# ENRICHMENT GUIDE

# Dr. Seuss's How The GRINCH STOLE CHRISTMAS! THE MUSICAL

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FIRST STAGE

**Recommended for families with young people ages 5 and up and holiday celebrators of all ages!**

**Every young person is different and may or may not be ready for certain elements of each production. Read more about this show's age recommendation below.**

Audiences will be delighted by this classic tale filled with singing, dancing and friendship.

The performance is expected to run approximately 80 minutes including a brief intermission — very young audiences may have difficulty staying connected for the full length of the show.

The show contains a grumpy character named The Grinch, moments of suspense and peril, and tension between The Grinch, Max, and the Whos; audiences may feel anxious as the characters experience these difficult situations, but they will learn the power of friendship and giving.

There will be changing lights, and loud music and sounds that may be overwhelming for those with sensory sensitivities. We offer sensory friendly performances and sensory kits for patrons who may need them.

# SUMMARY

Our story begins in Who-ville. Old Max the dog listens as carolers sing and reminisces about holiday seasons past (OPENING). We meet Cindy-Lou Who, Papa Who, Mama Who, and the other Whos, who are celebrating their love of Christmas (WHO LIKES CHRISTMAS).

Old Max explains that the Whos liked Christmas a lot, but that The Grinch did not. Max introduces himself as Max, The Grinch's dog, and we meet Young Max, Max when he was younger. Young Max and Old Max sing about the big feelings they get during the holidays, like loneliness and sadness and hopefulness (THIS TIME OF YEAR).

The Grinch emerges from his cave, and we learn that he hates Christmas and the Whos. Old Max tells us that perhaps he hates Christmas and the Whos because his heart is two sizes too small.
Cindy-Lou tells her family that she wants to make a gift for The Grinch to lift his spirits, but her parents point out that she's never met The Grinch, and that maybe she can make a gift for her brother instead. Cindy-Lou asks Papa Who if he's ever seen The Grinch. Papa Who says he has, but only twice.

The Grinch decides to stop Christmas from coming (I HATE CHRISTMAS EVE). The Grinch tells Max about how he imagines the Whos behave on Christmas morning; they will be loud and chaotic and full of greed (WHATCHAMAWHO). The Whos will feast on Who-pudding and roast-beast. And then the Whos will sing! (WELCOME, CHRISTMAS). The Grinch begins to plot: there won't be a Christmas this year (I HATE CHRISTMAS EVE, REPRISE).

In Who-ville, the Whos are Christmas shopping. Papa Who and Grandpa Who are overwhelmed by Christmas shopping, but Mama Who and Grandma Who remind them that it's the spirit of Christmas that matters, not what they give. In the midst of the Whos' shopping busyness, The Grinch begins to steal things he needs to put his plan into motion.

Cindy-Lou reveals that she wants a red rocking horse for Christmas, and that Santy Claus knows that's what she wants. Her family seems concerned about the price (IT'S THE THOUGHT THAT COUNTS).

## SUMMARY

The Grinch, in disguise, runs into the Who family. He pretends to be a tourist, and they invite him to their Christmas celebration.

The Grinch and Young Max return to Mount Crumpit with their stolen goods, and The Grinch uses them to make himself look like Santa Claus and to make Max look like a reindeer (THIS TIME OF YEAR, REPRISE 1). The Grinch and Max prepare to steal Christmas (ONE OF A KIND).

In Who-ville, Mama, Papa, Grandma, and Grandpa Who are getting ready for Christmas while the Who children sleep (NOW'S THE TIME). The adults go to bed, and The Grinch and Young Max slide down the chimney into Cindy-Lou's house.

The Grinch, with Young Max as his accomplice, begins to steal Christmas (YOU'RE A MEAN ONE, MR. GRINCH). As The Grinch is stuffing the Christmas tree up the fireplace, Cindy-Lou sees him! She asks him why he's stealing her Christmas tree, but he lies to her and says he's bringing it to his workshop to fix a light that won't light on one side.

Cindy-Lou begins to cry because of the bad dream that woke her, and The Grinch doesn't know what to do. Cindy-Lou asks The Grinch to stay, but he says he can't. Cindy-Lou says of course he can't, he has things to do, but when he's done, he'll be with his family and friends. The Grinch says, no, when he's done, he'll go home alone. Cindy-Lou tells him that he'll be in her heart even if he's all alone (SANTA FOR A DAY).

The Grinch asks Cindy-Lou what her scary dream was about, and she tells him that she dreamed about The Grinch! The Grinch tries to scare Cindy-Lou away, but she just laughs. Finally, he sends her to bed with a glass of water and finishes stealing the Christmas tree.

The Grinch and Young Max visit other Who houses and steal their Christmases too, while Old Max sings (YOU'RE A MEAN ONE, MR. GRINCH, REPRISE) and invites the audience to sing along.

# SUMMARY

In the morning, the Whos discover that their Christmas has been stolen! Cindy-Lou tells her family that she knows who stole Christmas and laments that he must be lonely with no family or friends.

Meanwhile, The Grinch gets ready to dump his sled full of stolen Christmas items off the top of Mount Crumpit. The Grinch tries to hear the Whos crying, but instead he hears happy singing. The Grinch cannot believe that Christmas came without gifts, and trees, and feasts (WHO LIKES CHRISTMAS, REPRISE).

The Grinch realizes that Christmas means more than gifts and things. He remembers the kindness that Cindy-Lou showed him. The Grinch realizes that he feels goodwill toward the Whos and begins to realize that he might be a Who, too (ONE OF A KIND, REPRISE).

The Grinch's heart grows three sizes! He happily pets Young Max and declares that they have to return the presents and things they stole. The sled teeters on the edge of the mountain, threatening to fall over the side. We flash to Old Max, reminiscing again (THIS TIME OF YEAR, REPRISE 2). The Whos celebrate Christmas, and The Grinch and Young Max ride their sled into Who-ville. With encouragement from Cindy-Lou, he wishes the Whos a Merry Christmas (WELCOME CHRISTMAS, REPRISE).

The Grinch and Young Max return everything they stole to the Whos, but Cindy-Lou tells him he forgot something — him. The Grinch celebrates with the Whos, and he carves the roast-beast (FINALE)!

# THEATER ETIQUETTE

## DO

### Stay present

Lean in and engage with the story. Observe and listen without distraction to the story being told on stage

### Oohs and Aahs

Reacting is encouraged! Please feel free to laugh, cry, clap, or ooh at appropriate moments.

### Respect the space

Please sit nicely in the audience chairs, refrain from eating or drinking, and pick up after yourself.

