

Study Guide prepared by  
Catherine Bush  
Barter Playwright-in-Residence

# *Frosty*

by Catherine Bush

**Performed by the Barter Players, from the historic Barter Theatre in Abingdon, VA**

## **Setting**

Central Park and other locations in and around New York City.



## **Characters**

*Frosty* – a snowman

*Paddy Moran* – a homeless man

*Billy* – a runaway

*Mom* – Billy's Mom

*Jack* – a hot dog vendor

*Dot Blackwell* – a social worker

*Officer Jones* – a policewoman

*Seamus* – Paddy's great-grandfather

*Beggar* – Santa Claus

*Vladimir* – owns a pawnshop

*Wind* – the element

*Snow* – the element

*Various other New Yorkers*



## Synopsis

It's December 23rd and Paddy Moran, a homeless man living in Central Park, befriends an orphan named Billy who has come to New York in order to keep a promise made to his mother: to build the best snowman ever. Before they go to sleep that night, Paddy reveals to the penniless Billy that his hat is an heirloom worth a small fortune. When Paddy wakes up the next morning, he discovers both Billy and his hat are gone. He reports the theft to Officer Jones, who is more interested in locking Paddy up for vagrancy. A social worker, Dot Blackwell, intervenes. Dot is in New York looking for Billy, who has runaway from Florida. Paddy explains that a magic spell has been placed on the hat; every fifty years, on Christmas Eve, the owner of the hat is granted a "bit o' magic and a wish." This Christmas is the fiftieth year and Paddy wants to use the magic to get his estranged daughter back. Dot and Paddy agree to work together to find Billy and the hat. Meanwhile, Billy has tried to pawn the hat but to no avail. Suddenly it begins to snow. Billy builds a snowman and places the hat on its head, christening his new friend "Frosty." Magically, Frosty comes to life and leads Billy on an adventure through the streets of New York. Officer Jones tries to arrest Frosty but Billy and Frosty elude him and run back into Central Park, where eventually Dot, Paddy, and Officer Jones catch up with them. Frosty agrees to give his hat back so Paddy can make his wish. At midnight Paddy wishes for a family and discovers that Billy is actually his grandson. They reunite and are able to bring Frosty back to life through the Christmas magic known as Love.

## Biography of the Playwright

Catherine Bush lives in Abingdon, Virginia where she is Barter Theatre's Playwright-in-Residence. Her produced plays include: *The Other Side of the Mountain*, *The Quiltmaker*, *Comin' Up A Storm*, *I'll Never Be Hungry Again* (book and lyrics), *Wooden Snowflakes*, *Tradin' Paint*, *The Controversial Rescue of Fatty the Pig*, *Where Trouble Sleeps*, *The Road to Appomattox*, *The Frankenstein Summer*, *Walking Across Egypt*, *A Jarful of Fireflies*, and *unHINGED*. Another play, *Just a Kiss* (produced at New Theatre) was a finalist for the 2007 American Theatre Critics Association's Steinberg Award. 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* and *'Twas the Night Before Christmas*.

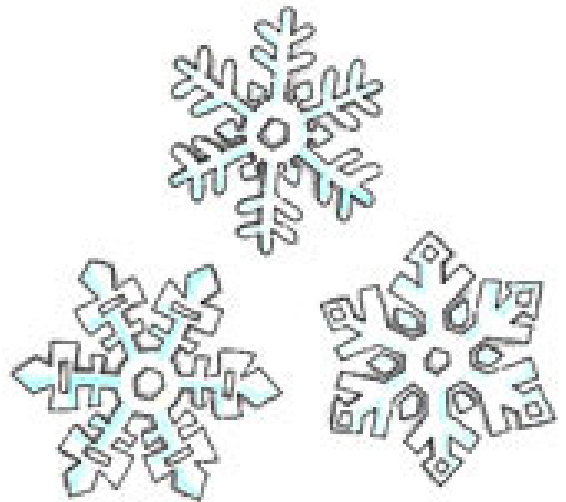
[www.catherinebushplays.com](http://www.catherinebushplays.com)



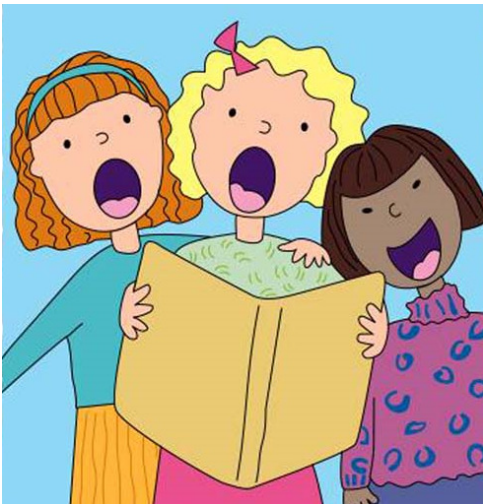
# **FROSTY Fun Facts!**

**The most snow to have ever fallen in one winter was in Bellingham Washington where 1,140 inches of snow fell during the 1998-1999 season. That's 95 feet of snow!**

