

A Guide for Teachers
December, 2018

Chattanooga
YOUTH THEATRE
Centre

We're Live

Charles Schultz's

A CHARLIE
BROWN
Christmas

Based on the television Special by
Bell Melendez & Lee Mendelson

Stage Adaptation by
Eric Schaeffer

Directed by
Chuck Tuttle

Production Design by
Scott Dunlap



Sparky Cast

Public performances: December 8 & 16
School performances: December 11 & 13

Charlie Brown.....	Mason Brown
Linus Van Pelt.....	Zachary Schulmeister
Lucy Van Pelt.....	Autumn Schulmeister
Snoopy.....	Lainey Maddox
Sally Brown.....	Kaleigh Loden
Pig Pen.....	Aiden DiChiacchio
Violet.....	Nevaeh Bentley
Patty.....	Kaitlin Young
Frieda.....	Emma Stidham
Shermy.....	Alex Champion
Schroeder.....	Hunter Gordy
Technical Crew.....	Irie Olsson

Spike Cast

Public performances: December 9 & 15
School performances: December 12 & 14

Charlie Brown.....	Jack Rogers
Linus Van Pelt.....	Charlie Clevenger
Lucy Van Pelt.....	Lauren Hays
Snoopy.....	Benjamin Suhribier
Sally Brown.....	Lilly Lewis
Pig Pen.....	James Cook
Violet.....	Violet McClendon
Patty.....	Zella Stockman
Frieda.....	Isa Baez
Shermy.....	Bec Fitzsimmons
Schroeder.....	Will Tutor
Stage Manger.....	Cassie Gallups
Technical Crew.....	Aleah Larson Timothy Rhea

About the Director

Chuck Tuttle is the Director of Education and Outreach for the Chattanooga Theatre Centre. He holds a Master of Fine Arts degree in Children's Theatre and Creative Drama from the University of Texas at Austin and has over 30 years of experience doing theatre with and for young people. His professional background includes serving as Directors of Education at Austin Theatre for Youth in Austin, Texas and Children's Theatre Workshop in Pleasanton, California. Mr. Tuttle has taught theatre classes to all ages in Acting, Play Writing, and Technical Theatre, among others. As an actor, he has taken on the roles of Scrooge in *A Christmas Carol*, and Billy Crocker in *Anything Goes*, which he performed in Hokkaido, Japan. His directing credits include *Waiting for Godot*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Hamlet*, *The Crucible*, *Once on This Island*, *A Year With Frog and Toad*, and *Go, Dog. Go!* Mr. Tuttle has written several stage adaptations, most recently *Plant, Grow, Pick* for CTC's Theatre for the Very Young program. As sponsor and advisor of CTC's teen interest group, TheatreQuest, he contributes to, and directs, *The Alphabet Plays*, an on-going series of plays for young children.



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The Chattanooga Theatre Centre extends sincere gratitude

Youth Theatre Co-Producers

\$1,000 Level:

Mitch & Jackie Collins

Carole Klimesch

Dennis McGuire in memory of Mary Kate McGuire

\$500 Level:

Anonymous

Owen Allen

Mark & Pamela Bracher

Brandon & Mandy Culpepper

Lily & Iris Hamby

Eunice Hodges

Sallie & Dale Lawrence

\$300 Level:

Chattanooga Handyman

Rick & Lisa Glisson

Diane & Michael Huseman

Charles & Krissy Joels

Martha Mackey

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Papercut Interactive

Come Clean Entertainment | Happy's Shaved Ice



Charles Schulz

1922 -2000

Born November 22, 1922 to Carl and Dena Schulz, Charles Schulz was destined to be a cartoonist. When his uncle saw the infant Charles, he nicknamed him “Sparky” after the horse in the *Barney Google* comic strip. His father was a barber who also had an interest in the newspaper comics of the time. In fact, the Schulz family subscribed to the two big newspapers in Minneapolis Minnesota where they lived and young Schulz’s father would read all the funnies to him.



At 15, he published his first drawing of his dog Spike in the *Ripley’s Believe it or Not* newspaper, accompanying a letter written by his father. His passion for drawing lead his mother to enroll him in a correspondent course through the Federal School of Applied Cartooning in Minneapolis. He study with them through his high school years and began submitting his cartoons to publications, receiving rejection after rejection.

In 1942 he was drafted into the army and within a year, his mother would die from cervical cancer. He was shipped to Fort Campbell in Kentucky where he was trained as a machine gunner. His unit, the 20th Armored Division was initially a training division but was sent to Europe in 1945. It is unclear if Schulz saw much fighting but the division itself is credited with the liberation of the Dachau concentration camp. At the end of hostilities in Europe, Schulz and his division was scheduled for redeployment for the invasion of Japan but was spared by the surrender of the Japanese forces.

