

STUDY GUIDE

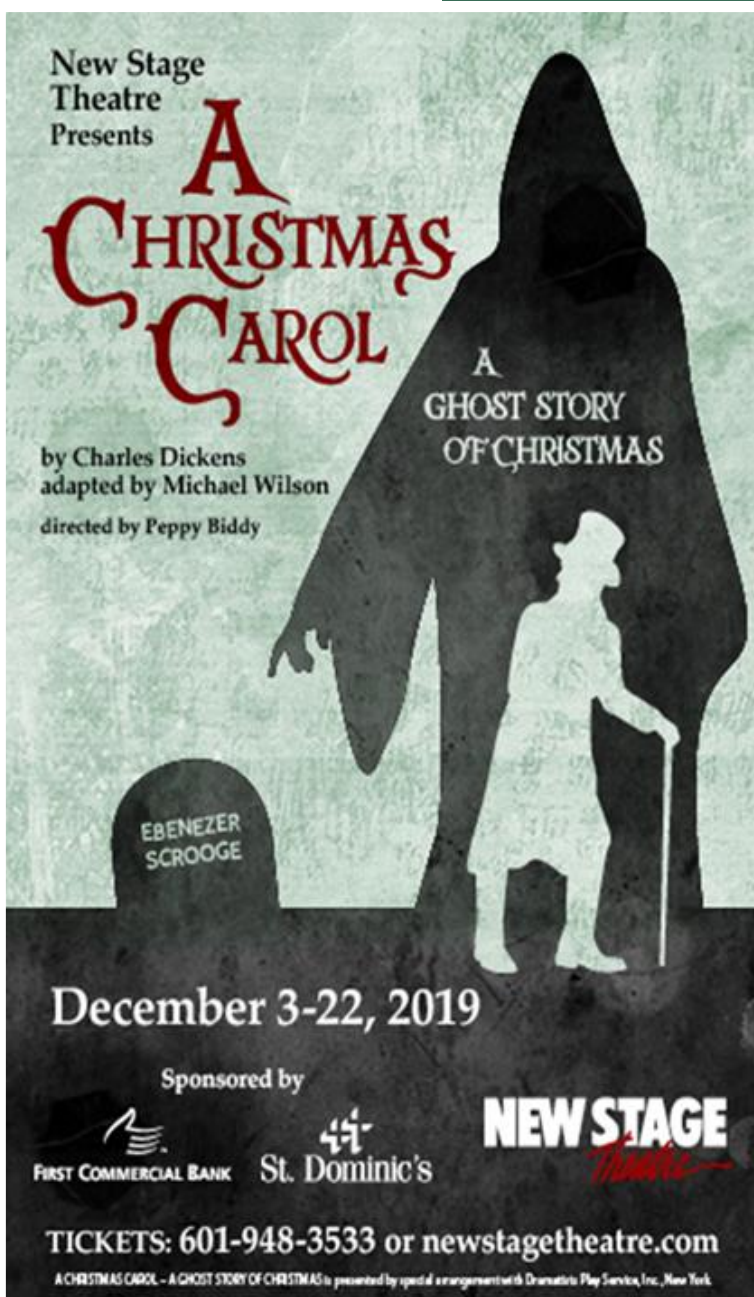


Table of Contents

Audience Etiquette	2
Curriculum Standards and Classroom Activities	3
Discussion Questions	4-5
Charles Dickens	6-8
Michael Wilson: The Playwright	9
About the Play	10
A Guide to the Characters in <i>A Christmas Carol</i>	11
History of <i>A Christmas Carol</i> at New Stage Theatre	12-14
Scenic Design Elements	15
Thoughts on <i>A Christmas Carol</i> by Turner Crumbley	16-17
Vocabulary of <i>A Christmas Carol</i>	18-25
Queen Victoria and the Victorian Era	26
Pagan Winter Traditions	27
The Origin of the Christmas Celebration	28-30
Victorian Etiquette and Leisure	31-34
Timeline of Important Events	35-38
Early 1800's and the Industrial Revolution	39-45
Christmas Crafts and Coloring Sheets	46-51
Who Said That?	52
<i>A Christmas Carol</i> Word Search	53
Answers to Who Said That?	54
Teacher Evaluation Form	55
Student Evaluation Form	56

**Please note: We want to hear from you and your students! Please respond by filling out the enclosed evaluation forms. These forms help us secure funding for future educational programming. Please send your comments and suggestions to: New Stage Education Department, 1100 Carlisle Street, Jackson, MS 39202, or email: education@newstagetheatre.com

Thank you for your support!



