

DECEMBER 3-17



The Musical

INSIDE THE GUIDE

SETTING THE STAGE

preparing for the play

Synopsis	3
About the Author	5
Recommended Reading	4
About Playwrite	4
Pre-Show Questions	5
Showtime Etiquette	5

FOR TEACHERS

Curriculum connections before or after the play

WHIMSICAL WILLIE.	6
classroom art activity	
SUMMING UP SNOWBALLS	7-9
classroom math activity	
MY PERFECT PET	10
classroom language arts activity	
GROWING UP	11
family resource	
PROP BOXES	12-13
teacher resource	
LETTER TO PETER	14
classroom language arts activity	
SNOW SCIENCE	15
classroom science activity	

CURTAIN CALL

Post-Show Questions	16
Who Said It?	15
Who Said it? (ANSWERS)	16



A NOTE TO TEACHERS AND PARENTS

ELF: THE MUSICAL

Dear Educators and Parents,

“The best way to spread Christmas cheer is singing loud for all to hear.” Buddy the Elf has spent his entire life at the North Pole. When he discovers that he is not really an elf, he sets off for New York City to find his true identity. Faced with the harsh reality that his real father is on the naughty list and his half-brother does not even believe in Santa, Buddy is determined to win over his new family and help New York remember the magic of Christmas. Based on the beloved 2003 holiday film, this Broadway holiday musical is sure to have everyone embracing their inner elf.

Enclosed in this enrichment guide is a range of materials and activities intended to help you discover connections within the play through the curricula. It is our hope that you will use the experience of attending the theater and seeing ELF: THE MUSICAL with your students as a teaching tool. As educators and parents, you know best the needs and abilities of your students. Use this guide to best serve your children—pick and choose, or adapt, any of these suggestions for discussions or activities. We encourage you to take advantage of the enclosed student worksheets—please feel free to photocopy the sheets for your students, or the entire guide for the benefit of other teachers.

Enjoy the show!

Julia Magnasco
Education Director
(414) 267-2971
Julia@firststage.org

First Stage Policies

- The use of recording equipment and cameras are not permitted during the performance.
- Food, drink, candy and gum are not permitted during the performance.
- Electronic devices are not permitted in the theater space.
- Should a student become ill, suffer an injury or have another problem, please escort him or her out of the theater space.
- In the unlikely event of a general emergency, the theater lights will go on and the stage manager will come on stage to inform the audience of the problem. Remain in your seats, visually locate the nearest exit and wait for the stage manager to guide your group from the theater.

Seating for people with special needs: If you have special seating needs for any student(s) and did not indicate your need when you ordered your tickets, please call our Assistant Patron Services Manager at (414) 267-2962. Our knowledge of your needs will enable us to serve you better upon your arrival to the theater.

SETTING THE STAGE SYNOPSIS

The story opens in the North Pole on Christmas Day where Santa sits in a recliner struggling with his TiVo box, which has recorded over a football game that he wanted to watch. Mrs. Claus announces that his in-laws will be arriving soon, which prompts Santa to read a Christmas Story: *The Story of Buddy the Elf*.

Buddy wakes up in the morning and sings about how much he loves his home ("Christmastown") as he makes his way to the toy shop for work. Charlie the Elf, who manages the workshop, announces that it is two weeks until Christmas. He also reveals that many humans around the world have lost the Christmas spirit. Christmas spirit powers Santa's new reindeer-less sleigh which means that the elves must do an excellent job to try and turn things around. Buddy struggles to keep up with the others, and calls himself the worst toy maker in the world and a "Cotton-Headed-Ninny-Muggins". The other elves try to cheer him up by bringing up his positive qualities and asking him to run the cocoa cart instead, which keeps the peace for the time being. However, an overheard conversation about his true identity sends Buddy into a whirlwind. Buddy runs away from the shop to be by himself.

Santa arrives with the elves to console Buddy. Santa reveals to Buddy that his mother's name was Susan Welles and that she passed away during childbirth. One night, as Santa was delivering gifts to the orphanage where Buddy lived, he crawled into Santa's bag and was taken back to the North Pole by mistake. The elves and Santa raised him as if he were one of their own. He also reveals that Buddy's father is named Walter Hobbs, that he publishes children's books, and that he is unfortunately on the naughty list. Santa announces that he thinks it's time for Buddy to meet his father, who lives in New York City. He gives him a snowglobe featuring the Empire State Building, where his father works, to help his on his way.

Buddy leaves the North Pole on foot, dreaming of his dad and the fun they will have (World's Greatest Dad"). He arrives in Downtown Manhattan which is wildly different from the North Pole. Recognizing the Empire State Building from his snowglobe, he makes his way up to Walter's office.

Walter is in the middle of an argument with his staff over a careless mistake he made on his last book which caused the story to be printed without the final two pages. Walter is unmoved and refuses to recall the book due to the cost and his belief that kids only "look at the pictures". His wife and son, Emily and Michael, arrive at his office to go Christmas shopping as a family. Walter calls off the plans, because he is too busy with work and leads his staff in singing about the inconveniences caused by

the holiday season ("In the Way"). Buddy arrives, gets caught up in the musical number, and becomes the center of attention. Walter, believing that Buddy has been sent as a Christmas-gram is stunned and furious when Buddy mentions that he is Walter and Susan Welles' son. Security guards remove Buddy from the office and drop him off at Macy's Department Store, which features a North Pole display.

At Macy's, Buddy is mistaken for an employee from corporate and guides the others in decorating the store ("Sparklejollytwinklejingle"). He also meets Jovie, a cynical young woman who rejects Buddy's attempts to connect with her, but accepts a dinner date. Buddy, homeless, falls asleep in the store for the night.

The next morning, a department store Santa arrives at Macy's and is quickly exposed by Buddy, who tears off his beard in front of parents and their children. The police remove Buddy from the store and drop him off at the Hobbs home where Emily and Michael reluctantly allow him in. Buddy notices Michael's unfinished science project and offers to help him get it working if he and Emily write letters to Santa. Emily and Michael accept the deal and wish for quality time with Walter as their only Christmas gift ("I'll Believe in You"). Walter arrives home and is furious to find Buddy in his house. He allows Buddy to stay, but demands that he be out of the house by morning.

