindness Day. Set a goal to perform one act of kindness every day for a month. Share your experiences and reflections in a group chat or during weekly meet-ups to keep each other motivated.



**November 14**

### Children's Day

Spending time outdoors is a great way to enjoy Children's Day. Plan an adventure that will allow the kid in you to explore nature and have fun. Pack a picnic basket with healthy snacks and enjoy a day at the park. Organize a series of outdoor games such as sack races, tug-of-war, or a water balloon toss.

# Daily Themes & Fun Ways to Celebrate



## November 15 National Drummer Day

Check out local music venues or community events for any drumming performances happening on National Drummer Day. Attending a live performance can be a thrilling experience and a fantastic way to support local musicians.



## November 16 National Button Day

Gather your friends for a fun-filled crafting session that centers around buttons. Create necklaces, bracelets, or earrings using an assortment of colorful buttons. Provide your friends with tools like string, wire, and clasps to make their own unique pieces.



## November 17 Take a Hike Day

The perfect opportunity to lace up your boots, grab some friends, and hit the trails. Bring along a camera or smartphone to take pictures of the stunning scenery and special moments along the way. Hiking with friends is a great way to strengthen relationships. Encourage teamwork and support each other throughout the hike.



## November 18 National Princess Day

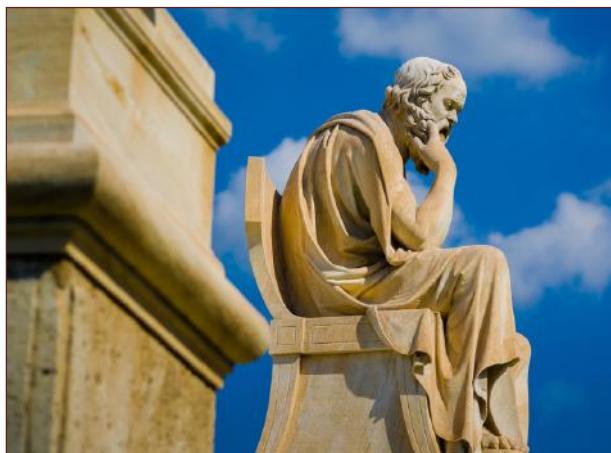
Invite your friends to dress up as their favorite princesses. You can even include a tiara craft station for a personal touch. These crafts can double as party favors that your friends can take home as a memento of the day. End the day with a cozy movie night featuring a selection of beloved princess films.

# Daily Themes & Fun Ways to Celebrate



## November 19 Play Monopoly Day

Monopoly Day is the perfect occasion to gather your friends and immerse yourselves in the classic board game that has been a staple of friendly (and sometimes competitive) gatherings for decades. Enjoy the fun and may the best tycoon win!



## November 20 National Philosophy Day

Choose a philosophical book or a collection of essays to read in advance and discuss together. Some accessible options might include: "Sophie's World" by Jostein Gaarder, "Meditations" by Marcus Aurelius, or "The Republic" by Plato.



## November 21 National Gingerbread Day

Host a gingerbread decorating contest. Supply an array of colorful icing, candies, and sprinkles. Let your friends unleash their creativity and award prizes for categories like "Most Creative" or "Best Overall Design." Encourage your friends to sample and discuss their favorite flavors.



## November 22 Love Your Freckles Day

Invite your friends over for a freckle-themed party. Decorate your space with playful and colorful designs that represent freckles. Set up a station where guests can use face paint or temporary tattoos to add freckles to their faces. Create a photo booth with props and signs that celebrate freckles.

# PREPARING FOR THE HOLIDAY BREAK



The holidays are quickly approaching, and for higher education students, that means swapping textbooks and lecture halls for festive gatherings, family catch-ups, and all the comforts of home. But before you can kick back and let someone else worry about dinner and laundry, there's an essential checklist to conquer. Here's your guide to everything you need to do before heading home for the holidays, ensuring your break is relaxing, enjoyable, and free from surprise disasters.