## DON'T

### Be on your phone

Use of phones is prohibited and is distracting to the actors and audience around you. Recording any portion of the show is strictly prohibited.

### Talk over the story

Please refrain from talking over the play. It is distracting to the actors and other audience members, and you'll miss the story!

### Be disrespectful

Practice the Campsite Rule - leave the theater better than you find it!

# PRE-SHOW QUESTIONS

- The Whos in Who-ville have holiday traditions around Christmas! Do you have any holiday traditions with your family?
- The Whos in Who-ville have special foods that they eat around the holidays, like Who Pudding and Roast Beast. Do you have any special foods you and your family eat around the holidays?
- The Grinch doesn’t understand and enjoy the Whos holiday cheer. Why do you think that might be?

# YOU'RE A MEAN ONE, MR. GRINCH

## A Language Arts Activity

In *Dr. Seuss's How the Grinch Stole Christmas! The Musical*, The Grinch hatches a plan to steal Christmas from Who-ville. Imagine you're a Who who lives in Who-ville, a write a letter to The Grinch convincing him NOT to steal Christmas!

Use the graphic organizer on the next page to plan your letter, then use the lines on the following page to write your letter to The Grinch! An example can be found following the lined page.

# Persuasive Writing

Opinion: The Grinch should not steal Christmas

- Reason 1 :
  - Explanation:

- Reason 2:
  - Explanation:

- Reason 3:
  - Explanation:

Conclusion:

# Persuasive Writin

EXAMPLE

Opinion: The Grinch should not steal Christmas

- Reason 1 : It will make the Whos Sad.
  - Explanation: Whos love Christmas, and we will be sad if we have no Christmas.

- Reason 2: The Whos worked hard to prepare for Christmas.
  - Explanation: The Whos spent a lot of time shopping and cooking and putting up decorations.

- Reason 3: The Grinch and Max don't need all that Stuff.
  - Explanation: Grinch and Max are only two people, and can't use all the Christmas Stuff like the Whos.

Conclusion: Grinch should not steal Christmas because it's not nice and the Whos will feel sad because they love Christmas and they worked so hard, and it will waste all the Christmas Stuff.

# MAKE YOUR OWN WHO-PUDDING

## A STEM Activity

It's not a Who-Feast without the Who-Pudding! Follow along with this recipe to make mini Who-Pudding cups to share with your family, friends, or classmates.

Ingredients and Instructions can be found on the next pages

Recipe is from Play Party Plan

# WHAT YOU'LL NEED

- 9x13 Cake Pan
- Parchment Paper
- One large sized mixing bowl
- Clear Plastic Cups
- Optional:
  - Hand Mixer OR Stand Mixer
  - Muffin Tin (for easier transport)
  - Two medium sized mixing bowls

Cake:

- 1 Box of White Cake Mix
- All required ingredients listed on boxed cake mix
- Red and bright pink food coloring

Pudding Frosting:

- 1 cup heavy whipping cream
- ¼ cup powdered sugar
- 3 Tablespoons instant vanilla pudding mix, unprepared

Pudding Filling:

- 4 oz cream cheese, softened
- 1 box instant vanilla pudding (3.4 oz)
- 1 cup milk
- 4 oz Cool Whip

Who-Pudding Toppings:

- Sprinkles
- Favorite Candies (we recommend small lollipops like Dum-Dums, Ring Pops, Nerd Clusters, or licorice ropes)

# CAKE INSTRUCTIONS:

- Preheat your oven according to the directions on the box for a 9x13 cake. Line your cake pan with parchment paper
- Mix the cake batter according to the directions on the box cake mix.
- Once the batter is mixed, add in a few drops of red food coloring to one side of the batter and a few drops of the pink to the other side of the batter. Mix the batter a little bit to allow the color to create a swirl pattern. Be sure not to mix too much!
- Pour the cake batter into the cake pan and bake in the oven according to the directions on your box cake mix.
- While you wait, this is a perfect time to wash dishes or start working on your pudding filling!
- Once your cake is ready, pull it out of the oven and let your cake cool in the pan.
- To check to see if your cake is ready, once your cake is a golden color, stick a toothpick into the center of your cake and pull it back out. If the toothpick comes out with no crumbs or goo left on it, that means your cake is fully cooked!
- While you wait for your cake to cool, this is a perfect time to wash dishes or start working on your pudding frosting!
- Pull your cake out of the pan and separate it from the parchment paper. Cut your cake into 24 square that are about the same size. Make sure these squares can fit into your plastic cups. If they're too big, cut all 24 squares in half to create 48 chunks of cake.

# PUDDING FILLING INSTRUCTIONS:

- In a mixing bowl (large or medium), cream softened cream cheese until its smooth. We recommend using a hand mixer or stand mixer, but a sturdy spoon or whisk will work too!
- Add instant pudding mix and milk to the cream cheese mixture and mix until well combined.
- Fold in the Cool Whip until the mixture is completely mixed together. Set aside.
- To fold, you will use a spoon, rubber spatula, or whisk to scoop along the bottom of the bowl and bring the bottom of the mixture to the top. After each time you do this, rotate your bowl a little bit.

# PUDDING FROSTING INSTRUCTIONS:

- In a mixing bowl (large or medium), combine heavy whipping cream, powdered sugar, and pudding mix. Whip the mixture until it is thick and fluffy. We recommend a hand mixer or stand mixer, but a whisk (and an adult with strong arms) will work too!
- Once the mixture is mixed, set aside until it's ready to decorate.
- You can also put the mixture into a sandwich bag or piping bag.

# PUT EVERYTHING TOGETHER!!

- Set your plastic cups out in a row, and fill a third of each cup with your pudding filling.
- Then, place 1 square of cake into each cup, and fill another third of each cup with your pudding filling. Place a final square of cake onto each cup.
- Fill the final third of each cup with your pudding frosting.
- If you're using sandwich bags or piping bags, feel free to create a fun design out of your frosting!
- Put the finishing touches on your Who-Puddings by putting a small lollipop on top or sprinkling sprinkles on top.
- Share your Who-Puddings with everyone at your Who-Feast, and enjoy!