The next morning, Buddy and Michael bond over leftover spaghetti, which Buddy dresses in syrup. A package arrives in the mail revealing the results of a DNA test which Emily had previously arranged: Buddy is Walter's son. Walter, stunned and put out by the news, reluctantly takes Buddy along with him to his office for the workday.

Walter and Buddy arrive at the office in matching suits. Buddy tries to lend a hand and sings about his desire to be just like his dad ("Just Like Him"). Walter's rude boss Mr. Greenway arrives, scolds Walter, and gives him a final chance to redeem himself: pitch a surefire bestselling book to him on Christmas Eve to save his job.

Jovie joins Buddy on a dinner date (over greasy souvlaki). Buddy tries to lift Jovie's poor spirits by getting her to sing with him- she refuses at first, but soon gets caught up in the moment and begins to sing along with Buddy ("A Christmas Song"). Jovie kisses Buddy as the Rockefeller Christmas Tree lights up.

Meanwhile at Walter's office, he and his employee Chadwick are struggling to come up with an idea for their story. Matthews, another employee of Walter's arrives with big news: a famous author who is known for their

SETTING THE STAGE SYNOPSIS

classic Christmas stories wrote an unpublished story which was found in a secret desk drawer after his death. Buddy comes into the office in high spirits, celebrating his wonderful date with Jovie. Walter ignores him and goes to write a large check to the person who found the manuscript. Just then, Buddy runs the manuscript through the paper shredder to turn it into "snow". Walter explodes and tells Buddy that he is kicking him out permanently and never wants to see him again.

At the Hobbs house, Emily and Michael discover Buddy's farewell message on an etch-a-sketch as Buddy wanders the streets alone. He goes into a Chinese restaurant where he finds a group of recently laid-off department store and Salvation Army Santas commiserating. They lament the disrespect they have experienced the entire holiday season ("Nobody Cares About Santa"). Afterwards, the others take off to be with their families for Christmas Eve. Buddy suddenly remembers Jovie and takes off to meet her for their planned second date.

Outside the restaurant, Jovie expresses her disappointment ("Never Fall in Love (With and Elf)") Buddy arrives and tries to make things right, but Jovie who is used to being let down by others is unable to trust him. Buddy gives her his snowglobe as a parting gift and exits.

Back at the Hobbs house, Emily claims that Buddy needs help from a therapist. Michael argues that just because he believes in Santa does not mean that he is crazy. Just then, they spot a flash of light outside of the window: it's Santa's sleigh! Emily and Michael's Christmas spirit is saved ("There is a Santa Claus")

At the office, the Christmas Eve pitch to Mr. Greenway is moments away and Walter's team still has no ideas. Emily and Michael arrive and tell Walter about Buddy's note

and their Santa sighting. Mr. Greenway arrives and Walter begins his pitch just as Buddy comes through the door. The reunion distracts Walter, and Mr. Greenway demands a story immediately. Buddy jumps in and shares the story of his own journey which wows Mr. Greenway ("The Story of Buddy"). However, Mr. Greenway demands changes to the story and disrespects Buddy and Michael in front of Walter, who then quits his job. Buddy realizes that Emily and Michael saw Santa because his sleigh crashed. He leads them in a race to save Santa.

At the crash site, The Hobbs find Santa and are amazed at his presence. Buddy learns that the sleigh ran out of Christmas spirit. Santa removes Walter from the naughty list because of his change of heart, and Buddy takes Santa's list to try and get the sleigh powered up again.

Buddy finds a news anchor and begins to read people's old Christmas lists on TV- which angers some, who think it's a joke. Buddy makes a plea to crowd to join him in a song to spread Christmas cheer. Jovie steps out from the crowd and sings a duet with Buddy as snow begins to fall. One by one, the entire crowd joins in and Santa's sleigh powers up. Santa flies away into the night.

At the North Pole, Santa reads the end of the story. We learn that Walter started his own publishing company and that Buddy's story was a bestselling book. We also learn that the "in-laws" are the Hobbs, Jovie, Buddy and their children who arrive to celebrate along with the others from New York.

PRE-SHOW QUESTIONS

1. "Elf: The Musical" is based on the hit movie "Elf". Have you ever seen the movie? What differences do you think there might be between the movie and the musical?
2. Buddy wants his father, Walter to join him in celebrating the Christmas season. What are some holiday traditions that you share with your family and friends?
3. "Elf: The Musical" takes place at the North Pole and in New York City. How do you think the design team at First Stage will transform the theater into those two very different places?

ABOUT THE PLAYWRIGHTS

Taken directly from: <https://www.mtishows.com/people/thomas-meehan>

Thomas Meehan (Book) received the Tony Award for co-writing the book for THE PRODUCERS in 2001 and in 2003 for co-writing the book for HAIRSPRAY. He received his first Tony Award in 1977 for writing the book of ANNIE, which was his first Broadway show, and has written the books for the musicals ROCKY, ELF THE MUSICAL, CRY-BABY, YOUNG FRANKENSTEIN, CHAPLIN, BOMBAY DREAMS, I REMEMBER MAMA, AIN'T BROADWAY GRAND and ANNIE WARBUCKS. In addition, he was a long-time contributor of humor to The New Yorker, an Emmy-Award winning writer of television comedy, and a collaborator on a number of screenplays, including Mel Brooks' *Spaceballs* and *To Be Or Not To Be*. Mr. Meehan was also a member of the Council of the Dramatists Guild. He and his wife, Carolyn, divided their time between a home in Nantucket and an apartment in Greenwich Village, near which, on Hudson Street, she owned and presided over the long-running and near-legendary children's store Peanut Butter & Jane.



