

2021/2022  
SEASON

Hop on board for a heart-thumpin', toe-tappin' joy ride!

# LAST STOP ON MARKET STREET

A  
MOTOWN  
-MEETS-  
HIP HOP  
MUSICAL



By Matt de la Peña, Illustrated by Christian Robinson  
Adapted for the stage by Cheryl L. West  
Music and Lyrics by Lamont Dozier and Paris Ray Dozier

Digital Recording and Underscoring by Paris Ray Dozier  
Originally commissioned and produced by Chicago Children's Theatre  
And the Children's Theatre Company

## INTERACTIVE LEARNING GUIDE

This guide is for educators, parents, guardians, and caregivers. You name it - you can use it!

This guide is filled with activities and conversation starters that can be used before or after your visit to the theater. Whether you are an educator, parent, or caregiver, the materials inside have been curated to extend the experience with this show.

[For best user experience download Acrobat Reader here](#)



### TAKE A LOOK AT WHAT'S INSIDE:

Look for the music note to bring you back to this page!

**ABOUT THE AUTHOR & ILLUSTRATOR**

**ABOUT THE PLAYWRIGHT & COMPOSERS**

**CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES**

with Missouri GLE and National Core Arts Standards

**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

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# ABOUT Last Stop on Market Street



## SYNOPSIS

Get ready for a heart-thumpin', toe-tappin' joy ride in this Motown-meets-hip hop musical adaptation of the *New York Times* bestselling and Newbery Medal-winning picture book *Last Stop on Market Street!* CJ is reluctantly staying with his Nana, a veritable force of nature who lives in a world considerably different than his own. Knowing CJ is used to being plugged in to his phone and tablet all the time, Nana takes him on a bus ride that's loud, gritty and offbeat – guiding her grandson to travel a little closer to his roots and see that things are not always what they seem. With a spectacular, spirited score by Motown legend Lamont Dozier and his son Paris Ray Dozier, you might find yourself dancing in your seat as you enjoy this vibrant story about connecting to your community.

## ABOUT the author | Matt de la Peña



**Matt de la Peña** is the *New York Times* bestselling, Newbery Medal-winning author of seven young adult novels (including *Mexican WhiteBoy*, *We Were Here*, and *Superman: Dawnbreaker*) and five picture books (including *Last Stop on Market Street* and *Love*). Matt received his M.F.A. in creative writing from San Diego State University and his B.A. from the University of the Pacific, where he attended school on a full athletic scholarship for basketball. In 2019 Matt was given an honorary doctorate from UOP. De la Peña currently lives in San Diego, California with his family. He teaches creative writing and visits schools and colleges throughout the country.

Read more at [mattdelapena.com](http://mattdelapena.com)

Source: [mattdelapena.com](http://mattdelapena.com)

## ABOUT the illustrator | Christian Robinson



**Christian Robinson** was born in Hollywood, California. He grew up in a small one-bedroom apartment with his brother, two cousins, aunt, and grandmother. Drawing became a way to make space for himself and to create the kind of world he wanted to see. He studied animation at the California Institute of the Arts and would later work with the Sesame Workshop and Pixar Animation Studios before becoming an illustrator of books for children. His books include *Gaston* and *Antoinette*, written by Kelly DiPucchio, and the #1 *New York Times* bestseller *Last Stop on Market Street*, written by Matt de la Peña, which was awarded a Caldecott Honor, a Coretta Scott King Illustrator Honor, and the Newbery Medal. He presently lives in northern California with his rescue greyhound Baldwin and several house plants. He looks forward to one day seeing the aurora borealis.

Visit him online at [TheArtofFun.com](http://TheArtofFun.com)

Source: [simonandschuster.com](http://simonandschuster.com)

# ABOUT Last Stop on Market Street



## ABOUT the playwright | Cheryl L. West



**Cheryl L. West's** plays include, *FANNIE: The Music and Life of Fannie Lou Hamer*, *Last Stop on Market Street*, *Shout Sister Shout*, *Akeelah and the Bee*, *Pullman Porter Blues*, and *Jar the Floor*. Her plays have been produced in England, off-Broadway, on Broadway (Play On!), and in numerous regional theaters around the country, including Seattle Rep, Arena Stage, Old Globe, The Goodman, Williamstown Theatre Festival, Minneapolis Children's Theatre, Seattle Children's Theatre, Chicago Children's Theatre, Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Indiana Rep, Asolo Rep, Merrimack, Arkansas Rep, St. Louis Black Rep, Bay Street Theatre Festival, Syracuse Stage, Cleveland Play House, South Coast Rep, Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park, and Off-Broadway's Manhattan Theatre Club, and Second Stage. She has written TV and film projects at Disney, Paramount, MTV Films, Showtime, TNT, HBO, CBS, BET, and is the Webby-nominated writer for the original web series *Diary of a Single Mom*. Ms. West is currently preparing a revival of Broadway-bound *Jar the Floor*, and working on commissions for Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Minneapolis Children's Theater, Goodman Theatre, and Seattle Rep.

