

# **SANTA'S LITTLE HELPERS**

## **STUDY GUIDE**

PREK-8<sup>TH</sup> GRADE OPTIONS

# PRE SHOW ACTIVITIES

## PreK-2nd Grade:

- **Basic Theater Etiquette**

Teach students about the importance of sitting quietly, paying attention, and not disturbing others.

*How to Practice*

Role-play scenarios where students pretend to be audience members while others perform.

- **Introduction to Storytelling**

Discuss the elements of a story (characters, setting, plot) and how they might be portrayed on stage.

*How to Practice*

Read simple stories together and act them out using props or puppets.

- **Expressive Listening**

Encourage students to listen actively to the dialogue, music, and sound effects during performances.

*How to Practice*

Play audio recordings of stories or scenes and ask students to describe what they hear.

## 3rd-5th Grade:

- **Understanding Theater Roles**

Introduce the roles of actors, directors, designers, and stage crew, and how they collaborate to create a production.

*How to Practice*

Assign students different roles in a mini-play and have them work together to stage it.

- **Character Analysis**

Help students understand how actors create characters through voice, movement, and costume.

*How to Practice*

Have students choose a character from a story and describe how they would portray them on stage.

- **Interpreting Themes**

Discuss the themes and messages of the play and how they relate to students' own experiences and values.

*How to Practice*

Engage in group discussions about the themes of stories they have read or seen.

#### 6th-8th Grade:

- **Critical Thinking About Productions**

Encourage students to analyze the artistic choices made in the production, such as set design, lighting, and costumes.

*How to Practice*

Show clips from different performances and discuss how the staging enhances or detracts from the storytelling.

- **Historical Context**

Explore the historical and cultural background of the play and its relevance to the time it was written.

*How to Practice*

Research the time period of the play and create presentations or posters to share findings.

- **Writing Reviews**

Teach students how to write thoughtful critiques of performances, considering both artistic merit and personal enjoyment.

*How to Practice*

Have students write reviews of school or community productions they attend, focusing on specific elements they liked or disliked.

# THEME: BULLYING AWARENESS

## DISCUSSION POINTS

- Identify different forms of bullying (verbal, physical, cyber) and discuss their impact.
- Encourage empathy by exploring how characters in the show felt when faced with bullying.
- Explore how the characters who weren't being bullied directly, stood up for the bullied individual.

## ACTIVITIES

### Anti-Bullying Workshop

Facilitate a workshop on recognizing and preventing bullying. Use scenarios from the show to encourage discussion on standing up against bullying.

## RECOGNIZING AND PREVENTING BULLYING

### Objective

- To increase awareness and understanding of bullying behaviors.
- To equip participants with strategies for recognizing and preventing bullying in various settings.

### Introduction (15 minutes)

- Welcome participants and briefly explain the purpose and objectives of the workshop.
- Icebreaker activity to create a comfortable atmosphere and encourage participation.

### ICEBREAKER OPTIONS

#### PreK-2nd Grade

- **Name Game**  
Have children sit in a circle. Start by saying your name and doing a simple action (like clapping your hands). Then, each child takes a turn saying their name and copying the action. This helps kids learn each other's names and encourages movement.
- **Favorite Animal**  
Go around the circle and have each child say their favorite animal. Encourage them to make the sound or do the movement associated with that animal. This activity is fun and helps children feel comfortable sharing with each other.
- **Color Hunt**  
Give each child a piece of paper with a specific color written on it. They have to find other children with the same color and stand together. This activity gets kids moving and interacting while focusing on colors.

### 3rd-5th Grades

- **Two Truths and a Lie**

Each child takes turns sharing two true statements about themselves and one false statement. The rest of the group guesses which statement is the lie. This game encourages conversation and helps children learn interesting facts about each other.

- **Human Bingo**

Create bingo cards with different statements or traits (e.g., "Has a pet," "Likes pizza," "Plays a sport"). Children have to find others who fit each description and have them sign the corresponding square. The first to fill their card yells "Bingo!" This activity promotes communication and teamwork.

- **Emoji Introductions**

Provide each child with a sticky note and ask them to draw an emoji that represents how they feel today. After they've drawn their emoji, have them share it with the group and explain why they chose that emotion. This activity helps children express their feelings and connect with each other.

### 6th-8th Grades

- **Would You Rather**

Present the group with a series of "Would you rather" questions (e.g., "Would you rather have the ability to fly or be invisible?"). Each participant takes turns sharing their choice and explaining why. This activity sparks discussion and helps participants learn more about each other's preferences.

