



MATHS

DECEMBER

FRIDAY

Smith



The Holiday Decorations

Characters

Write your initials next to the character you're going to play.

- _____ Narrator 1
- _____ Narrator 2
- _____ Narrator 3
- _____ Narrator 4
- _____ Narrator 5
- _____ Narrator 6
- _____ Narrator 7
- _____ Mrs. Beck (teacher)
- _____ Sound Effect Maker
- _____ Sofia
- _____ Eric
- _____ Cara
- _____ Joey
- _____ Julia
- _____ Hannah
- _____ Max
- _____ Lindsey
- _____ Roberto
- _____ Sachi
- _____ Cole
- _____ Nasir
- _____ Jonathan
- _____ Natalie
- _____ Grandfather

See how one third-grade class learned about some of the holidays celebrated at this time of year.

SCENE 1

NARRATOR 1: One December morning, Mrs. Beck's third-grade students watch her carry a cardboard box into the classroom. She sets it down with a . . .

SOUND EFFECT: THUMP!
(box dropping on table)

SOFIA: What's in the box?

MRS. BECK: Our winter holiday concert is this Thursday. The third grade always decorates the auditorium.

ERIC: Awesome!

MRS. BECK: In this box are paper snowflakes for us to hang. My students made them years ago.

NARRATOR 2: Mrs. Beck opens the box and frowns.

CARA: What's wrong?

MRS. BECK: The decorations are wet. There must have

been a leak in the storage shed. We did get a lot of rain this year.

NARRATOR 3: Mrs. Beck holds up a soggy snowflake.

WHOLE CLASS: Yuck!

JOEY: It looks like we'll have to make new ones.

MRS. BECK: You're right. I'll grab some white paper from the closet.

JULIA: Wait, Mrs. Beck. Do we have to make snowflakes? Or can we try something new?

MRS. BECK: What do you have in mind?

JULIA: Well, the theme of the concert is "winter holidays." We could each make a decoration for a holiday we celebrate.

MRS. BECK: That's a great idea! I'll get the art supplies.

SCENE 2

NARRATOR 4: An hour later, everyone has finished.

MRS. BECK: OK, time to share! Lindsey, what did you make?

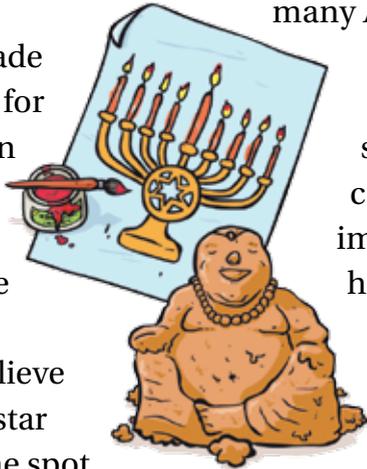
LINDSEY: I made a glittery star for Christmas. On Christmas, my family celebrates the birth of Jesus Christ. We believe that a bright star shone over the spot where he was born. My family celebrates Christmas by going to church, giving gifts, and decorating a tree—with a star on top, of course.

MRS. BECK: Excellent! What is your decoration, Hannah?

HANNAH: I painted a menorah. My family celebrates the Jewish holiday of Hanukkah

(HAH-nu-kah). We remember a miracle long ago when a tiny bit of oil kept the Temple in Jerusalem lit for eight days. Now, we celebrate Hanukkah for eight nights. Each night, we light a candle and exchange presents.

MAX: My decoration has



candles too! I made a *kinara* out of construction paper. It's a candleholder used for Kwanzaa (KWAHN-zuh). Kwanzaa is a time when many African-Americans remember their history. It lasts for seven days. We light candles to remember important ideas, like helping one another.

MRS. BECK: Good work. How about you, Roberto?

ROBERTO:

We moved here from Mexico. Part of our Christmas celebration is something called Las Posadas (lahs poh-SAH-dahs). For nine nights, we walk through our neighborhood carrying paper lanterns called *faroles* (fah-ROH-les).

I made a farol. See?

MRS. BECK:

Lovely! Now, Sachi, I can't help but admire your colorful decoration.

What is it?

SACHI: It's a lotus flower made out of paper. I made it to represent the Hindu holiday of Diwali

(dih-VAH-lee). Many people celebrate it in India. That's where my family is from. Diwali honors the goddess of good luck. For five days, we light oil lamps, give gifts, and fill our homes with flowers.

MRS. BECK: Wow! I'm learning a lot. Who else wants to share?

COLE: My family is Buddhist. Every winter, we celebrate Bodhi (BOH-dee) Day. It honors Buddha (BOO-dah), the founder of Buddhism. For my

decoration, I made a Buddha figure out of clay.

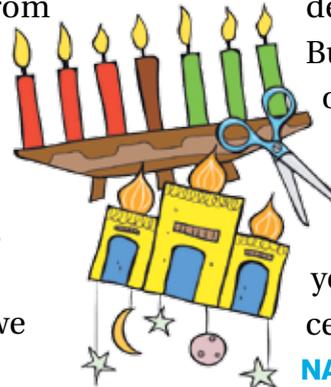
MRS. BECK: It's beautiful. And Nasir, I know your family just celebrated a holiday.