## WRAP UP ACADEMICS LIKE A PRO

Before you pack your bags, make sure you've finished all assignments ahead of schedule. Procrastination is the enemy of holiday cheer, so check your syllabus and online portals for any outstanding deadlines or final projects. If you're uncertain about anything, reach out to your professors now—they're often more accommodating before the holiday rush. Be sure to back up all your essays and notes to the cloud or an external drive, just in case your laptop gets misplaced or meets an unfortunate holiday accident.

## **TEND TO YOUR DORM OR APARTMENT**

Take a moment to clean out your fridge, tossing any perishables so you don't come back to unpleasant surprises. Make sure you empty all your trash bins to avoid returning to an impromptu science experiment. Unplug your electronics to save on energy and reduce any fire hazards, and lock up your valuables—or bring them with you if possible—for peace of mind while you're away.



## **PACK SMART—DON'T FORGET THE ESSENTIALS!**

When it's time to pack, remember to check your hometown weather and bring appropriate clothing. No one wants to face winter with only a pair of sandals! If you have exams after break, pack your study materials so you're not caught off guard in January. Double-check that you've packed all your chargers and electronics—there's nothing worse than a dead phone during travel. And if you're exchanging gifts, make sure you know where you've hidden them or have safely tucked them into your bag.

## **CONFIRM YOUR TRAVEL PLANS**

Secure your travel arrangements early since flights, trains, and buses fill up rapidly during the holidays. Coordinate rides with friends, roommates, or ride-sharing services for your trip to the airport or station—don't leave this until the last minute. It's also a good idea to check for any travel restrictions, especially if you're crossing state or country lines, and make sure you have all the required documents.

## **TIE UP LOOSE ENDS ON CAMPUS**

Return your library books to avoid late fees, and finish any club or work obligations before you leave. Check in with your instructors to ensure they need nothing from you and wish them a happy holiday.

If you know which courses you will be taking in the next semester, briefly connect with the instructors to build rapport.

Let your on-campus job or club leaders know your travel plans, and see if there's anything you need to wrap up. Don't forget to set your email away message for any organizations or work groups you're a part of, so everyone knows you're officially on break.

## GET IN THE HOLIDAY SPIRIT

Say goodbye to friends by planning a mini get-together, perhaps over coffee or holiday cards, before you part ways. For some extra fun, decorate your space with string lights or a small tree to make your last nights festive—just remember to tidy up your decorations before you head home.



## CONCLUSION: HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS, STRESS-FREE

With these steps checked off, you'll glide into the holiday season feeling organized and at ease. Not only will you sidestep the pitfalls of college life—no more moldy leftovers or missed deadlines—but you'll be perfectly poised to savor every moment with loved ones. Happy holidays and enjoy your well-deserved break!

# Daily Themes & Fun Ways to Celebrate



## November 23 Stir-Up Sunday

On Stir-Up Sunday, everyone gathers around to take turns stirring the pudding mix. Tradition dictates that each person should stir from east to west to honor the journey of the Magi. As they stir, invite your friends to make a wish for the coming year.



## November 24 Celebrate Your Talent Day

Collaborate on a group project that combines all your talents. For example, you could create a short film, put together a music video, or even write and perform a short play. This can be a fun and rewarding experience that strengthens friendships and showcases everyone's skills.



## November 25 Shopping Reminder Day

Turn shopping into a game by creating a scavenger hunt with specific items to find. See who can find the most unique item or the best deal. Once your shopping spree is complete, unwind with a cup of tea or coffee at a cozy café.

# Housing Professionals share with your Resident and Community Assistants



# Daily Themes & Fun Ways to Celebrate



## November 26 National Jukebox Day

National Jukebox Day, celebrated on the day before Thanksgiving, to enjoy the spirit of music and nostalgia with family. Encourage everyone to dress in their favorite retro styles. Host a dance competition with different rounds for each musical decade. Award fun prizes for the most enthusiastic or creative dancers.