Taken directly from: <https://www.mtishows.com/people/bob-martin>

Bob Martin has been working as an actor and writer in Canadian theatre, film and television for over 3 decades. He has had a long association with the Toronto Second City, where he co-wrote and performed in four Second City revues, directed three, and had a stint as Artistic Director. He is a co-creator of THE DROWSY CHAPERONE, and has performed in many of its incarnations including Ahmanson Theatre (Los Angeles), Marquis Theatre (Broadway), Novello (London). Bob has won a number of awards for his work including an LA Drama Critics Circle Award, an L.A. Stage Alliance Ovation Award, a Drama Desk Award, a Theatre World Award, and a Tony Award. He is also co-creator of the critically acclaimed dramatic series *Slings & Arrows*. Recent TV projects include *Michael: Tuesdays and Thursdays I & II* (CBC), *Sensitive Skin I & II* (HBO), and *Elf: Buddy's Musical Christmas* (NBC). Recent theatre projects include ELF (Broadway), MINSKY'S (Ahmanson LA), and in dev., GOTTA DANCE, THE STING, and MILLIONS. Bob reunited with ELF collaborators Matthew Sklar and Chad Beguelin to create the new musical THE PROM, now playing on Broadway at the Longacre Theatre.



RECOMMENDED READING

Chicken Soup for the Soul Christmas Treasury for Kids: A Story a Day from December 1st through Christmas for Kids and Their Families by Jack Canfield, Irene Dunlap, Patty Hansen, and Mark Victor Hanse

How to Have the Best Christmas Ever (The Christmas Book) by Juliana Foster

A Midnight Clear: Family Christmas Stories by Katherine Paterson

The Best Christmas Pageant Ever by Barbara Robinson

CONTENT ADVISORY

This play is suitable for friends of all ages.

ABOUT THE LYRICIST: CHAD BEGUELIN

Taken directly from: <https://www.mtishows.com/people/chad-beguelin>

Chad Beguelin is a four-time Tony Nominee whose works include DISNEY'S ALADDIN (Tony Award Nomination for Best Book and Best Original Score, Drama Desk Award Nomination for Outstanding Lyrics and Best Book) and THE WEDDING SINGER (Tony Award Nomination for Best Book and Best Original Score, Drama Desk Award Nomination for Outstanding Lyrics). He also wrote the lyrics for the Broadway musical ELF, which broke several box office records at the AI Hirschfeld Theatre. His play HARBOR premiered off-Broadway at Primary Stages. Chad also wrote the book and lyrics for JUDAS & ME (NYMF Award for Excellence in Lyric Writing), THE RHYTHM CLUB (Signature Theater) and WICKED CITY (American Stage Company). Chad reunited with ELF collaborators Matthew Sklar and Bob Martin to create the new musical THE PROM, now playing on Broadway at the Longacre Theatre. He is the recipient of the Edward Kleban Award for Outstanding Lyric Writing, the Jonathan Larson Performing Arts Foundation Award, the Gilman & Gonzalez-Falla Musical Theater Award and the ASCAP Foundation Richard Rodgers New Horizons Award. Chad is a graduate of New York University's Tisch School of the Arts Graduate Dramatic Writing Program.



ABOUT THE COMPOSER: MATTHEW SKLAR

Taken directly from: <https://www.mtishows.com/people/chad-beguelin>

Matthew Sklar is a Tony®, Emmy®, and Drama Desk Award-nominated composer. His works include the Broadway musicals ELF and THE WEDDING SINGER (Tony Award Nomination for Best Original Score, Drama Desk Award Nomination for Outstanding Music). He also wrote the music for THE RHYTHM CLUB (Signature Theatre), JUDAS & ME, and WICKED CITY (American Stage Company). Matthew reunited with ELF collaborators Chad Beguelin and Bob Martin to create the new musical THE PROM, now playing on Broadway at the Longacre Theatre.

Matthew received a 2015 Primetime Emmy® Award Nomination for Outstanding Music Direction for the critically-acclaimed NBC stop-motion animated TV special "*Elf: Buddy's Musical Christmas*", starring Jim Parsons. He adapted and arranged the music of Marvin Hamlisch for the Emmy Award-winning documentary film *Marvin Hamlisch: What He Did For Love*, seen on PBS/American Masters. Matthew has contributed original songs/music to *Sesame Street*, *Wonder Pets!*, and the NBC Broadcast of The Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade.

As an 18-year-old freshman at New York University, Matthew began playing keyboards for the Broadway production of LES MISERABLES, eventually conducting the show at 21. He has also been a keyboardist, conductor, and/or arranger for many Broadway productions including SHREK, CAROLINE, OR CHANGE, NINE, OKLAHOMA, 42ND STREET, PUTTING IT TOGETHER, ANNIE GET YOUR GUN, ON THE TOWN, TITANIC, GUYS AND DOLLS, SUNSET BOULEVARD, and MISS SAIGON. Matthew also appeared onstage as Oscar in the Broadway revival of 42ND STREET.

Awards include the ASCAP Richard Rodgers New Horizons Award, the Gilman/Gonzalez-Falla Theatre Award, and the Jonathan Larson Performing Arts Foundation Award.

Matthew is a proud member of the Dramatists Guild, ASCAP, and the American Federation of Musicians, Local 802. His music is published by Warner/Chappell Music. Matthew was educated at The Juilliard School of Music (Pre-College Division), the Boston University Tanglewood Institute, and New York University.



IT'S SHOWTIME!

Theatre Etiquette Activity

Adapted from: <http://www.louisvilleorchestra.org/wp-content/uploads/audience-etiquette-activity.pdf> , <http://www.musical-theater-kids.com/theater-etiquette.html>

There are many people involved, both on stage and behind the stage, who are working to put on the best performance possible for you and the rest of the people in the audience. Unlike watching television or a movie, the performers and crew can see and hear the audience members—therefore, it is the audiences' job to watch and listen carefully to the action on stage. The audience helps the performers and crew concentrate on doing their job when we practice the rules of theater etiquette.

- Visit the restroom **before** the performance begins.
- **Don't** speak during the performance...whispering is still speaking, so make sure you are only speaking in an emergency.
- **Do not** eat or drink in the theater.
- **Do not** put your feet up on the seats or balcony and do not kick the seat in front of you.
- **Do not** put or throw anything on the stage.
- **Do** laugh when the performance is funny.
- **Do** applaud when it is appropriate during the performance.
- **Do** applaud when the performance is over...this tells the performers and crew that you appreciate their work.

CONTINUED ACTIVITY:

1. Hand out the included worksheet to students.
2. As a class, go through the different event locations listed on the worksheet and discuss each event.

What can you do there? What can't you do there? Why?

