



# Scripts for Schools

## The Night Before Christmas

Adapted by Lois Walker

A Choral Reading/Speaking  
Script for Elementary  
School Readers

**HISTORY:** Clement Clarke Moore (1779 - 1863) wrote the poem "T'was The Night Before Christmas" also called "A Visit from St. Nicholas" in 1822. It is now the tradition in many families to read the poem every Christmas Eve.

The poem has redefined our image of Christmas and Santa Claus. Prior to the creation of the poem, St. Nicholas, the patron saint of children, had never been associated with a sleigh or reindeers!

**CHANGE OF TENSE:** The original poem is written in the past tense, as though the author is recalling an experience from the past. This adapted version sets the story in the present, as though Santa's visit is unfolding as the readers perform. The adapted version has also been shortened.

Ask your readers to visualize what is taking place in the story and see the actions taking place right in front of them. They should be able to visualize Santa's movements somewhere over the heads of their audience - straight ahead.

**FORMATTING:** This version of the story has been formatted for 7 SOLO READERS and an ALL CHORUS.

**NOTE:** An unformatted version of this script is also included so that you may do your own formatting and assign reading parts in any way that works best for your particular readers.

**GRAPHICS:** *(Optional)* As this piece is being performed, you might consider showing appropriate and corresponding graphics on the overhead projector. These can be found in a great variety of picture books, many of them award-winning publications.

## The Night Before Christmas

Original Poem by Clement Clarke Moore

Adapted for Primary Choral Reading/Speaking by Lois Walker

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### **ALL CHORUS:**

It's the night before Christmas and all through the house

We're waiting here quietly, just like a mouse.

We're looking for Santa and watching because

We can't fall asleep...

Till we see what he does!

**SOLO VOICE 1:** Ma's in her kerchief and Pa's in his cap.

They've both settled down for a long winter's nap.

**SOLO VOICE 2:** And out on the lawn, I hear such a clatter.

It's time to explore and see what is the matter!

**SOLO VOICE 3:** Run to the window - just like a flash.

Pull open the shutters and throw up the sash!

**SOLO VOICE 4:** And what to my wondering eyes now appear?

**ALL:** A miniature sleigh and eight tiny reindeer!

**ALL CHORUS:**

It's the night before Christmas and all through the house  
We're waiting here quietly, just like a mouse.  
We're looking for Santa and watching because  
We can't fall asleep...  
Till we see what he does!

**SOLO VOICE 5:** There's a little old driver, so lively and quick.

I know who that is, it must be St. Nick!

**SOLO VOICE 6:** More rapid than eagles those reindeer they come  
And he's whistling and calling out names for each one!

**ALL:** Now Dasher, now Dancer, now Prancer and Vixen!

On Comet, On Cupid, on Donner and Blitzen!

To the top of the porch - to the top of the wall!

**SOLO VOICE 7:** Now dash away! Dash away! Dash away all!

**ALL CHORUS:**

It's the night before Christmas and all through the house  
We're waiting here quietly, just like a mouse.  
We're looking for Santa and watching because  
We can't fall asleep...  
Till we see what he does!

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