## November 27 Thanksgiving

Thanksgiving offers a wonderful opportunity to engage with family traditions. Help out to prepare a classic dish like turkey, stuffing, or pumpkin pie, or participating in a time-honored family ritual, embracing these customs can strengthen familial bonds.



## November 28 Black Friday

Black Friday, the day following Thanksgiving in the United States, has become a cultural phenomenon, which traditionally marks the beginning of the holiday shopping season. Bond with the family while hunting for deals and finding the perfect gift at a discounted price or simply enjoying the crazy chaos of holiday shopping!



## November 29 National Chocolates Day

Gather your family in the kitchen for a chocolate-themed baking session. Choose a few recipes that everyone can contribute to, such as chocolate chip cookies, brownies, or a rich chocolate cake. Assign tasks based on everyone's skills—whether it's mixing, decorating, or taste-testing, there's something for everyone to enjoy.

# Daily Themes & Fun Ways to Celebrate



**November 30**

## National Personal Space Day

Celebrate National Personal Space Day by creating a personal space sanctuary. Transform a corner of your room into a personal sanctuary. Decorate it with things that make you feel comfortable and relaxed, such as soft pillows, favorite books, or calming lights. This space serves as a retreat when you need some time alone.

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## Student Success Portal



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Share your unique stories with us, and you could see them published in our newsletter. The *most captivating tales of summer 2025* will be featured, and the authors will win fantastic prizes for the best article.

Every submission will be carefully reviewed by a panel of judges so make your story unforgettable!

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## Summer Adventure Contest Share Your Exciting Summer Stories!

# WHY FOCUS GROUPS ARE CRITICAL TO OPTIMIZING HIGHER ED OUTCOMES?

## IDENTIFYING OPPORTUNITIES TO CREATE LASTING VALUE

In today's rapidly changing higher education environment, understanding the authentic perspectives of students, faculty, staff, alumni, and community partners is more important than ever. As institutions navigate enrollment shifts, evolving expectations, and the need for inclusive, data-informed decisions, one powerful tool stands out: the **focus group**.

When conducted by an **independent third-party company**, focus groups provide higher education leaders with the unbiased, credible insights needed to strengthen strategy, culture, and student success.



## DISCOVERING THE “WHY” DRIVING OUTCOMES

Surveys can tell us what people think, but not why they think it. Focus groups go beyond surface-level data by creating space for participants to explain their reasoning, feelings, and experiences. When people are asked to elaborate in a moderated, small-group setting, researchers can uncover the motivations, and values that drive behaviors on important issues. This insight helps leaders, institutions, and policymakers shape messages and strategies that are both informed and empathetic.



## PROFESSIONAL CONSULTANTS ENCOURAGE HONEST AND CANDID FEEDBACK

In Higher Ed institutions power dynamics can unintentionally shape what people are willing to say. Students may fear that criticism could affect their academic standing, while faculty and staff might hesitate to share concerns with senior leadership present.

When conducted by **independent, neutral facilitators**, focus groups allow participants to speak openly without fear of judgment or backlash. This independence is crucial in during sensitive discussions—especially if mistrust is high. A third-party moderator ensures objectivity and confidentiality.

An independent facilitator creates a neutral environment where participants feel safe to speak freely and confidentially. This psychological safety leads to honest, meaningful feedback – often revealing insights that internal teams would never hear directly. The result is more authentic feedback and greater credibility in the findings.

## **BENEFITS AND ENHANCES CREDIBILITY AND OBJECTIVITY**

When results come from an internal committee or office, stakeholders may question whether the findings reflect bias or institutional politics. Independent third-party facilitation removes that concern.

Data collected and analyzed by a neutral expert carries greater weight with boards of trustees, accreditors, and external partners. Leaders can present findings with confidence, knowing they reflect authentic campus voices rather than filtered or biased narratives.

