

# ***Rudolph***

Book & lyrics by Catherine Bush, music by Dax Dupuy

Inspired by the song ***Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer*** by Johnny Marks

\*Especially for Grades K-6

## **By the Barter Players, Barter Theatre, Christmas 2017**

(NOTE: standards listed below are seeing a performance of *Rudolph* and completing the study guide.)

### **Virginia SOLs**

**English** – K.1, K.5, K.6, K.8, K.9, 1.1, 1.2, 1.5, 1.8, 1.9, 2.1, 2.5, 2.6, 2.7, 2.8, 2.12, 2.14, 3.1, 3.3, 3.4, 3.5, 3.9, 3.11, 4.1, 4.2, 4.4, 4.5, 4.7, 4.9, 5.1, 5.2, 5.4, 5.5, 5.7, 5.9, 6.2, 6.4, 6.5, 6.7, 6.9

**Music** – K.11, K.13, 1.12, 1.16, 2.8, 2.9, 2.11, 2.13, 3.9, 3.10, 3.12, 4.8, 4.9, 4.13, 5.8, 5.9, 5.12, 6.7, 6.9, 6.10

**Theatre Arts** – 6.5, 6.18, 6.23, 6.24, 6.25

### **Tennessee/North Carolina Common Core State Standards**

**English/Language Arts - Reading Literacy:** K.1, K.3, K.5, K.7, 1.1, 1.3, 1.6, 1.7, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 3.1, 3.4, 3.5, 4.1, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5, 4.6, 5.3, 5.4, 5.6, 6.4, 6.6, 6.7

**English Language Arts – Writing:** K.1, K.3, 1.1, 1.3, 1.8, 2.1, 2.3, 2.8, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.7, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.7, 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.7, 5.9, 6.1, 6.2, 6.3, 6.7, 6.9.

### **Tennessee Fine Arts Curriculum Standards**

**Theatre** – K.4.1, K.4.3, 1.4.1, 1.4.3, 2.4.1, 2.4.3, 3.6.2, 3.6.4, 3.7.1, 3.7.2, 3.8.1, 4.6.1, 4.6.4, 4.7.1, 4.7.2, 4.8.1, 5.6.1, 5.6.4, 5.7.1, 5.7.2, 5.8.1, 6.1, 6.2

**Music** – K.7.1, K.7.2, 1.7.1, 1.7.2, 2.7.1, 2.7.2, 3.7.1, 3.7.2, 4.7.1, 4.7.2, 5.7.1, 5.7.2

### **North Carolina Essential Standards**

**Theatre Arts** – K.A.1, K.CU.1, 1.A.1, 1.CU.2, 2.A.1, 3.A.1, 3.CU.1, 3.CU.2, 4.A.1, 5.A.1, 5.CU.1, 6.C.1, 6.C.2, 6.A.1, 6.CU.2

**Music** – K.MR.1, 1.MR.1, 2.MR.1, 3.MR.1, 3.CR.1, 4.MR.1, 5.MR.1, 6.MR.1

## **Setting**

The North Pole.



## Characters

**Rudolph** – a red-nosed North Pole reindeer; collects coal for the stockings

**Dasher** – a North Pole reindeer; mail carrier

**Prancer** – a North Pole reindeer; head of the Ground Team

**Comet** – a North Pole reindeer; star-polisher

**Blitzen** – a North Pole reindeer; delivers Christmas trees to various lots

**Santa Claus** – a hard-working elf who bears the responsibility of the modern Christmas



## Synopsis

In order to test out his new Gift Delivery System (G.D.S.), Santa takes the Air Team out for a test flight the week before Christmas Eve, only to end with disastrous results. The entire Air Team is injured when the sleigh smacks into the actual North Pole and Santa needs new reindeer to take their place. An emergency Reindeer Games is ordered to determine which reindeer – if any – are qualified for Santa’s annual Christmas Eve mission. Dasher, Prancer, Comet and Blitzen – all members of the Ground Team – have decided that nothing will stop them from making the Air Team. They are equally determined to keep Rudolph, a lower-level reindeer with a glowing red nose, from participating in the Reindeer Games. Rudolph’s red nose makes him *different*, and in the reindeer herd, different is *bad*. But Rudolph’s difference also enables him to see the world differently; he is especially adept at figuring out new – and better – methods with which to train for the Reindeer Games. With the salvation of Christmas as his motive, Rudolph coaches the others and as they begin to qualify, they one-by-one begin to realize that different may not be all bad. But it isn’t until a foggy Christmas Eve prevents Santa from taking off that the new members of the Air Team come to realize that different, may indeed, be the best Christmas gift ever.



