



MERRY CHRISTMAS MOUSE

Script
by
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Classroom Guide Kindergarten - Grade 1

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How to Use This Guide

This classroom guide for *Merry Christmas Mouse* is designed for Texas students in kindergarten and Grade 1. It offers activities to help you integrate a performance of *Merry Christmas Mouse* into English language arts (ELA), mathematics, science, social studies, music, art, and theatre curricula.

All activities in this guide are linked to Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) content standards.

For students outside Texas, this guide's ELA and math activities also are linked to Common Core standards. At the back of this guide, you will find a list of the guide activities and their related Texas and Common Core standards.

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1: Discussion Questions

Before the Performance

Merry Christmas Mouse is a stage play. What is a stage play?

- How is a play similar to a TV show or movie?
- How is it different?

Who performs the parts (roles) in a play?

- What kinds of skills do you think performers need to have to perform in plays?
- Who else works on plays? (Remember: you may not see them on stage!)

Based on the title of the play...

- What do you think the set will look like?
- What props do you think the actors may use?

During the Performance

When you watch a play, you are a member of the audience. What kinds of things should you do as an audience member? Examples:

- Pay attention
- Laugh when something funny happens
- Clap if you enjoy something

What kinds of things should you *not* do as an audience member? Examples:

- Talk to your neighbor
- Use a cell phone during the performance
- Yell at the actors (unless they ask you to!)

After the Performance

What did you think of the play?

- How did the language in the play tell you it was about pirates?
- How did the show reflect holiday traditions?

Describe the performers in the play.

- What did they do to make their characters special (different from the other characters)?
- How did they use their bodies to play their characters (using voice, movement, etc)?
- Did you see anyone else who worked on the play besides the performers on stage?

Describe the characters' costumes.

- What did each character's costume tell you about that character?
- Did any of the performers change costumes?
 - If so, why do you think they needed to change costumes?

Describe the set of the play.

- Did it have a lot of locations?
- Did it look like a place you've been to before?
- How did different lighting change how the set looked for different scenes?

Did the play have music in it?

- If so, was it only in the background, or did it help tell the story?
- What instruments did you hear in the music?

If you were going to direct *Merry Christmas Mouse*, how would your production be different from the play you saw by Magik?

2: Magik Must-Reads

For each of our productions at The Magik Theatre, we choose a theme related to the show. Then we create a list of Magik Must-Reads on that theme.

The reading theme for *Merry Christmas Mouse* is **Holidays**:

The Magik Must-Reads (Kindergarten - Grade 1) for *Merry Christmas Mouse* are:

Thanksgiving Mice! by Bethany Roberts, Doug Cushman (Illus)

Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer by Rick Bunsen, Arkadia (Illus)

Masiey's Christmas Day by Lucy Cousins

Hanukkah Cat by Chaya M Burstein and Judy Hants Henn

Read them as a class or let students choose two or more to read. Then use these questions for discussion or book reports:

Theme

How did the theme of **Holidays** show in each book? Explain.

Setting

Describe the settings of each book.

- What details can you remember?
- Were the settings similar to a place you know or a place you've visited?

How were the settings similar to each other? How were they different?

How were the settings related to the theme of **Holidays**? Explain.

Characters

Who were the main characters of each book?

Did any characters show up in more than one book?

Were the characters of one book similar to another book's characters in any other ways?

Plot

What did the main characters of the books want most?

Did anyone or anything stand between the main characters and their goals?

Did the main characters get what they wanted? How?

How were the plots of the books similar? How were they different?

3: Write and Illustrate Your Own Story

In *Merry Christmas Mouse*, Maddy Mouse is causing all kinds of holiday trouble that her brother Mitchell is trying to fix. As a class, write a story about a character who solves a problem for someone else.