## **PROFESSIONALS REDUCE BIAS IN RESEARCH DESIGN AND INTERPRETATION**

Even the most well-intentioned internal teams can introduce bias – through question wording, facilitation style, or selective interpretation of results. Third-party researchers apply professional methodologies to ensure neutrality throughout the process.

They design balanced discussion guides, manage group dynamics objectively, and analyze data using evidence-based frameworks. This rigor transforms anecdotal comments into reliable, actionable themes that can guide policy and program development.



## BENEFITS TO THE LEADERSHIP

### INFORMED STRATEGIC PLANNING AND INSTITUTIONAL IMPROVEMENT

Independent focus groups are particularly valuable during times of transition – such as leadership changes, accreditation reviews, or strategic planning cycles. They provide insight into campus culture, communication effectiveness, student belonging, or faculty engagement.

Because the findings are independent, they serve as a credible foundation for institutional decisions and improvement plans, demonstrating to stakeholders that leadership values transparency and evidence-based action.



## BUILDS TRUST ACROSS THE COMMUNITY

When stakeholders and participants know their feedback is being collected and analyzed by an impartial third party, it builds trust in both the process and the administration. This trust increases participation and strengthens the culture of shared governance.

It signals that leadership not only listens – but listens objectively. That credibility is essential for uniting diverse voices behind institutional goals.



## PROVIDES ACTIONABLE, STRATEGIC INSIGHTS

Independent facilitators don't just summarize what people said — they help interpret what it means for the institution's mission, operations, and student outcomes. Their reports distill complex discussions into clear recommendations aligned with institutional priorities, helping leaders translate feedback into measurable progress.

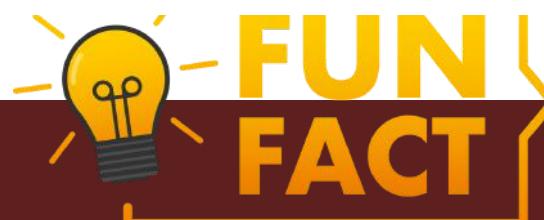
## CONCLUSION

Listening is a powerful strategy. For policymakers, educators, and leaders, the insights from focus groups are invaluable. For higher education leadership, an independent third-party focus group is not simply a research exercise — it's a strategic investment in trust, transparency, and truth.

By creating space for authentic dialogue, eliminating bias, and ensuring data integrity, these focus groups deliver insights that empower leaders to make informed decisions, foster campus unity, and strengthen institutional effectiveness.

By creating space for authentic dialogue, eliminating bias, and ensuring data integrity, these focus groups deliver insights that empower leaders to make informed decisions, foster campus unity, and strengthen institutional effectiveness.

# December Month Long Themes



## Snow Flake Day

Did you know? Snow doesn't just chill the world around it—it can actually keep you warm! Because snow traps a lot of air, it acts like a cozy blanket, insulating you from the icy winds. That's why igloos and snow caves make surprisingly snug shelters in frigid places!

- Art and Architecture Month
- Bingo Month
- Human Rights Month
- Write a Friend Month

- Read a New Book Month
- Made in America Month
- National Fruitcake Month
- Food Service Safety Month

# December Holidays & Observances

## Budget Friendly & Easy Events Themes



SUBSCRIBE

Check out these days and use your Imagination to Create Fun

## Daily Themes & Fun Ways to Celebrate



### December 1 Christmas Lights Day

Make the most of this festive day with your friends by, if the weather permits, consider a walking tour to fully enjoy the displays and take memorable photos. Encourage everyone to capture their favorite displays and share them on social media with a festive hashtag.

# Daily Themes & Fun Ways to Celebrate



## December 2 World Trick Shot Day

Start by organizing the day around the central theme of trick shots. Start with some easy trick shots to warm up. This could be simple basketball shots or easy bottle flips. End with a bang by attempting truly challenging shots. Think half-court shots or intricate setups involving multiple steps and props.