Upon returning home, he lived with his father in the apartment above Carl’s barber shop. He became an instructor at his old cartooning school, sold a few cartoons to the Saturday Evening Post and started a comic strip call *Li’l Folks* for the *St. Paul Pioneer Press*. He made several attempt to get his cartoon strip syndicated, eventually getting it purchased by United Feature Syndicate in 1950. Because of similarly named comic, *Li’l Folks* was given the new name of *Peanuts*, a name Schulz never liked (the name may have been chosen because it was a slang term for children popularized by the television program *The Howdy Doody Show*).

Peanuts premiered on October 2, 1950 with four panels about a character named Charlie Brown. Since that time, *Peanuts* has been printed in over 2,600 newspapers and translated into 21 languages. It has been made into 45 television specials, a Saturday morning cartoon, an eight-part mini-series, five motion pictures and two musical stage adaptations.

On February 13, 2000, *Peanuts* as a comic strip ended with the death of its creator. Charles Schulz passed in his sleep from colon cancer. His legacy lives on in the characters that shaped and reflected the hopes, fears and neurosis of a generation.



Sources

Biography.com Editors, “Charles Schulz Biography.” <http://www.biography.com/people/charles-schulz-222709>

Charles M. Schulz Museum, “The Life of Charles M. Schulz.” <http://schulzmuseum.org/timeline/>. 2015.

Wikipedia, “Charles M. Schulz.” https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charles_M._Schulz. 2015

How A Charlie Brown Christmas Came to Pass



Now, 50 years after its first airing, it's hard to imagine that this icon of Christmas was close to never being broadcast. In 1965, Lee Mendelson, the producer of *A Charlie Brown Christmas* had what he called, "The best idea I've had in my entire life." He had just made a documentary about Willie Mays, one of the best baseball players of the time. Now he wanted to make a documentary about the worst baseball player of all time, Charlie Brown. Then he thought a documentary about Charlie Brown's creator might be more interesting. He contacted Charles Schulz who agreed to the project.

Despite their enthusiasm, they could not find a buyer for their project but word got around about the collaboration and an ad agency working for Coca Cola floated the idea by their client. Coca Cola liked the idea but had another: what about a Christmas special featuring the Peanuts characters? Mendelson said yes then called Schulz to see if he'd agree. He did and they put together a short outline. Peanuts characters had been animated once before in a Ford commercial. They contacted the animator, Bill Melendez who agreed to the work, though he'd never done full length animation. They came up with the idea of the Christmas play and Mendelson wanted to add a Christmas tree.

During their talks about the documentary, Mendelson had suggested the music of Vince Guaraldi and brought his name up again. Schulz, not a fan of jazz music, never the less liked the simple child-like quality of what Guaraldi had come up with and agreed. they sent the outline to Coca Cola and it was given a green light.

Now they needed to turn the one page outline into a script. Schulz wanted the story to be about the true meaning of Christmas. Religious meaning? Schulz affirmed this and went on to add the scene of Linus reciting the passage from the Bible. Coca Cola, surprisingly agreed to this. To make this moment work, the team agreed they needed child actors to voice the characters. At the time, cartoon children were usually voiced by adults. They used Christopher Shea for the voice of Linus and Peter Robbins for the voice of Charlie Brown. These two had been the voices of the characters for the Ford commercial. Lucy was also a professional child actress. All the other characters were voiced by children from Bill Melendez's neighborhood.

They finished the animation just weeks before its television debut and Melendez and Mendelson both felt they would go down as the people who ruined Charlie Brown. They showed the newly completed cartoon to the animators. Melendez and Mendelson thought it too slow. The other animators were not enthused either except for one who shouted, "You guys are nuts, It's going to run for years."

The opening music was originally all instrumental and Mendelson felt it needed lyrics. They shopped around and couldn't find an available song writer so Mendelson sat at his kitchen table one night and wrote out the lyrics in ten minutes. They got the children's choir from St. Paul's Episcopal Church in San Rafael, CA. to sing it and *Hark the Herald*.

When the network executives screened it they didn't understand the slow pace or the use of the music. It also was made without a laugh track, a common addition to comedy (which is what they believed it was) of the time. Coca Cola also expected a comedy. By this time, it was too late to pull it so the executives at Coca Cola and CBS agreed to let it air "once and that will be all."

It didn't air once but, now, more than fifty times. It was an instant hit with audiences and garnered its producers and Schulz a Peabody and an Emmy award. It is now the second longest running Christmas special in history (behind Rudolph) and has become an enduring part of American culture.

Sources

Cavna, Michael. "A Charlie Brown Christmas: The gospel truth behind how a humble Peanuts holiday classic defied the odds." Washington Post. <https://www.washingtonpost.com>. December 5, 2011.

Gallagher, Danny. "10 Things you probably didn't know about 'A Charlie Brown Christmas'." The FW, <http://thefw.com/10-things-you-probably-didnt-know-about-a-charlie-brown-christmas/>. ND.