**Guinness World Records list the world's largest snowflakes as having fallen in January 1887 at Fort Keogh, Montana. One snowflake was 15 inches wide!**

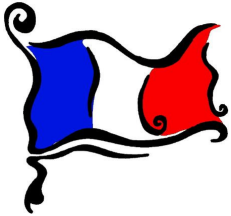


**In Hermosa Beach, California, they have a contest where they build snowmen out of sand on the beach since the weather there is too warm for snow.**



**People have been singing “Frosty the Snowman” for over 50 years!**

## Here's what Frosty would be called in several different languages



English – a snowman  
French – un bonhomme de neige  
German – ein schneemann  
Spanish – un muñeco de nieve  
Italian – un upazzo di neve  
Portuguese – um boneco de neve



**Most snowflakes have six points or sides, but no two snowflakes are exactly the same!**

**A giant snowman measuring over 62 feet was built in Alaska!**



**An avalanche, a huge wall of snow, can travel up to 240 miles per hour!**

# **New York City/Central Park Fun Facts**

**In the 1660s New York City’s “skyline” was dominated by a two-story-high windmill.**

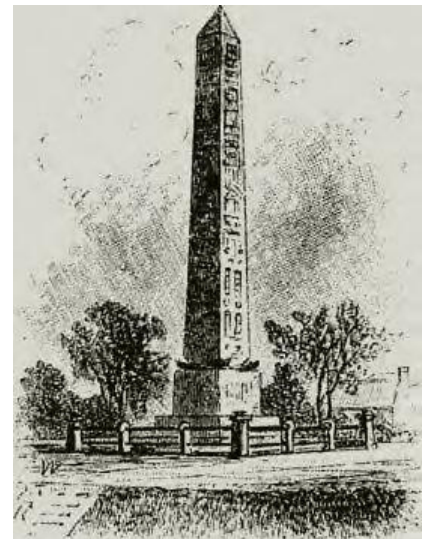


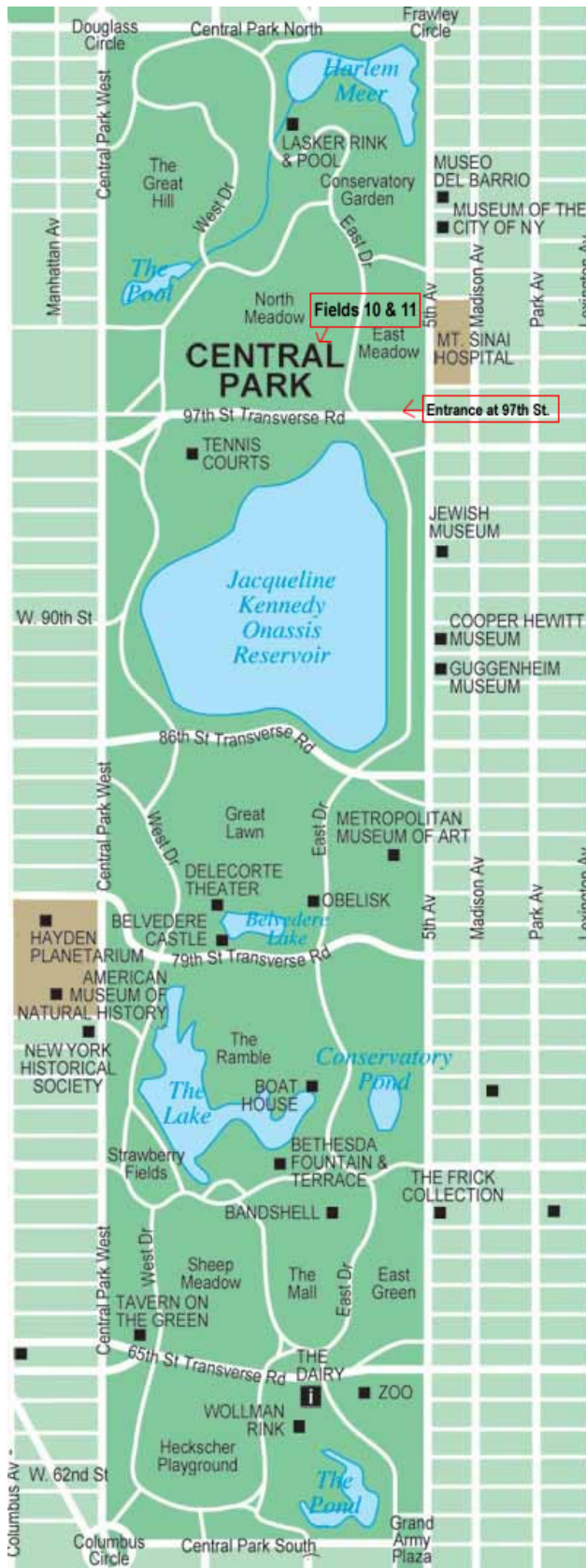
**Why are New York Yellow Cabs yellow...?**