## December 3 Make a Gift Day

Invite your friends over for a fun and festive gift-making party. Set up different crafting stations with all the necessary supplies. Use this day to make gifts not only for each other but also for those in need. Consider creating care packages for local shelters or nursing homes. Let's spread joy and kindness in your community.



## December 4 National Sock Day

Embrace the spirit of giving by organizing a sock donation drive. Encourage friends to bring new socks to donate to a local shelter or charity. Socks are one of the most needed items for those experiencing homelessness, and your contribution can make a significant difference.



## December 5 International Ninja Day

Invite your friends over for a ninja-themed costume party. Encourage everyone to dress in their best ninja attire, complete with masks, black clothing, and props like foam swords. Host a movie marathon featuring classic ninja films. Prepare themed foods, such as "shuriken" shaped cookies or "ninja punch," to enjoy while watching.

# Daily Themes & Fun Ways to Celebrate



## December 6

### St. Nicholas Day

Traditionally, this day involves giving small gifts, symbolizing the spirit of giving and kindness. A gift exchange among your peers is a fun and heartwarming way to celebrate. Encourage creativity with quirky and fun gifts that can be swapped during the event. Each person draws a name and buys a thoughtful gift for that friend.



## December 7

### National Cotton Candy Day

Gather with friends and enjoy a whimsical day filled with fun, laughter, and, of course, cotton candy. Get creative with some cotton candy-themed crafts. You could make cotton candy bath bombs, scented candles, or even paint cotton candy-inspired artwork. So, grab your cotton candy, and let the festivities begin!

**Tell us about your fun Campus Events! And we'll feature you on our monthly journal!**



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## December 8

### National Crossword Day

Invite your friends over for an evening of crossword-solving fun. Set the scene with crossword-themed decorations. Serve snacks and drinks with crossword-related names like “Puzzle Pretzels.” Provide a variety of crossword puzzles ranging from easy to challenging, so everyone can participate regardless of their skill level.

# REKINDLING RELATIONSHIPS ON HOLIDAY BREAK



The semester winds down, finals are finally in the rearview, and suddenly, you're hugging your family at the front door with a suitcase in one hand and a list of holiday foods you've missed in the other. For college students, the holidays aren't just a break—they're a magical window to reunite with loved ones, relive old traditions, and catch up on all that's changed. Ready to make your time at home truly memorable? Here's how to reconnect in ways that will have you laughing, reminiscing, and forging even stronger bonds.

## WHY RECONNECTING IS THE REAL GIFT

College transforms us, sometimes in big, unexpected ways. Between all-nighters, new friends, and campus adventures, it's easy for life at home to fade a little into the background.



But coming back for the holidays is your chance to bridge that gap, to show your growth, and to rediscover the people who know you best. When you reconnect, you're not just catching up—you're building a support system and deepening the roots that keep you grounded.

## **FUN WAYS TO RECONNECT WITH FAMILY**

- roommates, unusual classes, or campus pranks. Let them laugh with you, offer advice, and maybe even share a few stories of their own.
- Get Creative with Family Traditions
- Does your family always bake cookies or decorate the tree? Bring in some new twists! Try a bake-off, introduce your roommates' favorite recipe, or make a gingerbread house more structurally questionable than your first-year dorm.
- Pitch In and Have Fun
- Help with the holiday hustle—wrapping gifts, setting the table, or untangling those impossible lights. Working together sparks spontaneous conversations and inside jokes.
- Seek Out One-on-One Moments
- Go for coffee with a sibling or take a walk with a parent. These small, private moments can lead to big, meaningful conversations you'll remember long after break is over.

## **REUNITING WITH FRIENDS: MAKE EVERY MINUTE COUNT**

- Host a Mini-Reunion
- Organize a movie marathon, holiday brunch, or game night. Invite friends from high school, your old neighborhood, or even that one friend you only see during winter break.
- Embrace the Changes

- You and your friends have grown—celebrate that! Swap stories about new adventures, new interests, and how you’ve changed. Be open, honest, and a little vulnerable.
- Rekindle Old Connections
- Is there someone you haven’t talked to in ages? The holidays are perfect for reviving friendships with a simple message or spontaneous invite. Most people are thrilled you reached out.

