A Christmas Memory

Based on the story by Truman Capote

Book by Duane Poole
Music by Larry Grossman  Lyrics by Carol Hall
"Drama in education enables participants, either during the drama itself, or after the drama in a discussion, to look at reality through fantasy, to see below the surface of actions to their meaning."

-Betty Jane Wagner, Educational Drama and Language
TheatreWorks thanks our generous donors to the Education Department. In the 2009/10 school year alone, the support of these donors has enabled us to provide arts education to more than 14,000 students and approximately 650 teachers at 88 different schools through our TheatreWorks for Schools programs, the Children’s Healing Project at Lucile Packard Children’s Hospital, as well as 1,300 adult learners through audience enrichment opportunities such as Discussion Wednesdays.

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FOR TEACHERS

The student matinee performances of *A Christmas Memory* will be held on December 8th and 15th, 2010 beginning at 11:00 am at the Lucie Stern Theater in Palo Alto. The play is approximately 2 1/2 hours long including one 15-minute intermission. The play will be followed by a discussion with actors from the show.

Student audiences are often the most rewarding and demanding audiences that an acting ensemble can face. Since we hope every show at TheatreWorks will be a positive experience for both audience and cast, we ask you to familiarize your students with the theatre etiquette described on the “For Students” pages.

HOW TO USE THIS STUDY GUIDE

This guide is arranged in worksheets. Each worksheet or reading may be used independently or in conjunction with others to serve your educational goals. Together, the worksheets prepare students for the workshops, as well as seeing the student matinee of *A Christmas Memory* produced by TheatreWorks, and for discussing the performance afterwards.

Throughout the guide you will see several symbols:

- **Means “Photocopy Me!”** Pages with this symbol are meant to be photocopied and handed directly to students.

- **Means “English Language Arts.”** Pages with this symbol feature lessons that are catered to California State English Language Arts standards.

- **Means “Theatre Arts.”** Pages with this symbol feature lessons that are catered to California State Theatre Arts standards.

- **Means “Social Studies.”** Pages with this symbol feature lessons that are catered to California State Social Studies standards.
As an audience member, you mostly see the actors on stage. However, it takes many people to make a production possible. From the director to the designers to the stage managers to the carpenters, there are dozens of people working behind the scenes to make the performance run as smoothly as possible.

Here are three people at TheatreWorks that make our productions run smoothly.

MEET...THE DIRECTOR
Robert Kelley. It is the director’s job to help guide the actors through the story as well as coordinating with the lights, costumes, sets, props, and sound with the designers.

“Making a memory is no small task. The past we remember always seems like a simpler time, but as a result its complications stand out in greater relief. For young Buddy, Monroeville is a place filled with lessons to be learned, even if they defy conventional wisdom. An imaginative writer, dreamer, and storyteller, Buddy is anything but conventional, and therefore the adults in his world have differing visions of what his future should be. He and Sook imagine a world of just the two of them, heaven-bound kites "twitching at the string like sky fish as they swim into the wind." In our play a grown-up Buddy finds those kites an image of irrepressible memory and unavoidable questions: who would pull his string, chart his flight, reel him in? And who would he be when they were done?"

~Robert Kelley

MEET...THE STAGE MANAGER
Rebecca Muench. It is the stage manager’s job to make sure that everything runs smoothly during both rehearsals and performances.

MEET...THE DRAMATURG
Vickie Rozell. It is the dramaturg’s job to research anything and everything about a play. Is a character based on a real person? Do characters reference a specific event in the play? The dramaturg collects information that answers these questions and then gives this information to the actors, director, and designers.

Favorite facts from the dramaturg:
--Fruitcakes date all the way back to Ancient Rome, when they were made with pomegranate seeds and pine nuts!
--Truman Capote’s last words were “It’s me, Sook! It’s Buddy.”
All the work that goes into a production would mean nothing if there wasn’t an audience to perform for. As the audience, you are also a part of the production, helping the actors onstage tell the story.

When the performance is about to begin, the lights will dim. This is a signal for the actors and the audience to put aside concerns and conversation and settle into the world of the play.

