

READERS THEATRE - HOLIDAYS

Unit Overview

The holidays celebrated in North America serve as a rich source of literature and oral tradition. The unit contains ten lessons, each featuring a play about one of our holidays.

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Lessons Include

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CHRISTMAS

The Story Of Rudolph



CAST OF CHARACTERS

NARRATOR
BLITZEN

PRANCER
CUPID
RUDOLPH

ALPHIE
COMET

NARRATOR: It was Christmas Eve, about an hour before Santa would begin his annual journey, and all his reindeer were gathered together to prepare for the trip.

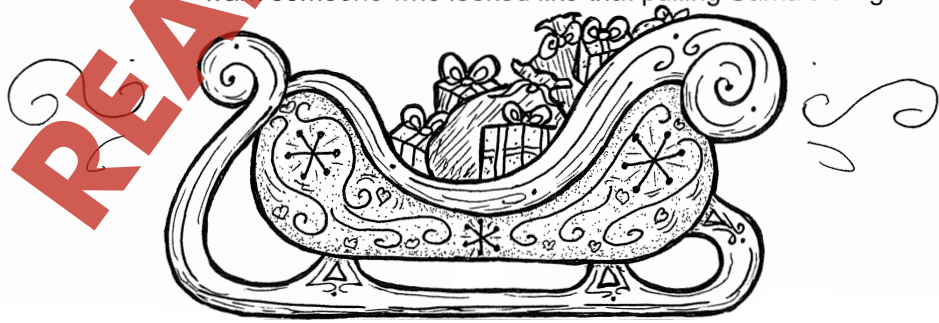
BLITZEN: What are you doing, Comet? You should be getting ready for our flight. Tonight's Christmas Eve.

COMET: Are you kidding? I've been toning my muscles for weeks in preparation for the big flight!

PRANCER: Toning your muscles? Whoever heard of a reindeer doing such a thing.

CUPID: That's nothing! You know Rudolph - that weirdo, red-nosed duffus? I heard he's practicing for the trip by doing pushups.

PRANCER: Push-ups! How on earth can a reindeer do pushups? Besides, Santa won't ever pick Rudolph for the trip! Who'd want someone who looked like that pulling Santa's sleigh?



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Comprehension Questions (Please answer in Complete Sentences)

1. What handicap did Rudolph have when it came to being picked for the Christmas Eve trip with Santa?

2. Describe the crisis that emerged for Santa and the reindeer.

3. The reindeer make a couple of suggestions for overcoming the crisis before arriving at the "Rudolph solution". Think of another possible resolution to this Christmas Eve problem.

4. We learn quite a bit about the characters of Santa's other reindeer in this story. How would you describe their characters from the way they react to Rudolph and his red nose?

5. Like many fairy tales, the story of Rudolph defies **logic** on many fronts. Give two examples of this.



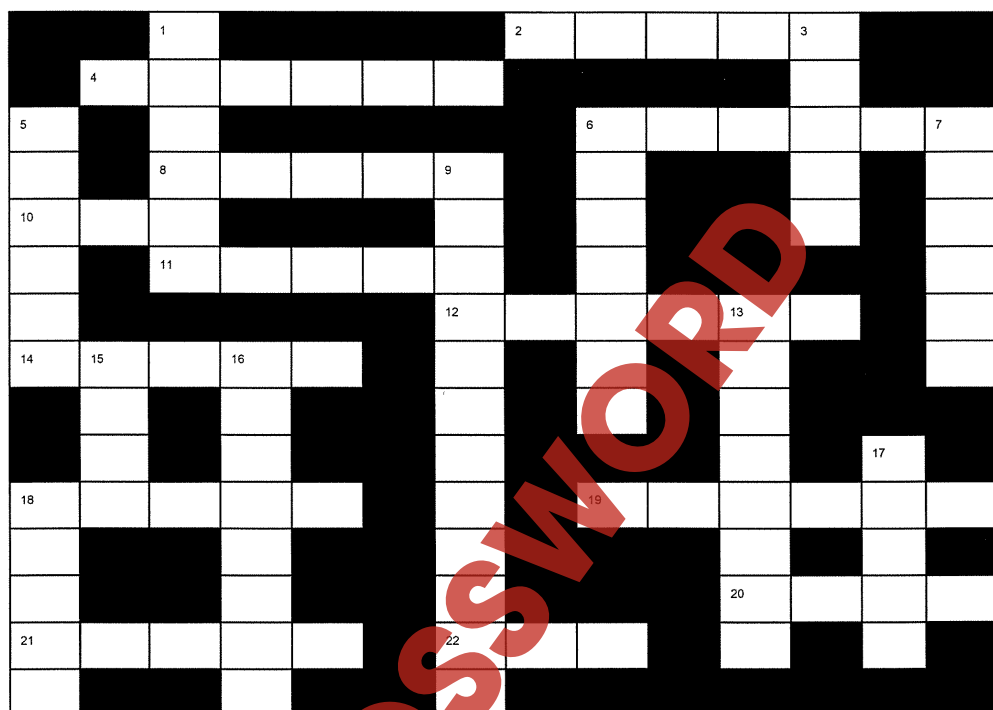
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Fun With Words - Crossword Puzzle