Wikipedia. "A Charlie Brown Christmas." en.wikipedia.org/wiki/A_Charlie_Brown_Christmas. 2015.



The Four Panel Comic Strip

Charles Schulz was a master of the four panel comic strip. In this style, the first three panels set up the punchline in the last panel. All literature, whether a play or a book, works the same way. There is a set up that leads to pay off. In comedy the event is called the punchline. In a mystery, it may be the murder of a character. Just like in the four panel comic strip, the set up in any story is always longer than the pay off. Without the set up, there is no pay off.

Activity:

This activity exercises students ability to follow a storyline, work together and non-verbally communicate.

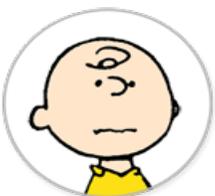
Divide students into groups of four or five each. Tell them to tell a well-known story in four tableaux using the members of their group. Each tableau should be done one after the other. All the members of the group should be in at least one of the tableaux but can be in more than one.

More advanced:

Have the groups look at examples of four panel comics. Have them come up with their own idea for a four panel comic strip. Create the comic strip with four tableaux. Add dialogue in each of the tableaux. The first three tableaux and accompanying dialog should set up the pay off in the last tableau.

Quiz: Do you know Peanuts?

Below are ten Peanuts characters. Can you place them in order of first appearance in the comic strip? The answers are on the next page.



Charlie Brown



Marcie



Linus



Schroeder



Franklin



Snoopy



Pigpen



Lucy



Peppermint Patty



Sally

Source

Peanuts, "Characters." www.peanuts.com. 2015

What Can We Learn From Charlie Brown?

Charlie Brown is a blockhead. Charlie Brown gullibly thinks Lucy will hold the football for him. Charlie Brown is the manager of the worst baseball team in the world. Charlie Brown picks out the puniest tree in the lot and thinks he can make it beautiful. So what can we learn from this? Here are a few things to consider:

- Charlie Brown believes he'll kick the ball. He believes his team will win. Through his belief, we learn what optimism is.
- As Lucy said, "Charlie Brown is a blockhead but he did get a nice tree." Charlie Brown saw the potential in the little tree and his example inspired the rest to work to make it a reality. Being a blockhead may be about keeping your idealism. Idealist sometimes change the world; cynics never do.
- It's okay not to be the best baseball player or artist or mathematician. It's okay to be different.
- Always do the right thing.
- Don't give up.

Discuss some of these ideas with your students.

What We Can learn from Charles Schulz in His Own Words

"My earliest recollection of drawing and getting credit for it and being complimented on it is from kindergarten. I think it was my first day, and the teacher gave us huge sheets of white paper, large black crayons, and told us to draw anything we wanted. I drew a man shoveling snow, and she came around, paused, looked at my picture, and said, 'Someday, Charles, you're going to be an artist.'

"I know from my own experience that I want my children to be free to do something that's crazy – as crazy as dedicating their lives to a comic strip."

"Although I have always resented the title 'Peanuts' which I was forced to use – and I'm still convinced it's the worst title for any comic strip – it probably doesn't matter what it is called so long as each effort brings some kind of joy to someone, someplace."

"To me it was not a matter of how I became a cartoonist but a matter of when. I am quite sure if I had not sold Peanuts at the time I did, then I would have sold something eventually, even if I had not. I would continue to draw because I had to."

"I think anybody who is writing finds he puts a little bit of himself in all of the characters, at least in this kind of a strip. It's the only way that you can survive when you have to do something every day. You have to put yourself, all of your thoughts, all of your observations and everything you know into the strip."

"I grew up with only one real career desire in life, and that was to someday draw my own comic strip."

Answer to the quiz

Charlie Brown FIRST APPEARANCE: October 2, 1950
Snoopy FIRST APPEARANCE: October 4, 1950
Schroeder FIRST APPEARANCE: May 3, 1951
Lucy FIRST APPEARANCE: March 3, 1952
Linus FIRST APPEARANCE: September 19, 1952
Pigpen FIRST APPEARANCE: July 13, 1954
Sally FIRST APPEARANCE: August 23, 1959
Peppermint Patty FIRST APPEARANCE: August 22, 1966
Franklin FIRST APPEARANCE: July 31, 1968
Marcie FIRST APPEARANCE: July 20, 1971

Source

Charles M. Schulz Museum, "The Life of Charles M. Schulz." <http://schulzmuseum.org/timeline/>. 2015.

WHAT IS DRAMA?

Aristotle (384-322BC) was one of the first philosophers to begin to explain Drama. He wrote an essential list of elements in Drama. Even though he wrote this list well over 2000 years ago, we still reference Aristotle's elements when discussing the definition of Drama.

Aristotle's six Elements of Drama:

Plot: What happens in the play; the storyline.