The performers expect the audience’s full attention and focus. Performance is a time to think inwardly, not a time to share your thoughts aloud. Talking to neighbors (even in whispers) carries easily to others in the audience and to the actors on stage. It is disruptive and distracting.

There is no food in the theatre: soda, candy, and other snacks are noisy and, therefore, distracting. Please keep these items on the bus or throw them away before you enter the audience area. There are no backpacks in the theatre.

Walking through the aisles during the performance is extremely disruptive. Actors occasionally use aisles and stairways as exits and entrances. The actors will notice any movement in the performance space. Please use the restroom and take care of all other concerns outside before the show or at intermission.

Pagers, watch alarms, and other electronic devices should be turned off before the performance begins. When watch alarms, cell phones, and pagers go off it is very distracting for the actors and the audience.

What to bring with you:
- Introspection
- Curiosity
- Questions
- Respect
- An open mind

What to leave behind:
- Judgements
- Cell phones, etc.
- Backpacks
- Food
- Attitude

Actors from To Kill a Mockingbird speak to students after a student matinee.
PLOT SUMMARY

Based on the classic short story by Truman Capote, *A Christmas Memory* is a new musical about friendship, imagination, and identity. 10-year-old Buddy has an unusual family—instead of a mom and dad, he is being raised by three elderly, eccentric cousins. Jennie is a strict disciplinarian and runs the town hat shop; Seabon is a quiet man with a lifetime of regrets; and Buddy’s favorite, Sook, has a childlike sense of wonder and a deep imagination. *A Christmas Memory* follows Buddy and Sook through their annual "fruitcake adventure" in which she and Buddy gather ingredients to bake into holiday gifts for people who have "struck their fancy" in the last year—a list that includes everyone from bus drivers to Hollywood stars, missionaries to President Roosevelt.

The play is narrated by Adult Buddy, who is now a successful author, struggling to write his next book. From the vantage point of time, he leads the audience through a series of vignettes; the gathering of pecans, the purchase of a much needed and illicit ingredient for fruitcake, and a midnight adventure with Buddy’s next door neighbor, Nelle Harper. On Christmas Day, after the last fruitcake has been given away and the final ornament is put on the tree, tragedy strikes. Unbeknownst to Buddy or Sook, Jennie and Seabon have enrolled Buddy in Military school—he is to start after the New Year. Buddy and Sook share a final moment together in the pasture, flying the kites they have given each other as gifts. It is their last Christmas together. In the present, after an emotional reconnection with the family housekeeper, the long suffering Anna Stabler, Adult Buddy realizes that the next story he has to tell is his own.

(By Mara Sherman)

CHARACTERS IN A CHRISTMAS MEMORY

**Buddy Faulk**
Young cousin to Sook, a 10-year-old version of the writer, a sensitive boy with an overactive imagination.

**Sook Faulk**
Buddy’s aunt, childlike and emotional, full of life and good will, wearing her heart on her sleeve.

**Jennie Faulk**
Sook’s domineering spinster sister, confident she knows what’s right for everyone in her family.

**Anna Stabler**
The Faulk’s housekeeper with a sharp sense of humor and a strong sense of self.

**Seabon Faulk**
Brother to Sook and Jennie, a timid bachelor who still dreams of a bigger life.

**Haha Jones**
Owner of the nightclub outside of town, a frightening presence and the subject of local gossip.

**Adult Buddy**
A successful Manhattan writer at an emotional and professional crossroads.

**Nelle Harper**
Buddy’s tomboy neighbor and nemisis whose tough exterior masks a need to connect with someone.
The character of Buddy in *A Christmas Memory* is based on aspects of Truman Capote’s early childhood in Monroeville, Alabama. When his parents divorced they sent Truman to live with his mother’s distant relatives in rural Alabama. He grew closest with Nanny Rumbley Faulk, whom Truman called Sook. In Monroeville, he was a neighbor and friend to Harper Lee who wrote the classic 1960 novel, *To Kill a Mockingbird*. She based the character of Dill, Scout’s next-door neighbor, on Truman.