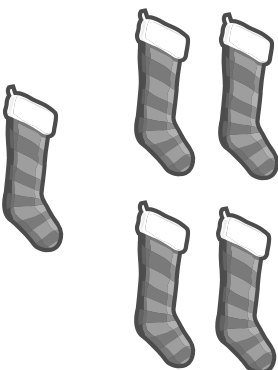
Answer these questions as you write your story:


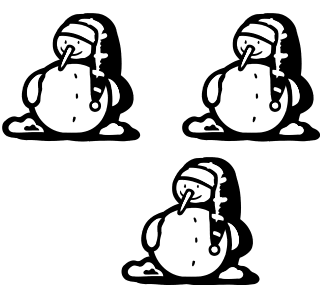
- Who is your main character?
- Who are your other characters (if any)?
- What does your main character want?
- What is keeping your main character from what he or she wants?
- How does your main character tackle the problem?
- How does your story end?
- Did your main character learn anything?


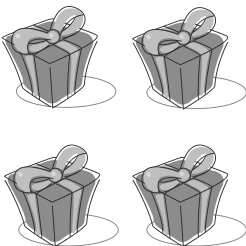
In the space below, draw a picture to illustrate your story.

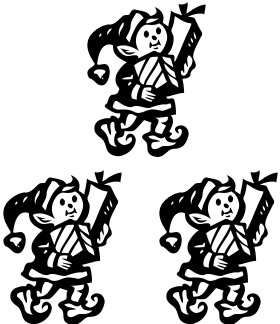

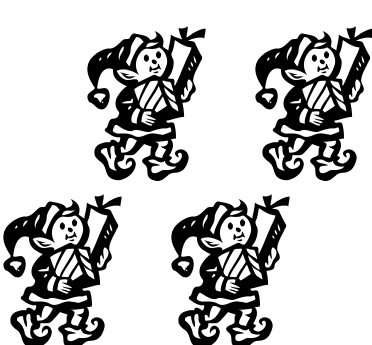
4: Picture Problems

 +  = ?

 -  = ?

 +  = ?

 -  = ?

 +  +  = ?

5: Tracking Weather

Weather happens all around us. It can affect all kinds of things, from how well crops grow on a farm to if there will be snow for Christmas. Keeping track of weather, and then looking at our records, helps us predict what kind of weather may happen in the future.

Work together as a class to make a weather board. To the top half of the board, draw or attach a monthly calendar. On the bottom half, leave space to describe today's weather. Make cutouts to represent these weather conditions:

- Sunny
- Part sun / part cloud
- Cloudy
- Rain
- Thunder / lightning
- Snow
- Windy

Mount a thermometer outside your classroom. Every morning, discuss the current weather. Display the cutouts that represent those conditions, and write a brief description on the calendar (e.g.: sunny and windy). Measure the outside temperature and record it on the calendar, too.

After several weeks, review your calendar. Do you see patterns? Can you predict what the weather will be tomorrow?

Try measuring weather using additional tools, like an anemometer for wind, a barometer for air pressure, or a rain gauge.

Talk about how people get information about weather.

- How does your family use that information?
- Does weather information affect the kind of clothes you wear to school?
- How did weather affect the characters in *Merry Christmas Mouse*?

6: Holidays in Our Culture

Culture is how we structure our lives and express ourselves. It is made up of our laws and belief systems, as well as our stories, songs, art work, and other creative projects. Holidays are also part of our culture.

What part do holidays play in our culture?

- Name as many holidays as you can think of that play a part in our culture.
- Are some holidays considered more important than others?
 - Why do you think so? How can you tell?
- Why do you think we celebrate holidays?
- What would life be like without holidays?

Think about the holidays you celebrate with your family.

- Which holidays are most important?
 - How can you tell?
- What is your favorite holiday?
 - How do you celebrate it?
 - Do you make special food?
 - Do you dress differently from other days?
 - Do you give or receive gifts?
 - Do you stay home from school?

As a class, discuss the holidays celebrated by Americans in general and your family in particular.

- What holidays do you celebrate in common?
 - Which are different?
- Listening to your classmates, did you learn about a holiday you didn't know about before the discussion?

What holiday are the mice in *Merry Christmas Mouse* getting ready to celebrate?

