“Not The Night Before Christmas”  
By Carol Montgomery

Performance Time = about 3 1/2 minutes  
Flesch-Kincaid Readability = Grade 1.7

Cast (2-6):

Narrator 1  
Child 1

Narrator 2  
Child 2

Dad  
Mom

Variation: Use 2 readers—
• Reader 1 for Narrator 1, Child 1, and Dad
• Reader 2 for Narrator 2, Child 2, and Mom

Vocabulary:

tw as  
ev’ry
narr ator  
exploded
twink ling  
wobbled
instilled  
crowned
especially  
stroked
wondering  
conscious
mousekin  
disbelief
flung  
laughed
sprang  
Christmas
We’re  
We’ll
flapping  
dressed
wreath  
awe
twisted  
Frosty

creature  
laughter
children
whistled  
kitchen
fife  
clatter
jiggled  
splashed
wiggled  
doorway
freed  
husband
stirring  
shouted
Christmas  
stuffed
giggles  
appeared
flagpole  
whiskers
awe  
winked
straight

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Narrator 1: “Twas a week before Christmas and all through the house
Ev’ry creature was stirring, especially the mouse!

Narrator 2: The cookies were stuffed in the freezer with care,
All ready for Grandpa who soon would be there.

Child 1: The children were busy, not snug in their beds,
But making more cookies so all would be fed.

Dad: While Mom in her apron, and I in my cap,
     Stroked Frosty, our cat, who was taking a nap.

Narrator 1: When out in the kitchen they heard a big clatter,
     Dad sprang from his chair to look into the matter.

Dad: Away to the doorway I flew like a flash,
     But, slipped in the eggs and splashed down with a crash!

Narrator 2: Mom raced in behind him to help where she could,
     Exploded with laughter—as other girls would…

Mom: Then, what to my wondering eyes should appear,
     But flour all over my husband so dear.

Dad: So, like an old rooster I warmed broken eggs,
     Thank God I was conscious, without broken legs.

Child 2: More rapid than eagles the children they came,
     Mom whistled, and shouted, and called them by name;
Mom: “Now, Donald! Now, Daniel! Now, Darrel and Dale! Come, Debra! Come, Darla! Come Gary and Gail!”

Mom: “Grab rags and your dad! Grab the broom and the pan! Now clean away! Clean away! Fast as you can!”

Narrator 1: Like doctors who fly to the scene of a crash, The children all flew to obey with a dash.

Child 1: “Get up Daddy Dear, your poor clothes are a mess; You’re dripping and slipping from batter, we guess.”

Child 2: “We’re sorry the stuff is all over the room; We’ll clean it all up with some rags and a broom.”

Dad: And then, in a twinkling, I heard from my wife, The giggles and toots like a boy with a fife.

Narrator 2: Dad wobbled his head and was turning around, When Frosty appeared, coming in with a bound.

Narrator 1: All dressed in cat fur, from his head to his toes, His tail was now flapping, like soft rubber hose.

Child 1: A mousekin so dear he had hung from his teeth, It wiggled and jiggled from sheer disbelief.

Narrator 2: Cat eyes—how they twinkled! His whiskers seemed merry! His tail now a flagpole; his nose like a berry.

Child 2: His cute little mouth was drawn up like a bow, The ears on his head were as white as the snow.
Child 1: Poor tail of the mouse he held light in his teeth,
   The awe it instilled crowned his head like a wreath.

Mom: Our Frosty’s soft face and his little round belly,
   Had scared the poor mouse who was shaking like jelly.

Dad: The mousekin was chubby, no jolly old elf,
   I laughed when I saw it, in spite of myself.

Narrator 1: Dad winked his left eye and he twisted his head,
   While watching the show by the cat who’s well-fed.

Narrator 2: Cat spoke not a word, but went straight to his work,
   And carried poor Mouse to the door with a jerk.

Child 1: Then waving his tail like a flag in the wind,
   He blinked, then he nodded, and shared a big grin.

Child 2: I jumped to the door and it flung open wide,
   Our cat freed that mouse; empty-teeth raced inside.

Dad: He sprang to the chair, since his duty was done;
   And gave us this story to share just for fun.

All: Merry Christmas!
Curriculum Links (Active as of December 2016):

http://www.carols.org.uk/twas_the_night_before_christmas.htm
“Twas the Night Before Christmas Poem” with the history of the story.

http://teachers.net/lessons/posts/761.html
“Mexican Version of the Night Before Christmas”—uses many Spanish words.

http://www.stnicholascenter.org/Brix?pageID=139
Unusual website from the St. Nicholas Center “Discovering the Truth About Santa Claus”. There are numerous resources here including this page with links to plays, skits, and scripts.

http://www.stnicholascenter.org/Brix?pageID=166
This is the start of the kid’s section on St. Nicholas--with stories, online activities, games, puzzles, and printables.

http://www.stnicholascenter.org/Brix?pageID=167
This page for children, from the extensive website on St. Nicholas, is entitled “The Real Santa” and tells the story of Nicholas.

You Tube:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DyJQoGix7us&feature=related
This is a folk-style parody of the Jolly Old St. Nicholas song by Sam Stokes with a funny health perspective: “Jolly Old St. Nicholas—Change Your Ways!” Pictures of Santa accompany the song.

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h8UDM_715N4&feature=related
5-year-old boy sings and plays “Jolly Old St. Nicholas.”