Read more at [cheryllwest.com](http://cheryllwest.com)

Source: [cheryllwest.com](http://cheryllwest.com)

Check out this **video** of **Cheryl L. West** from our friends at **Children's Theatre Company**.

Originally filmed at Children's Theatre Company (Minneapolis, MN) for the 2018 production of "Last Stop on Market Street." Filmed and edited by Kaitlin Randolph.

Click here for the interview with *Last Stop on Market Street* playwright Cheryl L. West

# ABOUT Last Stop on Market Street



## ABOUT the co-composer | Lamont Dozier



**Lamont Dozier** has written and produced over 54 #1 hits for The Supremes, Four Tops, Marvin Gaye, Smokey Robinson, and a host of others crediting Lamont as one of the primary Architects of the Motown Sound. A BMI ICON Award winner, Lamont was inducted into the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame and The Songwriter's Hall of Fame, where he also received the 2009 Johnny Mercer Award. As a solo artist, he has earned platinum albums and also written songs for Alison Moyet, Simply Red, Boy George, Eric Clapton and Phil Collins, earning a Grammy Award, Brit Award, Ivor Novello Award, Golden Globe Award, and Oscar nomination for the song "Two Hearts."

Source: [childrenstheatre.org](http://childrenstheatre.org)

## ABOUT the co-composer | Paris Ray Dozier



**Paris Ray Dozier** is a composer, lyricist, and recording artist from Encino, California whose works span across hip hop, R'n'B, pop, and musical theater genres. Born into a musical family, he became accustomed to creative expression at a very young age. Dozier's career began when he was 15, after attending the Lee Strasberg Theatre & Film Institute in West Hollywood, California, where he performed in Shakespearean productions. Paris went on to write songs for artists on Disney Music Group's Hollywood Records, where he was also signed as a singer-songwriter and producer. Soon after his tenure at Hollywood Records, Paris became the musical theme writer and co-host for *B In Tune TV*, which aired on the UPN Network, ABC Television, NBC, and Fox.

Source: [broadwayworld.com](http://broadwayworld.com)

Check out this **video of Paris Ray Dozier** from our friends at **Children's Theatre Company**.

Originally filmed at Children's Theatre Company (Minneapolis, MN) for the 2018 production of "Last Stop on Market Street." Filmed and edited by Kaitlin Randolph.

[Click here for the interview with Last Stop on Market Street co-composer Paris Ray Dozier](#)





## TECHNOLOGY FREE CHALLENGE



**CJ has a hard time unplugging from his tablet and other devices.** He is so focused on the electronic world that he misses things that are happening around him. Challenge your students to spend a night without screens! Then ask them to talk about it or write about it. Check out the prompts below.



- **What was the most challenging part of not using your screens?**
- **What did you do instead of using your screens?**
- **What would you do if all of your devices disappeared?**
- **Why do we use screens so much?**

## INTERGENERATIONAL STORYTELLING



**CJ learns so much from Nana while he is staying with her.** Nana takes the time to share things from her culture, like language and recipes, and even different ways to look at the world.



- **Ask your students to reach out to someone from an older generation.** It could be a grandparent, neighbor, or maybe even another teacher at school. Have students ask them about a special tradition in their life—maybe it's something they like to do on a holiday or a family recipe.
- **Then, ask students to present what was shared with them.**
- **They can do this by writing a story, drawing a picture, or giving a presentation to the class.**

### MISSOURI STANDARDS

#### MISSOURI SOCIAL STUDIES GRADE LEVEL EXPECTATIONS: SS6C, K-5:

Recount stories about locations, people, and cultural events in your community.

#### MISSOURI PERSONAL AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT GRADE LEVEL EXPECTATIONS PS2A, B, C K-8:

Interacting with others in ways that respect individual and group differences.



