

ENRICHMENT GUIDE & SOCIAL STORY



# A CHARLIE BROWN Christmas

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## DEAR EDUCATORS AND PARENTS,

Come home for the holidays with First Stage and this treasured holiday classic. Everyone is giddy with Christmas cheer, but Charlie Brown has the Yuletide blues. Will directing the Christmas play help him get in the spirit of the season? Join Charlie Brown, Snoopy, and the rest of the Peanuts gang as they learn the true meaning of Christmas. This is one holiday gift the entire family will treasure.

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 A CHARLIE BROWN CHRISTMAS with your students as a teaching tool. 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!



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# SYNOPSIS

Portions of text that appear in **bold and that are underlined** may be considered loud for some audience members.

All of the children are playing outside; some are skating, some are making snowballs, and even Charlie Brown is trying to have fun. He talks to Linus about how he feels there must be something wrong with him: he doesn't feel happy during the Christmas season. After Linus leaves, Charlie Brown checks the mail and finds the mailbox empty. No one has sent him a Christmas card.

Later, Schroeder, Patty, Lucy and Linus play outside in the snow, catching snowflakes on their tongues. They try hitting a can off of a wall with snowballs, but only Linus and his blanket are successful.

Charlie Brown comes across the kids and visits Lucy's psychiatric booth. She tries to figure out what Charlie Brown is afraid of and determines that he is afraid of everything. Charlie Brown admits that he always feels let down at Christmas. Lucy suggests that he should direct the Christmas play in order to get more involved at Christmastime.

On his way to rehearsal, Charlie Brown sees Snoopy decorating his doghouse for a contest and laments about the commercialization of Christmas. He runs into his sister Sally as well, who asks him to write a letter to Santa for her asking for money, further upsetting him.

Charlie Brown arrives at rehearsal and has Lucy help him pass out scripts and costumes. She tells everyone what to do. Charlie Brown takes over and rehearsal begins. **No one is working together, and Charlie Brown gets frustrated.** He doesn't want this play to be another commercialization of Christmas, but Lucy tells him that's just what Christmas is. Charlie Brown decides they need a Christmas tree, and he and Linus leave to find one.

Charlie Brown and Linus arrive at the Christmas tree lot and begin their search. Most of the trees are aluminum, but Charlie Brown finds a little green one. They take the tree and head back to rehearsal. When they arrive, the other kids call him stupid and hopeless for getting such a little, sad tree. Charlie Brown asks again what Christmas is all about, and Linus tells him the story of Christmas and the birth of baby Jesus.

Charlie Brown is inspired by Linus and takes the tree home to decorate it for the play. The first ornament he puts on it tips the tree over and Charlie Brown abandons his project, sure that everything he touches gets ruined. Linus and the rest of the kids come and finish decorating the tree for Charlie Brown, surprising him and finally making him smile on Christmas.

# PRE-SHOW QUESTIONS



1. A Charlie Brown Christmas is a made for TV special that some families have a tradition of watching every holiday season. What are some traditions you have with your family? Can you think of a new tradition to try this year?
2. Charlie Brown can't seem to catch the holiday spirit. What do you do to get you in the holiday mood?
3. Charlie Brown doesn't think the true meaning of Christmas can be bought at a store. What do you think the true meaning of Christmas is?
4. Charlie Brown is feeling down and out and his friends try to cheer him up. How do you help cheer up friends when they are feeling blue?

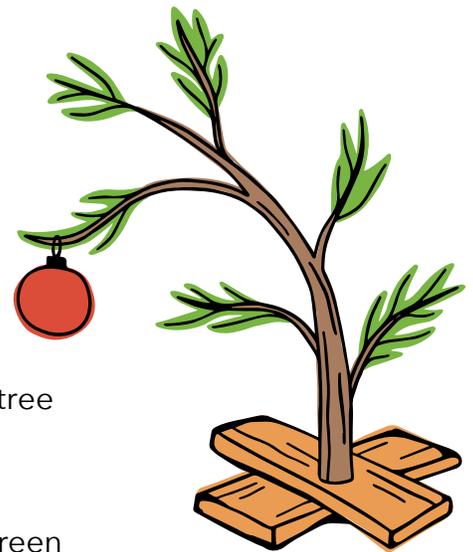
# THE PERFECT CHRISTMAS TREE

## ACTIVITY

Charlie Brown finds his perfect Christmas tree - a tree that he felt needed a home and needed him. You can work together with family and friends to make a Christmas tree from your handprints - a tree that symbolizes how when we work together, we can create something truly special.

### 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 person in your group trace their hand on pieces of green construction paper. Cut out the handprint. Fold the wrist over.
2. Make a lot of paper hands (the number you will need depends on the size of your tree and/or group), and make sure each person's name is on the back of each of their hand prints. You may wish to have each person write Christmas wishes for themselves on some paper hands, and a Christmas wishes for others on different ones.
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 slightly overlap the next hand.
6. Cut out a yellow star for the top of the tree. Attach it to the tree with glue.
7. Optional: Decorate your tree with glitter, glitter glue, or paper ornaments.

# POST-SHOW QUESTIONS



1. At the beginning of the show, Charlie Brown says he doesn't understand Christmas. Do you think he understands it better at the end of the show? How would you explain Christmas to someone like Charlie Brown?
2. Commercialization means to exploit or manage something to make a profit. What other holidays are commercialized? What is lost when people commercialize things?
3. Linus says that the tree Charlie Brown got 'just needed a little love.' What have you made better by giving a little love? What other things that don't cost money can you give during the holiday season, and the rest of the year?
4. All the kids work together at the end to give Charlie Brown a Christmas gift. When have you worked together with others? How is working as a team different than doing something by yourself? How does cooperation and team – work make you feel?

