



BROWARD
CENTER
— *for the* —
PERFORMING ARTS



STUDY GUIDE

HIGH SCHOOL

A CHRISTMAS STORY The Musical

slow burn
THEATRE CO.

Study Guides are produced in partnership with Broward County Public Schools.

Performance Summary

A CHRISTMAS STORY, the Musical, is an adaptation from the 1983 American film by Jean Shepherd, which is based on his novel “In God We Trust, All Others Pay Cash.” The story is the same, but the presentation is very different as this is a live, musical performance on stage. Note how music, lyrics, and underscoring are used to enhance the scenes as well as sets, lights, sound, costumes, and props.

Set in the 1940s, this play tells the story of a young boy named Ralphie Parker who attempts to convince his parents, his teacher, and Santa that a Red Ryder B.B. gun is the perfect Christmas gift. Narrated by Ralphie’s adult self, this play is a satirical tale of a middle-class family negotiating the challenges of Christmas, through the lens of a nine-year old boy.

Theatre Etiquette

(Before the Show)

It is often helpful to remind students of appropriate audience etiquette by explaining and discussing **why** these rules of behavior are important.

Audience members should:

- listen carefully to the ushers, your teachers – this gets everyone to their seats quickly and ensures a pleasant experience
- walk single-file and hold hand-rails as you use steps – this also keeps everyone safe
- listen carefully to the performers – they are working hard to entertain and inform you with lots of clues about the story
- refrain from talking – this allows everyone to enjoy the performance without being distracted
- laugh if something is funny, but not too loudly – you don't want to miss any dialogue
- pay attention to the lighting, scenery, costumes, and music – all of these elements help provide more details to tell the story in an interesting way
- applaud at the end – this shows the performers that you respect and appreciate their work

Teacher Instructions (After the Show) – *Choose from the activities listed on the following pages to extend student learning.*

Language Arts Connection

Think about Ralphie’s plea for a special gift. Create a wish list for three gifts you want to receive on a holiday your family might celebrate. Put the list in priority order and explain why these gifts would be perfect for you (e.g. how you would use them) (LAFS.910.W.1.3)

Priority Order	Description of Gift with justification

Name: _____

Persuasion

(LAFS.910.SL.1.1)

Consider Ralphie's letter:

"What I want for Christmas is a legendary official Red Ryder carbine action 200-shot Range Model air rifle with a compass and this thing which tells time built right into the stock. It is a very good thing to get for Christmas. I don't think Tinker Toys are a very good Christmas present. Lincoln Logs aren't a good present either. The end. P.S. Have a Merry Christmas, Miss Shields."

Engage in a class discussion (debate) based on the persuasion chart below that would make Ralphie's argument even more compelling. Provide your example in the last column.

Technique	Definition	Example
Appeal to Authority	Important people or experts can seem convincing	
Appeal to Reason	Facts, numbers, information, and logic	
Appeal to Emotion	Connect to feelings – happy, sad, angry ...	
Appeal to Trust	Build trust and believability	
Bandwagon	If everyone believes, it must be true	
Rhetorical Question	These questions are not intended to be answered – states the obvious	
Repetition	Repeat so people remember	

Advertising (1940s / 2020s)

Investigate how media influences us. Research an advertisement (*Ovaltine* or *Red Ryder B.B. Gun*) from the 1940s and then consider an advertisement for a similar item from today. Answer the following questions for each time period.

(LAFS.910.SL.1.2) (LAFS.910.L.3.5) (TH.912.C.1.8)

Advertised Item:	Advertised Item:
What do you notice about the advertisement (images, music, text)	What do you notice about the advertisement (images, music, text)
What persuasive techniques do they use to sell the product? (using characters relatable to the audience, price, use, emotional appeal, facts and statistics, endorsements, ...)	What persuasive techniques do they use to sell the product? (using characters relatable to the audience, price, use, emotional appeal, facts and statistics, endorsements, ...)

Name: _____

Write a Review

In the space below give future audience members a sense of what to expect. Explain aspects that were effective and Identify areas of improvement. In addition to the performers and their work, consider the production elements (lighting, scenery, props, music, ...) (LAFS.910.SL.1.2) (LAFS.910.RL.1.2) (TH.912.C.1.3) (TH.912.C.1.8)

Name: _____

Vocabulary

- **Connoisseur** – one who understands the details, technique, or principles of an art and is competent to act as a critical judge
- **Emporium** – a large retail store selling a variety of products
- **Insinuate** – suggest or hint in an indirect way
- **Marauder** – a person who roams, plunders, steals
- **Production Elements** – costumes, lighting, props, scenery, and sound that contribute to a production
- **Review** – writing that gives the audience a sense of what to expect at the performance – may include positive and negative feedback
- **Retribution** - punishment inflicted on someone as vengeance for a wrong or criminal act.
- **Satire** – the use of humor, irony, exaggeration

Standards Alignment: The activities in this study guide are aligned with the standards listed below. When teachers incorporate the arts, they increase student engagement, offer multiple points for students to access the curriculum, and provide alternative means for students to demonstrate what they know.

Language Arts Florida Standards	
Grade 9-10	
Speaking and Listening	
LAFS.910.SL.1.1	Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 9–10 topics, texts, and issues, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.
LAFS.910.SL.1.2	Integrate multiple sources of information presented in diverse media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) evaluating the credibility and accuracy of each source.
Language	
LAFS.910.L.3.5	Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.
Writing	
LAFS.910.W.1.3	Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.
Reading	
LAFS.910.RL.1.2	Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze in detail its development over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details; provide an objective summary of the text.

Florida Theater Standards	
Grades 9-12	
Critical Thinking and Reflection	
TH.912.C.1.3	Justify a response to a theatrical experience through oral or written analysis, using correct theatre terminology.
TH.912.C.1.8	Apply the components of aesthetics and criticism to a theatrical performance or design.

Cover Sheet

Please collect student work samples and attach it to this cover sheet. Pony all work samples to:

KCW – 3rd floor.

Attention: Lauri Foster

School Name: _____

SEAS Show: A Christmas Story

Grade: _____