



#10094 THE NIGHT BEFORE CHRISTMAS

WESTON WOODS STUDIOS, Year: 1997
Grade Level: Ps-3
7 mins.

DESCRIPTION

Santa and his eight reindeer visit a family's home on Christmas Eve in this version of Clement Moore's classic poem. Iconographic style with slight animation.

ACADEMIC STANDARDS

Grades K-4 History—The History of Peoples of Many Cultures Around the World

- Standard: Understands selected attributes and historical developments of societies in Africa, the Americas, Asia, and Europe
 - ♦ Benchmark: Knows the holidays and ceremonies of different societies (e.g., Christmas celebrations in Scandinavia, Germany, or England; Cinco de Mayo; the Chinese New Year; the Japanese tea ceremony; harvest and spring festivals) (See INSTRUCTIONAL GOALS 1.)

Subject Area: Language Arts—Reading

- Standard: Uses reading skills and strategies to understand and interpret a variety of literary texts
 - ♦ Benchmark: Uses reading skills and strategies to understand a variety of familiar literary passages and texts (e.g., fairy tales, folktales, fiction, nonfiction, legends, fables, myths, poems, nursery rhymes, picture books, predictable books) (See INSTRUCTIONAL GOALS 3.)
 - ♦ Benchmark: Understands the ways in which language is used in literary texts (e.g., personification, alliteration, onomatopoeia, simile, metaphor, imagery, hyperbole, beat, rhythm) (See INSTRUCTIONAL GOALS 2.)

INSTRUCTIONAL GOALS

1. To explore some Christmas traditions.
2. To enjoy a story written in rhyming verse.
3. To promote the reading of children's literature.

VOCABULARY

1. before
2. chimney
3. Christmas
4. dash
5. hoof
6. moon
7. reindeer
8. roof
9. Saint Nicholas / Saint Nick
10. sleigh
11. stockings
12. toys
13. visions

BEFORE SHOWING

1. Discuss the Christmas holiday. Share descriptions of holiday traditions. Display traditional items like stockings. Share photos of family celebrations. Consider:
 - a. What is your favorite part of the Christmas holiday? Why?
 - b. When you think of Santa Claus, how do you imagine him?
2. Read the book, *The Night Before Christmas*, by Clement Clark Moore, illustrated by Ruth Sanderson. Review key vocabulary and the story sequence.

AFTER SHOWING

Discussion Items and Questions

1. When does the story take place? What other name do people use for the night before Christmas? In what time period does the story take place? How do you know?
2. Why do people hang stockings by the chimney?
3. What are the children dreaming about? Why?
4. Why does the father jump out of bed and run to the window? What does he see?
5. What does the author compare the speed of the reindeer to? (Answer: eagles.)
6. What does the author say is like dry leaves when they meet an obstacle before a hurricane? (Answer: the sleigh going up to the rooftop.)
7. How does Saint Nicholas get into the house? Where is the father? How does the father know not to be afraid of Saint Nicholas?
8. Describe how Saint Nicholas looks. Include his clothes, pack, face, hair, and body style.
9. What does Saint Nicholas do in the house? What happens when he finishes with the stockings?
10. When does Saint Nicholas speak? What does he say?
11. What magical things does Saint Nicholas do that real people could never do?

Applications and Activities

1. Discuss the feelings of the different characters in the video at different times.
 - a. How do the children feel just before they go to sleep?
 - b. How does the father feel when he hears the noise outside? When he sees the sleigh in the sky? When he sees Saint Nicholas in the house?
 - c. How does Santa feel about delivering presents on Christmas Eve?
 - d. How do the reindeer feel when they finish delivering presents?

C a p t i o n e d M e d i a P r o g r a m

2. Using the book or any printed form of the story, identify the rhyming words. Discuss the purpose of using rhyming words in stories. Create a class story written with a simple rhyming pattern. Draw illustrations.
3. Identify the Christmas traditions that are shown in the video. List other common Christmas traditions.
4. Investigate other winter holiday celebrations. Share the information that is gathered.
5. Explain similes. Watch the video again, pausing to identify all of the similes. (i.e., "His cheeks were like roses," etc.)
 - a. Substitute other words in the similes to maintain or change the meaning.
 - b. Draw a picture of an imaginary character. Use similes to describe the character's features and abilities.
6. Discuss gifts and gift giving. Brainstorm a list of "gifts" people might give to make the world a better place. Draw or write one or two gifts for the world on a paper stocking.
7. Review the names of body parts. On a picture of Saint Nicholas, label all of the body parts named in the story.

SUMMARY

The Night Before Christmas is Clement Clark Moore's well-known story in verse of the magic of seeing Santa at work on Christmas Eve.



CMP RELATED RESOURCES

- [The Clown of God #10091](#)
- [Max's Christmas #2312](#)
- [St. Nicholas and the Children #3084](#)
- [The Snowman #1810](#)

World Wide Web



The following Web sites complement the contents of this guide; they were selected by professionals who have experience in teaching deaf and hard of hearing students. Every effort was made to select accurate, educationally relevant, and "kid safe" sites. However, teachers should preview them before use. The U.S. Department of Education, the National Association of the Deaf, and the Captioned Media Program do not endorse the sites and are not responsible for their content.

• NIGHT BEFORE CHRISTMAS LESSON PLAN

http://www.education-world.com/a_lesson/00-2/lp2258.shtml

Use this Web site to plan your objectives and activities related to the poem. Three excellent links are included to the tradition, history, and many faces of Santa Claus.

- **CLEMENT CLARK MOORE BIOGRAPHY**

<http://www.nightbeforechristmas.biz/moore.htm>

Learn about this lesser known but very skilled writer of the famous and timeless "Twas the Night Before Christmas." Click on the links at the top of the page to read the poem and extended information about it, even a variety of images of St. Nick.



- **CHRISTMAS GOODIES FOR TEACHERS**

<http://www.kiddyhouse.com/Christmas/xmasteacher.html>

This Web site is packed with links on Christmas ideas for the classroom, Christmas trees, rhyming lessons, cultural Christmases, journal writing, and cloze activities. Take your pick and happy planning!

- **HOLIDAYS AROUND THE WORLD: WINTER HOLIDAYS**

<http://teacher.scholastic.com/scholasticnews/indepth/holidays/index.asp>

This site explores the history of and similarities between the world's major holidays. Also includes a section on holiday symbols, a holiday greeting exchange, and a quiz.

- **RESOURCES FOR WINTER HOLIDAYS**

<http://www.waterborolibrary.org/christm.htm>

This Waterboro Public Library Web site holds a multitude of links for winter holidays that include Christmas, Kwanzaa, Hanukkah, and Winter Solstice. Each area contains subheadings with many links to more information.