Audience Etiquette

To best prepare your students for today's performance, we ask that you review these guidelines for expected behavior of an audience BEFORE the show.

TEACHERS:

Speaking to your students about theatre etiquette is **ESSENTIAL**. This performance of Michael Wilson's *A Christmas Carol: A Ghost Story of Christmas* at New Stage Theatre may be some students' first theatre experience. Students should be aware that this is a live performance and should keep distractions to a minimum as a courtesy to those around them.

STUDENTS:

- Stay with your group at all times and pay attention to your teachers and chaperones.
- Listen to the New Stage staff member who will board your bus and escort your group to the lobby.
- Be sure to go to the bathroom before the performance begins. It is hard to leave without causing a disturbance to those around you once the performance starts.
- Please do not stand up, walk around, or put your feet on the seat in front of you. Make yourself comfortable while keeping movement to a minimum.
- Recording devices and cameras are strictly prohibited.
- Absolutely no gum chewing, eating or drinking in the theatre.

NOISE

Live theatre creates a unique and dynamic atmosphere between actors and audience members for sharing ideas and emotional expression. In the same way that actors can hear what is happening on-stage, they can also hear disruptions in the audience as well. While actors appreciate laughter and applause at appropriate times, excessive noise and talking is not welcomed. Even whispering voices can be distracting to the actors and others in the audience.

- Cell phones are prohibited inside the theatre. Not only is the use of cell phones during a performance distracting for both the actors and fellow audience members, the cellular signal interferes with the use of our sound system. Upon entering the theatre, please remind students (and teachers) to turn off all electronic devices and store them during the performance. If there is a disturbance, they will be asked to leave and will not be invited back to the theatre.

APPLAUSE

Applause respectfully acknowledges the performers and shows appreciation or audience approval. Traditionally, applause occurs before intermission and at the conclusion of a performance. Dimming the lights on the stage and bringing up the house lights generally signals these intervals. A curtain call, when the cast returns to the stage, will follow every performance. At the conclusion of the performance, we encourage you to like us on Facebook and other social media platforms. Enjoy the show!

Curriculum Standards in English and Language Arts

Reading Literature: Key Ideas and Details

- Grade 5: Determine a theme of a story, drama, or poem from details in the text, including how characters in a story or drama respond to challenges.
- Grade 6-8: Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to the characters, setting and plot: provide an objective summary of the text.
- Grades 9-10: Analyze how complex characters (e.g. those with multiple or conflicting motivations) develop over the course of a text, interact with other characters, and advance the plot or develop the themes.

Reading Literature: Craft and Structure

- Grades 9-10: Analyze how an author's choices concerning how to structure a text, order events with it (e.g. parallel plots) and manipulate time (e.g. pacing, flashbacks) create such effects as mystery, tension, or surprise.

National Arts Standards:

- Compare and debate the connection between a drama/theatre work and contemporary issues that may impact audiences.
- Use basic theatre research methods to better understand the social and cultural background of a drama/theatre work.

Classroom Activities:

Interview a parent, grandparent, or older relative about their favorite memories of past Christmas or holiday tradition in your family. What foods, smells, sounds, images, and people do they recall from that holiday? Write a description of these memories to capture as many details as possible. Think about your own favorite holiday memory and do the same. Try to capture as many sensory details as possible. Imagine a future holiday when you are an older adult, and again write a detailed description of what you imagine your perfect holiday will be.

As a class, plan a Victorian holiday party complete with decorations, food, games, songs, and dances of the era. Ask each student to come as a character from the play or from the Victorian era. Have each student write a short autobiography of their character, including the daily challenges in his/her life. Meet and mingle as you enjoy each of the social festivities. Create and exchange handmade Christmas cards with decorations and practice writing prose for each card.