# EVERY WHO DOWN IN WHO-VILLE LIKED CHRISTMAS A LOT!

## A SOCIAL STUDIES ACTIVITY

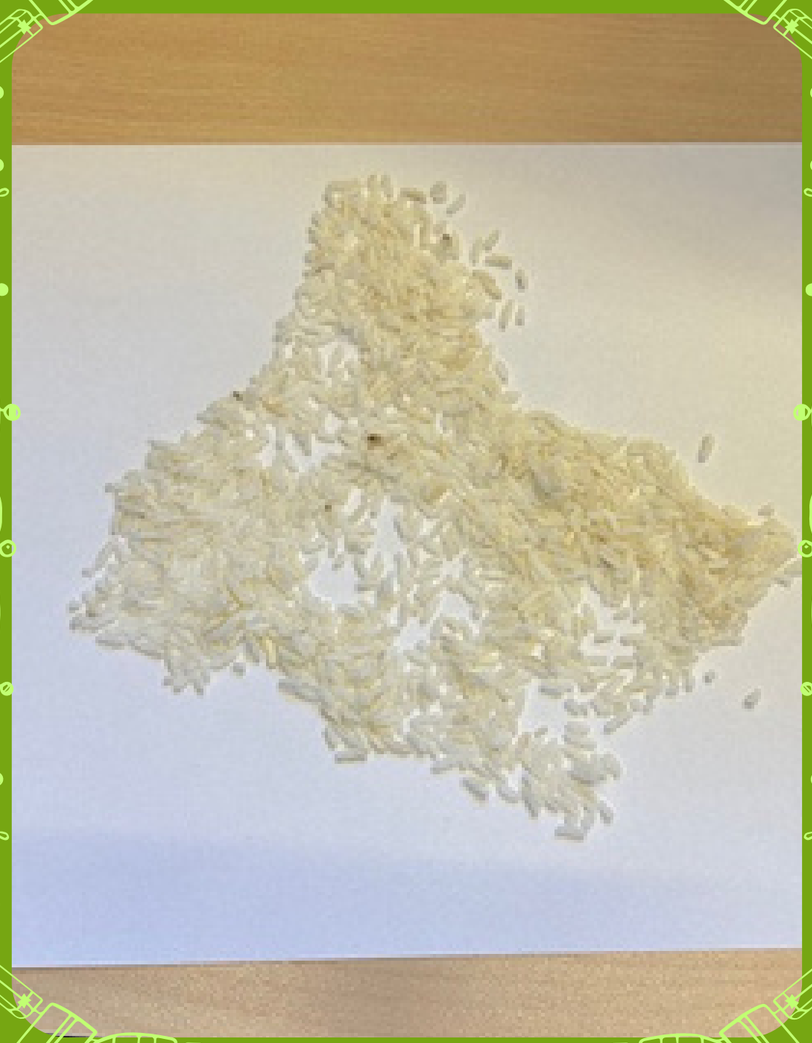
MATERIALS:
PAPER
PENCIL/MARKER/PEN
COLORING SUPPLIES
RICE

AFTER SEEING DR. SEUSS'S HOW THE GRINCH STOLE CHRISTMAS! THE MUSICAL OR READING HOW THE GRINCH STOLE CHRISTMAS, THINK ABOUT ALL OF THE PLACES THAT ARE MENTIONED IN WHO-VILLE

FOLLOW THE DIRECTIONS ON THE NEXT TWO PAGES TO CREATE A MAP OF YOUR OWN VERSION OF WHO-VILLE

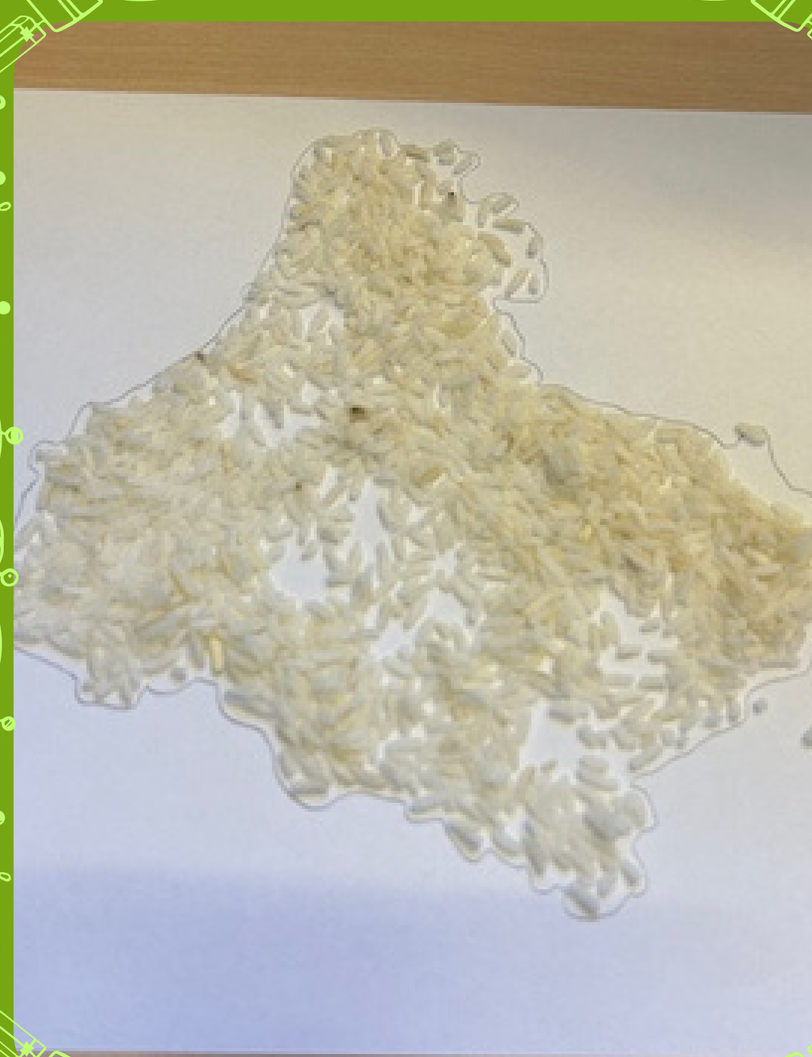
# DIRECTIONS

1:



Lay your paper down on a flat surface. Sprinkle, spill, or pour your rice onto your paper to create the shape of Who-ville. You can also adjust the shape of Who-ville by pushing rice into place as needed.