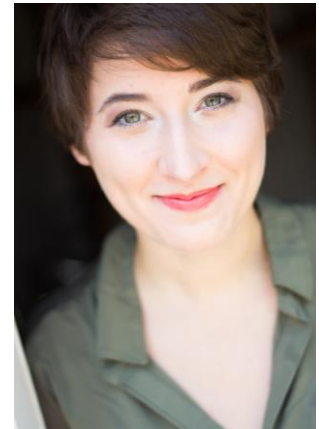
## Biography of the Playwright

Catherine Bush lives in Abingdon, Virginia where she is Barter Theatre's Playwright-in-Residence. Her plays for young audiences include *Cry Wolf!*, *Sleeping Beauty*, *Rapunzel*, *Frosty*, *The Scarlet Letter*, *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, *All I Want for Christmas is My Two Front Teeth*, *My Imaginary Pirate*, *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow*, *The Call of the Wild*, *The Princess and the Pea*, *Rudolph*, *The Red Badge of Courage*, *Aesop's Fables*, *Santa Claus is Coming to Town*, *Mother Goose: The Musical*, *'Twas the Night Before Christmas*, *Old Turtle and the Broken Truth*, *Jingle All the Way*, *Antigone*, *Robin Hood*, and *Great Expectations*. [www.catherinebushplays.com](http://www.catherinebushplays.com)



## Biography of the Composer

Dax Dupuy is a native of Alexandria, Louisiana. She grew up studying classical piano, until her brother showed her how to improv at age twelve –she has been creating her own melodies ever since. She has composed several Barter Player musicals, including *Mother Goose: The Musical*, *Santa Claus is Coming to Town*, *Rudolph*, *Frosty*, *'Twas the Night Before Christmas*, *Jingle All the Way*, and *Old Turtle and the Broken Truth* (music & lyrics). Dax holds a B.A. in Theatre from Louisiana College.



**Vocabulary:** define the words below then write a sentence using each of them. Remember: anyone reading your sentence should be able to understand the word from the context in which it is used.

priority

pinpoint

destination

accurate

automatic

efficient

technology

global

population

hitched

coordinates

objectives

conformity

naughty

contraption

agility

dexterity

quickness

strength

stamina

eligible

balance

dodge

strain

heave

qualify

participate



## A Brief History

Barter Theatre was founded during the Great Depression by Robert Porterfield, an enterprising young actor. He and his fellow actors found themselves out of work and hungry in New York City. Porterfield contrasted that to the abundance of food, but lack of live theatre, around his home region in Southwest Virginia. He returned to Washington County with an extraordinary proposition: bartering produce from the farms and gardens of the area to gain admission to see a play.

Barter Theatre opened its doors on June 10, 1933 proclaiming, "With vegetables you cannot sell, you can buy a good laugh." The price of admission was 40 cents or the equivalent in produce, the concept of trading "ham for Hamlet" caught on quickly. At the end of the first season, the Barter Company cleared \$4.35 in cash, two barrels of jelly and enjoyed a collective weight gain of over 300 pounds.

Playwrights including Noel Coward, Tennessee Williams and Thornton Wilder accepted Virginia ham as payment for royalties. An exception was George Bernard Shaw, a vegetarian, who bartered the rights to his plays for spinach.

