

FINAL\_Holiday Special

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**0:00:00.0 Speaker 1:** Warning. This podcast speaks openly and honestly about the holidays. Believers beware.

[music]

**0:00:13.8 Speaker 2:** Hello, everyone, and welcome to Popular Podagogy holiday special, brought to you by the Faculty of Education at Queen's University. I'm your host, producer, Josh. Nathan will be back with us in the New Year. Well, we thought it'd be kinda fun to do something different for this podcast, and have some staff and the faculty members tell us some of their funny classroom stories. I won't talk too much, so just sit back and enjoy.

[music]

**0:00:41.9 S2:** Up first, Kate Fazackerley from the School of English, with a story of how she ended up on the naughty list in kindergarten.

**0:00:49.8 Speaker 3:** So when I was in kindergarten, I was suspended for a day for telling all of my classmates that Santa wasn't real, and that clearly they were less intelligent than I was, because the idea of some reindeers being able to fly and others not being able to fly was ridiculous and creepy that their parents didn't think it was alarming that a large, strange white man was watching them day and night. That seemed problematic to me as a child, that if anybody else in their lives was watching them 24/7, that would be cause for alarm. But somehow, it was okay for Santa. They didn't like that. So yeah. I was suspended in kindergarten for a whole day for ruining the magic of Christmas for several children. [chuckle]

**0:01:50.8 S2:** Alrighty. Chad Herman, also from the School of English, has some holiday-themed dad jokes to share with us throughout this podcast.

**0:01:57.5 Speaker 4:** So I work in finance in the School of English. Math can be a pretty tricky thing. Five out of four people admit they're bad at fractions. [chuckle] My wife, she makes one of my work sometimes. This morning, she looked at me and she said, "A bus stops at a bus station. A train stops at a train station. The work, it stops at your work station." Two snowmen standing in a field. One snowman turns to the other, says, "Do you smell carrots?"

**0:02:29.3 S2:** Up next is Jamie Pyper. He has a story about how a popular children's show performed a holiday miracle in his classroom.

**0:02:35.5 Speaker 5:** Okay. So the story I'm gonna tell you about. I was teaching OEC calculus, didn't have a really big class, maybe about 15-18 students. My class for calculus was the first period, which was right after homeroom. And when it comes close to Christmas, all the homerooms had a competition, decorate your door for Christmas, blah, blah, blah. And so the class was right into it. They wanted to decorate the door. Happened that a couple days before, I was... We were talking about student engagement, interest, keeping yourself interested in things, and I said, "Well, it's sort of like the TV shows like Mr. Dressup and Mr. Rogers and Sesame Street and Teletubbies. They were all designed to keep the kids' interest for a long period of time. And they had all the

characteristics of interest holding. And my students didn't believe me. They said, "No. Well, we'll get you on Sesame Street, sure, but not the Teletubbies. That's... No."

**0:03:30.9 S5:** I said, "No, seriously. It is. My son watches it all the time and he loves it." So they didn't believe me. So I thought, Well, on door decorating day, I'm gonna bring in the Teletubbies VHS, this is how old it was, and just put it on. 'Cause not everybody can be around the door and working on the door. So I set it up so that some people could hang out over here and watch the video if they wished. So we were all working on the door, and I put the video on. And after about five minutes, half the room got incredibly quiet, and I was wondering what was going on. All the girls were here helping me with the door and all the guys were sitting over watching the Teletubbies, but they were dead silent. They were eyes glued to the TV, chins in their hands, their mouths are open. I think some of them might have even been drooling, probably not. But it sure looked like they could have been. And the girls and I just sat and... Or stood and watched them watch the Teletubbies for, oh, about a good two minutes. They still... And now the whole room is quiet. And the guys still didn't respond. The power of quality children's programming. Teletubbies. At Christmas, apparently.

[music]

**0:04:50.1 S4:** There's nothing like the joy and a kid's face during the holidays. I can't wait to see my daughter's face when she opens up that brand new PlayStation box full of socks I bought her. I asked my wife what she wanted for Christmas. She said, "Nothing would make me happier than a diamond necklace." So I bought her nothing. [chuckle] What do you call a kid that doesn't believe in Santa Claus? A rebel without a Claus. [chuckle]

**0:05:19.2 S2:** Faculty member Chris Carleton is next with a lesson he learned the hard way about hosting a holiday classroom potluck.