- **Memory Lane**

Have each participant share a memorable moment from their past (e.g., a favorite vacation, a funny experience). Encourage them to include details and emotions associated with the memory. This activity fosters deeper connections and encourages storytelling.

- **Group Juggle**

Stand in a circle and start by tossing a ball to someone across from you while saying their name. That person then tosses the ball to someone else while saying their name, and so on. After a few rounds, introduce multiple balls to increase the challenge. This activity promotes focus, quick thinking, and teamwork.

### Understanding Bullying (30 minutes)

- Define bullying: types, forms, and characteristics. Allow the students to name as many as they can. Use the following list to fill in the gaps as you feel are age appropriate.

- **Physical Bullying:** This involves physical actions intended to cause harm or discomfort, such as hitting, kicking, punching, or damaging property.
  - **Verbal Bullying:** Verbal bullying includes using words to intimidate, insult, tease, or humiliate others. Examples include name-calling, teasing, taunting, or making threats.
  - **Social Bullying:** Also known as relational bullying, social bullying involves manipulating relationships to harm others. This can include spreading rumors, gossiping, excluding someone from a group, or intentionally embarrassing them in front of others.
  - **Cyberbullying:** Cyberbullying occurs through digital devices and platforms such as social media, messaging apps, email, or online forums. It includes sending hurtful messages, spreading rumors online, sharing embarrassing photos or videos without consent, or creating fake profiles to harass others.
  - **Sexual Bullying:** This type of bullying involves unwanted sexual comments, gestures, or behaviors that are intended to intimidate, embarrass, or degrade someone. It can include sexual harassment, inappropriate touching, or spreading sexual rumors.
  - **Prejudicial Bullying:** Prejudicial bullying targets individuals based on their race, ethnicity, religion, nationality, gender, sexual orientation, disability, or other characteristics. It can involve discriminatory remarks, exclusion, or hate speech.
  - **Psychological Bullying:** Psychological bullying aims to undermine someone's mental and emotional well-being. This can include manipulation, gaslighting, threats, intimidation, or coercive control.
  - **Homophobic and Transphobic Bullying:** This type of bullying targets individuals who identify as LGBTQ+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer/questioning, etc.). It includes verbal harassment, name-calling, discrimination, or physical violence based on a person's sexual orientation or gender identity.
  - **Disability Bullying:** Disability bullying targets individuals with physical, intellectual, or developmental disabilities. It can involve teasing, mocking, exclusion, or deliberate acts to exploit or harm someone's disability.
  - **Financial Bullying:** Financial bullying involves using financial power or control to intimidate or manipulate others. This can include stealing money or possessions, coercing someone into giving money, or using financial threats to control behavior.
- Discuss the impact of bullying on individuals and communities.
  - Share relevant statistics and research findings on bullying prevalence.
    - In the US, 1 in 5 students ages 12-18 has been bullied during the school year.
    - Approximately 160,000 teens have skipped school because of bullying.
    - Students who reported that they were frequently bullied scored lower in reading, mathematics, and science than their peers who reported that they were never or rarely bullied.

- The most commonly reported type of bullying is verbal harassment (79%), followed by social harassment (50%), physical bullying (29%), and cyberbullying (25%).
- Labeling an incident as bullying can be important because it influences whether students tell an adult, as well as how adults respond to the student's report.
- More than half of bullying situations (57%) stop when a peer intervenes on behalf of the student being bullied.
- 6th grade students experience the most bullying (31%).
- 70% of school staff have seen bullying. 62% witnessed bullying two or more times in the last month, and 41% witness bullying once a week or more.
- Students are less likely to report bullying as they get older. Only 39% of high schoolers notified an adult of bullying.
- 42% percent of students who reported being bullied at school indicated that the bullying was related to at least one of the following characteristics: physical appearance (30%), race (10%), gender (8%), disability (7%), ethnicity (7%), religion (5%), and sexual orientation (4%).
- Over half of students ages 12-18 who reported being bullied believed their bullies had the ability to influence what other students thought of them.

### Prevention Strategies (45 minutes)

- Discuss proactive measures to prevent bullying.
  - **Promote Empathy and Respect:** Teach young people to treat others with kindness, empathy, and respect. Encourage them to consider how their words and actions impact others and to stand up for those who are being bullied.
  - **Foster Inclusive Environments:** Create inclusive school and community environments where diversity is celebrated, and everyone feels welcome and valued regardless of their differences.
  - **Educate About Bullying:** Provide age-appropriate education on bullying prevention, including what bullying is, its impact, and how to recognize and respond to bullying behavior.
  - **Encourage Open Communication:** Create opportunities for young people to talk openly about their experiences, feelings, and concerns. Foster a culture where they feel comfortable seeking help from trusted adults if they witness or experience bullying.
  - **Teach Conflict Resolution Skills:** Equip young people with skills to resolve conflicts peacefully and assertively. Teach them strategies for communicating effectively, managing emotions, and negotiating solutions.
  - **Promote Bystander Intervention:** Encourage young people to speak up and take action when they witness bullying behavior. Teach them safe and effective ways to intervene, such as seeking help from an adult or offering support to the victim.
  - **Set Clear Expectations and Consequences:** Establish clear expectations for behavior and consequences for bullying. Ensure that young people understand

the importance of treating others with kindness and the consequences of engaging in bullying behavior.