3. Fill out the worksheet using "Always, Sometimes or Never". Ask students why they think we behave differently at these different places (different atmospheres, expectations, traditions, etc.).
4. Discuss in detail the behavior expectations we have at the theater.

IT'S SHOWTIME!

Theatre Etiquette Activity

Adapted from: <http://www.louisvilleorchestra.org/wp-content/uploads/audience-etiquette-activity.pdf> , <http://www.musical-theater-kids.com/theater-etiquette.html>

Look at the different events listed across the first row in the table below. For each event, fill in ALWAYS, SOMETIMES or NEVER with the listed behavior expectations. Note the different behavior expectations there are for different events we attend.

BEHAVIOR	BASEBALL GAME	CHURCH/ WORSHIP SERVICE	LIVE THEATRE PERFORMANCE	ROCK CONCERT	MOVIE THEATER
CHEER					
CLAP POLITELY					
TALKING TO THOSE AROUND YOU					
EATING					
STANDING UP AND WALKING AROUND					

HOLIDAY TRADITIONS

Social Studies Classroom Activity

ACTIVITY

1. Begin by creating a chart on the board with the following headings: family, school, community.
2. Ask students to define the word “tradition”—where have they heard this word used, and what does it mean to them. Share a few dictionary definitions of tradition with students: the passing down of elements of a culture from generation to generation; a time-honored practice or set of such practices;
3. Next, as a class, come up with a group definition for the word “tradition.” Write this definition on the board.
4. Have students begin thinking about their own holiday traditions. Prompt students with the questions listed below, and jot down their responses on the board under the Family heading. Does your family decorate your house in any special ways during the holiday season? And if so, what are these decorations? Does your family make special meals or eat special foods during the holiday season? And if so, what are these foods or meals? Does your family visit any relatives or go anywhere special during the holidays? And if so, who do you visit or where do you go? Does your family follow any other special practices during the holiday season, such as sending out Christmas cards, Christmas caroling, visiting Santa Claus, celebrating St. Nick’s Day, wrapping presents, watching specific holiday movies, going to Christmas church services, etc.
5. Continue this same format to explore school holiday traditions and community holiday traditions.
6. Once completed, ask students what traditions they like best, and why? Next, ask students why they think people follow traditions?
7. Tell students that they are all going to be creating a new tradition this year by making holiday cards displaying some of our favorite holiday traditions that we can send out to all the other teachers and classrooms in the school.
8. Provide each student with one sheet of firm paper, and have them fold the paper to form a card. On the outside of the card, students should draw a picture of their favorite holiday tradition. Then on the inside of the card, students can write a message wishing holiday cheer and good will.
9. Once the cards are finished, have the students go around to the other class rooms at the school and pass out their cards to each teacher and administrator.



SINGING LOUD FOR ALL TO HEAR: THE HISTORY OF CHRISTMAS CAROLS

Classroom Language Arts/ History Activity

Historical information taken from: http://www.whychristmas.com/customs/carols_history.shtml

Carols were first sung in Europe thousands of years ago, but these were not Christmas carols. They were pagan songs, sung at the Winter Solstice celebrations as people danced around stone circles. The Winter Solstice is the shortest day of the year, usually taking place around the 22nd of December. The word carol actually means a dance or song of praise and joy!

Early Christians took over the pagan solstice celebrations with Christmas and gave people Christian songs to sing instead of pagan ones. However, not many people liked them as they were all written and sung in Latin, a language that common people couldn't understand. By the time of the Middle Ages (the 1200s), most people had lost interest in celebrating Christmas altogether.

This was changed by St. Francis of Assisi when, in 1223, he started his Nativity Plays in Italy. The people in the plays sang songs or "canticles" that told the Christmas story. Sometimes, the choruses of these new carols were in Latin, but normally they were in a language that the people watching the play could understand and join in! The new carols spread to France, Spain, Germany and other European countries.

Before carol singing in public became popular, there were sometimes official carol singers called "Waits". They were called "Waits" because they only sang on Christmas Eve (this was sometimes known as "watchnight" or "waitnight" because the shepherds were watching their sheep when the angels appeared to them), when the Christmas celebrations began.

New carol services were created and became popular, as did the custom of singing carols in the streets. Both of these customs are still popular today!

ACTIVITY

1. As a class, have students brainstorm a list of Christmas carols. Write the titles on the board. a. Ask students to summarize the story behind all or some of these carols. b. Ask students: what are other themes or story ideas a new Christmas carol could be written about? Again, write these ideas on the board.
2. Inform the class that they are going to write new carols. Place students into pairs or small groups.
3. Once in their groups, they must first choose a theme or story idea to write their song about. Students may use the brainstormed list on the board, or come up with a new song idea.
4. Next, using the tune of "Mary Had a Little Lamb," students must create their new Christmas carol.
5. Allow groups ample time to come up with their song ideas, and assist groups as needed.
6. Once the songs are finished, have the groups share their new Christmas songs by hosting a caroling session during the school day. If possible, provide cookies and hot chocolate for students after their caroling!

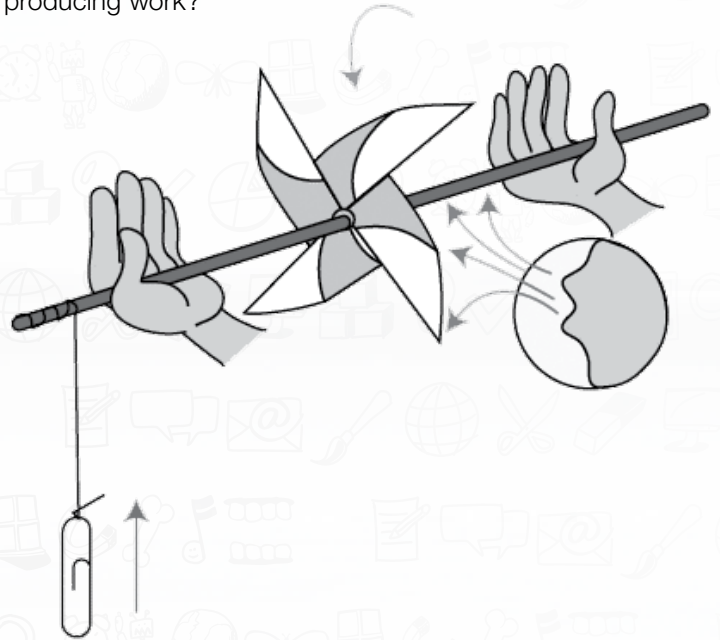
MICHAEL'S SCIENCE PROJECT: EXPLORING WIND POWER Classroom Science Activity