Truman Capote taught himself how to read and write and considered himself a serious writer at the age of eleven. In 1933 he moved to New York City with his mother and second husband, Joseph Capote, who adopted him as his stepson. As a child, Capote attended St. Joseph Military Academy, a school similar to where Buddy might have been sent to. As a teenager, Capote moved to Connecticut and attended Greenwich High School, where he wrote for the school’s literary journal, *The Green Witch* and the school’s newspaper. He ended his formal education at age 17 when the family returned to New York City and graduated from Dwight School, an Upper West Side private school.

After graduation Capote worked for *The New Yorker* magazine, where he stayed for 2 years. Between 1943 and 1946 he wrote many short stories that were published in literary quarterlies and popular magazines. In June 1945, his short story “Miriam” was published by *Mademoiselle* and won the Best First Published Story, and his writing career took off. His controversial first novel, *Other Voices, Other Rooms*, was published in 1948. Ten years later, Capote published his short novel *Breakfast at Tiffany’s* along with three short stories: “House of Flowers,” “A Diamond Guitar,” and “A Christmas Memory.” The heroine of *Breakfast at Tiffany’s* became one of Capote’s best known creations and a cultural icon. The film, starring Audrey Hepburn and George Peppard, was released in 1961.

“Writing has laws of perspective, of light and shade just as painting does, or music. If you are born knowing them, fine. If not, learn them. Then rearrange the rules to suit yourself.”

~Truman Capote

“I got this idea of doing a really serious big work—it would be precisely like a novel, with a single difference: Every word of it would be true from beginning to end.”

~Truman Capote
LITERARY PARTNERSHIPS
TRUMAN CAPOTE AND HARPER LEE

ADULT BUDDY
Nelle Harper. My neighbor and my worst enemy in life. Tougher than any girl in Monroeville. Any boy as well. Tougher than myself, certainly, though that was no feat.

One of American literature’s great partnerships is the forty-year friendship between Nelle Harper Lee and Truman Capote. The two grew up together in Monroeville, Alabama and remained friends throughout Capote’s life. It is no surprise then that each author went on to include characters based on the other in their most famous works.

Two characters based on Lee appear in Capote’s fiction. In Other Voices, Other Rooms (1948), his acclaimed first novel, tomboy Idabel Thompkins chides the main character Joel when he is embarrassed to undress in front of her:

“Son,” she said, and spit between her fingers, “what you’ve got in your britches is no news to me, and no concern of mine: hell, I’ve fooled around with nobody but boys since first grade. I never think like I’m a girl; you’ve got to remember that, or we can’t never be friends.”

Lee is also recognizable as Ann “Jumbo” Finchburg, “a sawed-off but solid tomboy with an all-hell-let-loose wrestling technique,” in Capote’s 1967 story “The Thanksgiving Visitor.”

Lee would return the favor by basing the child Dill in To Kill a Mockingbird on Capote:

He wore blue linen shorts that buttoned to his shirt, his hair was snow white and stuck to his head like dandruff; he was a year my senior but I towered over him. As he told us [an] old tale his blue eyes would lighten and darken; his laugh was sudden and happy... We came to know [him] as a pocket Merlin, whose head teemed with eccentric plans, strange longings, and quaint fancies.

The two became joint investigators in crime in 1959 when Capote invited Lee to accompany him on a new project: interviewing everyone who knew a family murdered in a small town in Kansas. Kansans didn’t know what to make of Capote but Lee “knew how farmers and inhabitants of small towns thought and talked.... [Her] gift for creating character sketches turned out to complement Truman’s ability to recall remarks.”

