



**ORLANDO
FAMILY
STAGE**

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH UCF

Cue to Cue

RESOURCE GUIDE

for Educators and Audience Members



A **CHARLIE BROWN** Christmas

LIVE ON STAGE

November 11 - December 29

ADAPTATION BY **Robbie Simpson**
BY **Charles M. Schulz**

Based on the television special by Bill Melendez and Lee Mendelson

PRESENTED BY


Advent Health
for Children

Welcome to Cue to Cue, an educational resource guide created to help teachers, parents/guardians, and young audience members enhance the experience of watching *A Charlie Brown Christmas: Live on Stage*.

In this guide, you will find >>

Synopsis

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Big Themes

- Friendship
- Christmas Spirit
- Hope and Happiness

Short Show Description

Charlie Brown is having a hard time getting into the Christmas spirit. Even after sending Christmas cards and decorating trees, he does not feel the way he is supposed to feel. Try as he might, Charlie Brown cannot help but think that Christmas has been taken over by commercialism and spectacle as distractions to what it means to correctly celebrate the holiday season.

When he is unexpectedly asked to direct the Christmas play, it seems that he will have his opportunity to prove himself and find that certain something missing from his holiday experience. After a disastrous first rehearsal, and failing to pick out a properly not-so-grand Christmas tree, Charlie Brown resigns himself to never knowing what the holiday is all about. Watch Charlie Brown discover the true meaning of Christmas through exciting musical numbers, help from his friends, and simple truths from unexpected places.

Full Synopsis

December 1965

On a bustling street corner, we see a newsboy selling papers to couples shopping. The couples purchase the newspaper but toss aside everything other than the colorful "Peanuts" section. As the couples read the comics, a Mysterious Man enters and everyone takes notice of him. Suddenly the Mysterious Man reveals himself to be Snoopy! Snoopy then reveals the newsboy to be Charlie Brown! Violet, Patty, Freida, Linus, Sally, Lucy, and all the other Peanuts characters enter as they sing ("Deck the Halls").

Christmas Time is Here

While singing "Christmas Time Is Here" Charlie Brown talks to Linus about how he feels there is something wrong with him: he does not feel happy during the Christmas season. The other children enjoy ice skating and the beauty of Christmas. Snoopy, dressed as a mailman, enters and puts Christmas cards in the mailbox. All of the children rush to find their Christmas cards, but sadly, Charlie Brown does not get one. The children continue to ice skate, build a snowman, and try to catch snowflakes on their tongues. They try hitting a can off a wall with snowballs, but only Linus and his blanket are successful.

The Doctor is In

Charlie Brown 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. Charlie Brown agrees.

True Meaning of Christmas?

On his way to rehearsal, Charlie Brown sees Snoopy and friends 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.

Rehearsal

At the auditorium, the children sing and dance to audition for the Christmas play. ("Audition Sequence/Christmas Time is Here") Charlie Brown arrives at rehearsal and tries to start by setting expectations, but they all dance wildly instead. Charlie Brown stops the music and Lucy passes out the scripts and assigns the roles. Snoopy is confident he can play all the animals and Linus is worried about memorizing all the lines. Lucy tries to convince Linus that he does not need his blanket while performing.

The students take a lunch break from rehearsal. Snoopy discovers his dog bowl is tragically empty and goes into a dream-like state thinking about food. He dances with his lunch bowl, celebrating how much he loves food. ("Snoopy's Blue - Lunch Time")

Back at rehearsal, Lucy insists that she play the Christmas Queen. No one is working together, and Charlie Brown gets frustrated. He does not want this play to be another commercialization of Christmas, but Lucy tells him that is just what Christmas is. Charlie Brown decides they need a Christmas tree, and he and Linus leave to find one.

Christmas Tree Lot

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. He thinks the tree needs a home and it reminds him of himself. ("Just Like Me") The Christmas Trees dance around and Charlie Brown finds confidence in his choice that this is the perfect Christmas tree for the play.

Back at Rehearsal

Schroeder plays Beethoven for Lucy as music for the Christmas play. Lucy questions what is so great about Beethoven and forces Schroeder to play "Jingle Bells" instead. Lucy fantasizes about becoming a Christmas Queen. ("Jingle Bells")

Charlie Brown takes the tree to rehearsal. The other kids call him stupid and hopeless for getting such a sad little 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 in and decide to give the tree some love.

Their love transforms the tiny tree into a fully decorated and perfect Christmas tree. ("Hark the Herald Angels Sing")

The Christmas Play

Charlie Brown welcomes the audience and tells them how he found the Christmas spirit and then the children perform their Christmas play. ("Joy to the World")

Charlie Brown plays Joseph and Lucy plays Mary. ("Oh Little Town of Bethlehem") Violet, Freida, and Patty are shepherds who dance with Snoopy as the sheep. Sally plays an Angel who brings the news of the birth of Jesus to the shepherds. Violet, Freida, and Patty then transform into queens bringing gifts to the manger. ("We Three Queens") All of the characters gather at the manger. ("Silent Night" and "Oh Come All Ye Faithful") After the play, everyone is excited and Lucy finally wishes Charlie Brown a Merry Christmas.