Taken directly from: https://www.education.com/science-fair/article/engineering_windmill/

Windmills are machines that convert energy from the wind into useful work by rotating. The rotation of a windmill often powers a motor or generator used to produce electricity or mechanical work (moving objects). Using wind power to turn the rotation of an object into useful energy and work dates back to 1st century Greece, and wind wheels are also well documented in 7th century Persia. They have been used to lift things up and down, especially water from the ground, to power machines that crush grain and process food, and more recently to power motors to generate electricity. Windmills are good examples of wheel-and-axle machines. The wheel is able to rotate freely on an axis, harnessing the wind's energy to move it by having sails, or shapes that can catch the wind. Which windmill design is the sturdiest? Which will be better at producing work?

MATERIALS

Construction paper.
Cardstock.
Printer paper.
Plastic straws.
String.
Paperclip.
Tape.
Scissors.
Glue.
Wooden skewers.
Hole punch.



PROCEDURE

1. Cut out a square of each type of paper.
2. Draw an X diagonally, from corner to corner, on each one.
3. Use a hole punch to make a hole in the center large enough for the straw to fit through.
4. Cut along each line, but stop about half an inch from the center hole.
5. Bring each free corner down to where the cut stops near the center of the paper and secure it with glue. This will create the 'sails' for your windmill.
6. Insert a straw through the center of each windmill, this will serve as the axis.
7. Insert a wooden skewer through the straw so it can rotate freely.
8. Towards the end of the straw, tape one end of a piece of string to the straw. Tie or tape the other end of the string to a paperclip.
9. Hold the ends of the wooden skewer and blow on the sails of your windmill model. What happens? Which windmill works the best and why?

THE SCIENCE OF SNOWFLAKES

Science Classroom Activities

Adapted from: <http://www.its.caltech.edu/~atomic/snowcrystals/kids/kids.htm>

Snowflake Watching

There are so many different shapes and sizes of snowflakes! Living in Wisconsin, we have the opportunity to observe snowflakes outside in the winter. When it begins to snow, go outside with a dark sheet of construction paper and allow snowflakes to fall on the sheet. Using a magnifying glass and the Types of Snowflakes Guide, see if throughout the winter months you can identify one of each snowflake type.

				
Simple Prisms	Solid Columns	Sheaths	Scrolls on Plates	Triangular Forms
				
Hexagonal Plates	Hollow Columns	Cups	Columns on Plates	12-branched Stars
				
Stellar Plates	Bullet Rosettes	Capped Columns	Split Plates & Stars	Radiating Plates
				
Sectored Plates	Isolated Bullets	Multiply Capped Columns	Skeletal Forms	Radiating Dendrites
				
Simple Stars	Simple Needles	Capped Bullets	Twin Columns	Irregulars
				
Stellar Dendrites	Needle Clusters	Double Plates	Arrowhead Twins	Rimed
				
Fernlike Stellar Dendrites	Crossed Needles	Hollow Plates	Crossed Plates	Graupel

Types of Snowflakes

MAKING IT SNOW

Classroom Art Activity

Adapted from: <http://www.its.caltech.edu/~atomic/snowcrystals/kids/kids.htm>

Snowflake Construction

Cutting snowflakes out of paper is a classic winter activity. Snowflakes in nature have six sides, and luckily folding a 6-sided snowflake is very easy! The trick is all in how you fold it before you cut.

1. Begin with a square piece of paper.

2. Fold the square of paper diagonally to make a triangle.



3. Fold this larger triangle in half to make a smaller triangle.



4. Point the triangle tip down to become the bottom of your paper. Fold the smaller triangle into thirds.



5. Cut through all the layers of paper at an angle close to that drawn in orange.



6. Throw away the top half.



7. Cut fun designs out of the bottom half.



8. Carefully unfold and display your masterpiece!



EXPLORING IDENTITY

Classroom Social/Emotional Development Activity

Taken from: <http://www.thirteen.org/edonline/lessons/whoami/b.html>

MATERIALS

2–3 magazines for each student (students can bring these from home), scissors, large blank paper, glue or tape.

ACTIVITY

1. Write “identity” on the board and ask the students to brainstorm its meanings.
2. Ask each student to create an “Identity Map” which depicts all the components that make up their own identity, including the varied roles they play. Show students how to create their maps by putting a circle on the board and writing “Me” in the center. Then, draw lines out from the circle and write words such as “loyal,” “artist,” “daughter,” etc.
3. Divide the class into small groups and ask students to share their maps with each other. Ask them to discuss the following questions: a. What three words would you choose to best describe yourself? b. Why do those words accurately describe you? c. What three words would your family or friends use to describe you? d. How accurate are other’s descriptions of you? e. What three words do you want to describe yourself as 10 years from now?
4. After allowing ample discussion time for the small groups, bring the class back together and ask for volunteers from the small groups to share their insights with the class.
5. Now, ask students to create a representation of themselves in the form of a collage. Before they begin, they need to review what they wrote about themselves in their Identity Map, as well as what was said or reflected on about their character during the small group discussion.
6. Individually students will cut pictures or word phrases out of magazines that represent their personal interests and abilities, and arrange and glue them onto a blank sheet of paper.
7. When these collages are completed, number each collage and display them around the room.
8. Without discussion, allow students time to view these collages, and then write down who they think each collage belongs to.
9. Afterwards, each collage will be identified by its owner and they will be allowed to explain what the symbols in their collage stand for.

