

Alliance Theatre

institute

A Christmas Carol

STUDY GUIDE

Grades 6–8

Created as part of the Alliance Theatre's **Dramaturgy by Students** program

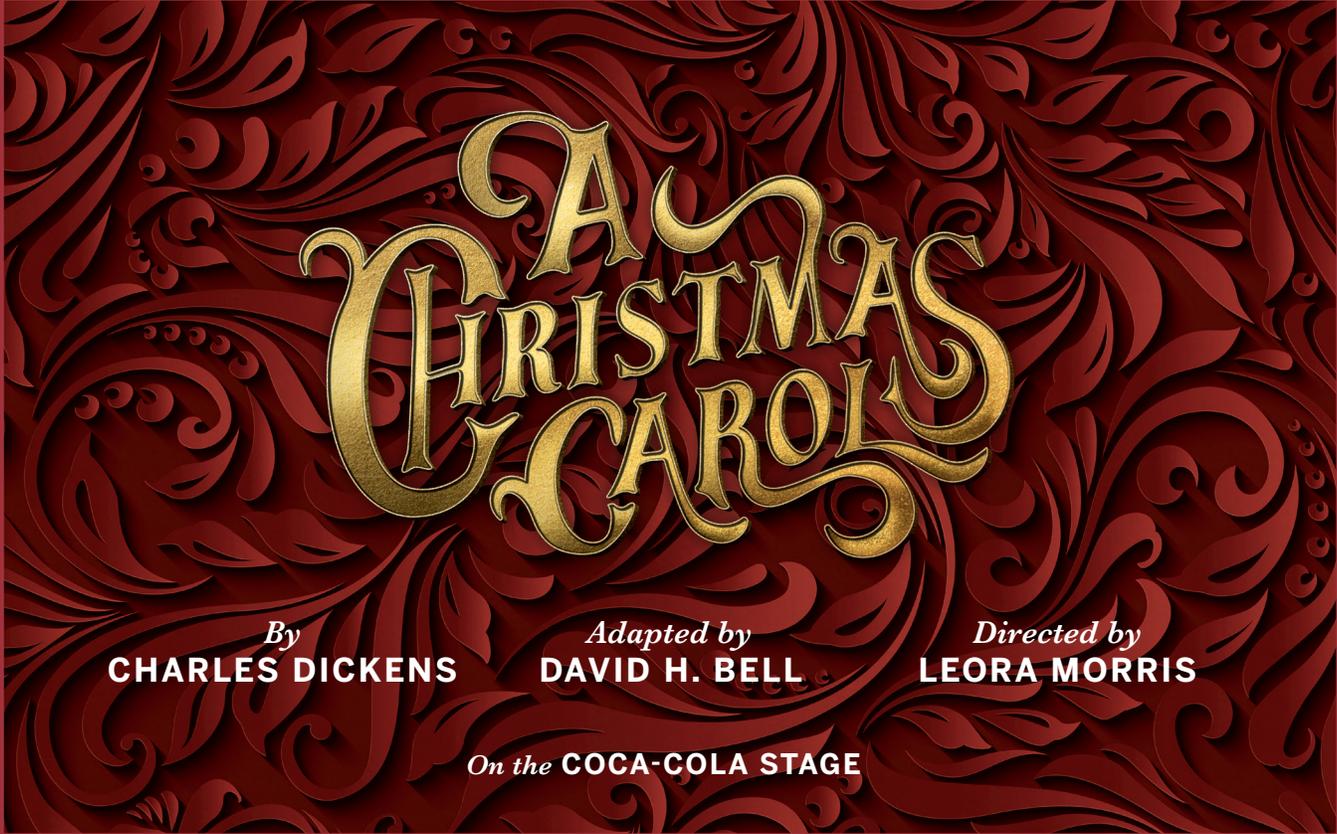
By: Community for Creativity 8th Grade Literacy Classes at Rising Starr Middle School

Teachers: Dr. Wendy Ashmore & Christy Todd

Courtney Moors-Hornick, Teaching Artist

Rebecca Pogue, Head of Elementary School Programs

Liz Davis, Head of Secondary Curriculum & Partnerships



A CHRISTMAS CAROL

By
CHARLES DICKENS

Adapted by
DAVID H. BELL

Directed by
LEORA MORRIS

On the **COCA-COLA STAGE**

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GEORGIA STANDARDS OF EXCELLENCE

English Language Arts (Grades 6–8):

ELAGSE6RL
ELAGSE6RL3
ELAGSE7RL3
ELAGSE8RL2
ELAGSE8RL3
ELAGSE8RL6

Social Studies (Grade 7):

SS7E10

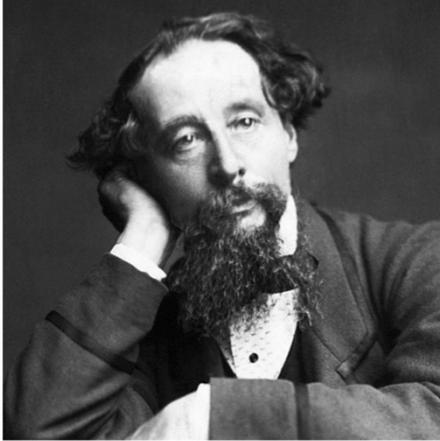
Theatre (Grades 6–8):

TA6.CR.1
TA8.CR.2
TA8.RE.1
TA7.CN.2



AUTHOR STUDY: CHARLES DICKENS

Compiled by Miles T., Leon C., and James H.



Charles Dickens was born in Portsmouth, England on February 7, 1812. His father, John, was a naval clerk who dreamed of striking it rich, and his mother, Elizabeth, aspired to be a teacher and school director.

