

Teacher Quick Reference Guide

06/07 Children's Theatre Company Season

The Play

Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas

Script & Lyrics by Timothy Mason • Music by Mel Marvin
Based on the book *How the Grinch Stole Christmas* by Dr. Seuss
Enjoyed by all ages



Synopsis

It's that time of year again in Whoville. Christmas. And the Grinch who lives nearby hates everything about it. So, he concocts an "awfully wonderfully rotten" plan that will rid him of Christmas and the annual Who festivities once and for all! In this delightful adaptation of the beloved Dr. Seuss classic, Max the Grinch's hapless companion, takes over as narrator, retelling the story as an older, wiser dog. Audiences of all ages will thrill to rediscover this perennial favorite, with new songs and characters adding to the holiday fun.

The Big Ideas

- Holiday traditions
- The meaning of Christmas

Examples of Classroom and Standard Connections

Activity: Write about and discuss your favorite holiday traditions.

Standard (Grade 3): Reading and Literature: Writing: Types of Writing: The student will compose various pieces of writing, including: descriptive, narrative

The Grinch describes in detail exactly what the Whos in Whoville will be doing on Christmas Day, from the moment they wake up to their annual feast. What are some of your favorite holiday traditions? Write a narrative describing what happens on this holiday every year. Or, you could write about one particular holiday that was your favorite and why. Be sure to include as many descriptive details as you can.

Have students share their work and use that as a basis for a class discussion. What are some other holidays that people celebrate every year? Use this as a time to discuss the different holiday traditions for the students in your class. What are the customs, beliefs, traditions, or foods that characterize these holidays? Have students talk about their favorite holiday. Who attends the celebration (your immediate family, your entire community, etc.)? Do you dance? Sing? Give and receive presents? Why is it your favorite?

Activity: Plan a holiday feast.

Standard (Grade 4): Mathematics: Number Sense, Computation and Operations: Computation and Operation: Compute fluently and make reasonable estimates with whole numbers in real-world and mathematical problems. Understand the meanings of arithmetic operations and how they relate to one another.

The Whos are preparing to feast on Who-pudding and rare Who-roast beast for their holiday meal. What sorts of food do you like to eat at celebrations? Plan a holiday meal for four people. Estimate how much food you would need for each person. Estimate the total amount of each item you would need to buy using U.S. standard measurements. For a challenge, convert those amounts to metric units. Based on

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your calculations, create a shopping list for your holiday meal. To take this activity a step further, research the recipes for your meal and plan the entire cooking process, step by step.

Activity: Read the book *How the Grinch Stole Christmas*. Compare and contrast the play and the book.

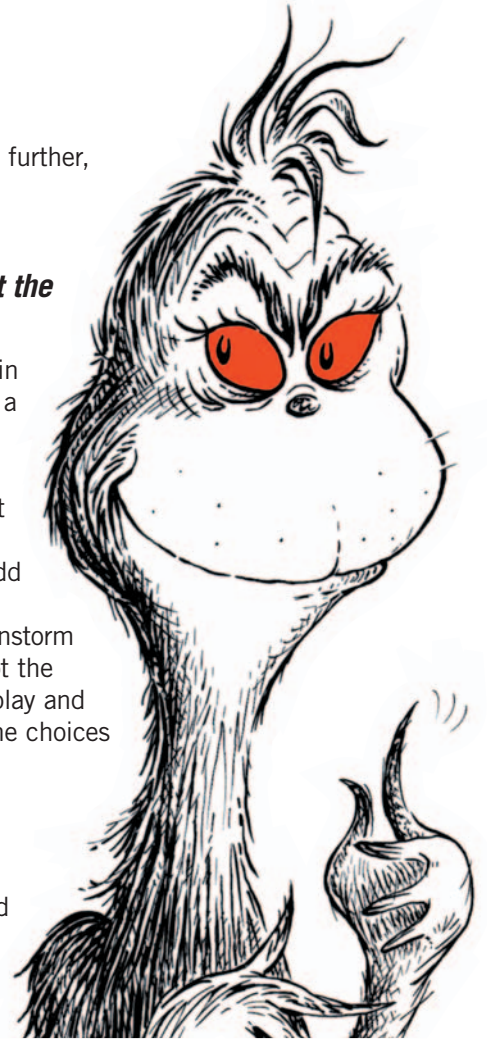
Standard (Grade 3): Reading and Literature: Literature: The student will actively engage in the reading process and read, understand, respond to, interpret, evaluate and appreciate a wide variety of fiction, poetic, and nonfiction texts. The student will: Compare and contrast similar works by different authors in the same genre or the same theme.

After seeing the play, read the original Dr. Seuss book with your class. What was different about the play? Were there new characters? Was it told differently? What events occurred in the play that were not in the book? Discuss why you think the playwright decided to add those elements. Create a Venn Diagram for comparing the play and the book in terms of characters. One circle would represent the play, the other would represent the book. Brainstorm a list of characters from *How the Grinch Stole Christmas*, either the play or the book. Plot the characters according to whether they appear in the play only, the book only, or both the play and the book. Again, analyze your findings according to why you think the playwright made the choices that he did in adapting the book.

Activity: Create a comic strip for *How the Grinch Stole Christmas*.

Standard (Grade 3): Reading and Literature: Comprehension: The student will understand the meaning of texts using a variety of comprehension strategies and will demonstrate literal, interpretive and evaluative comprehension. The student will: Retell, restate or summarize information orally, in writing, and through graphic organizers.

How the Grinch Stole Christmas was also adapted into a popular cartoon. Now, you can create a comic strip that retells the story. Divide a sheet of paper into six “frames” or squares of equal size which are clearly delineated by lines. This will become the comic strip. Make sure students understand what comic strips look like and how they tell a story frame by frame from beginning to end. How do they choose which events to include and which to leave out? How do they choose which pieces of dialogue to include? In which frame should a conflict, or problem, be introduced, and when should it be resolved? The students could pair off and retell the story to each other from beginning to end, or they could brainstorm the sequence of events as a class. Then each student can create a comic strip by drawing out what he/she considers the most important events in the Grinch’s story within the frames. Make sure to include thought or dialogue bubbles!



Pre- and Post-Show Discussion

Here are some questions that may add to your students’ understanding of the play:

- 1) Why do you think the Grinch hated Christmas so much?
- 2) Why do you think the Whos reacted the way they did when they found that all their things had been stolen?
- 3) Do you know anyone who is like the Grinch? Do you think there may be reasons why that person acts that way?
- 4) What are some ways to reach out to others who are less fortunate than us during the holidays?