STUDY GUIDE

Jolly Old St. Nicholas
Book by Ron Barnett and Dawn Westbrook
Lyrics & Music by Ron Barnett

TEACHER RESOURCES

Jolly Old St. Nicholas and this study guide are produced in support of the following Virginia Standards of Learning: English, Language Arts, Math, Reading, Fine Arts.

AT THE LIBRARY

What Do You Celebrate? Holidays around the World by Whitney Stewart
All-of-a-Kind Family Hanukkah by Emily Jenkins
Together for Kwanzaa by Juwanda G. Ford
How the Grinch Stole Christmas! by Dr. Seuss
The Polar Express by Chris Van Allsburg
’Twas the Night before Christmas by Clement Moore
The Legend of the Poinsettia by Tomie dePaola

ON THE WEB

How Do You Celebrate? An Introduction to Holiday Customs - Students read about and discuss Christmas, Hanukkah, and Kwanzaa customs, and use a graphic organizer to compare and contrast the holidays.
scholastic.com/teachers/lesson-plans/teaching-content/how-do-you-celebrate/

Scholastic Holiday Book Ornament (printable) - Add a literary twist to holiday decorations with these sweet mini book-ornaments.
scholastic.com/teachers/articles/17-18/printables-book-ornaments/

Celebrate Hanukkah in Israel - Students will learn about the history of Hanukkah, make a dreidel, and play the dreidel game.
scholastic.com/teachers/lesson-plans/teaching-content/celebrate-hanukkah-israel/

Celebrate Winter Holidays - A teacher’s guide to help your students learn about Christmas, Hanukkah, Kwanzaa, and other holidays around the world.
scholastic.com/teachers/lesson-plans/teaching-content/celebrate-winter-holidays-teaching-guide/

PLAY SYNOPSIS

It’s the night before Christmas and everyone at the North Pole is preparing for the big day. Santa and two of his elves, Trip and Rollo, are waiting for last minute letters from children and packing the sleigh when Mr. Grumpasaurus suddenly appears.

Mr. Grumpasaurus is well-known for hating Christmas, and this year he announces his biggest plan yet: to ruin the holidays for one child in particular. Using Santa’s magic video camera, he searches far and wide across the entire world and lands his eyes on Tuck, a young boy who is trimming a tree with his father.

Follow along as Mr. Grumpasaurus finally sees the magic of the holidays through the eyes of a child.

A Note for Teachers

Holidays are an essential part of any teacher’s curriculum. They’re an engaging way to introduce your students to diverse cultures, give them a global perspective, and help them make language arts and social studies connections. This classroom connections study guide was created to provide you with fun activities to celebrate different holidays in your class.
Seasonal Holidays

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Christmas is just one of many holidays celebrated during winter time. Two other holidays commonly celebrated in the United States are Hanukkah and Kwanzaa.

HANUKKAH

Hanukkah is celebrated for eight days beginning on the 25th day of the Hebrew month, Kislev (November-December). It honors a battle in which a small group of heroic Jewish men fought for religious freedom. After the battle was won, they needed oil to re-dedicate the temple and light the holy candelabra, or menorah. A very small container of oil was found and the menorah was lit with enough oil to last just one night. Miraculously, it stayed lit for eight days. For this reason, Hanukkah is also known as the Festival of Lights.

Hanukkah is celebrated for eight days by reciting blessings and lighting a menorah; one candle is lit each night of the celebration. On the final night, the eighth candle, along with the shammash, or servant candle, is lit. Throughout the eight days of the Festival, Jewish family members exchange gifts and play games, like the dreidel game.

KWANZAA

Kwanzaa is an African-American and pan-African holiday which celebrates family, community, and culture. Kwanzaa means “the first fruits of the harvest” and was founded in 1966 by Dr. Maulana Karenga, a cultural naturalist and professor of African American Studies.