- **Provide Positive Role Models:** Provide positive role models and mentors for young people to emulate. Highlight individuals who demonstrate empathy, kindness, and respect for others.
- **Encourage Friendship and Inclusion:** Encourage young people to make friends and include others who may feel left out or isolated. Foster a sense of belonging and connectedness among peers.
- **Create Safe Spaces:** Establish safe spaces where young people can seek support and assistance if they experience bullying. Ensure that adults are available and approachable for reporting bullying incidents and providing help and guidance.
- **Promote Digital Citizenship:** Teach young people responsible and respectful online behavior. Educate them about the consequences of cyberbullying and the importance of protecting their own and others' online safety.
- **Encourage Positive Activities:** Provide opportunities for young people to engage in positive activities such as sports, arts, clubs, and community service. Encourage participation in activities that promote teamwork, cooperation, and friendship.

### Responding to Bullying (30 minutes)

- Outline appropriate responses to bullying incidents.

**Assertive Communication:** Encourage them to calmly and assertively communicate their boundaries to the bully. They can use "I" statements to express how the bullying behavior makes them feel and request that it stops.

**Have them give examples of "I" statements.**

**Seek Help from a Trusted Adult:** Seek help from a trusted adult such as a teacher, school counselor, parent, or family member. Report the bullying incident and ask for support in addressing the situation.

**Use Humor to Defuse the Situation:** Sometimes, using humor can help diffuse a bullying situation. Respond to teasing or taunting with a light-hearted comment or joke to take away the bully's power.

**Walk Away:** It's okay to remove yourself from a bullying situation if you feel unsafe or uncomfortable. Walk away and find a trusted adult or friend to talk to.

**Stay Calm and Confident:** Stay calm and confident in the face of bullying. Bullies often seek reactions, so maintaining composure can help de-escalate the situation.



**Practice Bystander Intervention:** Speak up and take action when they witness bullying behavior. Support the victim, intervene directly, or seek help from an adult.

**Document the Bullying:** Keep a record of bullying incidents, including dates, times, locations, and details of what happened. This documentation can be helpful when reporting the bullying to adults or authorities.

**Use Safety Strategies:** Protect yourself from physical bullying, such as staying in well-lit areas, avoiding isolated places, and traveling with friends or trusted adults.

**Practice Self-Care:** Prioritize your well-being and practice self-care strategies to cope with the effects of bullying. This can include talking to a trusted friend, engaging in hobbies they enjoy, or seeking support from a counselor or therapist.

**Know When to Get Help:** It is important to reach out for help if you are unable to handle the bullying situation on your own. Seek support from adults, counselors, or helplines that specialize in bullying prevention.

- Discuss reporting procedures and support resources available in your school and/or community.

### **Interactive Activities (30 minutes)**

- Group activities or games to reinforce key concepts and skills learned.
  - Role-play bullying scenarios but ensure the teacher plays the bully to prevent students from using the activity to actually bully.
  - Allow students to callout and use tactics outlined in previous sections of the workshop.
- Q&A session: Address any remaining questions or concerns from participants.

### **Action Planning (15 minutes)**

- Facilitate a brainstorming session on practical steps individuals can take to prevent bullying in their own spheres of influence.
  - Here's a list of some suggestions if your group is stuck.
    1. Be Kind and Inclusive: Treat others with kindness, respect, and empathy. Include classmates who may feel left out or lonely, and stand up for those who are being bullied.
    2. Speak Up: If you witness bullying behavior, don't be a bystander. Speak up and let the bully know that their behavior is not acceptable. If you feel safe, intervene directly or seek help from a trusted adult.