Theme: Meaning of the Play; lessons learned from story.

Characters: Usually people in the play but at times characters can be animals, inanimate objects, or simply an idea.

Dialogue: The words spoken in the play written by the playwright. It helps move the plot.

Music/Rhythm: Sometimes Plays use music to help tell the story, but Aristotle was also talking about the rhythm of the dialogue of the characters. The pace of the play.

Spectacle: Visual elements of the play: costumes, set, lights, sound, etc.

TECHNICAL ELEMENTS OF THEATRE:

Scenery: The Set; The equipment, such as curtains, flats, backdrops, or platforms, used in production to communicate environment.

Costumes: Clothing and accessories worn by the actors to portray character and period.

Props: Properties; Any article except costumes and scenery, used as a part of a dramatic production; any moveable object that appears on stage during performance.

Lights: The placement, intensity, and color of lights to help communicate environment, mood, and/or feeling.

Sound: The audible effects heard by the audience to communicate character, context, and/or environment.

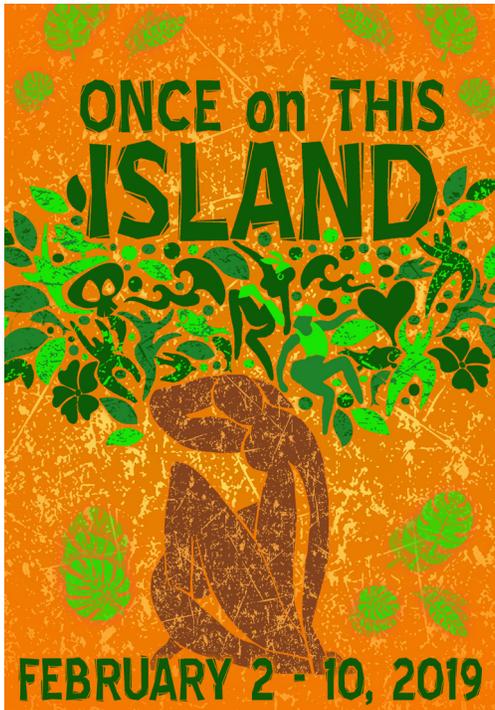
Have your students write a sentence explaining how each of the technical elements were used in the play to help create the mood, accentuate the characters or tell the story. What kinds of technical elements would you use to tell this story?

The Chattanooga Theatre Centre is thrilled that you are coming to the show! A few reminders for you and your students to ensure the best experience possible for everyone!

This performance will take place on our Main Stage.

- Please be on time to a performance. Usually this means arriving 30 minutes before curtain time to ensure proper time for parking and seating.
- This performance will be in the Main Stage Theatre (the double doors closest to the river).
- Upon arrival, one person should check in at the Will Call desk on the left side of the lobby.
- Please line up in the lobby the way you would like your class to be seated. If you must move someone please do so before entering the theatre
- There will be on no intermission for this show so please use the restroom before the performance to avoid a disruption during the performance.
- Turn off your cell phones and refrain from using them during the performance.
- Please pay close attention to the curtain speech before the performance. There is critical information given about the safety of our patrons while watching the performance.
- Please be mindful that any noise can be distracting for the audience... whispering is still speaking. Even unwrapping a piece of candy is more distracting than you know!
- Taking photos or video is strictly prohibited during a performance by our contractual agreement with the publisher.
- Please remain in your seat for the entire performance. If you must leave, do so discreetly so as not to disturb others. In an emergency, please walk, do not run, to the nearest exit.
- Please refrain from eating or drinking in the theatre.
- Keep feet off the seats and do not kick the seat in front of you.
- Applause at the end of the performance tells the performers and crew that you appreciate their work. Standing and applauding means you really liked the show.
- It is distracting and inappropriate to whistle or scream out to the performers (even if you know them).

Coming Soon
at the Youth Theatre at
The Chattanooga Theatre Centre



“This is why we tell the story!”

Come and experience a Carribean retelling of Hans Christian Anderson's classic story of The Little Mermaid. This Tony nominated musical, beautifully told in a storytelling fashion, brings an Island flavor to an old classic, with tunes that will keep you humming for weeks.

School Matinees

Tuesday & Thursday - February 5 & 7, 2019

Public Performances:

Saturday and Sunday afternoons

February 2-10 at 2:30PM

“Once upon a time there were four little rabbits, and their names were - Flopsy, Mopsy, Cotton-tail, and Peter.”

Join Peter Rabbit, his sisters, Flopsy, Mopsy and Cotton-tail, their friends Spirrel Nutkin, and Cawdy the Crow, as they Share in his exploits in Mr. McGregor's garden,

School Matinees:

Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday & Friday - April 2-5, 2019

Public Performances:

Saturday & Sunday afternoons

March 30 - April 7 at 2:30PM