**0:05:24.9 Speaker 6:** Hey. So my Christmas story is from a few years back. It was a grade four class. And as tradition has it, we were going to do a Christmas celebration, a feast to end all feasts. So they were all instructed that they were to go home, talk to their parents, and bring in different types of food and beverages to be able to celebrate the holiday season. And everything was going fantastic. We had, as usual, the back of the class was just chock-a-block full of everything you can imagine from candy cane ice cream to marshmallows to hot chocolate, and everybody was all excited. So I decided to empower my students by letting them set up the entire thing. And they started putting things out, and they categorized it for desserts and different ways they did it. And this is where the teacher needs to pay a little bit more attention to detail.

**0:06:22.2 S6:** So we started our festivities, and I was going around and sampling all the different things, as teachers have that privilege to do. And it probably wasn't... I was about about 15, 20 minutes late to the table. And I noticed that a lot of the kids were devouring some of the treats a little bit faster than others. So, I started going around and came to Sally's table or what Sally had brought in. And I looked down and here was a beautiful Christmas cake. And I thought, that's great, I'll have a piece of Christmas cake and it was labeled even, grandma's Christmas cake. And I took a bite of it and it was so laced with rum that it was just unbelievable. And I quickly turned around to see how many of the kids had taken it as well. And of course, all of them had a sample of that rum

on their thing, so I quickly went around and scooped up as many as I could and said, "We're not gonna have that one." And they didn't ask any questions. And about another five minutes I got back to the table, and I got over to the dessert table and I noticed this one box of chocolates was almost completely gone.

**0:07:28.7 S6:** And so I grabbed the last one, and again, attention to detail, liquor filled or liqueur filled chocolate, with the little bottles. And I guess Johnny had gone home and couldn't find his mom or dad, so had just grabbed the first box of chocolates he could find. So, my wonderful grade four kids were now inebriated. And I quickly ran around, but only the wrappers were left on that one. So the word to the wise is make sure the teacher gets the first sample and goes around and checks all of them, I think it was though one of our happiest Christmas festivities still.

**0:08:03.7 S2:** One of our newest faculty members, Thashika Pillay, has our final story. Here she'll tell us about how her students provided her with an unexpected outdoor experience her first year in the classroom.

**0:08:15.8 Speaker 7:** So, this happened a few years ago when I first started teaching. I had my grade 10 homeroom class in Northern Manitoba. And I grew up in South Africa, so celebrating Christmas was not a big thing in my life and in my family. So we would spend Christmas on the beach. So, in Northern Manitoba, it was snowing and there was snow everywhere. And my students, my 15-year-old students convinced me that what they did every single year is actually go out into the forest and cut down a Christmas tree. [laughter] And so I was like, "This can't be a thing." I just remembered my law class from being in school. And our law class would tell us that letting a group of 15-year-olds with a chainsaw... With someone who did not know how to use one would probably not be a good idea. [laughter] So I went and asked the principal if this was okay, assuming she would say no, and that would be my out. But no, she said yes. [chuckle] And then I went to the custodian, and I asked him if he had a chainsaw and if we could borrow it, and he said yes. [chuckle]

**0:09:35.3 S7:** And so of I went, this very inexperienced new teacher who had never really used... Who had never used a chainsaw before, with a group of 15-year-olds. There was about maybe 12 of us all together. Every single one of my students was on time that morning, by the way. I just have to tell you that [chuckle] There were no latecomers, and off we went into the forest behind the school to cut down our Christmas tree. My only job in this whole endeavor was literally just to be there, I think, in case something went wrong, 'cause I had no idea what I was doing. But these incredible group of students just... They took over.

**0:10:23.5 S7:** They were inspiring. They told me what to do. They told me where to stand and where not to stand. [laughter] And they proceeded to cut down a tree, and then we carried it back to out class and put it up. And in that entire endeavor, I was the student, 'cause they had all done this before multiple times. [chuckle] And yet I was the one supposedly looking after them. But I would say that it was my best Christmas experience, and I think for them it was probably their, "Oh my God, our teacher has no idea what she's doing." [laughter] But it all worked out in the end. There was no chopped fingers or anything else. Yay for us.

**0:11:16.9 S4:** Kids are really different these days, this morning my daughter looked at me and she

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started screaming, "Dad, you didn't listen to a thing I said." I thought, that's a weird way to start a conversation. What do you call an elf wearing earmuffs? Anything you want, he can't hear you.

**0:11:39.4 S2:** Well, that's it for the holiday edition of Popular Podagogy. Thank you all so much for listening. I'd also like to thank all of our guests for sharing their stories and jokes with us today. Kate, Chad, Jamie, Chris and Thashika. And from all of us at the Faculty of Education, we would like to wish you very happy holidays. See you all in the new year.

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