When Dickens was twelve years old, he was forced to work in a boot blacking factory to earn money to help his father get out of Marshalsea Prison, where he had been placed due to a debt he owed. Dickens was relieved when he was allowed to go back to school after his father inherited enough money to pay off his debts and be released from the prison.

After finishing school, Dickens worked as a London newspaper reporter, where he practiced freelance reporting and drew sketches under the pseudonym of “Boz.” In 1836, he published his first book called *Sketches by Boz* and married Catherine Hogarth, whom he would have 10 children with.

In his lifetime he published 15 novels, including *Oliver Twist*, *David Copperfield*, *Bleak House*, *A Tale of Two Cities*, and *Great Expectations*. Dickens wrote the novella *A Christmas Carol* in just six weeks. It was a huge success in Dickens’ lifetime, and remains beloved to this day. Dickens died on June 9, 1870.

Impact on Christmas

Charles Dickens’ creation of the story *A Christmas Carol* had a huge impact on how we celebrate the holiday to this day. His tale shifted the focus of the holiday to the family, and more specifically, to children, as well as those less fortunate. Dickens felt strongly that generosity and compassion were lacking in London during the Industrial Revolution, especially toward the young and impoverished, and that people should be more appreciative of what they have and help others if they are able. He connected the Christmas holiday with charitable giving and good deeds.



PLAYWRIGHT STUDY: DAVID H. BELL



David H. Bell is a Professor of Music Theatre and a professional director who has worked extensively all over the world – Including Broadway, off-Broadway, Carnegie Hall, National Theatre, London’s West End, Kennedy Center, Royal Albert Hall, Long Wharf, Ford’s Theatre (Artistic Director 1983–1988), Alliance Theatre, Atlanta (Associate Artistic Director 1992–2001), The Mongodor Theatre (Paris), National Opera (Berlin), Bridgewater Hall (Manchester), and the closing Ceremony of the Barcelona Olympics. He holds an MA in Theatre from the University of Virginia and a BA in Theatre from Yankton College.

Bell has been nominated for 44 Joseph Jefferson Awards in Chicago (winning 11), the Laurence Olivier Award (London), five Carbonall Awards (Florida), three Helen Hayes Awards in DC (winning one), five Atlanta Circle

of Drama Critics Awards (winning 1) and has won the Dramalogue Award (LA), the Mac Award (NYC), seven Atlanta Journal-Constitution awards, the Nebraska Award for Theatre Excellence, and has been awarded three National Endowment playwriting grants.

SYNOPSIS - ACT I

Created by Anna B., Ella G., Crista A., and Pav E.

The play opens on Christmas Eve morning with a lamplighter and his son extinguishing the lamps from the previous night. We meet Ebenezer Scrooge, dressed in dark clothing and on his way to collect a debt from someone who owes him money. Then, we meet the Cratchit family, and we learn that their youngest, Tiny Tim, is ill. The head of the Cratchit household, Bob Cratchit, works for Scrooge at his counting house. Scrooge is very rich but is a mean old man who only cares about money. Scrooge's only family, his nephew Fred, invites him to a Christmas party, but Scrooge refuses to celebrate the holiday.

Later that evening, Mr. Scrooge is visited by the ghost of his deceased business partner, Jacob Marley. Marley warns him that he may receive a great punishment in his death, just as he has, for the way he has lived his life and the choices he has made. Before Marley leaves, Scrooge is told that three spirits will visit him through the course of the night.

The first spirit to visit Scrooge is The Ghost of Christmas Past, who takes Scrooge back in time. We see Scrooge as a schoolboy and learn that his childhood was far from perfect, for his father fell into debt for not being able to pay the school's fees. This later influenced Scrooge as we see he is paranoid of falling into debt and holds on tight to his money.

Next, the Ghost of Christmas Past takes Scrooge to his early years of being an apprentice for the Fezziwig family. We meet Scrooge's love interest Belle, who he plans to propose to. The Fezziwig family ring is passed down to him; Scrooge proposes to Belle, and she says yes.

Then, the spirit takes Scrooge to the funeral of his sister, Fan, who has died along with her unborn child. Her surviving child, Fred, is all alone now, an orphan. Scrooge sends him to school and promises to write.

Still in the past, we learn that the Fezziwig family has become bankrupt and evicted, so an auction takes place where all their belongings are sold to repay their debt. Rather than fighting to help the Fezziwigs, Scrooge solidifies his partnership with Marley, who oversees the auction. Belle, Scrooge's fiancée, sees the change in Scrooge, and she calls off their engagement.

The Ghost of Christmas Past leaves Scrooge waiting for his next visitor.

SYNOPSIS - ACT II

Created by Josiah B., Jagad K., Munachim K., and Nolan G.

Act II begins with Scrooge's next visitor, the Ghost of Christmas Present, holding Fred's invitation to join him and his family for Christmas. First, the Ghost leads Scrooge to a church where they see Tiny Tim praying to not to make his mother sad. He also prays for a way to keep his father's hands and feet warm while he's working in the counting house. Then, Tiny Tim astonishingly prays for Scrooge, because he believes that Scrooge is less fortunate than he is, because Scrooge is all alone.

Next, the Ghost takes Scrooge to the Cratchit household, where the family is preparing for their Christmas feast. Bob leads a toast to Scrooge for agreeing to give him Christmas day off work. Scrooge sees that, even though the Cratchit family are poor, they are happy, as they have each other.

Then, the Ghost and Scrooge visit Fred's home, where Fred and his wife Alice and their guests are enjoying a holiday party. Fred's wife and friends criticize Scrooge and his frugal ways. Scrooge wonders where he might be today if he hadn't been so cruel to his fellow man. He remarks on how happy Fred and his wife seem and seems to be remorseful about how his own love life turned out.