3. **Report Bullying:** If you or someone you know is being bullied, don't hesitate to report it to a teacher, school counselor, or parent. Reporting bullying incidents helps adults intervene and prevent further harm.
4. **Be a Good Friend:** Build strong and supportive friendships with classmates. Be there for your friends, listen to their concerns, and offer help and encouragement when needed.
5. **Set Boundaries:** Know your boundaries and communicate them assertively. If someone is being mean or hurtful, tell them firmly that you don't like it and ask them to stop. Stand up for yourself in a calm and confident manner.
6. **Include Everyone:** Make an effort to include classmates who may be different from you or who may feel left out. Invite them to join in games, activities, or conversations, and show them kindness and acceptance.
7. **Use Positive Language:** Use positive language and avoid teasing, name-calling, or spreading rumors about others. Be mindful of the impact your words can have on others and choose to use language that uplifts and supports.
8. **Practice Empathy:** Put yourself in other people's shoes and try to understand how they might be feeling. Show empathy and compassion towards classmates who are struggling or going through difficult times.
9. **Seek Help if Needed:** If you're experiencing bullying or if you're unsure how to handle a bullying situation, don't be afraid to seek help from a trusted adult. Talk to a teacher, school counselor, or parent who can provide support and guidance.
10. **Be a Positive Role Model:** Lead by example and be a positive role model for your peers. Show integrity, kindness, and respect in your words and actions, and inspire others to do the same.

- Encourage participants to commit to specific actions they can implement. Have them write a Pledge of Kindness and hang it in a visible place in the room.

### **Conclusion (5 minutes)**

- Summarize key takeaways from the workshop.
- Express gratitude to participants for their engagement and participation.

### **Additional Tips:**

- Create a safe and respectful environment where participants feel comfortable sharing their experiences and perspectives.
- Use a variety of instructional methods such as presentations, group discussions, role-playing, and interactive activities to keep participants engaged.
- Provide resources and handouts for further reading and reference.
- Follow up with participants after the workshop to reinforce learning and support ongoing efforts to prevent bullying.

# THEME: FRIENDSHIP AND INCLUSION

## DISCUSSION POINTS

- Discuss the qualities of a good friend and the importance of inclusion.
- Explore how characters overcome differences to build strong, supportive friendships.

## ACTIVITIES

### PreK-2nd Grade:

- **Friendship Bracelets**  
Provide materials like colorful beads and strings, and have children create friendship bracelets. Encourage them to make one for a friend or to exchange bracelets with each other.
- **Circle of Friends**  
Have children sit in a circle and take turns sharing something they like about the person sitting next to them. This activity promotes positive interaction and appreciation among classmates.
- **Storytime: Books About Friendship**  
Read aloud age-appropriate books about friendship, such as The Rainbow Fish by Marcus Pfister or A Sick Day for Amos McGee by Philip C. Stead. Afterward, facilitate a discussion about the themes of friendship and inclusion in the story.

### 3rd-5th Grades:

- **Friendship Web**  
Have children sit in a circle and hold a ball of yarn. The first child says their name and one thing they like about themselves, then tosses the yarn to another child while holding onto the end. Continue until everyone has participated, creating a friendship web. Discuss how each person is connected and important.
- **Friendship Recipe**  
Provide large sheets of paper or poster board and markers. Have children draw and write ingredients for a "recipe for friendship," including qualities like kindness, trust, and respect. Display the recipes in the classroom as a reminder of the values of friendship.
- **Mix and Mingle**  
Create a "mix and mingle" activity where children move around the room and greet each other with a handshake, high-five, or fist bump. Encourage them to ask each other questions about their interests, hobbies, and favorite things to foster connections.

## 6th-8th Grades:

- **Friendship Quilt**

Provide squares of fabric or paper and art supplies. Have students decorate their squares with symbols, images, or words representing friendship and inclusion. Assemble the squares into a friendship quilt to display in the classroom or school.

- **Role-Playing Scenarios**

Create scenarios related to friendship and inclusion, such as someone being left out of a group or a disagreement between friends. Divide students into groups and have them role-play the scenarios, exploring different ways to resolve conflicts and promote inclusion.

- **Friendship Bingo**

Create bingo cards with different friendship-related activities or traits (e.g., "Compliment someone," "Sit with someone new at lunch"). Students play bingo by completing the activities and marking them off on their cards. This game encourages positive interactions and inclusivity. This can be done over the course of a week, semester, etc. Other students mark it for other students, they don't mark their own sheet.

# THEME: HOLIDAY SPIRIT

## DISCUSSION POINTS

- Define the holiday spirit beyond material gifts, focusing on acts of kindness, generosity, and compassion.
- Discuss how characters in the show embody the holiday spirit through their actions.