**Because John Hertz, the company’s founder, read a study that concluded yellow was the easiest color for the eye to spot.**

**Cleopatra’s Needle, a 3,000-year-old Egyptian ruin, can actually be found in New York’s Central Park. In 1879 it was given to the city as a gift by the Khedive of Egypt. The 220-ton, 66-foot-high monument took a decade to be fully transported**





**Central Park was designed by Frederick Law Olmstead & Calvert Vaux and opened shortly after the Civil War. Central Park is larger than two of the world's smallest nations. It is almost twice the size of Monaco and nearly eight times as large as Vatican City.**



**A carousel has been in operation at Central Park since 1871. The original carousel was powered by a blind mule and a horse under the machine.**

**The real-estate value of Central Park is estimated to be \$528,783,552,000!!**

**Sheep actually grazed on Central Park’s Sheep Meadow from the 1860s until 1934, when they were moved upstate since it was feared they would be used for food by impoverished Depression-era New Yorkers.**



**Bethesda Fountain is considered the “heart of the Park.” The sculpture that tops it, Angel of Waters, was designed by Emma Stebbins in 1873. Stebbins designed the statue to celebrate the new Croton Aqueduct which not only fed the fountain, but also supplied fresh water to a city that had long been plagued by infectious diseases caused by an unsafe water supply.**



**The first Christmas Tree at Rockefeller Center was put up in 1931 by construction workers building the complex. The first official Tree Lighting Ceremony took place in 1933. Over 30,000 lights are used to decorate the Tree, which is between 75 – 100 feet tall.**



**New Yorkers have been ice skating on Central Park's Wollman Rink since 1949!**





## Questions/Activities

1. Where is Central Park? Why did Billy decide to run away to Central Park at Christmas time? What was he hoping to find there?
2. The “Christmas Angel” Billy refers to in this play is actually a statue on top of Bethesda Fountain in Central Park called Angel of Waters. Draw a picture of what you think a Christmas Angel should look like then compare it to the picture of the statue above.
3. Why was Paddy’s hat so important to him? Who did it belong to originally? What made the hat “magical?” Why was Paddy so determined to get his hat back?
4. Why was Billy so excited when it started to snow?
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: Frosty

6. Make a snowman of your own using one of the suggested methods:
  - Styrofoam balls (two different sizes) dipped in glue and rolled in white glitter, fastened together with a toothpick. Push the cap from a bottle of soda into the bottom to give it a flat surface to rest upon. Make a face using buttons or colored felt glued into place.
  - Paper plates (two different sizes) stapled together vertically. Make a black hat out of construction paper and glue in place. Either draw a face on or decorate with bits of construction paper.
  - Fill up a small white sock with rice. Tie the top of the sock off with string about ½” from top. Fold the remaining sock over the string. Divide the sock approximately 1/3 of the way down by tying a brightly covered ribbon (pulled tightly enough to define the two “snowballs”) around it. This ribbon will serve as the snowman’s scarf. Scrunch up a small black sock and place it over the snowman’s head as a hat. Use buttons, scraps of felt, etc. and glue them on to design a face.

7. Billy rode a bus from Florida to New York City. Using a road map of the United States, trace Billy's route. (Assume he started his trip in Fort Lauderdale and ended his trip at Port Authority Bus Station in Manhattan.) Approximately how many miles was this trip? Through which states did Billy travel? Using the Internet, get on Greyhound Bus Line's website [www.greyhound.com](http://www.greyhound.com) and determine the length of time a bus trip like this would take.



8. 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.

9. If you could have Paddy's magical hat and make one wish this Christmas, what would it be? Does the fact that you won't be able to make another wish for fifty years influence the wish you would make now? If so, how?

10. Imagine you had a walking/talking snowman – or snowwoman – of your own. What would you name him/her? What kind of adventures would you go on with your new friend? Write one of these adventures as a story and present it to your class.



11. When it snows, Billy catches snowflakes on his tongue and builds a snowman. What other winter activities can you do in the snow? Which is your favorite?

12. On a map of New York City, locate the following: Delancey Street, Rockefeller Center, Times Square and Central Park. Trace Billy and Frosty's route from place to place.