The final spirit, the Ghost of Christmas Future, arrives to take Scrooge on the final leg of his journey.

First, they see a mob of poor beggars outside Scrooge's property, trying to raid his house for any remaining riches as Scrooge's housekeeper Mrs. Dilber tries to fend them off with a broomstick. Even though Mrs. Dilber admits that Scrooge never did anything for her, she tries to honor his life by defending his home. However, her attempts are futile as the mob rushes past her into the house and steals all the goods. Scrooge is sad to realize that in this "future", he is dead, and no one seems to miss him, as he made no real friends in his lifetime.

Next, the Ghost of Christmas Future takes Scrooge to a graveyard where he discovers the grave of Cratchit's boy, Tiny Tim's. Scrooge does not want Tim to die, and he tells the Ghost he will do anything to save the boy's life. He promises the spirit that he can change his ways. Scrooge collapses to the ground.

When he wakes up, the Ghost is gone, and he is back home in his bed. Mrs. Dilber informs him it is Christmas Day. Scrooge arranges to have the debts of a man he loaned money to erased, and have the man released from debtor's prison as well. He gives freely to charity workers and agrees to celebrate Christmas with Fred and Alice, to their surprise and delight. He sends a cart piled with goodies to the Cratchits and tells Bob he's doubling his salary and making him a partner. Tiny Tim is alive, and Scrooge embraces him. All the bells of London chime.

CHARACTER ANALYSIS

Created by Makenna E., Allison (AC) M., Karson Y., Maddy J., and Faith L.

Ebenezer Scrooge is the main character of *A Christmas Carol*. Scrooge is a negative, selfish man who runs a counting house and cares only about money. He is very wealthy but keeps every last penny to himself rather than using it to help those less fortunate. Scrooge claims Christmas is a “humbug.” Scrooge does not like Christmas, as it disrupts him from making money because his clerk, Bob Cratchit, wants the day off. Christmas is a time for giving, and Scrooge does not like to give.

Scrooge doesn't like anyone and is scared to allow anyone to love him. For example, his nephew Fred tries to invite him to celebrate Christmas at his home, but every year, Scrooge refuses.

When Scrooge was a young man, his devotion to business and his growing greed drove away his fiancée, Belle.

With the help of the Ghosts of Christmas Past, Present, and Future, Scrooge undergoes great change. Throughout the course of the play, he evolves into a kind and charitable man who recognizes the mistakes of his past and seeks to be better. Scrooge learns the importance of family and caring about those around you. He comes to understand that Christmas is about love, the people we cherish, and helping those in need.

Fred is Scrooge's nephew. Unlike Scrooge, Fred loves Christmas, and is pleasant, cheerful, and kind towards others. His mother, Fan, died when Fred was very young. Scrooge is Fred's only remaining family member, and he tries to connect with Scrooge every Christmas, with no luck. Fred is married to Alice, and they have a loving marriage, one that Scrooge comes to envy.

Bob Cratchit is Scrooge's working-class employee and later his partner at the counting house. Bob and his wife have five children, including the sickly Tiny Tim. Every day Bob puts up with Scrooge's grumpy behavior at work, but when he returns home to his family at night, he is jolly, amiable, and warmhearted.

Tiny Tim is the youngest son of Bob and Mrs. Cratchit. Tim has an illness that forces him to use crutches to get around, but he is a positive and cheerful boy despite his ailment. Even though he belongs to a poor family, he believes he is fortunate because he is surrounded by love. He feels sympathetic toward Scrooge because he is all alone.

Jacob Marley has been dead seven years at the beginning of the play. In life, he was selfish and greedy, much like his partner in business Scrooge. As a ghost, Jacob Marley visits Scrooge on Christmas Eve and tries to convince him to turn his life around. He warns Scrooge that he will be haunted by three spirits.

The Ghost of Christmas Past is the first ghost (after Marley) that visits Ebenezer Scrooge on Christmas Eve. Childlike and gentle, Past takes Scrooge on a journey back in time.

The Ghost of Christmas Present is the second ghost that visits Ebenezer Scrooge on Christmas Eve. This Ghost shows Scrooge joyful events happening on Christmas Eve, from the Cratchit household to his nephew Fred's Christmas party. Present is a vivacious Ghost who doesn't put up with any of Scrooge's negativity.

The Ghost of Christmas Future is the final ghost that visits Ebenezer Scrooge on Christmas Eve. This Ghost represents Scrooge's future if he does not change his ways. Future is silent because he aims to show Scrooge that he is the only person who can change his future, but he must willingly choose to do so.

Fan is Scrooge's sister who died when Fred was a young child. She and Scrooge were close as children; they teased each other and enjoyed each other's company.

Belle was Scrooge's fiancée, who left Scrooge for caring more about his work than his friends.

Mrs. Cratchit is Bob Cratchit's wife and the mother of Tiny Tim, Peter, Wyatt, Melinda, and Martha. She is a caring, loving mother, but also strict at times.

Wyatt, Peter, Melinda, and **Martha Cratchit** are the children of Mr. and Mrs. Cratchit. Martha, the oldest, is a milliner's (hat maker's) apprentice.

Alice is Fred's wife. She is kind and giving and loves Fred deeply.

Topper and **Bess** are friends of Alice and Fred's and guests at their Christmas party. They make fun of Scrooge for his miserly ways.

Mudge is Scrooge's brutish schoolmaster from his boyhood days.

Dick Wilkins is Scrooge's friend from school. As young men, they served as apprentices to Mr. Fezziwig.