Today, Barter Theatre has a reputation as a theatre where many actors performed before going on to achieve fame and fortune. The most recognized of these alumni include Gregory Peck, Patricia Neal, Ernest Borgnine, Hume Cronyn, Ned Beatty, Gary Collins, Larry Linville and Frances Fisher. The list also included James Burrows, creator of *Cheers*, Barry Corbin, and the late Jim Varney

Robert Porterfield passed away in 1971. His successor, Rex Partington, had been at Barter in the 1950s as an actor and in the 1970s as stage manager. Rex returned as chief administrator from 1972 until his retirement in 1992. In March 2006, he passed away.

Richard Rose was named the producing artistic director in October 1992. In that time, attendance has grown from 42,000 annual patrons to more than 163,000 annual patrons. Significant capital improvements have also been made. Including maintenance to both theatres, and in 2006, the addition of The Barter Café at Stage II and dramatic improvements to Porterfield Square.

Barter represents three distinct venues of live theatre: Barter Theatre Main Stage, Barter Theatre Stage II and The Barter Players. Barter Theatre, with over 500 seats, features traditional theatre in a luxurious setting. Barter Stage II, across the street from Barter Main Stage and beyond Porterfield Square, offers seating for 167 around a thrust stage in an intimate setting and is perfect for more adventurous productions. The Barter Players is a talented ensemble of actors, producing plays for young audiences throughout the year.

History is always in the making at Barter Theatre, building on legends of the past; Barter looks forward to the challenge of growth in the future.

## CHRISTMAS FUN FACTS

Germany made the first artificial Christmas trees. They were made of goose feathers and dyed green.



The first president to decorate the White House Christmas tree in the United States was Franklin Pierce.

If you received all of the gifts in the song *The Twelve Days of Christmas*, you would receive 364 gifts!



Holly berries are poisonous.

*Jingle Bells* was first written for Thanksgiving and then became one of the most popular Christmas songs.



## REINDEER TRUE/FALSE

Using the internet, research the reindeer to determine whether each of the following statements is True or False. Write T if True, F if False.

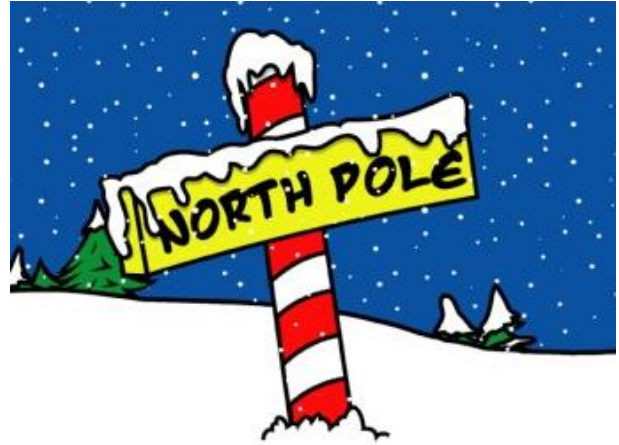
1. \_\_\_ Reindeer are noted for their longevity, with life spans of 70 years.
2. \_\_\_ All reindeer are carnivores (meat eaters).
3. \_\_\_ Reindeer are wild animals that always live in the forest.
4. \_\_\_ Both male and female reindeer have antlers.
5. \_\_\_ The average reindeer height, at the shoulder, is over six feet.
6. \_\_\_ Cervidae is the family name of reindeer.
7. \_\_\_ Reindeer are called caribou in North America.
8. \_\_\_ Reindeer are strong swimmers.
9. \_\_\_ Reindeer have white tails and necks.
10. \_\_\_ In North America, reindeer have been seen as far south as Montana.



## Questions/Activities

1. In this play, Santa accidentally crashes his sleigh into the “North Pole.” What is the North Pole really? How did it get its name? Where is it located? What is the environment like there? **Using the internet, research the North Pole and present your findings to the class.**

2. The Reindeer Games in this play include events such as “Dodge the Chimney,” “The Reindeer Pull” and “Up on the House Top.” These games test a reindeer’s agility, strength and balance. What other skills might the reindeer need to lead a sleigh effectively? **Make a list of other games they could play to test these skills.**



3. Why did Rudolph’s nose pose such a problem to the other reindeer? Why is “different” so scary to some people? How do you treat people who are different from you? In what ways are you different from your classmates? How do you treat their differences? How do they treat yours? **Discuss.**