Using words from the play, complete the following puzzle:



Across	Down
2. One of Santa's reindeer.	1. To call off.
4. To mar.	3. To ponder.
6. Just kidding.	5. Santa's mode of transportation.
8. Another of Santa's reindeer.	6. A trip.
10. "The night before."	7. Conducted or led.
11. Appears.	9. Let down.
12. Yearly.	13. To near.
14. Perceive sound.	15. Every.
18. Gleaming.	16. Arctic caribou.
19. Busted.	17. To taunt.
20. The play has an interesting _____ of characters.	18. Violent weather.
21. Contests of speed.	
22. A mischievous fairy.	

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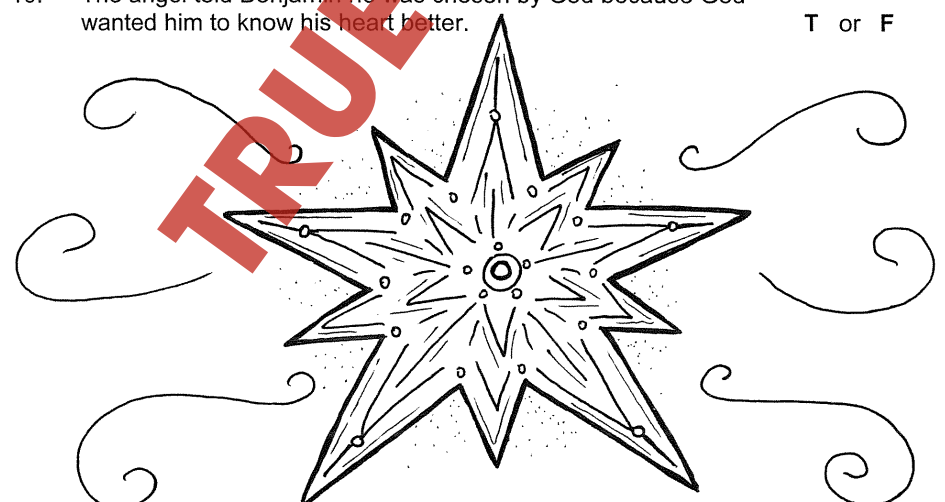
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Comprehension Questions

Indicate whether the following statements are **TRUE** or **FALSE**:
(Circle the correct response.)

1. Benjamin had been invited to his aunt's cottage. T or F
2. Benjamin's father had been injured in the fields. T or F
3. Benjamin's mother told him he would have to help the shepherds until sunset. T or F
4. The chief shepherd's name was Philip. T or F
5. Benjamin's help was especially critical right then because several lambs had recently been born. T or F
6. Benjamin felt that God was concerned about the problems of young boys like himself. T or F
7. Reuben and Jacob believed that God knew all things. T or F
8. The Saviour was born in a Bethlehem stable. T or F
9. The shepherd's problem was that they did not know where the Saviour was born. T or F
10. The angel told Benjamin he was chosen by God because God wanted him to know his heart better. T or F



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Fun With Words - 2

A **simile** is a comparison of two things using the words **like** or **as**. An example of a simile is found in this play: "I hear you little people are as slippery as a greased monkey."