Mr. Fezziwig is Scrooge's first employer and was like family to Scrooge. He gives Scrooge a family ring so that Scrooge may propose to Belle. Mr. and Mrs. Fezziwig fall into debt and lose everything at an auction.

Mrs. Fezziwig is Mr. Fezziwig's lovely and sweet wife.

Mr. Fouquet is a Frenchman who serves as the photographer at the Fezziwig Christmas party.

Mr. Pritchitt is the auctioneer at the Fezziwig's auction.

Tom Watkins was a drummer for the 27th regiment in the army. Tom and his wife Missy and son Matthew operate a street cart, selling goods to Londoners. Tom is arrested and thrown in Marshalsea Prison for a debt he owes Scrooge.

Missy Watkins is Tom's wife and Matthew's mother. She is a tough, untiring worker.

Matthew Watkins is Tom and Missy's son.

Mrs. Dilber is Scrooge's housekeeper. She cares for Scrooge even though he treats her poorly.

Ignorance and **Want** are representations of the poor and destitute. They are childlike in form, which makes Scrooge feel sympathetic towards them.

Peg and **Joe** are beggars who steal Scrooge's things in the "Future" scene.

Additional characters: Businessmen, Charity workers, Carolers, Lamplighter, Lamplighter's Son, Officer



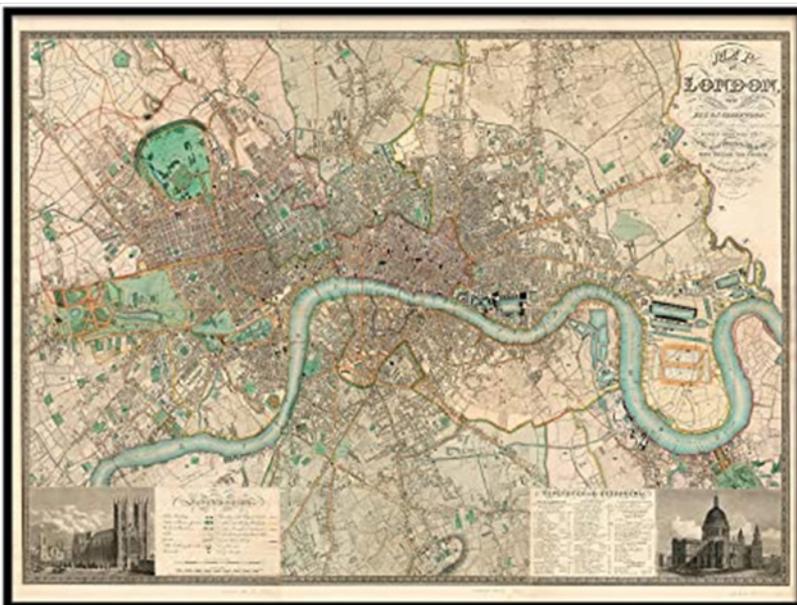
SETTING STUDY

Created by John B., Kieran B., Finn H., and Annabelle S.

A Christmas Carol takes place on a cold Christmas Eve in London, England during a time period known as the Victorian Era. The Victorian era takes its name from Queen Victoria who ruled between 1837–1901. The era ended after her death.

The Industrial Revolution brought tremendous change and growth to England during this time period; many British companies started using the latest inventions in their factories, which led to faster production of materials. Inventions during this time period include the spinning jenny, the steam engine, the high-speed printing press, the telegraph, and electric generators and motors. Despite the new technology, conditions in the factories were poor and many people died. The development of new factories and machines called for more workers, and children were an ideal choice because they could be paid less and were less likely to organize into unions and strike. Child labor became a massive problem in England, one that Charles Dickens was well aware of, as he was sent to work in a factory as a twelve year-old boy. In 1833, children under the age of 9 were banned from working in textile factories, and all women and children under the age of 10 were banned from working underground in the year 1842. However, many children continued to work, and it was not until the end of the 19th century and into the 20th century that stronger labor laws were passed.

There were three conflicts, or wars, that took place during the Victorian Era: the Crimean War (1853–1856), the Indian Rebellion (1857–1858), and the South African Wars (also known as the Boer Wars, 1899–1902). In *A Christmas Carol*, Scrooge’s sister Fan mentions that her husband is fighting a war:



“Eben – have you seen your nephew? Now that his father is off fighting in India, he needs his uncle more than ever.”

London, the capital of England, was an extremely dirty and unsanitary town during this time. The population swelled and overcrowding was common, which led to increased pollution, sewage problems, and the swift spread of viruses and bacteria.



Camden Town is a district of northwest London. In the play, we learn that the Cratchit family lives in Camden Town, which had many low and middle-class inhabitants during this time period. Charles Dickens spent much of his childhood in Camden Town, as his family settled there in 1822.



The Palace of Westminster

Architecture during this time period is known as “**Gothic Revival.**” Buildings were constructed with bricks and stone, and many incorporated decorative elements like pointed arches, dormers, roof gables, and parapets (towers), which gave the buildings a fortified look. Most of the interiors of Victorian houses were decorated with duller colors like burgundy, white, black, and green, and many of these interiors had wood accents on the walls. Many of the churches and cathedrals you see in England that still stand were refurbished and restored during this time, such as St. Peter’s Cathedral and St. Mary’s Church.



Fashion in the Victorian Era included dresses with petticoats and full skirts and poke bonnets for the women, while men’s attire was more rigid. Bold patterns were popular during this time.



