

OVERVIEW

***Best On The Box* is a theme-based, complete Christmas concert. It has been designed to include every student in the school, while dividing the work load equally among the staff through the component system.**

Each staff member should become familiar with the story and the component that they wish their class to perform. Each component is a unit in itself and can be rehearsed as a separate classroom unit, thus greatly reducing the time needed to prepare this production. Each component includes a description of characters, props, costumes, and stage directions. Those staff members who do not have a regular class of students, such as the Librarian or the Teacher Assistants, might wish to be the Director and/or be responsible for rehearsing the main characters or the choir.

The component feature allows teachers to add or delete items to suit their particular school size. To include more classrooms, creative teachers may wish to make up or adapt other acts to fit the theme. Other possibilities might include any popular T.V. shows such as situation comedies, game shows, sports commentaries, interview/talk shows, and Walt Disney (*Dashing Through The Snow...White*, a comedy adaptation of *Snow White And The Seven Dwarfs*, found in the Oct./Nov. 1986 edition of *Classroom* magazine is very good and would be suitable for Grades 4 through 8.). Current T.V. shows are best. You may also choose to do a re-run of an old T.V. show such as Ed Sullivan. Almost any concert item can be inserted by writing a few introductory and concluding lines for Santa Claus plus inserting a song for the choir which provides time for each act to get on and off stage. If your school does not wish to follow the theme, each individual component may be used in a variety concert by excluding Santa Claus' part.

THE STORY

Santa Claus has come down with a cold one week before Christmas. His doctor has advised that if he takes some medicine he could be better in seven days and if he doesn't he will be better in a week. The doctor recommends that Santa should rest up - curl up in his easy chair and watch a little T.V. Santa takes him at his word and watches the BEST ON THE BOX which includes a variety of T.V. shows (The Components), commercials, and school choir fill-ins. Santa's day of watching T.V. Christmas Specials culminates in *Charlie Brown's Christmas* which reveals the true meaning of Christmas - The Nativity Scene.

Care has been taken to avoid the inclusion of any copyrighted material. Any information which will enable the authors to rectify any reference in subsequent printings will be gladly received.

COMPONENTS

	SUGGESTED GRADE LEVEL
#1 The Big Comfy Couch.....	K - 2
#2 Sesame Street.....	K - 2
#3 Silver Collection.....	6 - 8
#4 Fred's Night Before Christmas.....	5 - 8
#5 Oprah.....	2 - 4
#6 A Very Special Gift.....	4 - 8
#7 Star Trek: The Next Generation.....	2 - 4
#8 The News.....	4 - 8
#9 World's Funniest Jokes.....	4 - 8
#10 Charlie Brown's Christmas.....	3 - 5

COMMERCIALS

These commercials would be appropriate for Division Two students. One class may choose to do all the commercials or the class which has performed the previous component could perform the commercial that follows.

#1 Canadian Bumper	#4 Fruit Of The Loom
#2 Pizza Hut / Duracell Bunny	#5 Pink Insulation
#3 Grabber's Drug Store	#6 Ho! Ho! Ho!

CHOIR

Some choir selections are suggested but any seasonal or appropriate songs may be used. The choir could be one classroom or could be selected from the entire student body. It is possible for the choir members to also take part in their classroom production, although this does cause some traffic problems, with students coming and going from the choir to the stage.

In memory of our dear colleague, Vivian Bertrand, whose dedication, devotion, and love of Christmas concerts made these books a reality.

PRODUCTION NOTES

Throughout the concert, Santa performs in front of the curtain or below stage level. He sits in a swivel easy chair which allows him to face the audience and the stage. Each time he clicks his channel changer, the curtains open. The script of Santa, the commercials, and the singing of the choir provides enough time for one class to leave the stage and for the next class to get on stage and get ready. Two aisles and two side stage doors allow for a smooth arrival and departure of classes by having them enter by one aisle and leave by the other. Stage hands for the entire performance are a definite asset in setting and clearing the stage and allowing for a smooth transition from one T.V. show to the next. The stage hands will find it much easier to do their job efficiently if you prepare a list of props for each performance.