# WHO SAID IT?

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1. "I just don't understand Christmas, I guess"
2. "Of all the Charlie Browns in the world, you're the Charlie Browniest"
3. "It's too early. I never eat December snowflakes. I always wait until January"
4. "How I love hearing that old money plate, that beautiful sound of cold, hard cash – that beautiful, beautiful sound"
5. "All I want is what I have coming to me. All I want is my fair share"
6. "This will be the worst Christmas play ever"
7. "In spite of my outward appearance, I shall try to run a neat inn"
8. "Ugh! I've been kissed by a dog! I have dog germs! Get hot water! Get some disinfectant! Get some iodine!"
9. "Christmas is not only getting too commercial; it's getting too dangerous"
10. "I can't go on. There's too much dust. It's taking the curl out of my naturally curly hair"

**A**  
**CHARLIE**   
**BROWN**   
*Christmas*

**GOING TO A SHOW AT  
THE MARCUS CENTER'S  
TODD WEHR THEATER**

**SOCIAL STORY**

In partnership with



# I am going to see a First Stage show at the Todd Wehr Theater.



I am going to see the show with

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**Watching a play is like watching TV or a movie,  
except people are on stage in front of us.**



They are called actors. They can see and hear me too.  
I can't turn the channel or turn the volume up and down.

# A play is made up of many interesting things.



Costumes



Scenery



Sound



Lighting

When we arrive at the theater, we will probably have to climb some stairs. There are stairs outside the building, and inside the building.



We may need to wait in line to scan our tickets.



When we are waiting, I can stay with my family or teacher.

## Masks are required in the theater.



I will keep my mask over my nose and mouth the entire time I am there.

# An usher will help us find our seats.

We will enter the theater and find our seats.



There are bathrooms in the lobby. If I need to, I can use the bathroom before we go to our seats.

**Someone will show us where to sit.**



The audience area is for all of us.



The stage is for the actors only.

## When I am in the theater waiting for the show to start:

1. I can talk to my family or friends.
2. I can take a short break in the lobby.



# There will be a lot of people in theater and it may get noisy.

If it gets too loud:

1. I can bring headphones if I want.
2. I can put my hands over my ears.
3. I can leave the room and take a short break in the lobby.



I can come back when I am ready.

## During the show:

1. I can watch and listen to the actors quietly.
2. I can applaud if I like something.
3. I can hold things in my hand that make me feel comfortable.



## If I need to talk:

1. I can talk quietly to my family.
2. I can write down what I want to say.
3. I can leave the room.

# After the show there will be a “talkback.”

**The talkback is a chance for me to ask questions.**

1. I will raise my hand to show that I want to ask a question.
2. I will wait for the leader to call on me to ask my question.
3. I don't have to ask a question if I don't want.



**I can ask different kinds of questions:**

1. I can ask questions about the show.
2. I can ask questions about the scenery, costumes, lights, or sound.

**After the show is finished,  
I will leave the theater with my family.**



# MEET THE "SCHULZ" CAST

# A CHARLIE BROWN Christmas



These are the actors you will see at the  
Sensory Friendly Performance on  
Wednesday, December 1 at 7pm



THIS IS JT.



JT plays a character named Snoopy. Snoopy is Charlie Brown's pet dog. Snoopy loves to play with Charlie and their friends. Snoopy sometimes pretends to be a pilot.



## THIS IS EDWARD.



Edward plays a character named Charlie Brown. Charlie Brown feels sad, even though it is Christmas time. They are the director of the holiday play.

# THIS IS WILLIAM.



William plays a character named Linus.  
Linus is Charlie's closest friend and is very smart.  
They always carry a blanket around with them.

# THIS IS AILIE.



Ailie plays a character named Lucy.  
Lucy runs a psychiatrist's booth where they give people advice. Lucy can be bossy.

A  
**CHARLIE  
BROWN**  
Christmas



**THIS IS BEN.**



Ben plays a character named Schroeder.  
Schroeder plays the piano.



**THIS IS ABIGAIL.**



They play a character named Violet.  
Violet is sometimes rude to Charlie Brown.



## THIS IS LAUREN.



Lauren plays a character named Sally. Sally is Charlie Brown's younger sister. Sally asks Charlie to help them write a letter to Santa Claus. Sally has a crush on Linus.

# THIS IS REESE.



Reese plays a character named Frieda. Frieda has curly hair and is very proud of it. They play the inn-keeper in the holiday play.

# THIS IS LAYTON.



Layton plays a character named Pig-Pen. Pig-Pen is very messy. Pig-Pen plays the innkeeper in the holiday play.



**THIS IS COLIN.**



Colin plays a character named Shermy.  
Shermy plays a shepherd in the holiday play.

# THIS IS SYDNEY.



Sydney plays a character named Patty.  
Patty likes to catch snowflakes on their tongue.

# THIS IS LAUREN.



Lauren plays an ice-skater. They perform a skating routine in the play.

# THIS IS LAUREN.



Lauren plays an ice-skater. They perform a skating routine in the play.



# THIS IS PAUL.



Paul plays piano and leads all of the music in the play.

# A CHARLIE BROWN Christmas



*A Charlie Brown Christmas is a musical.*



Characters will be singing and dancing in the play.