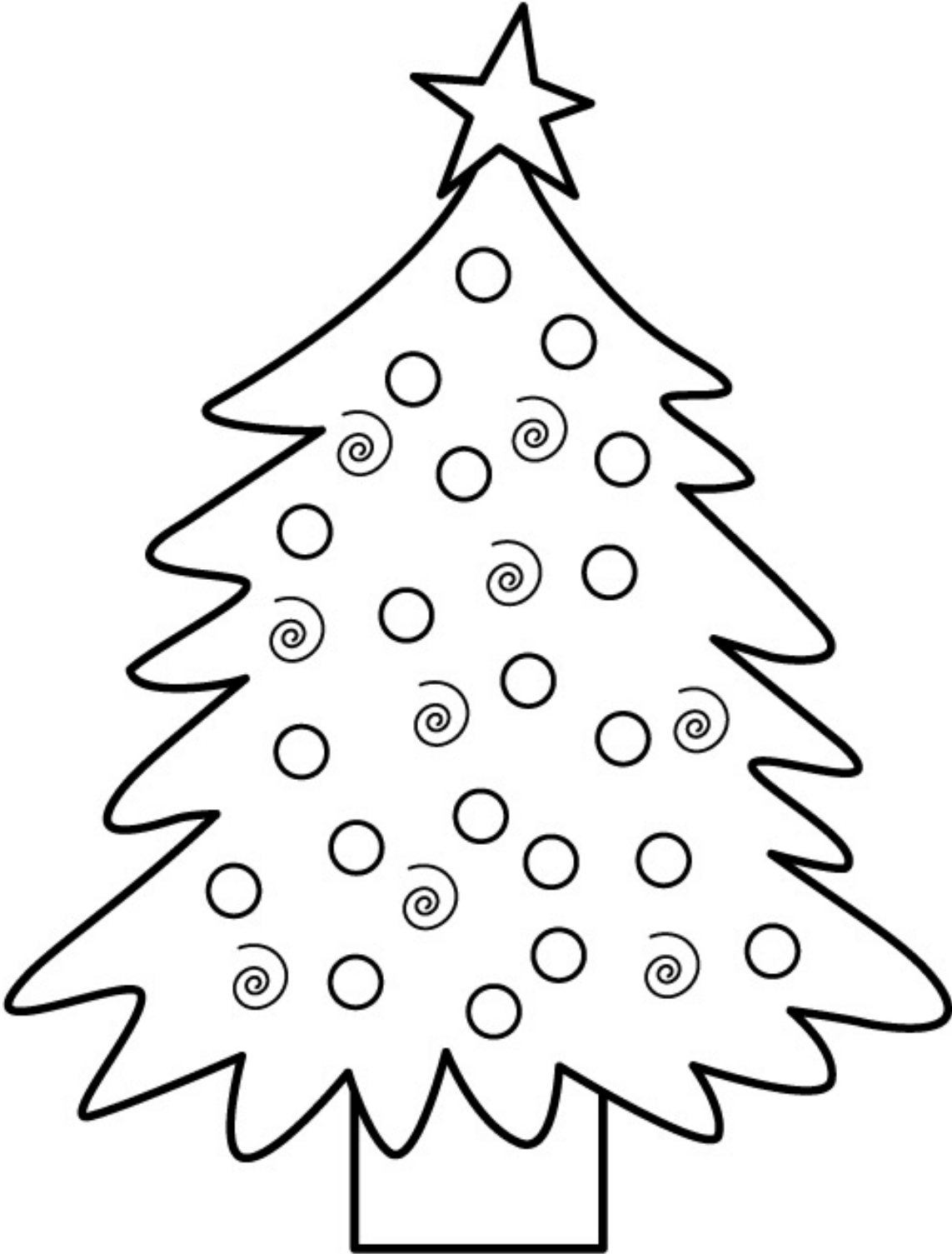
# WORD SEARCH

Find the following words below:

Frosty, Angel of the Fountain, Billy, Christmas magic, Central Park, top hat, Paddy Moran, New York City, Rockefeller Center, Times Square, runaway, Irish, hot dogs, pawnshop, Delancey Street, snowman, cold wind, Jack, Barter Players, Dot Blackwell

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

**Color the Christmas Tree!**



## Vocabulary

shelter	possess	refund
charity	precinct	magic
conscious	violation	wager
runaway	lawbreaker	fountain
angel	buggy	daft
snowman	token	tourist
antique	appreciation	neon
heirloom	pawnshop	halt
generation	bargain	midnight

## Suggested Further Reading:

*The Snowman* by Raymond Briggs

*The Biggest Snowman Ever* by Steven Kroll and Jeni Bassett

*Black Snowman* by Phil Mendez and Carole Byard

*The Biggest, Best Snowman* by Margery Cuyler and Will Hillenbrand