Lee’s novel To Kill a Mockingbird was published in 1960 and won the Pulitzer Prize. Three years later, when Lee saw the first edition of In Cold Blood, she was shocked that she shared the dedication with Capote’s lover, her contribution acknowledged as “secretarial help.”

connections:
Two of the most successful writers of the 20th Century grew up in the same town at the same time. How does this manifest itself in their work. Using A Christmas Memory and To Kill a Mockingbird, find and analyze the similarities in the two stories. What does this tell us about growing up in Monroeville in 1935?
A Christmas Memory is based on Truman Capote’s own life experiences growing up in Alabama during the Great Depression. He based his characters on the people he knew growing up. Here is an example of one of Capote’s childhood experiences that clearly informed how Nelle was portrayed in the story:

As the story goes, one day a young Truman got caught in the middle of a “game” called hot grease in the kitchen. The game consisted of older boys cordon off an area of the playground, and making all of the other boys stay clear. One day Truman, in defiance, entered the area. The older boys pounced on Truman and held him on the ground. They wouldn’t let Truman get up, that is until Harper Lee arrived on the scene. Harper walked into the middle of the scene pushing the older boys out of her way. Daring the older boys to stop her, she walked Truman to safety. The boys, knowing Harper’s love for a good fight, let the two of them pass.

Can you think of a story from your own life that you could base a character on? Write a paragraph about something that happened to you and then create a character based on the people in that story.

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ADAPTING A STORY FROM PAGE TO STAGE

Many of the movies and plays you see today are actually adaptations, meaning they are based on a story already written. An adaptation may simply present the characters and plot points of a novel as they were originally written, or it may change the setting and situation of the story. This adaptation of A Christmas Memory follows the basic steps below.

**Identify what grabbed you emotionally about the story.**
Before you start to form the plot and characters, decide the feeling you want to invoke in the audience.

**Pare down the story to only the most important plot points.**
A novel may tell a story in hundreds of pages that a film or stage adaptation would have to tell in roughly two hours. Which parts of the plot are the most important? What is extra, and might be cut out? When you’re outlining the plot, ask yourself if each scene helps to invoke the emotion you identified in the first step. Every scene doesn’t have to convey that feeling, but they should all should help carry the story to that place.

**Decide which characters and locations are needed to tell the story.**
The number of characters in a stage or film production should be kept small. Hiring more actors is not only costly, but too many characters can be confusing to the audience in a story only two hours long. If a character has a minor part and doesn’t affect the story much, leave that character out. When writing for the stage, do the same thing for locations: only use the most essential settings. A play can be very successful in only one place—no need for set changes! Films have a little more freedom because scenes can be shot in many different locations.

**Consider the conventions of your medium.**
A novel is not likely to include songs, but a musical adaptation certainly would. If you’re writing a screenplay, you might show the passage of time through a montage. Keep in mind the different ways that you can convey emotion or plot points that are different from the way they’re presented in a book.

**Begin writing the adaptation.**
Once you’ve outlined your scenes, you’re ready to start writing dialogue. Use your source material as a guide, but you won’t want to copy it verbatim. If writing for the stage, include any essential stage directions. If writing for film, make sure your writing is very visual.

continued...
Can you think of other examples of classic stories adapted for productions or movies? What stories might you like to see adapted for modern audiences? Why?

Now, write a plot summary or scene based on your ideas:
THE GREAT DEPRESSION

AMERICA IN 1935

In 1935 the United States is in the grips of the Great Depression, an extensive period of economic downturn. While there are several events that led to the Great Depression, many see the start as the 1929 Stock Market Crash. By March of 1930, at least 3.2 million people had lost their jobs. This unemployment number would eventually rise to almost 13 million people. By 1932, Fortune magazine reported that 34 million people belonged to families with no full-time wage earners. By 1933, 11,000 of the United States’ 25,000 banks had failed. Between 1929 and 1932 the income of the average American family was reduced by 40%, from $2,300 to $1,500.

