

Make an IMBOLC Prediction

(and it's an Accurate, Up-to-Now Weather Station too!)

Imbolc is the first of three Spring Festivals, it is also the time when many people around us wait to for a chubby groundhog to come out of his home and tell us his prediction, for the end of Winter, by looking at or for his shadow! But since Imbolc actually comes the day before, the Groundhog makes himself known, we'll get our first spring prediction with our Imbolc Prediction Station.

You Will Need:

- A 4" x 4" (or so) Paper-Mache box (from your craft department) or a similar type cardboard box (like a gift card box)
- Crayons, Markers, Felt or paint to decorate your box (which will be your base)
- Yarn/Ribbon or String/Rope (2 feet should be plenty)
- 4 Plastic Straws with the bend in them (this project doesn't work as well with the straight straws)
- The Object: 1 small tumbled stone OR a piece of macaroni (maybe left over from my elemental necklace project)
- **PARENTS:** You will need to make four holes into the box/base with something sharp, NOT too big a hole, just big enough for the straws to snugly fit into to, I found a knitting needle works well – just be careful!
- ** Older children can use Craft dowels (no need to cut them) – though they can be a bit tricky to tie together.
- ** Anything can be used as the Object, as long as your four straws or dowels can support it.

Step 1:

Paint or decorate your box. If you are using a paper mache box with a lid, the lid should face down and the bottom of the box should face up, it will be the top of your base. (I recommend, but its not necessary, to glue the top in place with tacky glue AFTER punching the four corner holes in it.) If you are using felt on the top of your base, you need to punch the holes into the base first – before gluing it on, AND you must cut slits into the felt – It's very difficult to punch a hole through the felt and the box, without ruining the felt and maybe even your box.



Step 2:

PARENTS: mark out the four holes needed, one in each corner of the box (or at the outer corner points of a 3 3/4" – 4" square template).

Step 3:

Insert 1 straw into each hole, with the bend pointing up in the air. Once all 4 straws are in, tilt them all into the center so all the bends meet. The bent section of the straws should point to the outside of the box. Now, using a piece of string, wrap it around the bent over section of the straws. Wrap it tightly a couple of times and knot securely. Trim string as necessary.

Step 4:

Either tie a small rock to a piece of string (or string a bead or piece of macaroni to it). With the object lying in the on the top of the base, in the center, tie it to the top of the straw "pyramid" – bring the object to 1/2" – 1" above the base top, so it can swing freely. Knot tightly. Then bring that same piece of string down underneath and knot below the straw junction. Knot securely. Trim as necessary.

Project Complete!

For Your Imbolc Prediction: ... take your Prediction Station outside, clear of any shadows (like from buildings or trees) Does your Object have a Shadow???

If YES, your Object has a shadow.... 6 more weeks of winter

if NO, your Object has no shadow....it will be an early spring

IMPORTANT: Make a note in your journal or on your calendar of your prediction and check it in the Spring!

How was your prediction??

A Great Idea!! (to make this Summer, to be ready for next Winter)

As a family, construct a larger, more natural Prediction Station – Outside, maybe in or around your garden. Mark out a square section to use, than using four large sticks/branches.... place them into the ground at an angle, so they all meet in the middle. Use rope to secure the four sticks together at the top. Find a rock...or other object that can be supported by the large branches - to hang from the center (Or like maybe a Frisbee with a drilled hole in the center.. or a bunch of smaller twigs and branches).

Now this Prediction Station is also a Weather Station, here's how it works:

Take your Weather station outside for 1 minute, If your Object

is WET.....than it is Raining

is DRY.....than it is Sunny

is covered in Snow...than it is Snowing

was Swinging or Moving Outside....than it is Windy

Weather doesn't get more accurate and up-to-the-minute than that!!

This projects idea comes from a craft object I picked up some "20" years ago, as a gift for my grandfather. I had all but forgotten about it until my grandmother mentioned it a short while ago.

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