Kwanzaa is a seven day festival beginning on December 26 and continuing until January 1. During the celebrations, families and communities organize activities and events based on the seven principles, in addition to enjoying feasts, music, dance, poetry, and narratives. The holiday ends with a day dedicated to reflection and a recommitment to the seven principles. Those seven principles are unity, self-determination, collective work and responsibility, cooperative economics, purpose, creativity, and faith.

From the official website, “Kwanzaa celebrates the best of African thought and practice in its reaffirmation of the dignity of the human person in community and culture, the well-being of family and community, the integrity of the environment and our kinship with it, and the rich resource and meaning of a people’s culture.”

http://www.officialkwanzaawebsite.org/index.shtml
Activity

WRITING AND ILLUSTRATING
Write about your favorite part of the play, and then illustrate it below!

My favorite part of the play was...
MAZE TIME

Can you help Tuck find his way through the crazy snow maze below?

Start

End
STORY PROBLEMS

1. Rollo has two more reindeer than Trip. Trip has six reindeer. How many reindeer does Rollo have?

2. Nine gifts are in the basket, waiting to be loaded onto the sleigh. More gifts were added to the basket. Now there are 17 gifts. How many gifts were added to the basket?

3. Eight red gumdrops and three green gumdrops are in the candy jar. How many gumdrops are in the candy jar?

4. Three rows of ornaments are nestled in a box, ready to be added to the tree. There are four ornaments per row. Two more boxes of ornaments arrive, each with three rows. How many ornaments are ready to be hung on the tree?

5. There are nine candles on a menorah. Two candles have been lit. How many candles remain unlit?

6. Jordan has six family members coming for dinner to celebrate Kwanzaa. How many table settings does Jordan need to put out, including himself, his wife and two daughters?
Activity

WORD SEARCH

Search up, down, forward, backward, and on the diagonal to find the hidden words in the box below.

WORD BANK

ELVES  SANTA  HOLIDAY  TUCK  ROLLO
GRUMPY  TRIP  ORNAMENT  GIFTS  SNOW
MAGICAL  FAMILY  SIMPSON  LETTER
COMPARE AND CONTRAST

Mr. Grumpasaurus is very grumpy and doesn't like the holidays, much like another famous holiday character, the Grinch!

Read *How the Grinch Stole Christmas!* by Dr. Seuss, and then compare and contrast that story with the story of our play, *Jolly Old St. Nicholas*.

1. How are Mr. Grumpasaurus and the Grinch alike?
2. How are they different?
3. Do they both change over the course of the story?
WRITE A HOLIDAY GREETING

Write a holiday greeting letter to friends or family! Study the parts of a friendly greeting letter shown below. Use the stationary on the next page to write a letter to a friend or family member.

**Audience**
Who is your letter going to? (someone you know such as family or friends)

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**What is your letter’s purpose?** (circle one!)

- share news
- stay in touch
- express feelings
- to invite

**Beginning sentence**
Where you introduce your purpose.

---

**Three details** (at least!)
These connect your beginning sentence.

---

**Ending sentence**
This sums up everything you said.

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**Friendly Letter Ideas**

1. Tell a friend or family member something you like about the holidays.
2. Share with your friend some things you like to do for fun over winter break.
3. Tell your friend or family member about a book or movie you like, and why they should read or watch it.
4. Ask your friend questions to get to know them better, such as what things they like to do at the holidays.
'Twas the night before Christmas, when all thro’ the house 
Not a creature was stirring, not even a mouse; 
The stockings were hung by the chimney with care, 
In hopes that St. Nicholas soon would be there; 
The children were nestled all snug in their beds, 
While visions of sugar plums danc’d in their heads; 

And Mama in her ‘kerchief, and I in my cap, 
Had just settled our brains for a long winter’s nap, 
When out on the lawn there arose such a clatter, 
I sprang from the bed to see what was the matter. 
Away to the window I flew like a flash, 
Tore open the shutters, and threw up the sash. 

The moon on the breast of the new fallen snow, 
Gave the lustre of mid-day to objects below; 
When, what to my wondering eyes should appear, 
But a minature sleigh, and eight tiny rein-deer, 
With a little old driver, so lively and quick, 
I knew in a moment it must be St. Nick. 