As the farming and cotton communities lost income and demand in a short time, the problems between white and black Southerners became more pronounced. As much as one-fourth of the labour force in industrialized countries was unable to find work in the early 1930s. With unemployment high for both races and the economy suffering, the already standing racial tensions led to added bigotry, violence, and intolerance in the dynamics of the South. In 1933, under the strain of the Great Depression, President Franklin D. Roosevelt created The New Deal program designed to “give a hand up, not a hand out.” This program promised to repair America and help with “poverty, unemployment, and the disintegration of the American economy.” Alabama politicians and businesses largely supported Roosevelt’s plan. New Deal agencies and programs included “The National Recovery Administration, the Agricultural Adjustment Administration, the Civilian Conservation Corps, the Tennessee Valley Authority, and Social Security.” The effects of the New Deal were slow in Alabama’s poverty-stricken community, but over the decade, state demands for additional assistance helped restructure the economic system and boost confidence for both white and black southerners. Although the New Deal took nearly the entire decade to fully restore America, the overwhelming unemployment problem finally ended in the early 1940s with the increased needs of World War II.

connections:

Have students research different jobs available during the Great Depression. Based on their research, create characters who would have lived during the Great Depression and then write monologues about what it might have been like living and trying to find work in 1935.

Next, have your students do the same kind of research for the current economic crisis. What jobs are Americans taking now to help make ends meet? Have students create modern characters based on their research and write monologues about what it is like living and trying to find work in 2010.

Have students present both monologues. What are the similarities? What are the differences?
When planning their Christmas fruitcake giving list, Buddy and Sook decide to send a fruitcake to the president, Franklin Delano Roosevelt. They sing:

**BUDDY**
I’VE SEEN PICTURES OF FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT
FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT HAS A BIG SMILE
MAKES ME IMAGINE THAT FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT

**SOOK AND BUDDY**
MIGHT LIKE TO SNEAK OFF ONCE IN A WHILE.

**BUDDY**
BET HE GOES DOWN TO HIS GREAT BIG OL’ KITCHEN

**SOOK**
IT’S PAINTED ALL RED, WHITE AND BLUE

**BUDDY**
BET HE SAYS SOMETHIN’ LIKE
“HEY, I’M JUST ITCHIN’
TO HAVE ME SOME FRUITCAKE,
THAT’S WHAT I’LL DO.”

Who exactly was Franklin D. Roosevelt? “FDR”, as he was commonly called, assumed leadership during one of the greatest crises in modern history—a crisis that seemed to mark the total breakdown of the American system—and his response to that emergency changed the nation’s ways forever. In the tumultuous period still known as the Hundred Days, he pushed through Congress a broad array of legislation, ranging from the reform of the nation’s banks to the reorganization of the entire farm system. [To accept his nomination] "I pledge myself to a new deal for the American people."

The New Deal was a message of hope at a time when a naturally optimistic people seemed to be slipping into despair, and with good reason. In the three years since the great stock market crash of 1929, national income had plunged by more than half, from $87.4 billion to $41.7 billion. Unemployment had soared to 4 million in 1930, 8 million in 1931, 12 million in 1932.

In Roosevelt’s legendary first hundred days he won approval of 15 major legislative innovations. Many of the New Deal’s experiments failed or faltered into limbo, but others became part of the steely armature of American life. Social Security, minimum wages, insured bank savings, the right to join labor unions—these are just a few of the lasting results of Roosevelt’s New Deal. Roosevelt had a pet scheme of his own for the unemployed. An ardent conservationist, he wanted thousands of the jobless to work in the nation’s parks and forests. Roosevelt was in the process of creating the personal presidency, or, as Supreme Court Justice William Douglas later put it, “He was in a very special sense the people’s President because he made them feel that with him in the White House they shared the presidency.” (Time magazine)
In A Christmas Memory, Buddy and Sook go on an adventure to scrape together the ingredients for their holiday gifts: fruitcake. The Faulk family, like most other families living in America during the 1930s, was hit hard by the depression and didn’t have extra money to spend on elaborate gifts. Instead, they exchanged homemade gifts, something that was quite common during the Great Depression.

“Richard Grondin, an 85-year-old man who grew up on an 80-acre Michigan farm during the Depression, remembered getting an orange —along with a banana, nuts and candy— in his Christmas stocking. “An orange was a big thing because you couldn’t afford one during the year.”

In those days, most everything was homemade or homegrown, including Christmas gifts, according to Grondin. He and his eight siblings accepted the reality of Depression holidays. “We never felt any different from anybody else,” Grondin said. “Everybody was poor. Nobody had money. If you had food to eat and a place to sleep, you were thankful for that.”