## BALANCE, BOUNDARIES, AND BEING PRESENT

The holiday calendar fills up fast—with family dinners, friend hangouts, and maybe a bit of quiet me-time. Don’t stress if you can’t do it all. Set boundaries, listen to your needs, and focus on being present wherever you are. A heartfelt conversation means more than a dozen distracted get-togethers.

## MAKE HOLIDAY MEMORIES THAT STICK

Think of this holiday as your chance to create stories you’ll tell for years—whether you’re caught in a snowball fight, losing to your aunt at board games, or having a late-night heart-to-heart. These are the moments that make coming home so special, and they’ll carry you back to campus feeling happier and more connected.

## CONCLUSION

Your holiday break is a gift: a pause from the whirlwind of college life and a doorway back to the people and places that helped shape you. Dive into family traditions, rekindle old friendships, and savor every laugh and story.

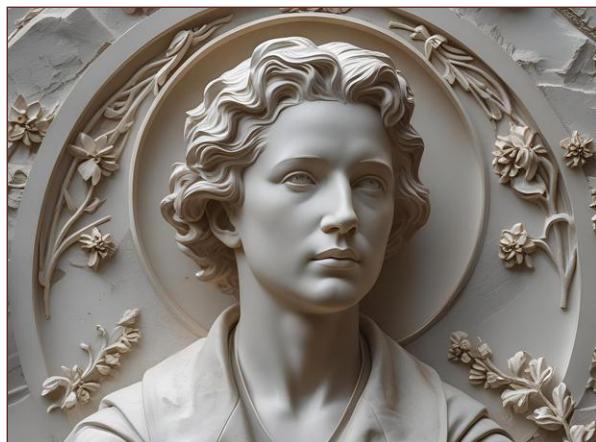


# Daily Themes & Fun Ways to Celebrate



## December 9 World Techno Day

This day provides the perfect excuse to dive into the pulsating beats and innovative sounds that define techno music. If any of your friends are aspiring DJs, consider hosting a live DJ session. This adds a personal touch and keeps the energy high with real-time mixing.



## December 10 Nobel Prize Day

Engage in activities inspired by the different Nobel Prize categories. Conduct simple experiments related to physics or chemistry. Host a meditation or yoga session to honor the Peace Prize. Play board games that involve strategy and economics, such as Monopoly or Settlers of Catan.



## December 11 Christmas Jumper Day

Encourage your friends to wear their most creative Christmas jumpers. Have a “Best Jumper Contest” to add a fun competitive edge. Categories might include the most festive or the funniest jumper. Set up a mini runway and let everyone strut their stuff. Have a panel of judges or let everyone vote for their favorites.



## December 12 National Salesperson Day

Organize a sales game where participants role-play as salespeople. This activity can help develop skills and offer insights into the challenges and strategies of selling. You can set up different scenarios, such as selling a new gadget, a fashion item, or even an innovative service. Have a friendly competition, who can sell the most!

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## Daily Themes & Fun Ways to Celebrate



### December 13 Day of the Horse

One of the best ways to celebrate the Day of the Horse is by spending time with horses themselves. Consider organizing a group horseback riding trip. Whether you choose a scenic trail ride through the countryside or a guided tour at a local equestrian center, this activity is sure to create lasting memories.



### December 14 World Choral Day

Gather your friends and organize a choral sing-along. You can choose popular choral pieces or even holiday songs if you're in the festive spirit. Make sure to provide sheet music or lyrics for everyone to follow along. Sing to your neighbors, in a local community center, or even a nearby park, weather permitting for the pure joy of singing.



### December 15 Wear Your Pearls Day

Invite your friends to wear pearls as part of their ensemble. Whether it's a classic necklace, earrings, or even a pearl-studded accessory, this dress code will add a touch of elegance to the event. Set up a crafting station where guests can create their own pearl accessories.