Marshalsea Prison, built in 1373, stood along Borough High Street in Southwark, London. The name “Marshalsea” comes from the old English word “marshalcy” which refers to “the office, rank, position of a Marshal.” Many prisoners of Marshalsea were in debt, as was Charles Dickens’ father, John Dickens, who was imprisoned there in 1824. Charles was only 12 years old at the time, and this was to become Dickens’s worst memory, which would haunt him for the rest of his life. Conditions were unhygienic, dingy, and even deadly. Marshalsea Prison was demolished in 1842. Dickens wrote that Marshalsea “is gone now, and the world is none the worse without it.”

THEMES IN A CHRISTMAS CAROL

Created by Nicholas A., Kimberly P., Julianna B., and Gavin G.

Themes are main ideas or underlying meanings a writer explores in a literary work. The theme of a story can be conveyed using characters, setting, dialogue, plot, or a combination of all of these elements.

THEME	EVIDENCE	ANALYSIS
You get out of life what you put into it	<p><i>Tim gives a penny to the beggar woman.</i></p> <p>PETER: Can we afford it father?</p> <p>CRATCHIT: Ah Peter – we make a living by what we get but, we make a life by what we give.</p>	The Cratchit Family shows generosity and charity towards others, even though they themselves have little. Mr. and Mrs. Cratchit teach their children to care for each other, and the world around them, and in turn they are blessed as a family. They have love, and they have each other. Just as the saying “what goes around comes around” goes, the kindness they show others comes back to them.
The importance of generosity over greed	<p>SCROOGE: Oh spirit – am I the cause of this? Has money and my pursuit of it blinded me to the misery around me? Have I stood by and done nothing while this child perished? Please spirit – spare the child. Let me rot in a grave next to the multitudes I could not see and did not help – but spare the child – or have mercy on me, spirit – and I will save this child – and any child in need – I don’t know how – but let me try again.</p>	Scrooge is not content with what he has from the beginning of the play. He always feels he could be earning more, his clerk Cratchit could be working harder, and their profits could be higher. He realizes by the end of the play that he has been so focused on his pursuit of wealth that he has neglected the people around him, and that it is more important to be charitable and enjoy the company of friends and family than it is to be wealthy and alone.

THEME

EVIDENCE

ANALYSIS

The value of friendship and family

SCROOGE:
All these children on but fifteen shillings a week. It's madness.

GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PRESENT:
The pleasure he takes in his family defies price, Mr. Scrooge. Whatever you think.

You can have all of the riches in the world, but no amount of money can amount to friendship and family. In many ways the Cratchit family is richer than Scrooge, as they have the love of family while Scrooge has isolated himself from love.

Scrooge learns the value of friendship and family on his journey with the Ghosts, and as a result, he doubles Cratchit's salary and finally agrees to celebrate the holiday with his only remaining family member, Fred. He apologizes to Fred for letting him down and promises to make up for his past mistakes.

LITERARY ALLUSIONS

Compiled by Nate P., Krishna K., Seth M., Kennedy K., and Caleb G.

A **literary allusion** is a reference to a person, event, thing, or other text within a literary work.

ALLUSION

IN CONTEXT

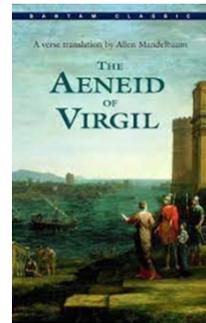
LEARN MORE

IMAGE

“The Aeneid”

MUDGE:
I expect the first five chapters of **The Aeneid** memorized and word perfect, or you’ll have the rod to show for it.

An epic poem by Virgil, about Aeneas’ travels from Troy to Italy.



Henley Regatta

BELLE:
I loved you the minute you fell into the Thames at the **Henley Regatta** – and quite wilted your straw hat.

A very posh rowing event held on the River Thames with individuals from high society participating in the competition and festivities.



Old Scratch

JOE:
It seems that **Old Scratch** has got his own at last.

Old Scratch or Mr. Scratch is a nickname or pseudonym for the Devil. The name likely comes from Middle English *scrat*, the name of a demon or goblin, derived from Old Norse *skratte*.



ALLUSION**IN CONTEXT****LEARN MORE****IMAGE**

“Auld Lang Syne”

MR. FEZZIWIG:
Now smile as if
you were making a
proper holiday toast
- **“Auld Lang Syne”**
- that sort of thing.

Auld Lang Syne is a song that is often sung during New Year’s Eve celebrations to mark the end of one year and the start of another. It was originally a Scottish poem written by Robert Burns in 1788 and is about two friends having a drink and remembering old times. The literal meaning of “Auld Lang Syne” is “times long past,” or “old long since.”

Light of Heaven

MARLEY:
The poor are poor
because we made
them so. This time
of year, I suffer the
most. Christmas
— when the **light of
heaven** shines so
brightly, I wonder
lived my life in
darkness.

Biblical reference
from Acts 26:13: “At
midday, O king, I saw
in the way a light
from heaven, above
the brightness of the
sun, shining round
about me and them
which journeyed
with me.”



ALLUSION

Great Clock on St. Martin's Lane

IN CONTEXT

GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PRESENT:

My life on this globe is very brief. It ends tonight.

SCROOGE
Tonight?

GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PRESENT:

Tonight, with the toll of the **great clock in St. Martin's Lane**.

LEARN MORE

The Great Clock on St. Martin's Lane is a clock made by clockmakers John Barwise and Sons (W and J Barwise) who were clockmakers and watchmakers during the Victorian Era, and whose company was located on St. Martin's Lane. The clock is referenced by The Ghost of Christmas Present to signify to Scrooge that they don't have much time left.