Discussion Questions for *A Christmas Carol: A Ghost Story of Christmas*

Show Etiquette

- What is the role of the audience in a live performance?
- How is it different from seeing a film? Why can't you talk? What can happen in live theatre that cannot happen in cinema?
- What are the differences between live theatre and cinema? (Two-dimensional vs. three dimensional; larger than life on the screen vs. life-size; recorded vs. live performances, etc.)
- Discuss the nature of film as mass produced, versus the singular, intimate nature of live performances. Compare original art work to poster design or print work. Which do they feel is more valuable? Why?

Pre-show Questions

- Discuss the elements that go into producing a live performance: lights, set, props, costumes, and stage direction. Describe the people involved backstage (stage manager and crew) and how "behind the scenes" choreography of the show happens in front of an audience. Tell them to be aware of this as they watch the show. Observe each technical element.
- Examine the setting of the Charles Dickens' novel *A Christmas Carol*. What important themes does he impress upon his Victorian audiences through the redemption of Ebenezer Scrooge? How are they still relevant today?
- If you could change something about yourself or how you treat others, what would you change and why? What would possibly motivate such a change in your behavior?
- There have been numerous adaptations of *A Christmas Carol* on stage and screen. Which are some of your favorites and why?
- Put yourself in Scrooge's place. Pretend you are shown your past. Describe pivotal points in your life where the Ghost of Christmas Past would take you. How would you feel about re-living what you saw? Given the option, would you want to know your future? Why?

Theatre Observations (on the day of the show) at New Stage Theatre

FOR STUDENTS: Look around. What do you see? How does it make me feel? What in the play contributed to that feeling?

- Observe the lighting instruments around the room and on the ceiling. Look at the set. Does it look realistic or abstract? Try to guess how the set will be used during the show.
- What special technical effects are used in the show? Were the effects successful in establishing mood and furthering the dramatic action of the story?
- What is your first impression of each of the characters visually? Does their outward appearance reflect how you interpret their character? Does their appearance give you an impression of setting or mood? Do the actors change costumes quickly?
- Sound is an important technical element in *A Christmas Carol*. How does music and sound effects establish mood? How does the use of live music and Christmas carols enhance

STUDY GUIDE: *A Christmas Carol: A Ghost Story of Christmas*

important themes in the story? What specific carols are associated with particular characters and why?

- Discuss the scenic elements in the show. How does a scenic designer/director establish various locations in the story: streets of Victorian London, Scrooge's bedroom, the counting house, Cratchit's home, etc.? How successful was each location and what scenic elements (including props) were used to create that atmosphere? The use of projected images are also included in this production. How well are these elements incorporated into the play?

Post-show Discussion Questions

- Think of the character of Scrooge. How would Scrooge be viewed in today's world? What makes him different from someone who is considered "thrifty" or a good businessman? How do the people around him view Scrooge? How does his behavior at the end of the play make him a better person? What makes him worthy of redemption?
- Compare and contrast this play to the original Dickens' novel or the many film adaptations. Explain the similarities and differences between the original plot and subsequent adaptations for stage and screen. Which do you like better and why?
- What was your favorite aspect of New Stage's production of *A Christmas Carol*? Which character did you identify with the most? Why?
- Forgiveness and redemption are themes found within the story of *A Christmas Carol*. The characters of Fred and Mrs. Cratchit outwardly show two different opinions of Scrooge. Does their opinion of him change by the end of the show? Compare and contrast each relationship with Scrooge.
- How do you approach bad-tempered people in your own life? Is your opinion of Scrooge more like Fred's or Mrs. Cratchit's?
- Music is integral to this production of *A Christmas Carol*. In what ways are sound effects, singing Christmas carols, and live musicians used as theatrical devices to tell the story? How did these intensify the dramatic effect of a particular scene or moment in the play?
- Scrooge's debtors: Ms. Pigeon, the Doll Vendor, Bert, the Cider Vendor, and Mr. Marvel, the Watchwork Vendor, also play the roles of Christmas Past, Present, and Future. How does this doubling serve a thematic purpose in this production? How do the Spirit characters embody aspects of their vendor characters?
- Michael Wilson's *A Christmas Carol* incorporates ghostly apparitions into this production. How do these characters further the dramatic action and aid in Scrooge's transformation?