More rapid than eagles his coursers they came, 
And he whistled, and shouted, and call’d them by name: 
“Now! Dasher, now! Dancer, now! Prancer and Vixen, 
On! Comet, on! Cupid, on! Donner and Blitzen; 
To the top of the porch! To the top of the wall! 
Now dash away! Dash away! Dash away all!” 

As dry leaves before the wild hurricane fly, 
When they meet with an obstacle, mount to the sky; 
So up to the house-top the coursers they flew, 
With the sleigh full of toys — and St. Nicholas too: 
And then in a twinkling, I heard on the roof 
The prancing and pawing of each little hoof. 

As I drew in my head, and was turning around, 
Down the chimney St. Nicholas came with a bound: 
He was dress’d all in fur, from his head to his foot, 
And his clothes were all tarnish’d with ashes and soot; 
A bundle of toys was flung on his back, 
And he look’d like a peddler just opening his pack:

His eyes — how they twinkled! His dimples: how merry, 
His cheeks were like roses, his nose like a cherry; 
His droll little mouth was drawn up like a bow, 
And the beard of his chin was as white as the snow; 
The stump of a pipe he held tight in his teeth, 
And the smoke it encircled his head like a wreath. 

He had a broad face, and a little round belly 
That shook when he laugh’d, like a bowl full of jelly: 
He was chubby and plump, a right jolly old elf, 
And I laugh’d when I saw him in spite of myself; 
A wink of his eye and a twist of his head 
Soon gave me to know I had nothing to dread. 

He spoke not a word, but went straight to his work, 
And fill’d all the stockings; then turn’d with a jerk, 
And laying his finger aside of his nose 
And giving a nod, up the chimney he rose. 
He sprung to his sleigh, to his team gave a whistle, 
And away they all flew, like the down of a thistle: 

But I heard him exclaim, ’er he drove out of sight — 
“Happy Christmas to all, and to all a good night.”
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WORD SEARCH ANSWER

T V
D W
D W H I
I E D A
F Q F C N H
J S F W O M
E Y V N A S P J
X U G N P S B
X B H Y L I M A F E
I Q V K Z G I C A K
K S H Z I Y G S P Z R O
X S E L Q P P D D W C F W
L I I L G W M J X H J S F L
F M Y V B G U I N J T Z H E
Q N J X E I U R S W F M D Z E C
R Q N W S D L G S I U G G R Y N
W W F O D Z E A W G Z N X Y O N P P
N L R B S G J C Y S Z Q T A L Y X E
E M M P Y Z J R I R S A I R P L T M Q T
E F X B Q U Q B G H T W D I N O W Q A L
O H U E U C O R N A M E N T P A L G T Y W Y
R H Y M P S Y A M M E W L L H G Q E D K P Q
J Z X I T K Y G L K T X Z U S N V L P T H S M L
N B T J S C J Q H O L I D A Y K L Z K T T X N R
J R A T K B U H F A T U N O B O P V K I R E X O S
U Q D M C Z T W U Q H A T T K I K F J X K G P R W W
A O Q F
R C B L
P X Q V
O C S C

STORY PROBLEMS

1. Rollo has eight reindeer.
2. Eight gifts were added to the basket.
3. 11 gumdrops are in the candy jar.
4. There are 36 ornaments ready to be hung on the tree.
5. Seven candles remain unlit.
6. Ten table settings are needed.
When you are in an audience at *Jolly Old St. Nicholas*, or any play, pay attention to the following:

**Cue**

1) Command given by stage management to the technical departments.

2) Any signal (spoken line, action or count) that indicates another action should follow

**House Lights**

The auditorium lighting, which is commonly faded out when the performance starts.

**Blackout**

The act of turning off (or fading out) stage lighting

**Curtain Call**

At the end of a performance, the acknowledgment of applause by actors — the bows.

**Build / Check**

Build is a smooth increase in sound or light level; check is the opposite — a smooth diminishment of light or sound.

**Fade**

An increase, decrease, or change in lighting or sound.