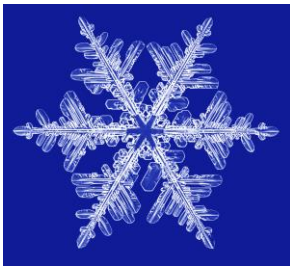# Greetings Everyone! Here is the Math Vitamin for the Week.
(Building Blocks, Weeks 17: Patterning, Core Units of Patterns, and Counting)

The Building Blocks curriculum invites children to discover and explore patterns they see in the world. In the classroom, it asks them to recognize, extend and duplicate linear patterns using a variety of materials and templates.   Children initially enjoy this work and frequently grasp the concept quickly. Then, they may become bored. Beyond creating more challenging pattern units (such as ABBC, ABBC), we can also introduce them to Radial Patterns.

Radial patterns are particular fun at this time of year, as they duplicate the pattern that we see in snowflakes (and throughout nature – think flowers and seashells)! They also are found in mandalas, mosques, and cathedrals, as well as other spaces designed by humans.

Radial patterns follow a simple set of rules. They:
1. Have a center point
2. Grow out from the center on radial axes
3. There can be any number of axes.

Here are some ideas and strategies for ways to start.

Fold a square or circular piece of paper to provide axis guidelines. Be sure to use heavy materials (tiles, glass gems, etc.) that will weigh down the folds.

Use a pattern block to mark the center. A square creates 4 axes, a hexagon creates 6. Try various pieces to see what happens.

Use colored tape to mark 4 axes on the floor and provide children with a variety of materials.

Create a group project in an open space. Invite 4 children to share a variety of large materials to create a collective design. (This is how many cultures create larger sand painting and mandalas). Invite the group to share and explain their work to the class.