Episode: “Snowflake Heartache”

Albie makes a mistake when cutting her paper snowflake. She wants to give up but decides to keep trying. It can be frustrating to mess up, but with some creativity, mistakes can become part of your art.

Activity

Materials:
• Coffee filters
• Scissors
• Washable markers
• Water
• Paintbrush
• Tray

Steps:
1. Watch “Snowflake Heartache,” and point out that Albie feels frustrated when she makes a mistake while cutting a paper snowflake. Notice how Albie finds a way to work her mistake into her artwork. Practice making your own paper snowflakes, knowing there will be lots of mis-snips and mistakes along the way!
2. Start by folding a coffee filter in half two times.
3. Show your child how to cut small shapes into the two folded ends of the coffee filter. Triangles are the easiest shape to cut and just take two quick snips. Try not to cut all the way through the coffee filter (but if you do, that’s okay! Keep practicing).
4. After cutting a few small shapes, unfold the coffee filter to reveal your snowflake. Notice how the shapes repeat on each side of the fold.
5. Once you have several snowflakes, use Tie-Dye Coffee Filter Snowflakes

Materials:
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No coffee filters at home? Regular paper is perfect for cutting snowflakes. Trace a bowl or plate on the paper and cut out the circle to use for your snowflake. Fold, cut and decorate with marker, crayon and stickers.
washable markers to decorate them. Try to use lots of ink and big, bold lines to fill up the snowflake.
6. On a tray, paint the colored coffee filters with water. The marker will dissolve and spread through the coffee filter, mixing into new colors and creating a magical tie-dye effect. Note that the color will become more vibrant as the coffee filter dries.

**Tips**

- As your child gets more comfortable with their scissor skills, try folding the coffee filter in half three or even four times to create a more detailed snowflake.
- If your child isn’t quite ready for scissors, collaborate by having the grown-up do the cutting and the child do the coloring and water painting.
- If your child is more interested in making tie-dye coffee filters than cutting snowflakes, flip the process and color and paint your coffee filter first. They can be cut into snowflakes later once they’re dry.
- Drawing on a wet coffee filter can ruin the marker, so make sure to have a wet and a dry station to keep them separate.
- Point out to your child how primary colors mix as the marker runs together. Red, yellow and blue are perfect colors to use if you want to limit the number of markers for this project.

**In this activity, your child:**

- Learned a new skill by making paper snowflakes
- Engaged their fine motor skills with scissors and folding
- Used marker and other materials in a new way

**Talk to your child! Conversation Starters:**

- Albie is frustrated when she makes a mistake cutting her snowflake. Did you make any mistakes while creating your own snowflake? What did you do when that happened?
- Albie wants to make a snowflake because her friend Loretta has never seen snow and can’t go outside. We see a memory of Loretta as a baby in the elevator. Share some memories of when your child was a baby, maybe even the first time they saw snow, the ocean or something else.
• When we’re cutting the snowflake or coloring it, we don’t quite know how it’s going to turn out until we unfold it or paint it. What parts of your snowflakes surprised you when they were unfolded or when you added water to the color?

**Keep Going!**

**Paint the Snow**
If you happen to have real snow outside, fill a tupperware container and bring the snow indoors. Use food coloring or watercolor paint to paint the snow a tie-dye rainbow of colors, watching the colors mix and run together.

**Paper Snowflake Chain**
Cut a “blizzard” of snowflakes and string them together into a chain to hang in your home. Compare the snowflakes’ shapes and patterns, pointing out that no two snowflakes are alike!

**Vocabulary**

*Mistake:* When you accidentally do something differently from how you tried to do it
*Symmetrical:* When shapes or designs are the same on both sides, like they are in a snowflake
More At-Home Activities
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**Children’s Books with Related Themes**
Check out these children’s books online or at your local library to continue exploring the concepts in this episode.

*No Two Alike* by Keith Baker  
Two birds explore a winter wonderland and discover how no two snowflakes, or anything in nature, are alike.

*Beautiful Oops* by Barney Saltzberg  
All the ways that mistakes are opportunities, from holes in your paper, to rips, snips or smudges, which can all be transformed into a beautiful oops.

*The Book of Mistakes* by Corinna Luyken  
Accidental splotches and blotches magically become part of this book’s illustrations right before your eyes.