## MAP THAT BUS

During *Last Stop on Market Street*, the bus that CJ and Nana travel on makes many different stops. Sometimes people get on the bus and sometimes they get off.



Source: wikipedia.com



1. Read the book as a class and make a list of places that stand out in the book.
2. Have students create maps based on the list of places you have created.
3. Don't forget to include a key and compass with primary directions on the map!
4. After students have created their own Market Street map, they can create a map of their own neighborhoods, house, or even the classroom.



- ▲ N
- Stop 1
  - Stop 2
  - Stop 3
  - Stop 4

### MISSOURI STANDARDS

#### MISSOURI SOCIAL STUDIES GRADE LEVEL EXPECTATIONS: SS5.A, K-5:

With assistance, read, construct, and use maps of familiar places such as the classroom, the home, the bedroom etc.

#### MISSOURI SOCIAL STUDIES GRADE LEVEL EXPECTATIONS: SS5.B, K-5:

Locate a place by pointing it out on a map and by describing its relative location.

## EXTRA FUN!

If you are learning about primary directions for the first time, try out this song from Teachers Pay Teachers – Class of Kinders.

### NATIONAL CORE ARTS STANDARDS

#### MUSIC (MU) PR6.1.K:

With guidance, perform music with expression.



(Sing to the tune of “Twinkle Twinkle Little Star”)

If you like the oceans best  
 Travel east or travel west  
 If you like the cold and snow  
 North’s the way you want to go  
 If you like the hot hot sun  
 Head down south for lots of fun





## THE TRUTH ABOUT ME

**When CJ first meets Jojo, they do not get along.** They have very different life experiences and do not understand one another. As they learn more about one another they find common ground and respect for their new friend. This activity is all about making space for students to learn new things about their classmates—and to share about their own lives.



- 1. Have students stand in a circle.** Everyone should think about something that is true about them – maybe that they have a sibling, maybe their favorite color– something they are comfortable sharing with the class.
- 2. Once most students have thought of something that is true about them, ask one student to stand in the middle of the circle.** They will share their fact with the class by saying “The truth about me is...” followed by their fact.
- 3. If the statement is true about anyone else in the classroom, they should find a new spot across the circle from them.** If it is not true, they should stay put. The person who was in the middle should try and find a spot in the circle.
- 4. Remind students to use safe bodies as they cross the circle– no running feet!** You can also challenge them to keep their voices off as they cross the circle.
- 5. The person left in the middle, or the last person to find a spot will be the next one to share a fact.**
- 6. If someone shares something that isn’t true about anyone else, take a moment to celebrate that there is something unique about that person.** Then you can either ask them to share another fact, or call on another student to jump into the middle.

### AFTER YOU HAVE PLAYED, ASK YOUR STUDENTS TO CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING:

- Did they learn anything new about a classmate?
- Were they surprised to find they had something in common with a classmate?
- Was there anything they were really excited to share? Was there anything that they were nervous to share?
- Take a moment to celebrate the bravery of students who shared even when they were nervous.



#### MISSOURI STANDARDS

MISSOURI COMMUNICATION ARTS GRADE LEVEL EXPECTATIONS LS1B K-8:  
Demonstrate listening behaviors.

MISSOURI PERSONAL AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT GRADE LEVEL EXPECTATIONS PS2A, B, C K-8:  
Interacting with others in ways that respect individual and group differences.



## NEIGHBORHOOD I SPY

**CJ makes so many discoveries about his Nana's neighborhood and the people in it.** Go outside in your neighborhood, or a friend or family member's neighborhood and make your own discoveries!

Spend a few minutes looking at your surroundings. Observe the buildings, nature, animals, people, cars, etc. Perhaps you can even go on a walk while playing! Secretly pick something that you "spy" in the neighborhood, but don't tell anyone what it is. For instance, maybe you spy a red door or some purple flowers. You can give clues to others about what you spy by sharing the color or the first letter.

Discuss the details you noticed that make the neighborhood unique and special.



### MISSOURI STANDARDS

#### MISSOURI COMMUNICATION ARTS GRADE LEVEL EXPECTATIONS 3A K-5:

Speak clearly and to the point, using conventions of language when presenting individually or with a group.



### FOR EXAMPLE:

"I spy with my little eye, something red."

OR

"I spy with my little eye, something that starts with the letter R."

Then, people guess what you spied.

Take turns spying and sharing different things you see in the neighborhood.