For Salvatore Calandra, 86, of Cleveland, Christmas during the Depression meant looking for his holiday presents in the stove. There was no fireplace.

“There’d always be a quarter at the bottom of the stocking, plus a tangerine and walnuts,” he added. “We didn’t have elaborate Christmases.”

As for tinsel and toys, “We didn’t know what those things were,” he said. “You’d see them in the window of Higbee’s or Sterling-Lindner. But they were just something to be looked at.”

According to his wife, Marie, 86. “We always went downtown to see Santa Claus and look at all the windows,” she said. “The displays were fantastic, wonderful.”

And she noted that if her parents ever heard any whining, they would have a ready response: You should be happy you got what you did. People are starving.”

connections:
Buddy and Sook make fruitcakes every year around the holidays. What traditions do you and your family have during the holiday season? Compare these traditions with your classmates. Are there any similarities in family traditions? Any differences?
GIFT GIVING

HOLIDAY GIVING LIKE BUDDY AND SOOK

Money was extremely tight in 1935 as the United States entered its sixth year of the Great Depression. Banks were failing, people were being layed off, and the number of unemployed Americans would eventually reach 13 million people. As did most Americans in the 1930s, Sook, Buddy and the rest of the Faulk family struggle to make ends meet. Lacking the money to buy presents for their friends and family, Buddy and Sook make fruitcakes. Throughout the play, the pair attempts to stretch their meager savings to purchase the ingredients for their holiday gifts. Each year they choose a small group of people to send a fruitcake to, including their closest family members and friends, but also people who have “struck their fancy. Like the driver of the six o’clock bus from Mobile, who exchanges waves with [them] every day as he passes in a dustcloud.”

Think about those people who have made an impact on your life this year. If you had to send a homemade gift to three people, who would they be and what would you send? Would you send a fruitcake like Buddy and Sook or would you make a different kind of gift? Below, list 3 people you’d send a homemade gift, along with a short description.

Name: ____________________________________________
Description/Why they should get a homemade holiday gift:
________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________

Name: ____________________________________________
Description/Why they should get a homemade holiday gift:
________________________________________________________________________________________
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Name: ____________________________________________
Description/Why they should get a homemade holiday gift:
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In *A Christmas Memory*, Buddy and Sook go on an adventure to find the necessary ingredients for their holiday fruitcakes. One of the most important ingredients is whiskey, the most expensive and hardest to obtain because Alabama state law forbade the sale of alcohol. Between 1920-1933 in which the manufacture, sale, and transportation of alcoholic beverages was illegal in the U.S. This period was called Prohibition. Today, prohibition is widely considered a monumental failure. In Buddy’s time, however, it was a very real issue.

The ban of alcohol stems back to the mid 1800s when the American Temperance Society was founded to convince society of the evils of drinking. The Women’s Christian Temperance Union quickly followed, pledging to enact a national ban on alcohol and drugs, as well as to improve public morals. These temperance societies pushed for increased governmental control; they initially succeeded at passing laws at the local level until, eventually, the government succumbed to the pressures of the movement and made prohibition the 18th Amendment to the Constitution.

Commonly referred to as the “Volstead Act”, the amendment was considered successful in its early stages. Liquor consumption and drunken arrests significantly dropped. Since the average American worker couldn’t afford the high cost of prohibition alcohol, consumption dropped by around 30%. Supporters of the temperance movement may have viewed these statistics as promising but many citizens were outraged by the act and chose disobedience over compliance. Bootlegging (the illegal production and distribution of alcohol) became rampant, and by 1925 there were at least 30,000 speakeasys in New York City alone! Those who opposed the prohibition would frequent these underground bars, carry hidden flasks in their boots, and take extreme measures to get a hold of alcohol. In fact, it’s now a common belief that the prohibition had the opposite affect that it intended by making life in America more violent, rather than civil, as it brought on open rebellions and organized crime.