A complete rehearsal is recommended to time items so that each class can be ready to enter on time and so Santa, the lighting and sound directors, stage hands, and curtain puller(s) can practice their cues. This also provides an opportunity for students to practice using the microphones.

The choir is best placed below stage level or to the right of the stage so that while they are singing, the stage can be set for the next performance. The theme music for each T.V. show can be taped from the television and used to introduce each performance.

The channel names and numbers that Santa switches to have been left blank. You may wish to insert the initials of your school or the number of the grade that will be performing the item.

We have found that rehearsing for the concert is much more efficient if the whole school practices at the same time. This allows assisting teachers, aides, or parents to pull Santa and the choir from class for their practice. The part of Santa should be played by an older student or you may wish to cast a staff member or a parent volunteer in this part.

Stage decoration is not necessary for the concert, but if you wish to, it should be as neutral as possible considering the variety of settings for the scenes. A T.V. screen with letters of your school and the logo "Tuned In To You" or "Best On The Box" (printed on a flexible material), could be attached to the curtain so that when the curtains are closed, it appears that the T.V. station is still on.

COMMERCIAL #1 - CANADIAN BUMPER

(Children are looking at toys on display. Scrooge and Santa walk towards them.)

Scrooge: "Look at those greedy little ankle-biters coveting all those toys. They only think of themselves. The more they get, the more they want. Whoever thought of giving gifts at Christmas anyway? What a rotten idea! Humbug, I say! Bah! Humbug!"

Santa: "Oh, Scrooge, you can't really mean that! Whatever happened to make you so bitter and mean? Didn't you ever get presents for Christmas? Don't you know how it feels that special morning when you wake up and find all those lovely wrapped gifts under the tree?"

Scrooge: "Bah! Humbug! Too expensive! Money wasted! Now here's something that makes sense. The new talking, walking, inexpensive, Scrooge-approved doll. It doesn't take expensive batteries - you just wind it up and it does its thing. And it's made of all wood products so when you get tired of it, it makes good firewood. Nothing wasted. You can even wear its clothes!"

Santa: "Wouldn't that be a little strange - even for you, Scrooge?"

Scrooge: "Bah! Humbug! If you are a really smart shopper, I'll let you in on a secret. My factory is the exclusive manufacturer of these marvellous dolls, and Canadian Bumper stores have them on sale for Christmas time only - for \$49.99. Don't be stupid! Buy your brat one of these Scrooge-approved dolls and make a smart investment at the same time."

Santa: "Ho! Ho! Ho! You'll never give up, will you Scrooge!"

(CURTAIN CLOSES.)

Santa: "That Scrooge! He always shows up around Christmas time. I don't know if I'll ever be able to convince him to just enjoy the season. Oh well, I'll just have to keep working on him."

A CHRISTMAS ALPHABET RAP

Narrator: "A B C and even D
Climbed up in the Christmas tree."

(ABCD climbs the step ladder, attaches the ABCD to the tree with a clothes pin, and peeks out the "window" in the tree. He/she stays there until the end of the play when he/she is convinced to come down.)

Chanters: "Chick-a-chick-a-boom-boom
There could be a crash soon
Chick-a-chick-a-chick-a-chick-a-
Chick-a-chick-a-boom-boom."

Narrator: "E F G on bended knee
Begged....."

(Student EFG turns to child in tree and says.....)

EFG: "Come down from the Christmas tree."

Chanters: "Chick-a-chick-a-boom-boom
There could be a crash soon
Chick-a-chick-a-chick- a-chick-a-
Chick-a-chick-a-boom-boom."

Narrator: "H and I sighed....."

HI: "Oh, my, my!
If you fall, I'm going to cry."

Chanters: "Chick-a-chick-a-boom-boom
There could be a crash soon
Chick-a-chick-a-chick- a-chick-a-
Chick-a-chick-a-boom-boom."