## ACTIVITIES

### PreK-2nd Grade:

- **Holiday Storytime**  
Read age-appropriate books about winter holidays from different cultures, such as "The Snowy Day" by Ezra Jack Keats (Christmas), "Seven Spools of Thread: A Kwanzaa Story" by Angela Shelf Medearis (Kwanzaa), and "Celebrate Diwali" by Deborah Heiligman (Diwali).
- **Crafts: Holiday Ornaments:**  
Provide materials like paper, markers, glitter, and glue, scissors and have children create snowflakes different winter holidays. Encourage them to draw in the center space that represent their own traditions or learn about new ones.  
\*OPTIONAL TEMPLATE PROVIDED
- **Santa's Workshop**  
In the show, we see the Simulation Stations for the Makers, Bakers, and Decorators. What other rooms are there in Santa's Workshop in the North Pole? Are there other elves there? Use your imagination and create all of the rooms in the workshop through artwork!

### 3rd-5th Grades:

- **Holiday Around the World Presentations:**  
Assign each student a different winter holiday from around the world, such as Hanukkah, Christmas, Diwali, Kwanza, or Chinese New Year. Have them research the holiday's traditions, customs, and significance, and then present their findings to the class.
- **Cultural Holiday Crafts:**  
Provide materials for making traditional holiday crafts from different cultures, such as paper lanterns for Chinese New Year, paper menorahs for Hanukkah, or Rangoli designs for Diwali. Encourage students to explore and appreciate the diversity of holiday traditions. Connect how the show has Aster as the light of a star and how

these traditions use light as a symbol. Discuss and use what those symbols are in the different areas they are used.

- **Holiday Cards for Strangers**

Have students make cards geared toward spreading the holiday spirit to someone that doesn't get to be with their families as often. It could be a senior center, military base, children's hospital, etc.

### **6th-8th Grades:**

- **Holiday Cultural Fair:**

Organize a holiday cultural fair where students set up booths representing different winter holidays from around the world. Each booth can be hosted by a class or grade band that can showcase traditions, customs, food, music, and decorations associated with the holiday. Students can visit each booth to learn and experience the diversity of holiday celebrations.

- **Holiday Spice Game**

Gather the scents, they could be in the form of actual food, candles, lotions, essential oils, whatever you have around. Divide the students into teams and see if they can identify the list of smells associated with each item. Below are some examples:

- Peppermint
- Cinnamon
- Gingerbread
- Nutmeg
- Vanilla
- Chocolate
- Hazelnut
- Caramel
- Pine
- Marshmallow

- **Community Service Project:**

Organize a holiday-themed community service project, such as volunteering at a soup kitchen, collecting donations for a toy drive, or making holiday cards for residents of a local nursing home. This activity fosters a sense of empathy, compassion, and giving back during the holiday season.

# POST SHOW ACTIVITIES

## PreK-2nd Grade:

- **Discussion and Reflection**  
Lead a simple discussion about what the students saw and heard during the performance, encouraging them to share their favorite parts.
  - Have students draw pictures of their favorite characters or scenes from the play and share with the class.
- **Creative Expression**  
Provide opportunities for students to express themselves creatively through dramatic play or simple crafts related to the performance.
  - Set up a dress-up corner with costumes and props inspired by the play for students to explore.
- **Extension Activities**  
Offer activities that extend the themes or lessons of the performance into other areas of learning, such as literacy or art.
  - Activity: Read books or sing songs related to the themes of the play, reinforcing vocabulary and concepts.

## 3rd-5th Grade:

- **Deeper Analysis:**  
Guide students in a more in-depth discussion about the characters, themes, and messages of the play, encouraging them to think critically.
  - Activity: Have students write journal entries from the perspective of a character, reflecting on their experiences and motivations.
- **Performance Reviews**  
Encourage students to write reviews of the performance, considering both the artistic aspects and their own emotional response.
  - Activity: Create a classroom "newspaper" featuring student reviews, illustrations, and interviews with classmates about their thoughts on the play.
- **Creative Response Projects**  
Assign creative projects that allow students to respond to the play in their own way, such as writing a sequel scene or designing a new set.
  - Activity: Divide students into small groups and have them create short skits inspired by the themes or characters of the play to perform for the class.

## 6th-8th Grade:

- **Critical Analysis**

Facilitate a more sophisticated discussion about the production, delving into the artistic choices made by the director and performers.

- Activity: Have students research the historical context of the play and present their findings to the class, discussing how it influenced the production.
  
- **Comparative Analysis**  
Encourage students to compare and contrast the live performance with other versions they may have seen or read, such as film adaptations or different stage productions.
  - Activity: Create a Venn diagram or other visual organizer to help students identify similarities and differences between different interpretations of the play.
  
- **Community Engagement**  
Foster connections between the performance and the wider community by encouraging students to share their experiences with friends and family.
  - Activity: Organize a post-show discussion or reflection event for students to share their thoughts and insights with parents, teachers, and community members.