Charles Dickens



A literary superstar in his own lifetime, Charles Dickens and his literary legacy reached all over the globe, with throngs of fans attending his public readings and lectures, and became a household English name rival to that of Shakespeare. Charles John Huffman Dickens was born on February 7, 1812 near Portsmouth, England into a poor family, the second of seven children. He often read novels in his free time which would later inspire him to begin writing. Dickens's father, John, a clerk for the Naval Pay Office, frequently had difficulty supporting such a large family. John Dickens's careless spending left him and the rest of his family jailed in the Marshalsea Prison for being unable to pay off his debts. At twelve years old, young

Charles was sent to work at Warren Blacking Company, a shoe-polish factory. He worked 12 to 16 hour days, then travelled three miles to his sparse lodgings in Camden Town in east London. At the factory, he put labels on jars of polish and earned only six shillings a week. After his father inherited a sum of money, the family was released from prison, but this experience forever changed Dickens and later influenced his writing career. Themes of abandonment, abuse, and ignorance characterize much of his later work and he would continue to be a constant champion of children, the poor, and a well-regulated legal system through his writings. Although a private person about his own personal struggles, within his lifetime Dickens spoke of how he felt abandoned and betrayed by the adults who were supposed to take care of him. Through hard work and determination, he overcame his early challenges and later attended school until the age of 15, where he began work as a law clerk and later a freelance political reporter. Like many of his contemporary novelists, he was a skillful reporter, concerned with the detailed realism of his subject matter.

In 1833 he published his first work of fiction, "A Dinner at Poplar Walk" in a monthly magazine. His collection of monthly "serials" in 1833-1835 were called *Sketches by Boz*, a childhood nickname. Dickens' gained popularity with *The Posthumous Papers of the Pickwick Club*, another serial work published between 1836 and 1837, became a famous and successful author as a young man. Dickens also married Catherine Hogarth, a daughter of a newspaper editor, and they eventually had ten children. The couple later separated in 1857, when Dickens fell in love with a young actress named Ellen Ternan.

In 1838 Dickens wrote *Oliver Twist*, the first Victorian novel to have a child protagonist. Reflecting upon his own youth and the horrific conditions of the poor and destitute, *Oliver Twist* sealed his universal popularity and conveyed prevailing themes of his work: an indictment of a society that mistreated the poor, a condemnation of the wrongs inflicted on children by adults, and a denunciation of corruption and decay in politics and government. Similar to many Victorian authors, his stories centered around the struggles of a protagonist, male or female, relating to society as a whole, whether in love or marriage, family or neighbors, or with working associates. Victorian

STUDY GUIDE: *A Christmas Carol: A Ghost Story of Christmas*

novelists were less occupied with the people's relation to God than with their relation to other people. In the spring of 1843, Dickens began work on a pamphlet called "An Appeal to the People of England on behalf of the Poor Man's Child." *A Christmas Carol*, was written in the fall of 1843, after Dickens spent the summer teaching in a Ragged School, charity schools that provided basic instruction to poor children. Barely clothed, hungry, and already turning to a life of thievery, these children served as the basis for the two children in *A Christmas Carol*, Ignorance and Want. In October 1843, he began to write *A Christmas Carol* and was finished within six weeks. Only one in ten people in Victorian England could read, but legend states that each person who read his story, went out and read it to many other anxious listeners. Dickens was so sure of the story's potential for success that he paid all publication costs himself. The first edition was an elaborate format with gilded edges, colored end papers, and four hand colored plates by John Leech, he priced the manuscript at five shillings to make it acceptable to a wide audience. Six thousand copies of the first edition were sold on the day of publication.