IMAGE

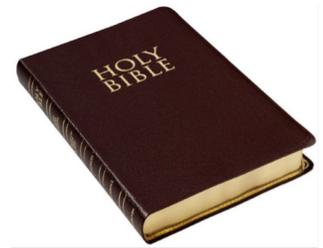


Reap what you sow

JACOB MARLEY:
I **reap the misery that I have sown**.

You should look to the chains that you have made. Ebenezer, they are so much heavier than mine.

Biblical reference from Galatians 6:8-9: "Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows. The one who sows to please his sinful nature, from that nature will reap destruction; the one who sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life." In the play, Marley warns Scrooge that greed and cruelty towards others will come back to him.



VOCABULARY

Compiled by Frank P., Ayanna R., Robin S., Miles T., James H., Leon C., Sarah B., Emily E., Ian I., and Ouisie M.

WORD (Part of Speech)	DEFINITION	IN CONTEXT
Accrued (adj.)	Accumulated over a period of time	“He has accrued a fortune simply because he has no idea how to spend it.”
Amends (n.)	To “make amends” means to correct a mistake	“I need to make amends.”
Apprentice (n.)	A person who is learning a trade from a skilled employer, having agreed to work for a fixed period at low wages.	“He’s my apprentice, he must do as I tell him.”
Arrears (n.)	Money that is owed and should have been paid earlier.	“In full. Mr. Watkins — that is one hundred and twenty five pounds. You are in arrears.”
Blimey (n.)	Used to express one’s surprise, excitement, or alarm	“Blimey — a whole thirty pounds?”
Blind Man’s Buff (n.)	A game where one player is blindfolded and tries to tag the other people	“Blind man’s buff — and Topper, you’re first.”
Compound interest (n.)	Interest earned from the original principal (the debt owed), plus accumulated interest	“He was a fool who could never grasp the dangers of compound interest”

WORD (Part of Speech)	DEFINITION	IN CONTEXT
Debt (n.)	Something, typically money, that is owed or due.	“The Marshalsea Prison until the debt is paid. It is the law, sir.”
Disposition (n.)	The usual attitude or mood of a person	“Given your disposition — I warrant we should match your charity penny for penny.”
Forfeit (v.)	To lose or be deprived of something; to give up	“If you leave now, you’ll forfeit all of it — you’ll have to begin again.”
Forgoing (v.)	Refrain from; to go without	“You work all hours in your counting-house forgoing even a day off at Christmas — why?”
Gruel (n.)	A thin liquid food of oatmeal or other meal boiled in milk or water.	“As you wish — I was putting out your supper. Would you like your gruel cold or hot?”
Ha’penny (n.)	Half of a penny	“He gave me this coal for a ha’penny — and a thruppence for my work.”
Hearth (n.)	A brick, stone, or concrete area in front of a fireplace	“The Christmas hearth — Mr. Scrooge. Stand by me.”
Humbug (n.)	Deceptive or false talk or behavior	“So say you... I say you’re a humbug.”
Impertinent (adj.)	Not showing proper respect; rude.	“Out with you, you impertinent wretch and I’ll expect you tomorrow as usual, Christmas or no.”
Infernal (adj.)	Of or relating to a nether world of the dead	“Why the infernal rush? I’m old.”

WORD (Part of Speech)	DEFINITION	IN CONTEXT
Lad (n.)	British term for a boy or young man	“Of course, you will, lad.”
Lamplighter (n.)	Someone who lights the streetlamps.	“As dawn light reveals the stage, a lamplighter slowly extinguishes the lamps as his equipment is carried by his young son.”
Loot (n.) Looting (v.)	Goods usually of considerable value taken in war or conflict; to take or steal goods	“They’ll join in the looting most likely.”
Madame (n.)	Madam, or madame, is a polite and formal form of address for women, often contracted to ma’am	“The goods you ordered, madame.”
Mail coach (n.)	Stagecoach	“I’ve come to bring you home, Father set me up with the mail coach”
Mate (n.)	British term for a friend or fellow employee	“I was helping the barge mate load coal most of the night. He gave me this coal for a ha’penny — and a thruppence for my work.”
Mickey (inf.)	To tease or ridicule someone	“Are you taking the mickey?”
Milliner (n.)	A person who designs, makes, trims, or sells women’s hats	“I ran all the way from the milliner’s shop.”
Miser (n.)	A person who hoards wealth and spends as little money as possible.	“I know he’s your family, Fred — but all society agrees he’s a most notorious miser.”

WORD (Part of Speech)	DEFINITION	IN CONTEXT
Mum (n.)	British slang for Mom	“Mum. It’s five o’clock.”
Parlor (n.)	Sitting room where guests would be entertained	“What parlor trick is this?”
Parsimonious (adj.)	Unwilling to spend money or use resources; stingy or frugal.	“It’s a tribute to your parsimonious old Uncle Scrooge?”
Parson (n.)	A member of the clergy	A member of the clergy: “I am giddy as a tipsy parson!”
Parsonage (n.)	A church house provided for a member of the clergy	“— I heard she burnt the pies at the parsonage off Hanover Square —”
Pauper (n.)	A very poor person	“None, but for a nephew, he hardly knows; so tell me which is the rich man and which is the pauper.”
Pippin (n.)	A red and yellow dessert apple	“The goods you ordered, madame. Oranges, dried pippins, candied plums, and a sack of chestnuts. That’s two-pound three and six. Having a party, are you?”
Principal (n.)	The original sum invested or lent	“But it is the principal that has fallen due, Mr. Watkins. You may arrest him, Officer.”
Prison Barge (n.)	A boat to transfer prisoners	“As if the day wasn’t already bad enough — your father sent word there’s no room in the clink — so they’re trying to move him out to a prison.”

