
Director's Packet

That's What Christmas Is About!



The Musical Miracle Behind *A Charlie Brown Christmas*

Written by TwoTalentsStudio.com
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Director's Introduction

That's What Christmas Is About! is a musical celebration of creativity, courage, and faith. It tells the true story behind the making of *A Charlie Brown Christmas*, honoring Charles Schulz's insistence on meaning over marketing.

This script is designed for flexible casting, minimal staging, and maximum heart. Whether you're working with seasoned performers or first-time students, this show invites your community to reflect on the spirit of Christmas through storytelling, music, and timeless values.

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Cast List Template

Role	Actor Name	Rehearsal Notes	Costume Notes
Narrator		Split lines	Neutral formal wear
Charles Schulz		Lead role	Cardigan, glasses, sketchpad
Lee Mendelson		Comedic timing	Business casual
Bill Melendez		Expressive delivery	T-shirt, animator vibe
Animators		Ensemble	Casual, varied
CBS Executives		Dramatic flair	Suits or blazers
Child Reader		Calm, reverent	Simple holiday outfit
Minister		Optional guest role	Robe or formal wear
Choir		Group rehearsals	Matching scarves or festive





Scene Timing & Transitions

Act	Scene Title	Est. Duration	Transition Cue
1	Schulz's Drawing Studio	~6 min	Fade to black, choir enters
2	Brainstorming Session	~8 min	Lights dim, choir begins next carol
3	Animator Screening	~5 min	Fade out, projector sound ends
4	CBS Pitch	~7 min	Choir enters slowly, lights warm
5	Towle's Café	~6 min	Fade to black, spotlight on child
6	True Meaning of Christmas	~10 min	Spotlight fades, choir finale begins



Blocking & Stage Directions

- **Scene 1:** Schulz sits stage left at drawing table. Phone rings stage right. Narrator stands downstage center.
 - **Scene 2:** Mendelson and Melendez enter from upstage right. All three gather around center table.
 - **Scene 3:** Animators seated in rows facing screen (upstage). Ed stands from back row.
 - **Scene 4:** CBS executives seated in semicircle. Mendelson and Melendez in back row.
 - **Scene 5:** Café tables stage right. Mendelson enters with daughter from stage left.
 - **Scene 6:** Spotlight center stage. Child enters slowly. Minister follows from stage left.
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Costume & Set Design Suggestions

Costumes

- **Schulz:** Cardigan, glasses, sketchpad
- **Mendelson:** Sport coat, clipboard
- **Melendez:** T-shirt, jeans, animation sketches
- **Animators:** Casual wear, varied styles
- **CBS Execs:** Suits, ties, notepads
- **Child Reader:** Holiday dress or sweater
- **Minister:** Robe or formal suit
- **Choir:** Matching scarves or festive accessories

Sets

- **Schulz's Studio:** Folding table, lamp, Peanuts sketches
 - **Screening Room:** Chairs, projector sound effect
 - **CBS Room:** Formal chairs, clipboard props
 - **Towle's Café:** Small café tables, mugs
 - **Final Scene:** Bare stage with North Star light effect
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Sheet Music & Musical Cues

All carols are public domain. Suggested arrangements:

Song	Style	Notes
O Little Town of Bethlehem	Solo or SATB	Reflective opening
God Rest Ye Merry, Gentlemen	Trio or full choir	Energetic brainstorming
Away in a Manger	Children's choir	Gentle screening moment
O Come, O Come, Emmanuel	Solo or duet	Contemplative pitch scene
Silent Night	Soft piano + choir	Post-airing reflection
Hark! The Herald Angels Sing	Full choir	Triumphant finale

Free sheet music sources:

- [CPDL.org](https://www.cpdL.org)
- [MusicNotes.com](https://www.MusicNotes.com)

Rehearsal & Production Notes

Suggested Rehearsal Schedule

- **Week 1:** Read-through and casting
- **Week 2–3:** Scene blocking and choir practice
- **Week 4:** Full run-throughs
- **Week 5:** Tech rehearsal and final polish

Scene Pairings for Practice

- Act 1 & 2: Creative development
- Act 3 & 4: Doubt and pitch
- Act 5 & 6: Resolution and message

Cast Doubling Suggestions

- Animators and CBS Executives can be played by same ensemble
 - Narrator lines can be split among choir members
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Licensing & Usage Notes

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Optional Scene Extensions & Cuts

To Shorten:

- Cut Scene 3 (Animator screening) for time-sensitive productions
- Trim CBS dialogue to reduce runtime by ~3 minutes

To Expand:

- Add a reprise of “Silent Night” before the Minister’s message
 - Include a short monologue from Charles Schultz after the Child Reader’s scripture
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