## BEHIND THE DESIGN

The artwork in the book, *Last Stop on Market Street*, is filled with bright beautiful colors and designs. Set design team, Peter and Margery Spack, used the artwork from the book as an inspiration for the set design. The designs were then brought to life by Erik Kuhn, Metro Theater Company technical director, and scenic painter Cristie Johnston. Check out the images of the set below!

### MISSOURI STANDARDS

#### MISSOURI VISUAL ARTS STANDARDS:

##### VA:RE7B.1:

Compare images that represent the same subject.

#### MISSOURI VISUAL ARTS STANDARDS:

##### VA:CN11A.K:

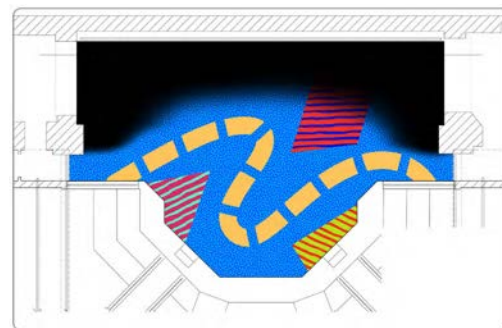
Identify a purpose of an artwork.



- Ask your students to compare and contrast the set design pictures to the pictures in the book.
- Then, ask students to create their own images inspired by the book— it could be their own set design, or a regular image.
- After watching the production, take some time to look at our production photos on our website, [metroplays.org](http://metroplays.org).



Have your students compare and contrast the designs to the real life images!



Images courtesy of Studio Spack

## DISCUSSION Questions

1. Why do you think Nana took away CJ's devices?
2. When CJ first gets to the city, he finds the noise to be too much. He is overwhelmed and homesick. **Have you ever felt homesick?** What made you feel better?
3. CJ loves animals and wants to be a zoologist when he grows up. **What is something that you love learning about and might want to explore as a career one day?**
4. As CJ and Nana ride the bus, lots of different people get on and off. They are all a part of Nana's community. **Who is someone special in your community?**
5. Why did CJ give Jojo his special turtle pillow? Have you ever given away something that was special to you?
6. When CJ and Jojo first meet, they don't understand one another or get along. **Have you ever made a judgement about someone else but then changed your mind? How did that make you feel?**
7. **Have you ever taken public transportation in your home town or while traveling?** What was your experience like?
8. **Who was your favorite person that CJ met on the bus and why?**
9. **What was your favorite song in the show?** Did it remind you of any other songs you know?
10. Nana gives back by working at the soup kitchen and brings CJ with her. **What are ways you have given back, or ways you could be of service to your community?**



# RESOURCES for readers and educators



## Matt de La Peña and *Last Stop on Market Street*

- Matt de la Peña's Website: [mattdelapena.com](http://mattdelapena.com)
- Penguin Young Readers School & Library Team Study Guide for Matt de la Peña and Christian Robinson:  
<https://storage.googleapis.com/classroom-portal-production/uploads/2021/01/12ad4c32-delapena-robinson-ed-guide.pdf>
- NPR: On Board A City Bus, A Little Boy Finds The Route To Gratitude:  
<https://www.npr.org/2015/02/06/383856887/on-board-a-city-bus-a-little-boy-finds-the-route-to-gratitude>

## How to Talk to Young People about Housing and Food Insecurity

- Sesame Street in Communities – Family Homelessness:  
<https://sesamestreetincommunities.org/topics/family-homelessness/>
- Feeding America – How to Talk to Kids about Hunger:  
<https://www.feedingamerica.org/take-action/talk-about-hunger>
- No Kid Hungry – Facts about Child Hunger in America:  
<https://www.nokidhungry.org/who-we-are/hunger-facts>

## For Families Experiencing Food and Housing Insecurity

- St. Patrick Center: <https://www.stpatrickcenter.org>
- Saint Louis Area Resource Directory: <https://www.startherestl.org/housing.html>
- Covenant House: <http://www.covenanthousemo.org>

3311 Washington Ave.  
St. Louis, Missouri 63103  
EMAIL: [community@metroplays.org](mailto:community@metroplays.org)

### MISSION

Inspired by the intelligence and emotional wisdom of young people, we create professional theater, foster inclusive community and nurture meaningful learning through the arts.

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Illustrations by Christian Robinson. From the book *Last Stop on Market Street* © 2015. Published by the Penguin Group.



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