WORD (Part of Speech)	DEFINITION	IN CONTEXT
Promissory note (n.)	A signed document containing a written promise to pay a stated sum to a specified person or the bearer at a specified date or on demand.	“Mr. Watkins, to warm your Christmas dinner, I suggest you set fire to your promissory note.”
Redemption (n.)	The act of making something better or more acceptable	“You tire on your path to redemption?”
Scurvy (n.)	A disease caused by a deficiency of vitamin C, characterized by swollen bleeding gums and the opening of previously healed wounds, which particularly affected poorly nourished sailors until the end of the 18th century.	“If you don’t eat it, you’ll get scurvy — I read that somewhere.”
Sixpence (n.)	Coin that is worth six pence, or half a shilling.	“With an extra sixpence for your troubles.”
Specter (n.)	A visible disembodied spirit: Ghost	<i>The Ghost of Christmas Future appears. Scrooge, in chasing the Ghost of Christmas Present collides with the specter.</i>
Starched (v.)	To stiffen fabric or clothing with starch	“I’ve got your collar and cuffs father. Starched and white like new.”

WORD (Part of Speech)	DEFINITION	IN CONTEXT
Sultanas (n.)	A pale yellow seedless raisin	“I gots a cart full of plums, almonds, sultanas, and candied fruit.”
Taper (n.)	A thin candle	“Here’s the taper — what’s your first wish?”
Thruppence (n.)	Coin that is worth three pence	“He gave me this coal for a ha’penny — and a thruppence for my work.”
Warrant (v.)	Justify a course of action	“Given your disposition — I warrant we should match your charity penny for penny.”
Workhouse (n.)	A public institution in which the destitute of a parish received board and lodging in return for work	“And union workhouses? Are they still in operation?”

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Created by Sarah B., Emily E., Ian D., and Ouisie M.

BEFORE THE PLAY

- Are you familiar with the plot of the story *A Christmas Carol*?
 - Have you ever seen a film adaption of *A Christmas Carol*? If so, what version or versions have you seen? What do you think is going to happen in this play?
 - Does money influence your happiness? In what way?
 - What do you think might have influenced Charles Dickens to write this story?
-

DURING THE PLAY

- Notice the costumes worn by the different characters. How do the costumes help us understand the personalities, backgrounds, and motivations of the characters?
 - As you watch the play, notice how the lighting of the setting changes the mood from scene to scene.
 - What phrases resonate with you that you think make an impact on the story?
 - How does the set represent and reflect the time period and setting?
 - As you watch the play, what do you notice about the differences in the way things were done during the Victorian Era versus now? Do you notice different social behaviors and etiquette?
-

AFTER THE PLAY

Engage in a discussion as a class or use these questions as journal prompts.

- Do you think if this play were to be placed in modern times it would have the same impact?
 - What aspects of the setting were important to the story? How did the setting contribute?
-

- What do you think Scrooge meant when he said: “And we measure each day by what we earn.”?
- How do Cratchit’s morals differ from those of Scrooge?
- What aspects of our society can we recognize in the Victorian Era, if any? How have we progressed? How have we remained the same?
- Why do you think Charles Dickens chose to give such focus to poor and working-class characters such as the Cratchit family?
- Do you think Tiny Tim is aware of his family’s financial status? Why or why not?
- Why do you think Charles Dickens named the story *A Christmas Carol*? What is the significance of the title?
- What do you think Marley’s chains and lockboxes were formed by? Why was his visit so significant to the story? Explain.



POST-SHOW EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

Created by Isabelle S., Caleb B., Karim M., Courtney M., and Emma H.

ALTERNATE ENDINGS

Choose an important scene from the play, and in a small group, brainstorm other directions the scene could have taken. Create a script and reenact the scene.

Examples:

- Scrooge is asked in Act I to donate to a charity. As we know, he denies the request. What is another ending we can create to this scene? If he agreed to donate, how might the charity workers react? What might Cratchit do and say?
 - During the Fezziwig auction, Scrooge just stands by and watches his friends lose everything they have. But what might have happened if he took action?
-

MONOLOGUE WRITING

A **monologue** is a speech given by one character.

Monologues provide us insight into a character's deepest thoughts and feelings and allow us to better understand the reason for their actions

- Select a character from the play to develop through a monologue.
 - Determine a setting (a specific place and time) for your monologue.
 - The setting includes the indoor or outdoor location and the character's position (sitting, standing, lying down).
 - The time specifies the date, season, day of the week, and time of day.
 - The setting may also include context (e.g. a café on a busy street in downtown Atlanta) and mood (e.g., overcast, with clouds gathering overhead).
 - Decide how your character might grow or change over the course of your monologue. For example, a character might tell a story, come to a decision, share a revelation, figure something out, or express a strong emotion.
 - Determine whether your character is speaking to another character, and if so, whom, or to himself, and, by extension, the audience (technically, a soliloquy).
 - When writing your monologue, include stage directions and details indicating the characters' actions or emotions as they speak.
-

- Additional options:
 - Rather than writing, improvise the monologues out loud, in character, to yourself, or to a partner or series of partners.