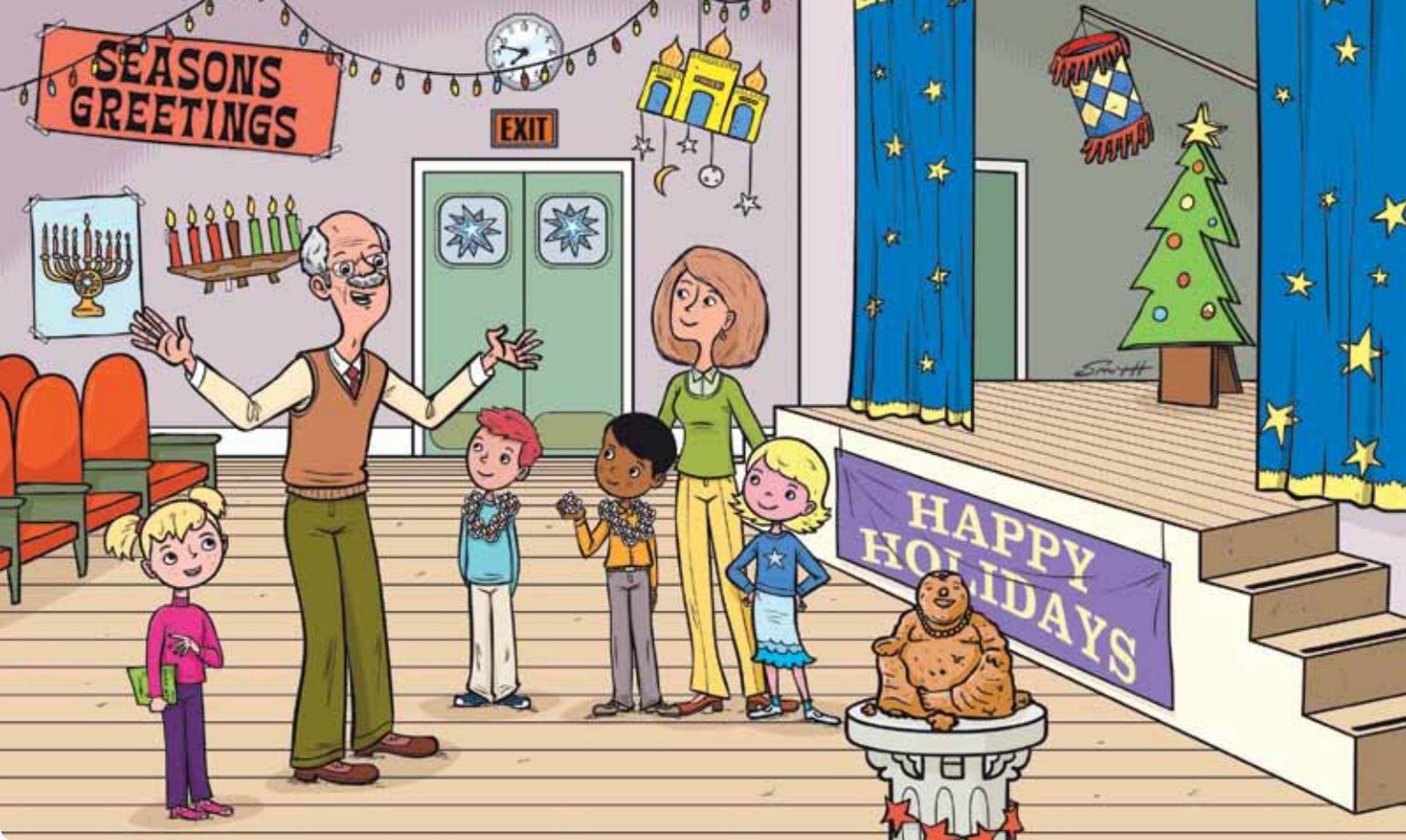
NASIR: My family is Muslim. We recently had Eid al-Adha (ihd uhl-ahd-HA). It is a time when people share food and go to mosques to pray. I made a mobile with a mosque, the crescent moon, and stars. Many Muslims think of these as symbols of our faith.

NARRATOR 5: One by one, all of the other students shared their work.

MRS. BECK: Nice job, class. What did you learn?

JONATHAN: Well, the





holidays we celebrate are pretty different.

NATALIE: But they all seem to be about giving and sharing.

MRS. BECK: I noticed that too. Now let's get these decorations into the auditorium!

SCENE 3

NARRATOR 6: On the night of the concert, hundreds of people come to hear the students sing.

SOUND EFFECT: (clapping and cheering)

NARRATOR 7: Afterward, a student's grandfather walks up to the third-graders.

GRANDFATHER: I hear that you are the talented

students who made the holiday decorations. I really enjoyed them.

WHOLE CLASS: Thank you!

GRANDFATHER: I can't wait to tell my wife all about them. She wanted to be here tonight, but she is too sick. She is in the hospital.

MRS. BECK: We're sorry to hear that.

GRANDFATHER: Yes, it's a tough place to be at holiday time. It's a shame the hospital doesn't have decorations like these. They would cheer the patients up.

MRS. BECK: Class, are you thinking what I'm thinking?

WHOLE CLASS: Yeah!

—By Karen Kellaher

Holiday Time

It's time to celebrate! Here is this year's list of dates for the holidays in the play. They are in alphabetical order.

- **Bodhi Day:** December 8
- **Christmas:** December 25
- **Diwali:** November 5 to November 9
- **Eid al-Adha:** November 16
- **Hanukkah:** December 1 to December 9
- **Kwanzaa:** December 26 to January 1
- **Las Posadas:** December 16 to December 24