I LIKE BEING ME: BUILDING SELF-ESTEEM

Health Classroom Activity

Taken directly from: <http://school.discoveryeducation.com/lessonplans/programs/selfesteem/>

ACTIVITY

1. Ask students to define the term self-esteem. Write their ideas on the board. Help students understand that self-esteem refers to how we understand and value ourselves.
 - a. People with high self-esteem are realistic about their strengths and weaknesses and are able to set goals and work toward them with optimism and humor. They also feel competent in areas they consider important and do not take other people's negative impressions of them too seriously.
 - b. People with low self-esteem have a hard time honestly evaluating their strengths and weaknesses and often have an unrealistic, overall negative impression of themselves. They take other people's opinions of their strengths and weaknesses more seriously than they should. Also, they do not feel competent in areas they consider important. People with low self-esteem tend to be pessimistic.
2. Tell students that an important first step in building self-esteem is taking a realistic look at their strengths and weaknesses and likes and dislikes. This helps them know what goals are realistic to pursue, what aspects of their personality and lifestyle to seek to improve, and how to identify their weaknesses without worrying about how others perceive them. Tell students that self-knowledge helps lay the foundation for high self-esteem.
3. Then tell students they are going to complete a personal inventory during this lesson to help them achieve better self-understanding. Pass out the Personal Inventory worksheet and have students complete the handout.
 - a. Give students ample time (it should not take more than 10 or 15 minutes) in class to complete the inventory.
4. Once students are finished, have students take the information they learned about themselves and create a drawing, collage, or short essay that illustrates who they are.
 - a. Make available paper, art supplies, and magazines to cut up. Give students about 20 minutes to complete their projects.
5. During the next class period, ask for student volunteers to share their artwork or essays, and their personal reflections, with the class.
6. Hold a discussion with students, asking them what they learned about themselves by going through this activity. Continue the dialogue with the following:
 - a. How can you apply this information to your lives? How does it affect the goals you set for yourself?
 - b. Tell them that understanding their own strengths, weaknesses, and preferences is essential in boosting their self-esteem.
7. Conclude the lesson by asking students what role they think self-esteem plays in leading a healthful life. If students feel good about themselves, do they think they will make good decisions about friends, diet, exercise, and overall work habits? Why do they think this is so? Help students understand that if they feel good about themselves, they will want to take care of themselves.

I LIKE BEING ME: BUILDING SELF-ESTEEM

Personal Inventory Student Worksheet

Taken directly from: <http://school.discoveryeducation.com/lessonplans/programs/selfesteem/>

PERSONAL INVENTORY

School Subjects

I like _____

I do not like _____

I am good at _____

I am not good at _____

I am good at this subject, but I do not like it: _____

I am not good at this subject, but I like it: _____

Activities

I like _____

I do not like _____

I am good at _____

I am not good at _____

I am good at this activity, but I do not like it: _____

I am not good at this activity, but I like it: _____

I prefer being involved in individual activities _____ or group activities _____. (Check one.)

Relationships with Friends and Adults (Check the statements that apply to you.)

I am generally well liked:

I am generally not well liked:

I have a group of friends:

I prefer having one or two friends:

I am a leader:

I am a follower:

I prefer people who like the same things I like:

I prefer people who like different things:

I have the support of significant adults in my life:

I have the support of a group of peers:

Food Preferences

I like to eat _____

I do not like to eat _____

I do _____ do not _____ eat a balanced diet. (Check one.)

Relaxing

I relax by _____

I like relaxing alone _____ or with other people _____. (Check one.)

After this activity, I always feel calm and peaceful. _____

THE PERFECT CLASSROOM CHRISTMAS TREE

Classroom Art Activity

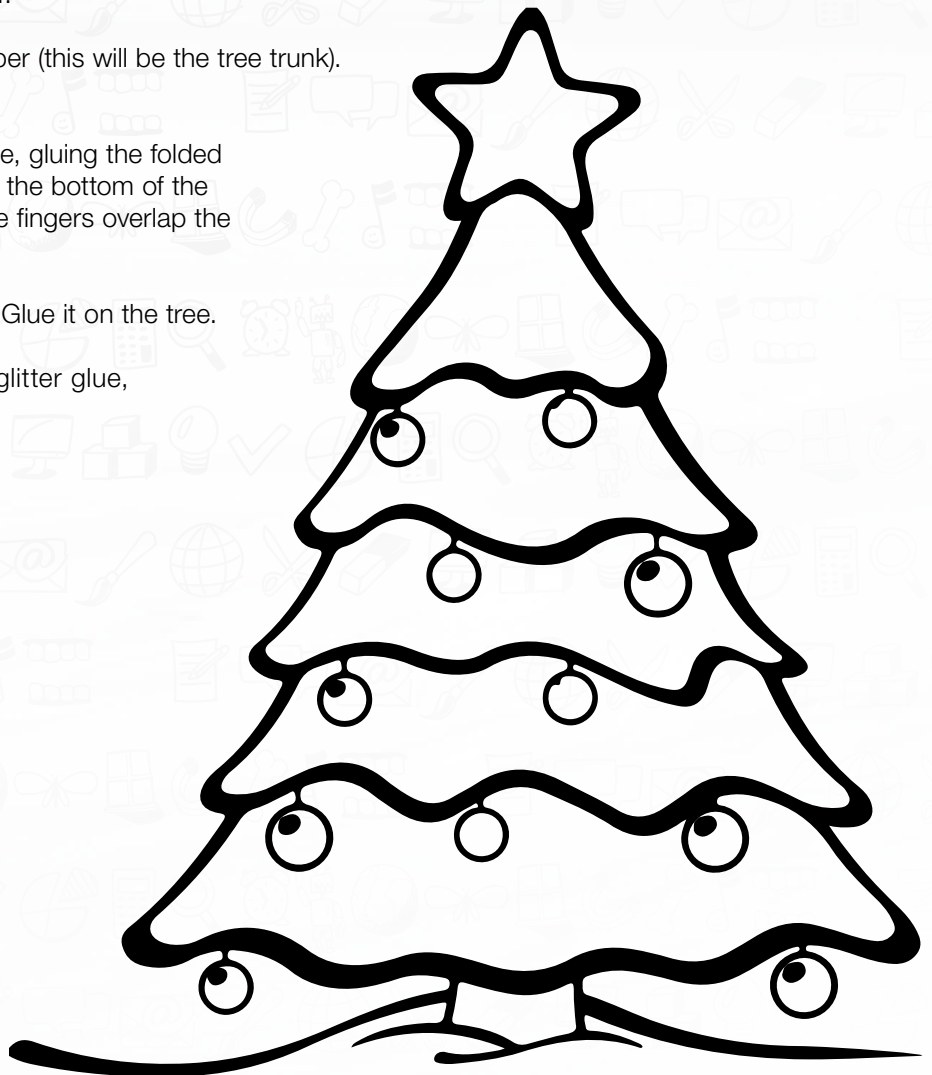
Adapted from: <http://www.enchantedlearning.com/crafts/christmas/handtree/>

MATERIALS

- Green construction paper.
- One piece of brown construction paper (for the tree trunk).
- One piece of yellow construction paper (for the star).
- A large piece of butcher paper to mount the Christmas tree on.
- Pencils.
- Scissors.
- Glue.
- Optional:** glitter, glitter glue, or paper ornaments to glue on the tree.

