



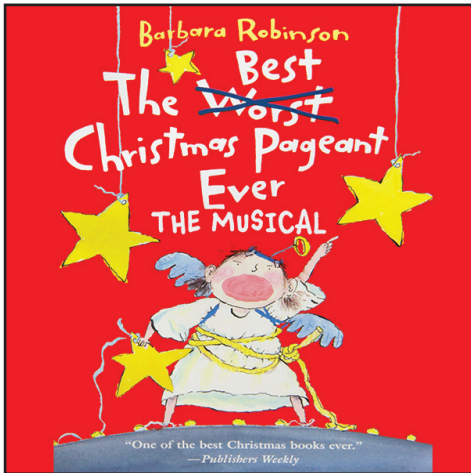
Resource Guide | for Educators and Audiences

We include information about our production along with creative activities to make connections both before and after the show. For educators, all activities are aligned to the Common Core Standards and North Carolina Essential Standards. Look for the symbol below throughout the guide.



NCES-TheaArts.(K-5).TA.A.1: Analyze literary texts and performances. NCES-TheaArts.(K-5).TA.A.1.1: Recall the basic parts of a story, such as characters, setting, and events.

Mainstage production
all ages



Books and lyrics by
Jahnna Beecham

Music and lyrics by
Malcolm Hillgartner

Adapted from the book
by Barbara Robinson

Director/Choreographer
Ron Chisholm

Music Director
Charlene Thomas

Themes explored
community, traditions,
belonging, empathy

Summary of *The Best Christmas Pageant Ever: The Musical*

The Herdmans are ready to wreak havoc! What happens when the “worst kids in the history of the world” find out about free food at Sunday school? And what happens when they decide to audition for the annual Christmas pageant? Will the show go on? This hilarious and heartfelt musical comedy, adapted from Barbara Robinson’s classic story, will have your family laughing and crying as we celebrate the holidays.

Audience expectations

You may wish to have a discussion with your students about their role as an audience member. Live theatre only exists when an audience is present; their energy and responses directly affect the actors in performance.

Younger audiences should know watching live theatre isn’t like watching more familiar forms of entertainment: there is no pause or rewind button, there are no commercials for bathroom breaks, and they can’t turn up the volume if someone else is talking. Encourage your students to listen and watch the play intently so they may laugh and cheer for their favorite characters when it is appropriate. At the end of the play, your applause is an opportunity to thank the actors for their performance. Here are some other guidelines to remember as well:

- Respect other audience members. Stay seated and keep your hands to yourself.
- Please turn off all cell phones and other electronic devices during the performance.
- Photography and recording of the performance is prohibited by copyright law.
- We do not permit food and drinks in the theatre.



NCES-TheaArts.(K-5).TA.CU.2: Understand the traditions, roles, and conventions of theatre as an art form. NCES-TheaArts.3.TA.CU.2.1: Illustrate theatre etiquette appropriate to the performance situation.

The BIG QUESTIONS about the show

1. The pageant doesn’t go as originally planned. Has something you planned not gone the way you expected it? How did this make you feel at first? How did you feel about the event when it was all over? Did you learn anything because something unexpected happened?
2. Do you know anyone in your class, school or neighborhood who acts like the Herdman children? Without naming them, what do you think might cause some of their behaviors?
3. Is there a hero in this story? If so, whom?



CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.(K-5).2: Ask and answer questions about key details in a text read aloud or information presented orally or through other media. NCES-TheaArts.2.TA.A.1.2: Analyze the relationships between events, characters, and settings.

Holidays around the world

Different countries and cultures from around the world celebrate the holidays with a variety of traditions during the winter months. As a class, make a list of winter holidays from around the world the students may already know. Then, supplement that list with the holidays listed below.

Encourage each student to pick one of the holidays from the final list to research and create a presentation. This presentation should include the reason for celebration, the country or culture of origin and the various traditions involved with that holiday. As a class, compare and contrast the different holiday customs.

What are some differences you notice in the celebrations?
What are some similarities?

- Tet (Vietnamese New Year)
- Pancha Ganapati (Hindu)
- Yule (Pagan)
- Krampusnacht/St. Nicholas Day (European)
- Fiesta of Our Lady of Guadalupe (Mexican)
- St. Lucia Day (Swedish)
- Hanukkah (Jewish)
- Bodhi Day (Buddhist)
- Christmas Day (Christian)
- Three Kings Day/Epiphany (Christian)
- Boxing Day (Australian, Canadian, English, Irish)
- Kwanzaa (African American)
- Las Posadas (Mexican)
- Omisoka (Japanese)
- Dongzhi Festival (Chinese)
- Saturnalia (Pagan)
- Newtonmas (Atheist)
- Yalda (Zoroastrian)



NCES-SocialStudies.3.C.1.1: Compare languages, foods and traditions of various groups. NCES-InfoTech.3.TT.1.1: Use a variety of technology tools to gather data and information (e.g., Web-based resources, e-books, online communication tools, etc.). CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.(3-5).2: Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.

Want more activities and content?

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THEATRE CORNER

Every play Children's Theatre of Charlotte produces is created by a talented team of designers, technicians, actors and a director. As a class, discuss what you experienced when you saw the performance.

1. Name three things you noticed about the set. Did the set help tell the story? What sort of set would you have designed?
2. What did you like about the costumes? Did the costumes help tell the story? What sort of costumes would you have designed?
3. What role did lighting play in telling the story? How did the lights enhance what you were seeing?
4. Talk about the actors. Were there moments you were so caught up in the story you forgot you were watching a play?
5. Were there any actors who played more than one character? What are some ways you can be the same person but play different characters?



NCES-TheaArts.(K-5).TA.A.1: Analyze literary texts and performances. NCES-TheaArts.(K-5).TA.AE.1.2: Understand how costumes [and technical elements] enhance dramatic play.



Write to Us!

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CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.(K-5).1: Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

Recommended Reading

If you enjoyed the show, check out these books at your local Charlotte Mecklenburg library branch. Check availability at cmlibrary.org.

The Longest Christmas List Ever by Gregg Spiridellis

The Best School Year Ever by Barbara Robinson

Christmas In Camelot by Mary Pope Osborne

Horrid Henry's Christmas by Francesca Simon