As the crowd leaves, Snoopy begins to clean the stage and discovers a newspaper, and shows the audience pages of the Peanuts comic. ("We Wish You A Merry Christmas")



Pre-Show Discussion Questions

The following conversation starters will help you think about the themes in *A Charlie Brown Christmas: Live on Stage* and make some predictions about the production. Discuss the following before you join us at the theatre:

1. What do you do to get in the holiday mood?
2. What do you think the true meaning of Christmas is?
3. When you are feeling sad, how do you help yourself feel better? How can you help your friends feel better if they are sad?
4. What are some no-cost things that you can give to others during the holiday season, and the rest of the year?

Post-Show Discussion Questions

We hope you enjoyed Orlando Family Stage's production of *A Charlie Brown Christmas: Live on Stage!* Discuss the following questions after attending the performance:

1. What was *A Charlie Brown Christmas: Live on Stage* about? Describe the beginning, middle, and end. What was the climax of the story? Why? How would you summarize the play in one sentence?
2. What did you notice when you first entered the theatre? Describe the stage.
3. What was the setting of the story? Did the scenery help establish the show's location? What specific things did you notice about the scenery or stage lighting?
4. What did you notice about the actors and their performances? How did they use their voices and bodies to bring the characters to life?
5. Which character do you relate to the most? Why? What words describe that character?



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Florida State Standards

Getting Ready for your Field Trip

Detailed list of Florida State Standards satisfied by using Family Stage's Field Trips and this Resource Guide.

Language Arts (B.E.S.T.)

ELA.K12.EE.1 Cite evidence to explain and justify reasoning
ELA.K12.EE.3 Make inferences to support comprehension
ELA.K12.EE.4 Use appropriate collaborative techniques and active listening skills when engaging in discussions in a variety of situations
ELA.K12.EE.6 Use appropriate voice and tone when speaking or writing
ELA.K.C.2.1 Present information orally using complete sentences.
ELA.1.C.2.1 Present information orally using complete sentences and appropriate volume
ELA.2.C.2.1 Present information orally using complete sentences, appropriate volume, and clear pronunciation.
ELA.3.C.2.1 Present information orally, in a logical sequence, using nonverbal cues, appropriate volume, and clear pronunciation.
ELA.3.C.2.1 Present information orally, in a logical sequence, using nonverbal cues, appropriate volume, and clear pronunciation.
ELA.5.C.2.1 Present information orally, in a logical sequence, using nonverbal cues, appropriate volume, clear pronunciation, and appropriate pacing.
ELA.6.C.2.1 Present information orally, in a logical sequence, using nonverbal cues, appropriate volume, clear pronunciation, and appropriate pacing.
ELA.7.C.2.1 Present information orally, in a logical sequence, emphasizing key points that support the central idea.
ELA.8.C.2.1 Present information orally, in a logical sequence, supporting the central idea with credible evidence.
ELA.9.C.2.1 Present information orally, with a logical organization and coherent focus, with credible evidence, creating a clear perspective.
ELA.10.C.2.1 Present information orally, with a logical organization and coherent focus, with credible evidence, creating a clear perspective.
ELA.11.C.2.1 Present information orally, with a logical organization, coherent focus, and credible evidence, while employing effective rhetorical devices where appropriate.
ELA.12.C.2.1 Present information orally, with a logical organization, coherent focus, and credible evidence while employing effective rhetorical devices where appropriate.

Theatre Arts

TH.K.C.2.1 Respond to a performance and share personal preferences about parts of the performance.
TH.K.C.3.2 Share reactions to a live theatre performance.
TH.1.C.2.2 Identify elements of an effective performance.
TH.2.O.2.1 Re-tell what happened in the beginning, middle, and end of a story after viewing a play.
TH.3.C.1.2 Watch a play and describe how the elements of light costumes, props, and sound influence the mood of the production.
TH.3.C.2.2 Discuss the meaning of an artistic choice to support development of critical thinking and decision-making skills.
TH.3.O.2.1 Describe what happened in a play, using age-appropriate theatre terminology.
TH.3.S.1.3 Evaluate a performance, using correct theatre terms, and give specific examples to support personal opinions.
TH.4.S.1.1 Exhibit proper audience etiquette, give constructive criticism, and defend personal responses.
TH.4.S.1.3 Use theatre terms to evaluate a live performance and discuss the qualities that directly impacted the audience's response to the production.
TH.4.S.3.3 Describe elements of dramatic and technical performance that produce an emotional response in oneself or an audience.
TH.5.O.1.1 Explain an actor's choices in the creation of a character for a scene or play.
TH.5.O.1.3 Evaluate how an actor or designer's choices about a character affect the audience's understanding of a play.
TH.5.S.1.3 Evaluate a performance, using theatre terminology, and articulate emotional responses to the whole and parts of dramatic performances.
TH.68.S.2.3 Analyze the relationships of plot, conflict, and theme in a play and transfer the knowledge to a play that contrasts in style, genre, and/or mood.
TH.68.H.1.5 Describe one's own personal responses to a theatrical work and show respect for the responses of others.
TH.912.C.1.3 Justify a response to a theatrical experience through oral or written analysis, using correct theatre terminology.
TH.912.C.3.3 Critique, based on exemplary models and established criteria, the production values and effectiveness of school, community, and live or recorded professional productions.