# Daily Themes & Fun Ways to Celebrate



## December 16 Toy Day

Toy Day is a delightful occasion that brings friends together to celebrate the joy of play and creativity. Encourage everyone to bring a toy they're willing to exchange. This activity is not only fun but also fosters a spirit of generosity and sharing among friends.



## December 17 National Device Day

Gather your gamer friends and dive into an epic gaming marathon. Whether you prefer console, PC, or mobile games, make sure to have a variety of options available. Set up multiple gaming stations so everyone can join in the fun. Consider hosting friendly competitions with prizes for the winners to add an extra layer of excitement.



## December 18 Snow Flake Day

If there's snow on the ground, head to a local hill for some sledding or snow tubing. It's a fun, exhilarating way to enjoy the winter weather. Visit a nearby ice rink or frozen pond for some skating. It's an activity that can be enjoyed by all skill levels. Bundle up and take a scenic hike through a nearby park or nature reserve.



## December 19 National Emo Day

This day is all about self-expression, emotional honesty, and connecting with peers who share similar interests in music, fashion, and art. Form discussion circles to talk about what emo means to each person, encourage attendees to share personal stories, memories, or experiences that relate to the emo lifestyle.

# SPREADING CHEER AND GIVING BACK: HOLIDAY EVENTS AND VOLUNTEERING FOR COLLEGE STUDENTS

The holiday season is a time of joy, celebration, and reflection—and for college students, it's also an opportunity to engage in meaningful activities and give back to the community. From festive campus events to impactful volunteering opportunities, there are countless ways for students to make the most of the holidays while fostering a sense of connection and purpose.

## CAMPUS HOLIDAY EVENTS: BRINGING THE FESTIVE SPIRIT TO LIFE

College campuses come alive with holiday cheer during the winter months. Many universities and student organizations host a variety of events that encourage students to unwind, socialize, and embrace the holiday spirit. These events often include:



- **Holiday Markets and Fairs:** Student-run markets featuring local crafts, baked goods, and holiday gifts—perfect for picking up unique presents while supporting small businesses and student entrepreneurs.
- **Themed Movie Nights:** Cozy screenings of classic holiday films like Home Alone or Elf, complete with hot cocoa and popcorn.



- **Holiday-Themed Dances and Parties:** From winter formals to ugly sweater contests, these events provide a fun way for students to celebrate with friends.
- **Crafting and Decorating Workshops:** Creative workshops where students can make ornaments, wreaths, or holiday cards to send to loved ones or residents in local care facilities.
- **Campus Light Displays and Tree Lightings:** Many campuses host tree lighting ceremonies or holiday light displays that transform the grounds into a winter wonderland.



These events offer a welcome break from the demands of finals and exams, giving students a chance to recharge and create lasting memories.

## **HOLIDAY VOLUNTEERING AND SERVICE: THE GIFT OF GIVING BACK**

The holidays are also a time for giving back, and many college students look for ways to serve their communities during this season of generosity. Here are some popular avenues for holiday volunteering:



- **Food Drives and Meal Programs:** Student groups often organize food drives or partner with local food banks and soup kitchens to provide meals to those in need.
- **Toy Drives and Gift Wrapping Events:** Many campuses collect toys and gifts for underprivileged children or volunteer to wrap gifts for local charities.
- **Visiting Seniors or Children's Hospitals:** Students can volunteer to bring holiday cheer to seniors in nursing homes or young patients in hospitals by organizing visits, singing carols, or delivering handmade cards.
- **Charity Fundraisers and Runs:** From holiday-themed fun runs to bake sales, these events raise money for important causes and bring people together for a good purpose.

Not only do these activities help those in need, but they also foster empathy, leadership, and a sense of shared community among students.

## **CONCLUSION:**

The holiday season offers countless opportunities for college students to celebrate and make a difference. By participating in campus events and volunteering efforts, students can create joyful memories, form deeper connections with their peers, and contribute to their communities in meaningful ways. In the end, the greatest gift of the holidays is the spirit of giving back.