COMPONENT 4 - FRED'S NIGHT BEFORE CHRISTMAS

CHARACTERS:

Fred Flintstone	Miss Boulder (secretary)
Wilma Flintstone	Mr. Pennypincher (accountant)
Barney Rubble	Mr. Slate
Betty Rubble	Mrs. Slate
Pebbles	St. Nickel
Bam Bam	Rhinestone (shiny rockdeer)
Dino	Mother Granite (Wilma's mother)
Kazoo	Tree
Mr. Stonehouse (banker)	Narrator(s)

COSTUMES AND PROPS:

This play has seven scenes but all of them can be performed without having to close the curtains. The actors can exit and enter while the narrator is speaking. The characters should be costumed in a similar fashion to the cartoon characters on the *Flinstone's* T.V. show. Props should include whatever livingroom furniture you wish to use; a table or a desk which can double as the bank manager's desk; a pine tree painted on heavy cardboard and tall enough for a student to stand behind; St. Nickel's sleigh painted on heavy cardboard and attached to a wagon; a phone; a computer sheet; adding machine tape or an office ledger; and a big bat.

Wilma: "That was Mr. Slate's accountant. It appears that Fred was fired. I wonder what that man is up to."

Betty: "Men! Barney is always close by when Fred is up to something. I wonder where they are."

Wilma: "He must feel pretty miserable, Betty. How could Mr. Slate be so heartless?"

Betty: "Why don't we plan a surprise party, Wilma? Fred loves a good party and it might take his mind off his troubles."

Wilma: "Good idea, Betty. I have an idea...."
(Exit Betty and Wilma, heads together, planning)

Narrator: "And so with the aid of Pebbles and Bam Bam
The stage was set to help Fred out of his jam."

(Enter Pebbles and Bam Bam from left, Wilma and Betty from right)

Pebbles: "Mother! Everyone says that they can come. The response to your invitations has been great!"

Betty: "Yes, Wilma. Even the Slates agreed to come, although I'd never have believed they would show their faces!"

Pebbles: "What do you think of all this Bam Bam?"

Bam Bam: *(Clubs the floor)* "Bam! Bam! Bam! Bam!"

Pebbles: *(Laughs)* "I agree. The party's going to be a knockout! A real blast!"

Bam Bam: "Too right! Bam! Bam! Bam! Bam!"

(Exit Pebbles and Bam Bam)

COMPONENT 5 - OPRAH

This play is an afternoon talk show, in which the host introduces assorted guests and celebrities. The name may be changed to suit a male host or to any other afternoon T.V. talk show.

CHARACTERS, COSTUMES, AND PROPS:

Host Of The Show	-suit jacket, tie
Arnold Swarzenegger	-big muscles, shades
Billy Rae Cyrus	-jeans, T-shirt with sleeves rolled up, guitar
Waldo (The Real Waldo)	-red and white horizontally striped shirt, blue pants, glasses, red and white toque, cane
Beauty (Without The Beast)	-long dress
The Queen Of England	-long dress, shawl, crown
Prince Phillip	-suit jacket with medals, captain's hat
Vancy Mandel	-casual wear
Yorgi	-all white clothing, chef's hat, 2 cups flour, 2 tablespoons sugar, mixing bowl and spoon
Borgi	-all white clothing, chef's hat
Producer	-headphones, clip board, 3 cue cards with the following words on them: "Wild Applause"; "The Crowd Goes Wild"; "The Crowd Goes Nuts".
3 Band Members (Air Band)	-instruments, flashy clothing, shades
Announcer	-formal wear

On stage you will need 7 chairs across center back for the guests and one chair (slightly to the right of these) for the host. The Air Band is positioned to the left and the Producer to the right. You will require some taped theme music representing a talk show. For Billy Rae Cyrus, you will need taped music of the song, "Achy Breaky Heart". "The Walk Of Life" by the Dire Straits would be appropriate for Waldo's entrance on stage. For the Queen's entrance, you will need "God Save The Queen". "Upbeat" music for Vancy and "slow" music for Belle will be needed. New "guests" can be added easily.

STAGE SET:

The stage should be set with a neutral background, with the news desk at stage right in front of the curtain, if there is room. If there isn't room, an inner curtain (some sheets pinned over a wire and pulled by a student on each side) could be behind the news desk. If you don't wish to have an inner curtain, the characters for each scene can enter from the left stage door and the reporter can enter from the right.

Santa: "Now for the News on Channel _____."

(Santa CLICKS his channel changer.)