ACTIVITY

1. Have each student trace their hand on a piece of green construction paper. Cut out the hand print. Fold the wrist over.
2. Make a lot of paper hands (the number you'll need depends on the size of your tree), and make sure each student's name is on the back of each of their hand prints. You may wish to have each student write a Christmas wish for themselves on one paper hand, and a Christmas wish for the world on the other.
3. Draw a tree shape on a large piece of paper.
4. Cut out a small rectangle of dark brown paper (this will be the tree trunk). Glue the rectangle below the tree.
5. Glue the hand prints together in a tree shape, gluing the folded part of the wrist to the background. Start at the bottom of the tree. Starting with the second row, make the fingers overlap the next hand a little bit.
6. Cut out a yellow star for the top of the tree. Glue it on the tree.
7. **Optional:** Decorate your tree with glitter, glitter glue, or paper ornaments.



DESIGN AND DECORATE

Classroom Art Activity

Adapted from: <http://www.enchantedlearning.com/crafts/christmas/handtree/>

In theatre, designers use their talents to bring the setting of a play to life. Help design one of the many settings of the play (New York City, the North Pole, Walter's office, the Hobbs house, etc.)

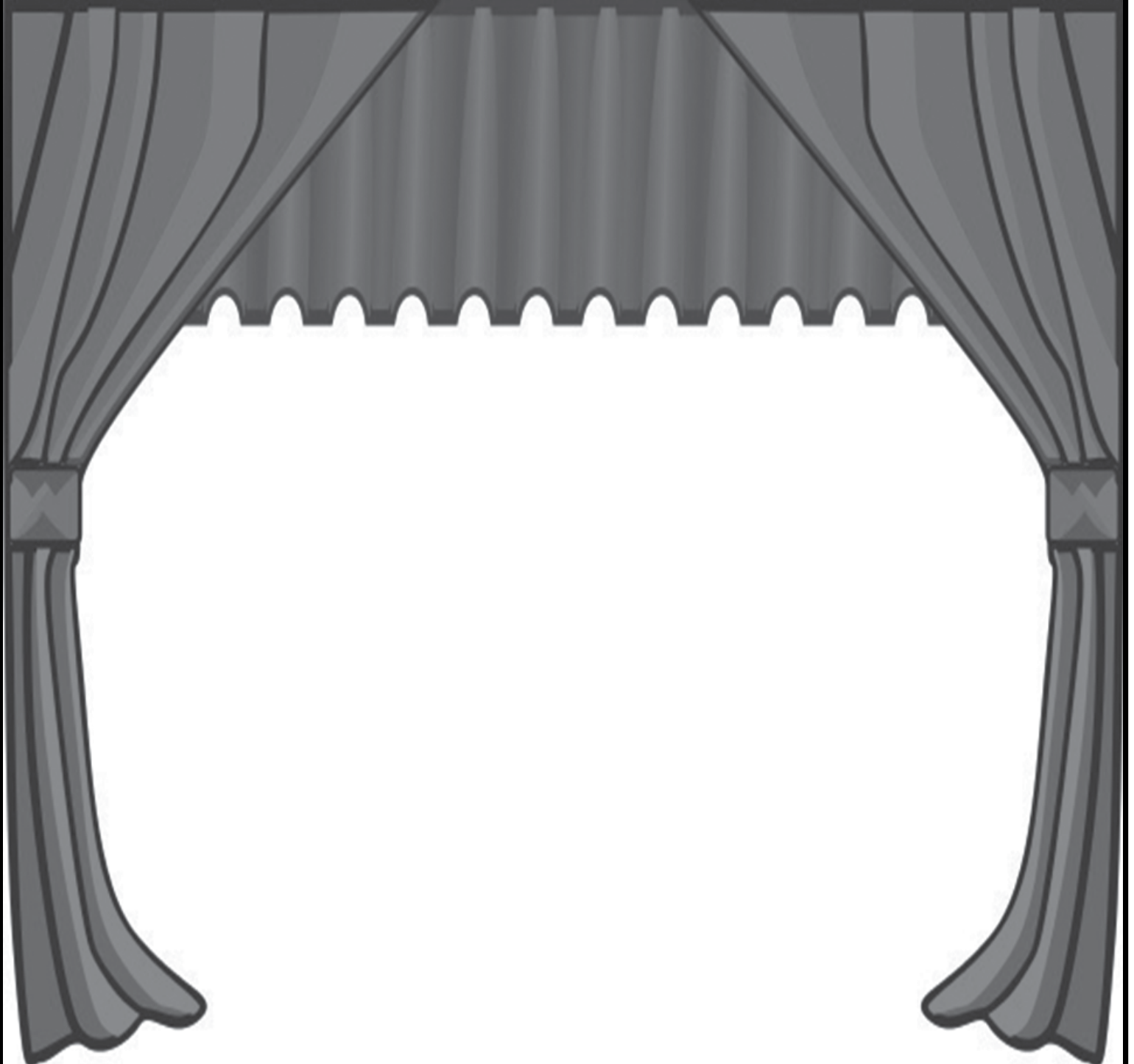
Design the Set!

What is the mood?

What is the place?

What is the time of day?

What objects might be found here?