(password required:
According to legend, the phrase “86 it”, which means “leave or get rid of it” comes from a famous speakeasy in New York City—Chumley’s. The speakeasy had 2 unmarked doors, one of them at 86 Barrow Street, and when the police would raid during Prohibition patrons were told to “86 it” or leave out of the door for 86 Barrow Street.)
TOLERANCE

ACTIVITY: UNDERSTANDING THEME

While Buddy struggles to find his identity, Sook sets a clear example for him in the way she interacts with the people of Monroeville. From the bus driver to the mail man to her own family, Sook treats each person she meets with respect. This was not always the case in 1935. In fact, Americans in the 1930s tended to shy away from what was different, whether that was a difference in skin color or a difference in opinion. Below is an activity to explore tolerance in your own classroom.

Artists often use an editorial cartoon as a means to show their opinion about something in our society. Just as columnists or op-ed writers use words to express their opinions about a wide array of topics, artists use pictures to make statements.

Examine the cartoon to the right:

Ask students to look at the top of each character. What is similar about the design on each character’s head? What is different?

What is the angry character “saying” to the crying one?

What is the artist’s message?

How do you think this artist feels about intolerance?

connections:

1. Form small groups. Tolerance can be defined as “an understanding of the beliefs and practices of others, even if they are different from yours.” In your groups, come up with your own definitions of tolerance and intolerance.

2. Discuss the following questions in your group:

A) What are some examples of intolerance?

B) What does intolerance do to people?

C) What does it mean to be a tolerant person?

3. Create a poster in the same style as the editorial cartoon above that promotes tolerance. Try to rely solely on images and symbols (without text). Be sure that your poster truly sends people a message about how your group thinks about intolerance.

4. With permission from your teachers and school administrators, display posters around your school to help promote the idea of tolerance.

from the Southern Poverty Law Center, tolerance.org
IDENTITY

ACTIVITY: DEFINING YOURSELF

Above all else, *A Christmas Memory* is a story about identity--through his relationship with his eccentric cousin, Sook, Buddy begins to define his own identity and make the transition from childhood to adulthood. But why is defining yourself so important? The word “define” means “to separate one thing from another.” By doing this, we embrace differences. Sook, for example, has a clearly defined identity, one that she is extremely comfortable with (even when others, like her sister, Jennie, are not). Sook embraces her quirks and idiosyncrasies and in doing so gives Buddy the courage to accept his own.

Begin to define your own identity by answering the following questions:

1. List at least six adjectives that you would use to describe yourself.

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____________________________________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________________________________

2. List 3 important relationships in your life (for example: friend, sister, brother, mother, daughter, nephew).

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____________________________________________________________________________________________________________
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3. List 5 things you love.

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____________________________________________________________________________________________________________
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4. List 3 memories you have and describe how you felt at those times.

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____________________________________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________________________________

from facinghistory.org
IDENTITY

ACTIVITY: DEFINING YOURSELF (CONTINUED)

5. List 5 of your fears.

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7. List 5 hopes or wishes.

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8. Where do you live?

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____________________________________________________________________________________________________________

from facinghistory.org
IDENTITY

ACTIVITY: DEFINING YOURSELF (CONTINUED)

Using the answers to your previous questions, complete the following biopoem:

(Line 1) First and last name
(Line 2) Three or four adjectives that describe the person
(Line 3) Important relationship
(Line 4) Two or three things, people, or ideas that this person loves
(Line 5) Three feelings this person has experienced
(Line 6) Three fears this person has
(Line 7) Accomplishments
(Line 8) Two or three things this person wants to see happen or wants to experience
(Line 9) The residence of the person
(Line 10) First and last name

**Example:**

Sook Faulk
Kind, Eccentric, Excited, Naive
Cousin to Buddy
Who loves her family, Queenie, and fruitcake weather
Who feels happy, loved, and misunderstood
Who fears Buddy leaving, Queenie disappearing, and disrespect
Who has always found a way to make fruitcake
Who hopes to see Buddy grow up
Lives in Monroeville, Alabama
Sook Faulk

____________________________________________________________________________________________________________