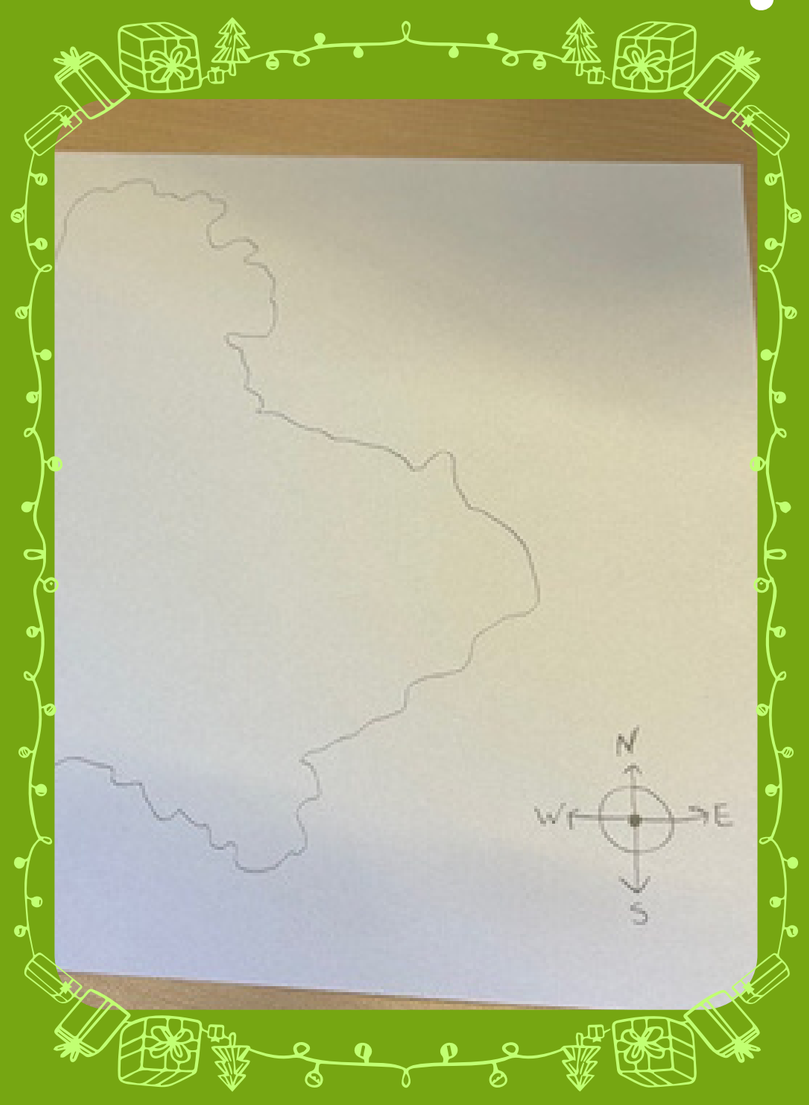
2:



Using your marker or pen, outline your rice. Try and avoid making your lines look straight—the goal is to make it look rough and textured.

# DIRECTIONS

3:




Add a compass rose to your map showing the directions north, south, east and west.

4:

Draw the following places on your map of Who-ville. Make sure to label them!

- Mount Crumpit and The Grinch's cave (just north of Who-ville)
- Cindy-Lou's house
- The shops where Cindy Lou's family goes Christmas shopping
- The center of town where the Whos gather on Christmas morning
- Any other buildings or landmarks that you wish to add!

5:

Color your map of Who-ville!!!

# DESIGN YOUR OWN WHO OUTFIT!

## A Technical Theater Activity

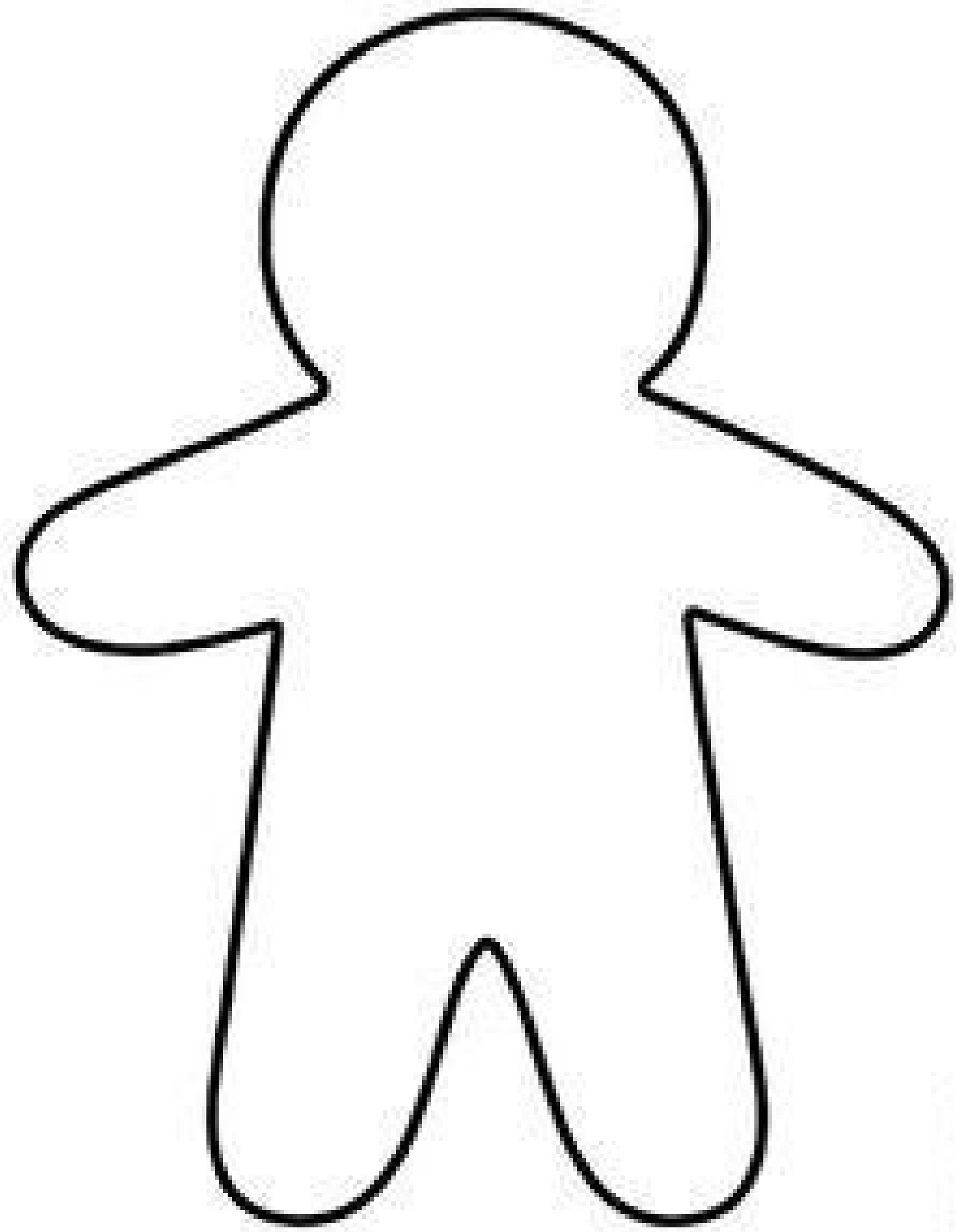
The Whos in Who-ville have such bright and festive fashion! Put yourself in the role of Costume Designer. Using the outline on the following page and the prompts below, design your very own Who outfit!