- How can you tell?
- Do you celebrate the same holiday?
 - If so, how are your holiday traditions similar to the mice's traditions?
 - How are they different?

As a class, choose a culture other than your own. Research how people of that culture celebrate holidays.

- Do holidays play a part in that culture?
- Which holidays are considered most important?
- Does that culture celebrate any of the same holidays your culture celebrates?
 - If so, does it celebrate those holidays in the same way or differently?
- Based on the holidays celebrated, which cultures would you most like to live in? Why?

7: Draw What You Saw!

Choose your favorite moment from *Merry Christmas Mouse*? Use the space below to draw a picture of that moment. Use your own colors and style to show that scene however you want to. When you finish, share your picture with your class. Be ready to answer questions about your picture, such as:

- Who does your picture show?
- What is happening in your picture?
- Why did you choose the colors you used?
- How did you show emotions (feelings) in your picture?
- What happened just before the moment you drew? What will happen just afterward?
- Did anyone else draw the same moment you drew?
 - How is their picture similar?
 - How is it different?



8: Exploring Music , Holiday Songs

In the play of *Merry Christmas Mouse*, the characters sing holiday music while they prepare for Christmas. Oftentimes different holidays have special songs. For example when it is someone's birthday we always sing "*Happy Birthday*." Can you think of other songs that are connected to a holiday or special event?

As an exploration exercise, play samples of several different musical pieces for your students. Encourage children to add dance/movement to their listening experience. Make sure students have room to move around. Point out different tempos and rhythms to encourage change in dance/movement. Help students find the beat of a piece by clapping, marching in place, snapping your fingers, etc.

Using a variety of musical instruments** or everyday objects***, lead students through a discussion of musical qualities:

- Demonstrate musical qualities
 - loud vs. soft sounds
 - high-pitched notes vs. low-pitched notes
 - fast rhythms vs. slow rhythms
- Ask students to emulate your examples using instruments, their voices, or their bodies (e.g., clapping their hands, snapping their fingers, clicking their tongues)
- Ask students to sort instruments
 - sort single-pitch instruments from low-pitched to high-pitched
 - sort single-pitch instruments separately from multi-pitch instruments
- Create a simple rhythmic pattern
 - ask students to repeat it
 - ask students to create and repeat their own simple rhythmic patterns
- Create a simple melody
 - ask students to repeat it
 - ask students to create and play their own simple melodies

*** If you live in a city or town with music resources like a university music department, professional orchestra, or high school band program, consider asking local musicians to demonstrate their instruments for your students.*

****Including: cardboard oatmeal can (with lid), rubber band, chopsticks, metal spoons, plastic bucket, plastic storage bin, pots and pans, pot/pan lids, wooden spoon, plastic cup with lid, filled ¼ full with dry beans or rice, cardboard tubes, glasses with different levels of water*

TEXAS

Kindergarten

<u>Activity</u>	<u>Standard(s)</u>
1	Fine Arts 117.4.b.5
2	ELA 110.11.b.5
3	ELA 110.11.b.13-14
4	Math 111.12.b.1, 3-4
5	Science 112.11.b.8
6	Soc Studies 113.11.b.12
7	Fine Arts 117.2.b.1-2, 4
8	Fine Arts 117.3.b.1-2, 4

Grade 1

<u>Activity</u>	<u>Standard(s)</u>
1	Fine Arts 117.7.b.5
2	ELA 110.12.b.6
3	ELA 110.12.b.17-18
4	Math 111.13.b.1-3
5	Science 112.12.b.8
6	Soc Studies 113.12.b.15
7	Fine Arts 117.5.b.1-2, 4
8	Fine Arts 117.6.b.1-2, 4

COMMON CORE

Kindergarten

<u>Activity</u>	<u>Standard(s)</u>
2	ELA L.K.4
3	ELA W.K.3
4	Math K.OA.1-2

Grade 1

<u>Activity</u>	<u>Standard(s)</u>
2	ELA L.1.4
3	ELA W.1.3
4	Math 1.OA.1-2, 5, 7-8