Student example: Belle's monologue

Belle: *(standing in the middle of the cold, empty Fezziwig warehouse after the auction, speaking to Ebenezer)* You have changed, Ebenezer – in learning to count “things” you have forgotten how to value them. You’re so concerned about your job and your money that you don’t put your time into the things that actually matter, like family and friends. You take things from others to fatten your own purse. I just don’t understand how you find pleasure in putting a family on the street, one after the other. You think that success is business and business alone, and in the end, what is that worth? Success isn’t money. It isn’t wealth or business. Success is happiness, falling in love, having good friends, and just....enjoying life. You can’t feel love through a pence. One more coin in the jar can’t make you happy. You can try, but it won’t work. If you choose that, there is no way I will stay with you. Your heart has turned cold, and your spirit has been drained by the cruelty that has consumed you, but there is nothing I can do about it. You think you don’t have debt, yet you carry the debt of life. I want to marry the Ebenezer who had a spirit and loved me. I don’t know where he has gone. If I marry you, I want you to love and care for me. And if there is anything I am for sure of, it is that I don’t want to be another one of your items. You have no understanding of what you are losing and what you have already lost. *(She takes her ring off)* To think, you gave me this ring right on this very spot. *(She places it down on an empty crate and exits).*

THEATRICAL DESIGN

- Imagine that you’re a part of the production team for an adaptation of *A Christmas Carol* that is set in a completely different time and place. Choose the setting (ex: 1960s San Francisco during the Hippie movement, or modern-day Silicon Valley). Design a set that reflects that particular setting.
- Using that same setting, create a costume for one of the main characters using your knowledge of that time period as well as your understanding of the character’s personality, socioeconomic background/class, etc.
- Include notes in the margins around your designs, explaining your choices and inspiration.

JOURNAL PROMPT

According to the National Conference of State Legislatures, the Georgia state minimum wage is \$7.25 (per hour). Imagine you are an adult with a full-time job (40 hours per week).

- How much would you typically earn in one month (before taxes)?
- Would this wage support all of your financial obligations?
 - Consider the costs associated with clothing, food, transportation, housing, cell phone, education, and any family members that you financially support.
- In your opinion, is \$7.25 a reasonable living wage?
 - Why?
 - If not, what should it be?
- Lastly, imagine your supervisor earns \$1 million each year.
 - Would you consider that individual a “Scrooge”?

Additional Journal Prompts:

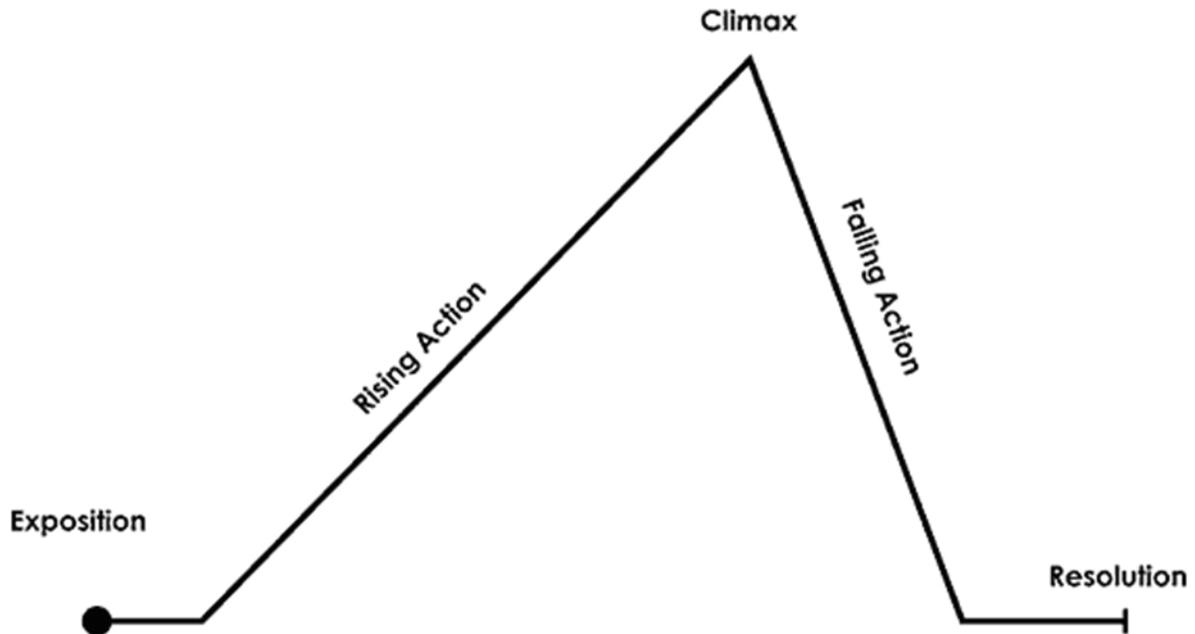
- Do you believe Scrooge is trying to keep Cratchit poor? If so, in what ways?
 - What systems are in place that keep Cratchit poor while Scrooge remains rich?
 - Who is richer in spirit at the beginning of the play, Scrooge or Cratchit? Why? At the end of the play?
-

PLOT PYRAMID

A **plot pyramid** is used to analyze the story. The elements of the plot includes the exposition, rising action, climax, falling action, and resolution.

- **Exposition:** The introduction of a story that includes the main characters, settings, and conflict.
 - **Rising Action:** Key events that led to the climax.
 - **Climax:** The most intense, important, or exciting part of the story.
 - **Falling Action:** Events that occur near the end of the story and lead to the resolution.
 - **Resolution/Denouement:** The end of the story.
-

Plot Diagram



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- Use the diagram above to fill in the key moments from the play.
- Additional extension: In small groups, create tableaux of each element. A tableau is a frozen snapshot of a group of participants/actors that represents and explores a particular moment in a story.
- Incorporate facial expressions and the use of levels. High, low, and medium body positions make the tableau more interesting for the audience.
- Option to layer in Thought Tracking:
 - The teacher can activate certain statues in the tableau by calling their name or tapping them on the shoulder
 - Once activated, the statue, as the character, has to say how they're feeling or what they're thinking, using 1st person perspective: "I'm feeling _____" or "I'm thinking about _____".

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