Create your own similes. Use the following subjects:

leprechaun - _____
 gold coins - _____
 a snake - _____

Investigation

Research one of the following items that has made Ireland famous the world over. Your investigation should include at least three facts about your topic.

- ☞ The Blarney Stone
- ☞ The Shamrock
- ☞ Saint Patrick
- ☞ Leprechauns
- ☞ The Shillelagh
- ☞ The Irish Jig
- ☞ Poteen
- ☞ The Irish Daisy
- ☞ Colcannon
- ☞ W. B. Yeats

Creative Writing

The Irish are famous for their poets. The poems of **W.B. Yeats**, for instance, are renowned throughout the world. The **limerick** - a light, humorous, nonsensical type of five-line poetry named after a county in SW Ireland. A limerick has a **abba** rhyme scheme. Here is an example of one:

There was an old man of Kilbride,
 Who slipped in a sewer and died.
 His stupid young brother,
 Went into another,
 And the verdict on both was "sewericide".

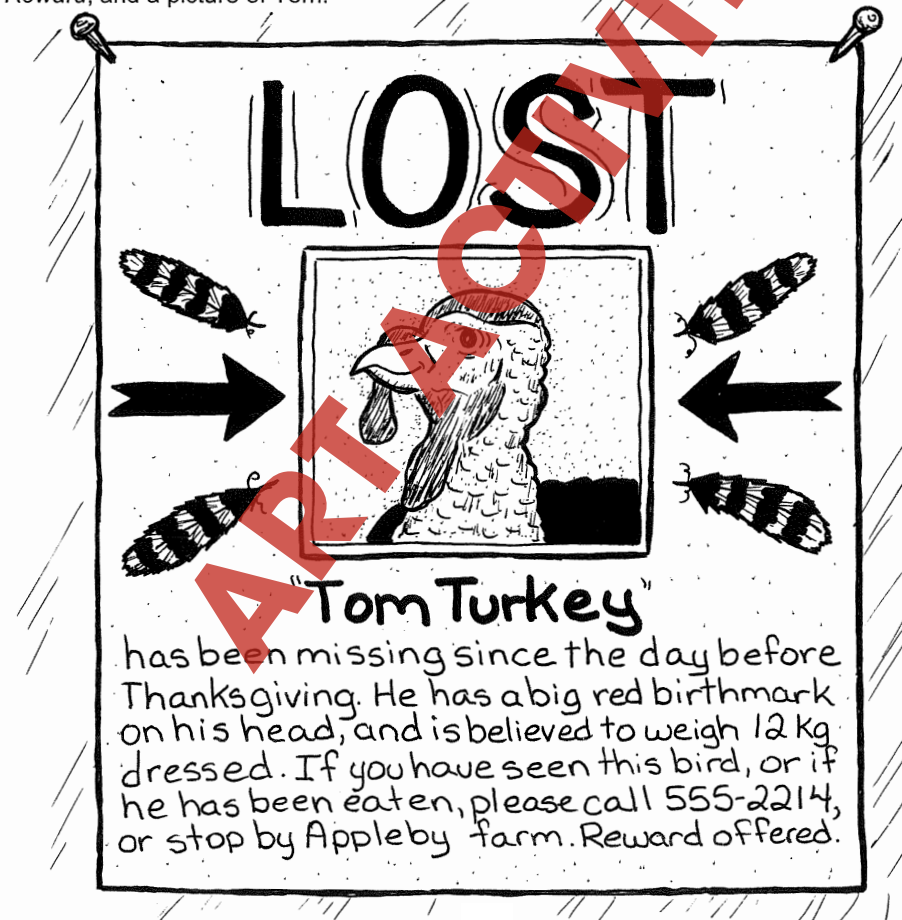
☞ Create your own limerick using an Irish theme.

Creative Writing

Imagine another way the animals might have saved Tom Turkey. Write a story describing this plan and the results of it. Your story should be at least a half page in length.