TEACHING CHILDREN IN THE FOSTER CARE SYSTEM

Resource for Classroom Teachers

Explore the Student's Academic History

Contact the student's former teacher and school to find out about academic status, strengths, challenges and history. Help ensure that school records and Individual Education Plans (IEPs) for students enrolled in special education are updated with all relevant information and evaluated by the appropriate staff at your school in a timely fashion. Be aware that each move a child makes can delay academic progress by months. Understand that many children and youth in foster care have a harder time learning because of their experiences. They may have been in educational settings in which they were not well supported because they were viewed as transient students bound to be moved again.

Invite the resource parents – foster parents, kinship caregivers, adoptive parents, etc. – to work with you in assessing the student's current level of achievement and setting reasonable goals for the academic year.

Find out who the student's educational decision-maker is and reach out to this person to ensure that you are both on the same page.

In the Classroom

Be aware that children and youth in care generally tend to perform less well in school than their peers. Thirty to forty percent of youth in foster care are also in special education, so your student may already have an IEP or may need one. Determine the student's academic, social and emotional level and then find ways to help him or her fit into the class by using accommodations and adaptations to support educational success. Connect the student to appropriate supports, such as tutoring and mentoring.

The student may have a learning disability due to poor maternal health during pregnancy or prenatal exposure to drugs and alcohol. The enormous emotional burdens of grief, loss and uncertainty about the future can also impair a child's ability to concentrate, learn and acquire new skills. You can support the student's development by insuring that routines are regular and that he or she has opportunities to practice needed skills and is alerted to any schedule changes.

Structure materials and tasks in the classroom to help the student achieve success, even if academics are a problem. Help offset the chaos in the student's life by providing structure and predictability in the classroom.

Respect the child's right to privacy. Students and teachers who do not have responsibility for teaching the child do not need to know about his or her foster care status. Become knowledgeable about confidentiality and how to address confidential issues appropriately.

Encourage students to participate in holistic educational opportunities like after school programs, extra-curricular activities, and special school events. Broaden the diversity of families depicted in the books and materials in your classroom to include foster, adoptive and relative caregiving families.

Keep in mind that a youth in foster care (or one who has been adopted) may not be able to complete certain assignments as easily as their peers. For example, constructing a family tree or bringing in a baby picture may be difficult for a child who has been frequently and suddenly moved or has little contact with his or her birth family. Similarly, securing permission for a special activity such as a field trip can be problematic when the current caregivers do not have legal authority to give permission. It may take more lead-time than normal to get approval through the appropriate channels.

Consider doing a unit on foster care during May. Lists of books about foster care and adoption are available at the following sites: <http://www.cwla.org/pubs/subj .asp> and <http://www .childadvocacy .com/books/index .php>

Your Relationship with the Child and Family

Like other students, a child or youth in foster care needs to be accommodated, but does not want to be treated differently. Strive to ensure that the student does not feel exposed as a "special case" as he/she does in so many other settings. At the same time, be lenient when circumstances warrant it.

TEACHING CHILDREN IN THE FOSTER CARE SYSTEM

Resource for Classroom Teachers

Remember that many children and youth in foster care find it difficult to trust adults, often for good reason. Recognize you may have to work harder to achieve a trusting relationship over time. Behavior and attitudes intended to be caring can appear just the opposite when they have been experienced in a negative context in the past. Be patient and consistent.

Some teachers may feel challenged by highly involved resource parents who advocate very strongly for the student. Remember that these children and youth need someone who is on their side, even if that person seems over-involved. Try to work with the energy the parents bring to their child's academic life.

What children and youth in foster care need most are strong advocates in their schools. Educators, resource parents, agency staff and birth families can all contribute to school success when they understand the challenges and have the opportunity to collaborate in providing support to these students.

Preparation for Postsecondary Education, Training and Career Goals

Prepare students for postsecondary education and training while in middle and high school, helping them become aware of the full range of postsecondary program options. Have high aspirations for their post high school lives.

Train students early in self-determination and self-advocacy so they can speak up for themselves, direct and redirect their lives, solve problems, reach valued postsecondary education and training goals, and take part in their communities.

Provide students with access to appropriate academic supports, high school course planning, SAT/ACT and other assessment preparation, as well as guidance and follow-up in selecting and applying to postsecondary education and training programs.

Link students to existing community educational and career development programs such as TRIO, Gear Up, and College Bridge Programs

WHO SAID IT?

1. "Hey! There's no singing at the North Pole!"
2. "You don't smell like Santa. You smell like beef and cheese."
3. "Well, it's weirdly nice that I make your tongue swell up, but I just don't see this date happening."
4. "Left over spaghetti for breakfast is the best, huh?"
5. "I'm going to need coffee. Now."
6. "Greasy souvlaki on a stick is not dinner."
7. "I'm in love! I'm in love! And I don't care who knows it!"
8. "Just because somebody believes in Santa Claus, doesn't mean they're crazy."
9. "You look...seasonally appropriate."
10. "8 million people who don't believe in me. A guy can't help but take that personally."

POST-SHOW QUESTIONS

1. Buddy has to go on a long journey away from the North Pole and faces many challenges along the way. However, he stays positive and never stops pursuing his goal. What is a goal you have for yourself? Is it a short-term or a long-term goal? What are the steps you plan to take to achieve your goal, and how will you handle the challenges posed along the way?
2. Many characters in the play lack holiday spirit. What are some things that you do when you are feeling upset to cheer yourself up? How do you help others around you when they are having a rough time?
3. Buddy sometimes feels like he doesn't fit in, but he brings joy to everyone around him. What are some qualities you have that make you unique? How might you use your talents and the things that make you special to help others?

WHO SAID IT? (ANSWERS)

1. "Hey! There's no singing at the North Pole!"STORE MANAGER
2. "You don't smell like Santa. You smell like beef and cheese." BUDDY
3. "Well, it's weirdly nice that I make your tongue swell up,
but I just don't see this date happening."JOVIE
4. "Left over spaghetti for breakfast is the best, huh?"MICHAEL
5. "I'm going to need coffee. Now."WALTER
6. "Greasy souvlaki on a stick is not dinner."JOVIE
7. "I'm in love! I'm in love! And I don't care who knows it!" BUDDY
8. "Just because somebody believes in Santa Claus, doesn't mean they're crazy."MICHAEL
9. "You look...seasonally appropriate."JOVIE
10. "8 million people who don't believe in me. A guy can't help but take that personally."SANTA