



STUDY GUIDE FOR

# **BUDDY, THE MAGIC SNOWMAN**

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## TO THE PARENT/TEACHER

This guide has been provided to help children benefit the most from experiencing a live theatrical event. The activities described herein are only suggestions. Please feel free to pick and choose the things that will most benefit your children in the time you have available. It is our hope that the performance is not only entertaining, but is a valuable educational experience as well.

You will find that some of the activities contained in this guide are geared for younger, some for older children-- but there is something for everyone. Please feel free to reproduce and distribute any of the enclosed pages and activities for your personal use.

# Theatre Etiquette

- 1> Attending a theatrical performance is a social event. Just as the way you act (and behave) in church or temple is different than the way you act on the playground, there is certain behavior that is appropriate in a live theatre. Discuss with your children the types of behavior that is appropriate when they are members of an audience.
  
- 2> Explain that they need to act differently when they're watching a live play than if they're watching a movie in a theatre. Live actors can hear their laughter and applause as well as their talking to their neighbor or rustling papers. And their responses-- appropriate or not-- really do affect the actors' performance. The end line is: How would they want to be treated if THEY were up on the stage.
  
- 2> Audience Participation. Normally, audience members should never talk during the play--and especially not talk directly to the actors (it distracts other audience member and may even make the actors forget their lines). But the plays by KMR Scripts are unique in that we offer the audience special opportunities to participate in the production. They will probably not be asked to come onstage, but there are various times throughout the production where the actors will ask them questions. At those times we encourage the audience to answer them wholeheartedly (but not in an overly loud yell). Over the years, this has become one of the hallmarks of KMR Scripts productions.

## THE STORY OF HANUKKAH

Hanukkah (or, Chanukkah) is actually a relatively minor holiday in the Jewish calendar. Because of its proximity to Christmas it has gained more notoriety. Since most Jewish families do not celebrate the Santa Claus part of the Christmas season, Hanukkah has become a time for Jewish children (and adults, too) to receive gifts.

Hanukkah is the holiday that celebrates the victory of the ancient Jews over the oppression under the reign of Antiochus IV of Syria during the second century B.C.. After a miraculous defeat of the mercenary army, Mattathias and the Maccabees were determined to rededicate the temple that had been pillaged by Antiochus' soldiers. A special dedication service was held at which an oil lamp was lit signifying the Eternal Light. There was only enough oil to burn for one night, but miraculously the oil lamp burned for eight days and nights.

The menorah, a freestanding candelabra with room for nine candles-- eight lights and a shammes light--is lit during this celebration. The shammes light is used to light the other candles. On the first night of Hanukkah, one candle is lit. On the second night, two candles are lit. Each night an additional candle is lit until the eighth night of Hanukkah when all the lights of the menorah are lit. The eight-day celebration is a time of much joy and gift giving.

## SPIN THE DREIDEL

A game commonly played at Hanukkah is called SPIN THE DREIDEL (dray'-dul). A Dreidel is a four-sided top, each side displaying a different Hebrew letter. The game begins with everyone placing a piece of candy in the center of the circle. Each player gets a turn to spin the Dreidel. If the Dreidel lands on one particular letter, they get none of the candy, half, all, or must put another piece of candy in the center. When there is no more candy left in the center, each person puts in another piece. The game is over when one person has all the candy.

## ACTIVITIES

1. **STORY CIRCLE.** Have the children make up their own version of BUDDY, THE MAGIC SNOWMAN. Have them sit in a circle. Pick one child to begin the story and go clock-wise around the circle, allowing everyone a chance to add to the story. You may have to limit each child's contribution to one story event (some children are avid storytellers!).
2. **SEASONS.** Buddy, the snowman can only visit during the winter (he's allergic to Spring!). Discuss each of the four seasons and its effect on Buddy (just think what the summer heat would do to him!). What is its effect on nature? What is its psychological effect on humans? Do we feel as excited about the beginning of fall as we do about the beginning of spring? Why or why not?
3. **HOLIDAYS.** When someone wishes you "Happy Holidays," they may not be just talking about Christmas. Christians celebrate the birth of Christ as Christmas, Jews celebrate Hanukkah, and people of many faiths celebrate the Santa Claus part of Christmas. New Year's Day and Kwanza are also a part of the holiday season. How do your students celebrate the Holidays? Possibly you have different faiths and cultures represented in your class.
4. **HEROS AND VILLAINS.** Although our story was less violent than many stories, we can still pick out the "good guys" and the "bad guys." Who was the hero (protagonist)? Who were the villains (antagonists)? Can a character still be a villain if they are portrayed as silly or goofy? Can there be more than one "good guy?"
5. **SANTA, CHRIST, HANUKKAH.** Jews do not believe Jesus Christ was the prophesied Messiah so they do not celebrate his birth as do Christians. Santa Claus has very little to do with Christ's birth--why do your students think few Jews believe in Santa Claus? Your Jewish students may be able to shed light on this subject. Should we "feel sorry" for our Jewish friends or think they're "weird" because they don't celebrate Christmas? Do your students think Jewish children feel sorry for their Christian friends who don't celebrate Hanukkah (after all, they get EIGHT presents!), Yom Kippur or Rosh Hashana?
6. **COLOR PAGES.** On the next pages you will find pictures for your students to color. The menorah, a symbol of Hanukkah, and candy canes, a symbol of Christmas. Can the students name other symbols for the Holidays?