Art

Design a "Lost" poster that the Applebys might put together when Tom Turkey "disappears". You should include all the important information that would help someone find Tom, as well as a **Reward**, and a picture of Tom.



Fun With Words - 2

Match up the word from the column on the left with its **antonym** from the column on the right.

- | | |
|--------------|------------------|
| 1. carefree | a. lacking |
| 2. awesome | b. smile |
| 3. awful | c. good |
| 4. scowl | d. frivolous |
| 5. serious | e. unacceptable |
| 6. beautiful | f. worried |
| 7. popular | h. ugly |
| 8. plenty | i. insignificant |



Investigation

The origins of **Cupid** lie in Roman Mythology. Cupid is the son of Venus and Mercury and is the god of Love, Desire and Passion (in Greek Mythology he known as Eros). Many of the characters of Roman Mythology are quite famous, in fact, some of the planets in our solar system are named after them. Choose a god from Roman Mythology and research at least three interesting facts about him / her. You may pick one from the following list or one of your own choosing:

- | | | | |
|----------|------------|----------|----------|
| ♥Saturn | ♥Hercules | ♥Jupiter | ♥Mercury |
| ♥Mars | ♥Neptune | ♥Pluto | ♥Ulysses |
| ♥Lucifer | ♥Concordia | ♥Fauns | ♥Romulus |

Creative Writing / Art

A favourite type of poetry is a cinquain. There are at least two types of cinquain, the **Syllable Cinquain** and the **Word Cinquain**.

Line 1: Title	2 syllables	1 word
Line 2: Description of the title	4 syllables	2 words
Line 3: Action about the title	6 syllables	3 words
Line 4: Feeling about the title	8 syllables	4 words
Line 5: Synonym for title	2 syllables	1 word

Create your own **cinquain** poem using one of the above formats. Your theme should involve some aspect of the celebration of **Valentine's Day**. You should also include an illustration to enhance your poem's effectiveness.

Comprehension Questions (Please answer in Complete Sentences)

- Describe why Gordon was so nervous at the outset of the play.

- Why wasn't Sammy much of a help in calming Gordon down?

- Did Gordon see his shadow? Explain why or why not.

- What did Gordon decide to do about whether or not he would let the others know if he had seen his shadow.

- What might be the result of this decision?
 Good _____
 Bad _____



Fun With Words - Word Search

The following Word Box contains 20 words from the play *Benjamin, the Shepherd Boy*. The words are hidden in the Word Search Puzzle below. The words are all in a straight line horizontally, vertically, or diagonally - they can be forward or even backward!

Benjamin	shepherd	fields	worship
carpenter	collector	wonderful	obedience
flock	sacrifices	Saviour	humble
invited	lamb	Bethlehem	angel
merchant	problem	stable	faithful

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

Investigation / Art

Being a **shepherd** is often difficult and dangerous work. Investigate the duties and responsibilities of a shepherd - especially one living in Israel where the shepherds of our play lived. Why did the sheep depend on them? What specific dangers did they face? How might this have been a rewarding occupation? Write a report of at least a half page in length on this topic. Finally, design and draw a poster advertising a job opening for a shepherd. Be sure to include a picture to attract attention to your poster's message.

Lesson # 2 - Christmas - Benjamin, The Shepherd Boy

Integrated Teaching Strategies

When reading or performing, students should always face the audience. To provide variety, more students might be seated instead of having them all stand in a line. Simple props such as masks can be used to good effect. As well, percussion instruments, sound effects and mime gestures can add to the overall results of a performance.

"Christmas: Benjamin, the Shepherd Boy" - *Selfless sacrifice is usually rewarded.*

Background:

Christmas is the celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, 2000 years ago. Celebrated by Christians as the Son of God, the life and teachings of Jesus are found in the four books of the New Testament in the Bible.

Answers

Extension Questions

1. *F* 2. *F* 3. *F* 4. *F* 5. *T* 6. *F* 7. *T* 8. *T* 9. *F* 10. *T*

Words - Word Search Answers

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