1. Start by mapping out the outline of their outfit.
    - Are they in pants and a shirt? A dress? Overalls?
2. Then color the outfit in using red and green
    - You can use as much or as little of each color as you would like
3. Add in some patterns!
    - Stripes and polka dots and swirls, oh my!
4. When your Who outfit is complete, add some accessories!
    - Are they wearing a headband? A hat? Reindeer antlers?
5. Finally, give your Who a name! Who is the stylish Who that would rock your creation?

Your Name: _____

Your Who's Name: _____

Design your Who's outfit using this outline!



# POST-SHOW QUESTIONS

- Max says that The Grinch hates the Whos and Christmas. Why do you think he dislikes them so much?

- In the end, The Grinch's heart grows three sizes when he brings the Christmas he stole back to the Whos. What is something you can do during the holiday season to grow your heart three sizes?

- What song from *Dr. Seuss' How The Grinch Stole Christmas! The Musical* is your favorite? Why?

- If you were a Who what would your Who-name be?

- What do you think Christmas will be like in Who-ville next year?

# WHO SAID IT?

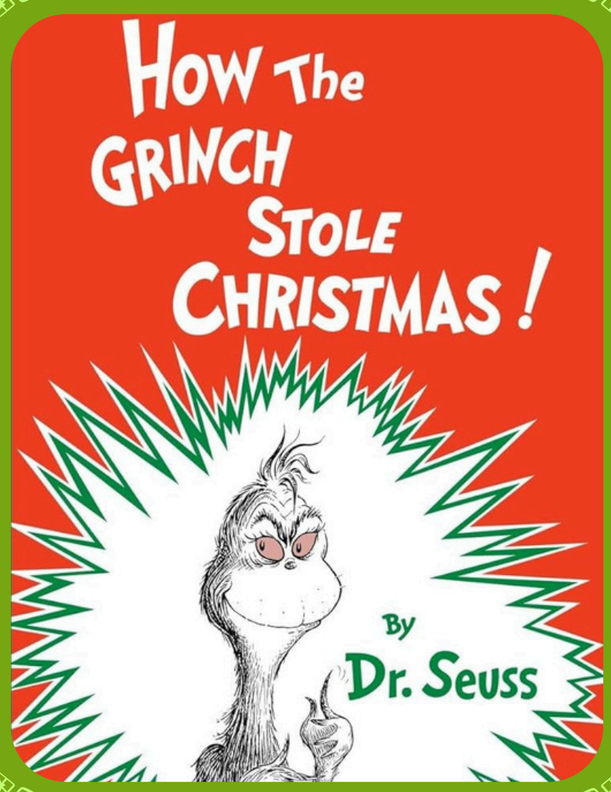
1. “Every Who down in Who-ville liked Christmas a lot. But the Grinch, who lived just north of Who-ville did not.”
2. “I’d like to make the old Grinch a gift.”
3. “Oh, the noise. The noise. The noise. Noise. Noise. Noise.”
4. “We wish you a big Who-ville how-do-you-do!”
5. “You said "Grinches”, Mr. Grinch, does that mean there’s more?”
6. “Hid the figs and pheasants?”
7. “Look! Puppies!”
8. “Oh, look! Little Who-stockings hung all in a row. These dear little socks... will be the first things to go!”
9. “I can hardly believe it- Santy Claus! But why, why are you taking our Christmas tree? Why?”
10. “Oh, it’s a ballad!”
11. “There aren’t any presents. There aren’t any toys. I slept rather soundly- did you hear a noise?”
12. “It came without packages, boxes, or bags!”
13. “Merry Christmas, Whos one and all!”
14. “The presents are great, and we’re grateful, it’s true. But really the only thing missing was you.”

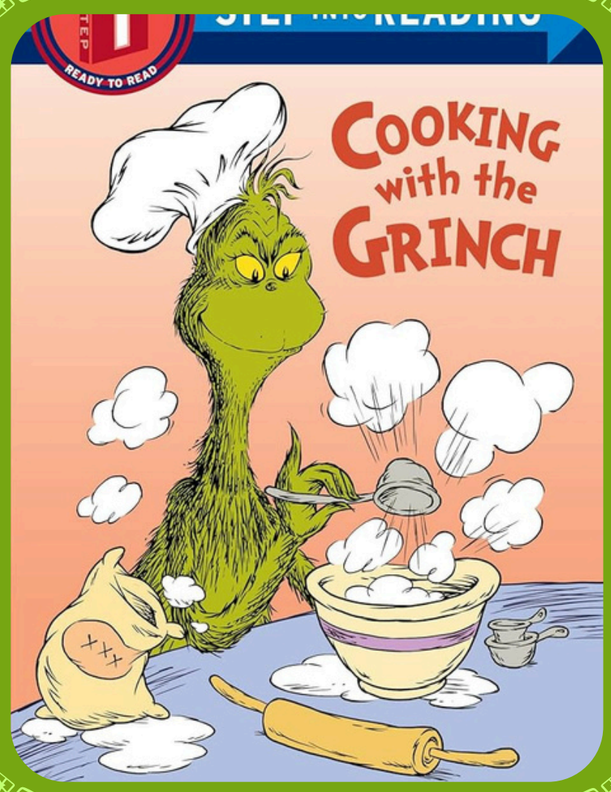
# WHO SAID IT?