4. In this play, Santa explains that a Top Priority Gift is one that saves a child’s life. What does he mean by that? Are there more ways to “save a life” than just medically? What do you think the Top Priority Gift is? **Discuss.**

5. **Write a letter to your favorite actors from this production.** Tell them what you liked about the play, their performance, etc. Mail your letters to:

The Barter Players  
c/o Barter Theatre  
P.O. Box 867  
Abingdon, VA 24212-0867  
ATTN: Rudolph

6. What is “fog?” How is it created? What kind of weather conditions would have to prevail at the North Pole for Santa to be hemmed in by fog? What is “smog?” How does it compare to fog? London, England is a city notorious for its fog; Los Angeles, California is equally notorious for its smog. Using the internet, research these two cities to discover the reasons for their atmospheric phenomena. **Present your findings to the class.**



7. Prancer explains the need for the G.D.S. (Gift Delivery System) is a result of the booming growth in the earth's population. **Using the internet, compare the growth in the earth's population** starting with the year 1823 (the year Clement Clark Moore's "A Visit from St. Nicholas" was published) and every 20 years after that (1843, 1863, 1883, etc.) until the present. **Make a bar graph and chart the growth.** Does Prancer make a good point? How much has the population grown?



8. How does this play compare to the book "Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer" by Robert L. Mays? How does it compare to the Rankin/Bass television classic? How does it compare to the song? **Discuss.**

9. In this play, Rudolph helps the other reindeer train for the Reindeer Games even though they won't allow him to play. Why is he willing to do this? What does this say about Rudolph's character? About his loyalty to the herd? His loyalty to Santa? His loyalty to Christmas? **Discuss.**



10. This play took a character and lyrics from a song and built a story around them. Pick another favorite Christmas carol like *Suzy Snowflake* or *Jingle Bells* **and write the story behind the song.**

11. In this play, Rudolph's job at the North Pole is to gather coal for stockings that belong to children on Santa's "Naughty List." **Using the internet, research when and where this tradition was started.** How would you feel on Christmas morning if you only found coal in your stocking?

12. In this play, Santa doesn't like technology. Why do you think that might be the case? **Discuss.**



13. Using the Internet, research the history of the following: the Christmas tree, the Christmas stocking and Santa's sleigh. **Present your findings to the class.**

14. This story takes place over a week. Pick a character from this play and **keep a journal as that character during this week.** Keep your journal entries as specific and imaginative as possible. For example, what might Prancer have written in his journal the night Santa crashed his sleigh?

# WORD SEARCH

Find the following words below: Rudolph, sleigh, Santa Claus, stocking, Reindeer Games, Dodge the Chimney, Comet, Top Priority Gift, Dasher, Up on the Housetop, coal, Christmas tree, Prancer, Blitzen, North Pole, Naughty List, Air Team, takeoff, red nose, technology, elves, fog

S U T S T E M O C Z P A R Y Y  
U P T J T C R Z S R J E L E Y  
A O R S I O E E A E I H N G M  
L N U L I Q C N D N V M O E A  
C T D E O L C K D N I L F R E  
A H O I V E Y E I H O F E D T  
T E L G R S E T C N O S A L R  
N H P H A R E E H E G S E A I  
A O H C G C H C K G H P Q O A  
S U M A G T E A U E U E L C S  
H S M O E T T J R U A A H S F  
T E F G N E Z T I L B O N Y K  
S T D M R V N O R T H P O L E  
T O P P R I O R I T Y G I F T  
D P E E R T S A M T S I R H C

# Color Santa and Rudolph!



## Suggested Further Reading

**Below are some Christmas favorites:**

*The Best Christmas Pageant Ever* by Barbara Robinson

*A Visit from St. Nicholas* by Clement Clark Moore

*A Charlie Brown Christmas* by Charles Schulz

*How the Grinch Stole Christmas* by Dr. Seuss

*The Polar Express* by Chris Van Allsburg

*A Christmas Carol* by Charles Dickens