# Daily Themes & Fun Ways to Celebrate



## December 20 Go Caroling Day

Go Caroling Day is celebrated on December 20th, offering a unique opportunity for families to bond through music and shared experiences. Hold a few practice sessions with your family. This can be a great way to spend time with family and friends during the holiday and strengthen relationships and create lasting memories.



## December 21 World Snowboard Day

World Snowboard Day is a fantastic opportunity to celebrate the exhilarating sport of snowboarding with your family where you can find snow, at a park or nearby lodge. Enjoy a warm drink like hot cocoa, and make sure everyone stays hydrated. Use this time to share laughs, swap stories, and relax before and after hitting the slopes.



## December 22 National Cookie Day

Encourage each family member to pick a unique cookie recipe to bake. Turn the kitchen into a bustling hub of activity. Assign tasks to each family member, from mixing dough to decorating cookies. Baking together offers a perfect blend of teamwork and fun, and it's an opportunity to share family stories and traditions.



## December 23 Christmas Movie Day

Gathering with friends to enjoy a Christmas Movie Day is a wonderful way to celebrate the holiday season. Starting in the afternoon allows for plenty of movie watching, while an evening event might be cozier. Encourage everyone to wear Christmas sweaters, pajamas, or costumes for added fun.

# Daily Themes & Fun Ways to Celebrate



## December 24 National Eggnog Day

Eggnog Day offers more than just a tasty beverage; it's a chance to create lasting family traditions. Gather around the fireplace or a television for a holiday movie marathon, complete with cozy blankets and a warm mug of eggnog. Classics like "It's a Wonderful Life" or "Home Alone" are sure to get everyone in the festive spirit.



## December 25 Christmas Day

Gift-giving is a cherished Christmas tradition. For young adults, this can be a chance to show appreciation for family members. Consider personalized gifts or experiences, such as concert tickets or a homemade gift, to add a personal touch. Remember, it's the thought and effort that count, not the price tag.



## December 26 Day of Goodwill

Giving back is at the heart of the Day of Goodwill. Get together with your family and peers to volunteer at a local charity, organize a neighborhood cleanup, or visit a nearby retirement home. Not only does this spread goodwill, but it also strengthens your bond as you work together for a common cause.

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# Daily Themes & Fun Ways to Celebrate



## December 27

### National Leftovers Day

After the hustle and bustle of Christmas festivities, today offers a perfect opportunity to gather with family, relax, and savor the flavors of the holiday spread once more. In the spirit of the holiday season, consider sharing your leftovers with those in need. This act of kindness can make your National Leftovers Day celebration even more meaningful.



## December 28

### National Playing Card Day

National Playing Card Day is a fantastic opportunity to gather with your siblings and cousins to indulge in the simple pleasures of card games. Take a break from the games to share stories about your favorite card game experiences or any family traditions involving playing cards.



## December 29

### International Cello Day

International Cello Day is a delightful occasion to honor the beauty and versatility of the cello. Organize a music appreciation session where family members can share their favorite cello pieces. This exchange can introduce everyone to new music with the cello. Create a playlist of everyone's favorites to enjoy throughout the day.



## December 30

### National Bacon Day

Kick off the day with a hearty bacon breakfast. Encourage everyone in the family to contribute a dish or help with the cooking, making it a collaborative and interactive morning. Engage in some bacon-themed activities that don't involve eating. Try making bacon-scented candles or DIY bacon-themed T-shirts using fabric paint.

# Daily Themes & Fun Ways to Celebrate



## December 31 New Year's Eve

In the morning, find a quiet space to write your resolutions or goals for the coming year. Plan an outing later in the evening with your friends to attend a New Year's Eve events, such as fireworks, ball drop or private countdown parties. Share your visions for the new year with your party buddies while creating lasting lifetime fun and memories. Be Safe!!

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