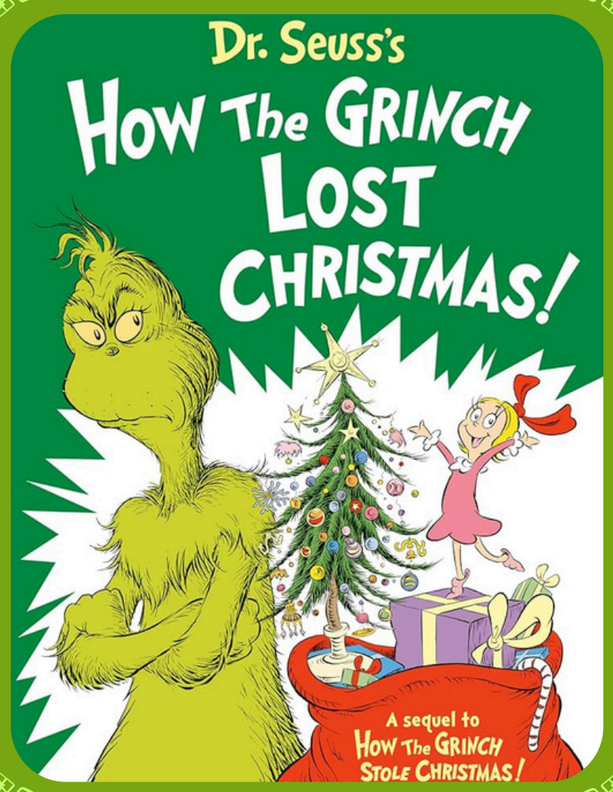
## ANSWER KEY

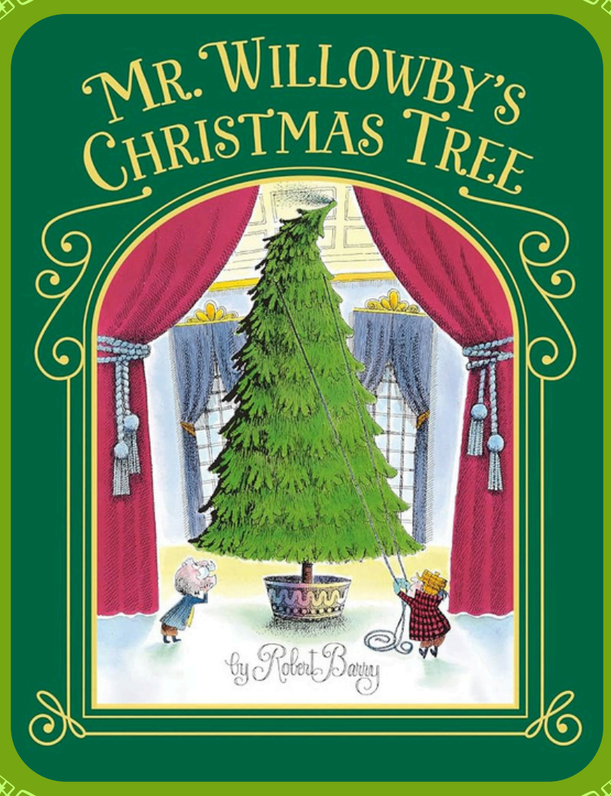
1. OLD MAX
2. CINDY-LOU
3. THE GRINCH
4. GRANDMA WHO
5. YOUNG MAX
6. GRANDPA WHO
7. YOUNG MAX
8. THE GRINCH
9. CINDY-LOU
10. THE GRINCH
11. PAPA WHO
12. YOUNG MAX
13. THE GRINCH
14. CINDY-LOU

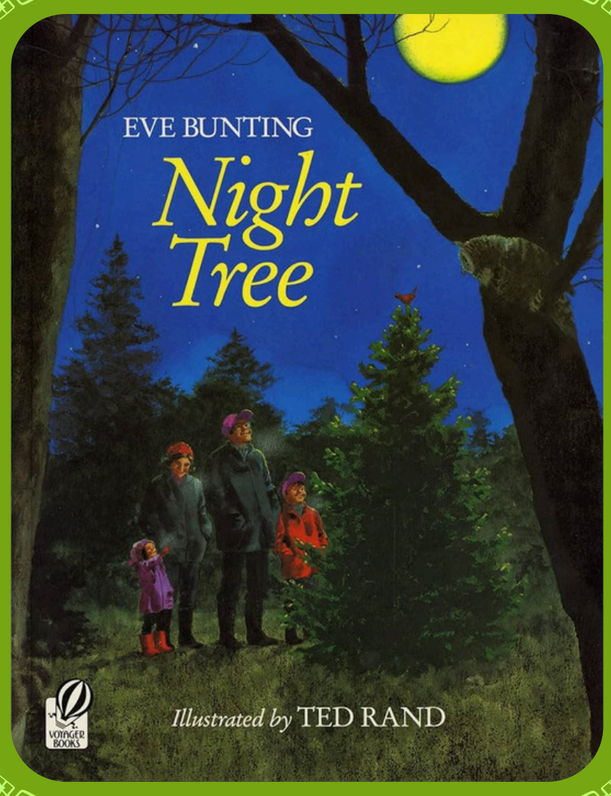
# RECOMMENDED READING

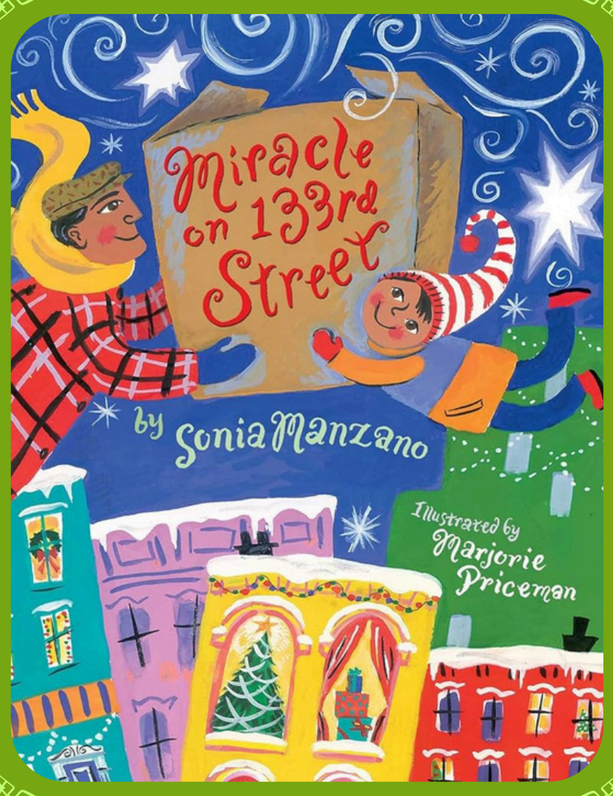


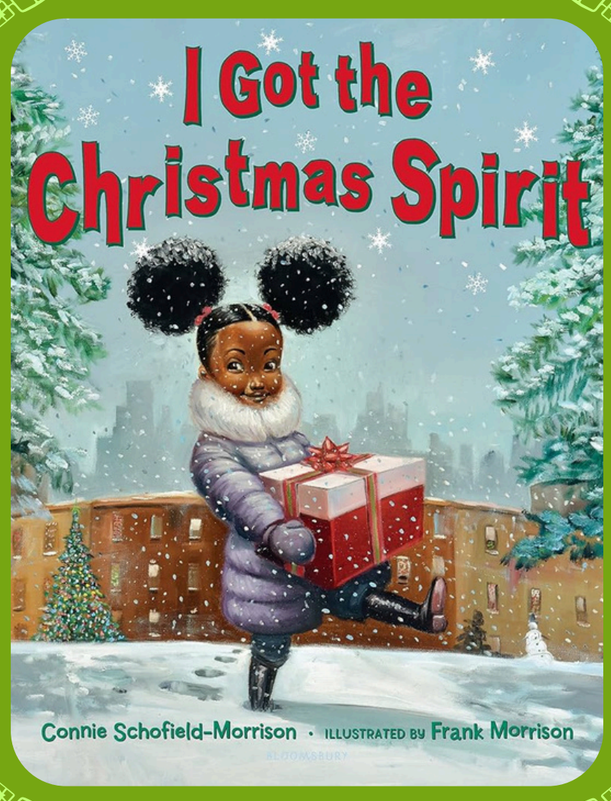



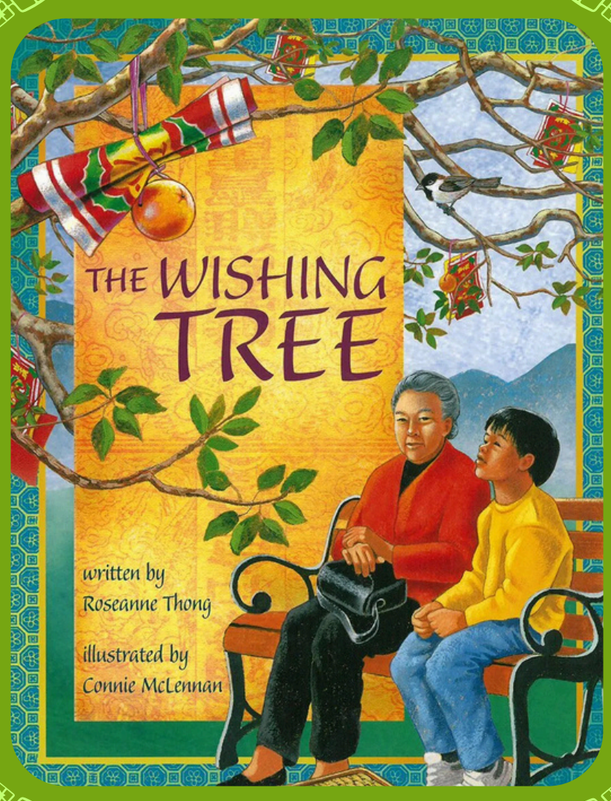



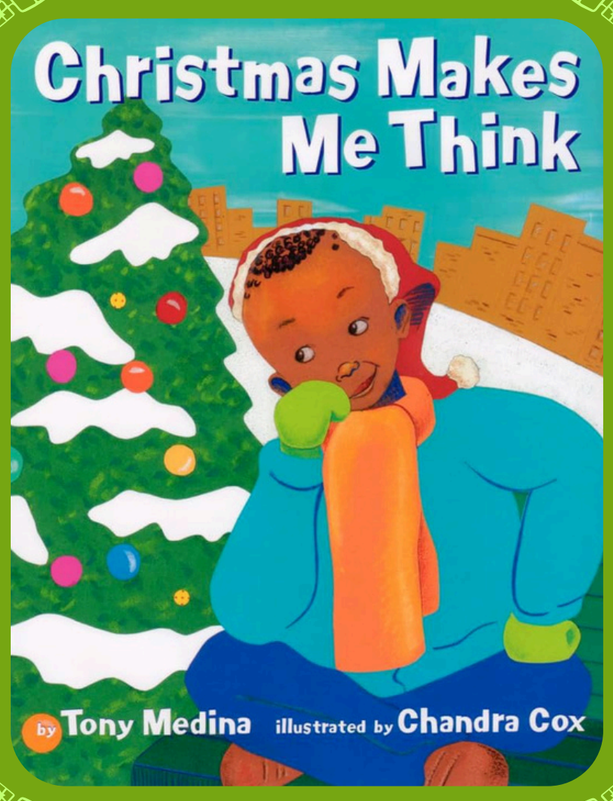



# THE GRINCH SHOW PLAYLIST

**Get into the festivities in Whoville with this special show playlist!**

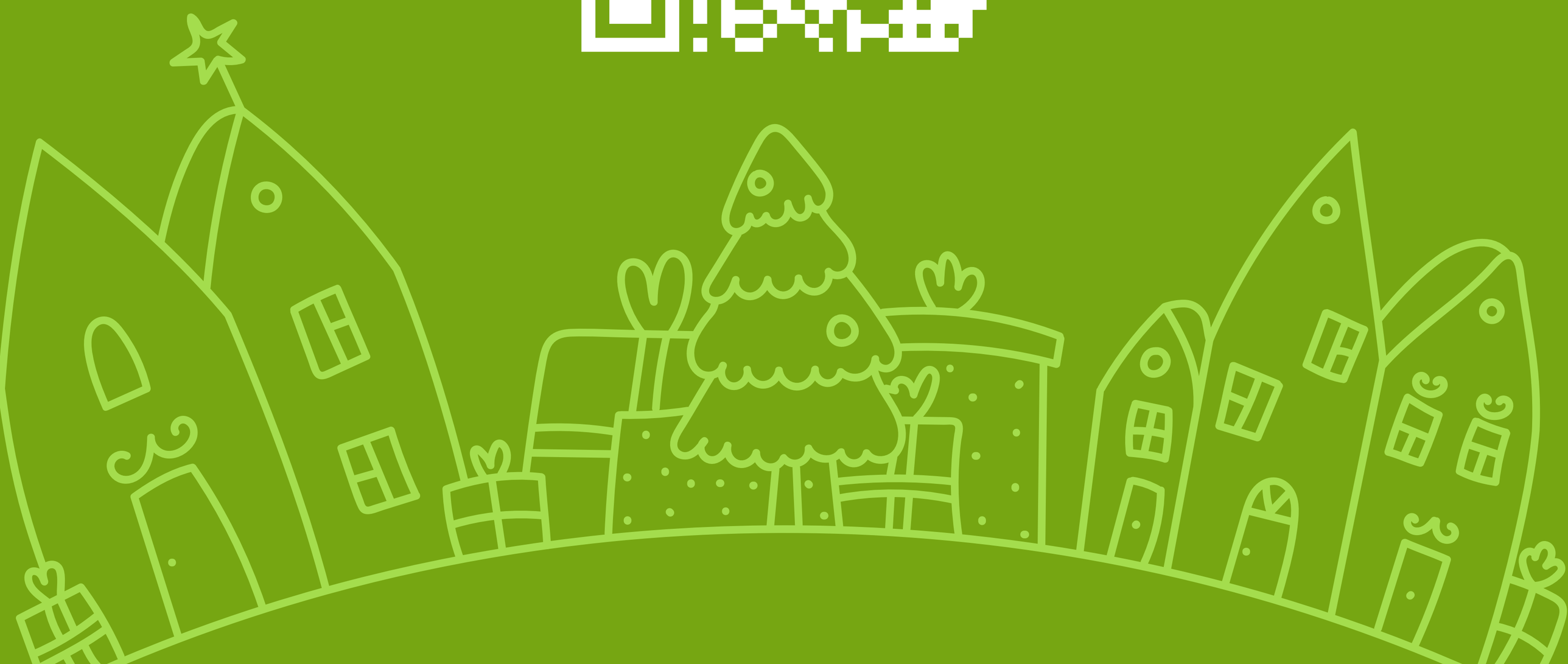
Enjoy a curated playlist that aims to capture the essence of *Dr. Seuss' How The Grinch Stole Christmas! The Musical* through themed music that can be enjoyed by theater-goers of all ages

# THANK YOU TO OUR DONORS!

Philanthropy is giving (time, money, goods, or talents) to make the world a better place. At First Stage we are so thankful to our donors, sponsors, volunteers, families, students and staff who help transform lives through theater!

**Sponsors and donors for this production:**

**First Stage's current donors:**



# HOW CAN YOU GET INVOLVED?

Volunteer front of house for a production

Make a monetary donation

Take an Academy class

Attend a performance

Bring First Stage to your school

Tell your friends about First Stage

# GROW YOUR HEART 3 SIZES

When The Grinch gives Christmas back to the Whos his heart grows three sizes!
Here is a list of places that collect toys and gifts and
donate them to those in need during the holiday season.
Consider donating or volunteering so that your heart can grow three sizes too!

**Coats for Kids and Toy Shop at the Salvation Army**

**The Magic Room at the Ronald McDonald House of Eastern Wisconsin**

**Children's Wisconsin**

**Toys for Tots**

**Milwaukee Rescue Mission**

**Capuchin Community Services' House of Peace**

# FIRST STAGE STAFF FEATURE

## GET TO KNOW

**Could you describe what you do for First Stage and how long you've been working here?**

I'm First Stage's Grants Manager, and I've been working at First Stage for a little over 3 years now. What is a grant, you may ask? A grant is support, such as a donation, that is not expected to be paid back. Grants are usually given to organizations after an employee submits a written request to a foundation, corporation, or government agency. First Stage uses money from grants to ensure that we can put on professional theater performances, host Theater Academy classes, and visit classrooms via our Theater in Education programs. So, what I do is write to foundations, businesses, or the government to ask them to help us continue providing our nationally leading theater experiences to youth and families across Southeastern Wisconsin.

**If you had to spend a day in Who-ville, what would you do?**

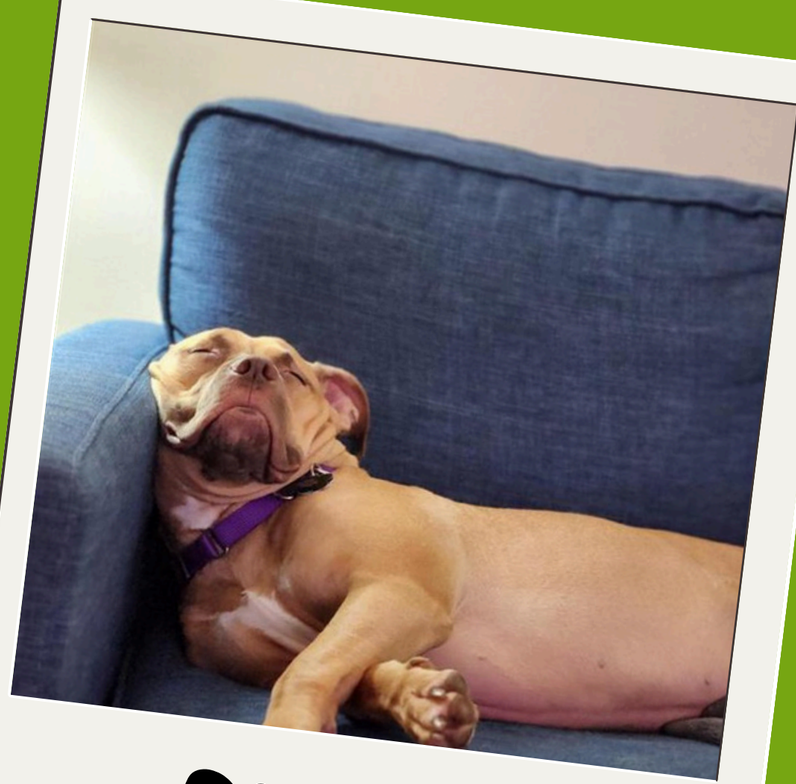
Hmm, I would probably want to try and play all of the cool and wild instruments in Who-ville! Especially the Jingtinglers, Whohoopers, and Trumtookas.

**The Whos in Who-ville have loads of traditions for the holiday season. What are some of your favorite traditions for this time of the year?**

One of my favorite holiday traditions is a silly one involving a pickle-shaped Christmas tree ornament. Every year, someone in my family places a pickle ornament in the tree so that it's very hidden. When Christmas morning comes, my family gathers around the tree to see who can find the hidden pickle ornament first. Whoever wins gets an extra present!

# FIRST STAGE STAFF FEATURE

## GET TO KNOW ABI



PUMBA

**The Grinch's closest friend at the start of the story is his dog Max. Do you have any furry friends? What are their names? How long have they been a part of your life?**

I do indeed have a furry friend! His name is Pumba, and my fiancé and I adopted him back in September 2025. Pumba is such a sweet, goofy dog, and he absolutely loves to cuddle. When Pumba gets really excited, he starts spinning in circles!

**The holiday season is a time for giving. What does a gift to First Stage do?**

A gift to First Stage ensures that theater continues to be accessible for all. Whether your gift supports our ability to build sets and sew costumes for shows, support families trying to purchase theater tickets, allow students to take Theater Academy classes, or provide discounts to schools receiving our arts-integrated Theater in Education workshops, you are helping folks to connect to the arts in new and exciting ways. The benefits of the arts, especially theater, include increased empathy, creativity, and a sense of belonging.

**If you were The Grinch, what would make your heart grow three sizes?**

I always love to read feedback, questions, and comments that people have about the work First Stage does. Whenever someone takes the time to offer thoughtful feedback or a heartfelt compliment, it lets me know that our community really cares about our mission. I love hearing about the incredible impact First Stage makes, and I love hearing how we can improve to better serve our entire community. As someone who has been positively transformed by their love of theater, I'm so thankful that I can help others to experience theater, too.