A Christmas Carol is probably one of his most beloved classics, and ever since that first publication, the story has been adapted for public performances, transformed into theatrical stagings, in which Dickens himself would participate, to the modern cinema. After the novella's publishing in 1843, Dickens authorized a theatrical production that opened in London on February 5, 1844, and later at the Park Theatre in New York City. Dickens adapted his story into a script for performance, and gave more than 120 public dramatic readings of it. He altered his reading style to suit the demeanor of his audience. His original prompt book contains a significant number of handwritten words and phrases in the margins, to remind him of the tone he should take on when reading a particular passage. His dramatic readings of his abridged version of *A Christmas Carol* "gave to every character a different voice, a different style, a different face" and a "happy blending of the narrative and dramatic style." In a letter to a friend in 1858, Dickens wrote "I never beheld such a rapturous audience. And they- and the stage together: which I never can resist- made me do such a vast number of new things in the *Carol*, that Arthur and our men stood in amazement at the Wing, and roared and stamped as if it were an entirely new book, topping all the others. You must come to some good place and hear the *Carol*. I think you will hardly know it again."

Scrooge's trials and subsequent redemption certainly have religious undertones, but within the context of late Victorian society, adapters chose primarily to emphasize the Biblical references relating to the Cratchit family.

The Cratchits embodied the idea of the Holy Family and Scrooge a nineteenth-century worldly wise-man making his pilgrimage to the humble house of the 'poor-man's child.' The Cratchit Christmas dinner was the highpoint of late Victorian theatrical productions, while in print the image of Bob Cratchit and Tiny Tim became an iconic image of Christmastime.

By the 1920's, Dickens' story had gained wide popularity in the United States, and during the years of the Great Depression, radio broadcasts of *A Christmas Carol* offered glimmers of hope to a weary American public. The 1938 big budget MGM production incorporated more romance than in the original text, and glosses over the harsher social critique of responsibility of industrialized societies needing to protect those less fortunate. The 1950s seemed to engage in the darker themes in *A Christmas Carol*, with a Freudian emphasis on issues of repression and internal conflict within the

STUDY GUIDE: *A Christmas Carol: A Ghost Story of Christmas*

protagonist. Post-war adaptations approach Scrooge as a psychologically complex character, with details of his troubled childhood and abandoned youth that shaped him into the hardened man at the beginning of the Christmas story.

Charles Dickens wrote a total of 34 books and is considered one of the finest writers of the Victorian Era. As a political writer and a reformer, the experiences of his own life led him to recognize the serious need for social reforms to provide more comprehensive care for the poor, particularly for children. During his first U.S. tour in 1842, Dickens became one of the first modern celebrities, who advocated for social reforms and an end to slavery. He was writing the book *The Mystery of Edwin Drood* when he died of a cerebral hemorrhage in his country home in Kent, England on June 9, 1870 at the age of 58. He is buried in London at Westminster Abbey in the Poet's Corner.



Dickens Quotables

“He was a sympathizer to the poor, the suffering, and the oppressed; and by his death, one of England’s greatest writers is lost to the world.”—Inscription on Dickens tombstone

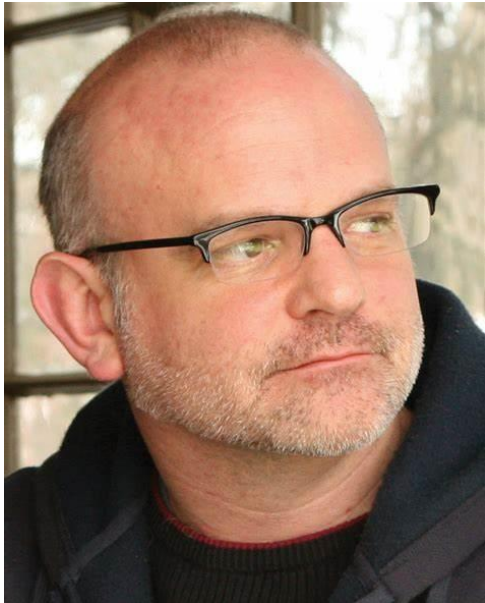
“On Thursday night, I went to the Ragged School; and an awful sight it is...I have very seldom seen, in all the strange and dreadful things I have seen in London and elsewhere, anything so shocking as the dire neglect of soul and body exhibited in these children...(.) in the prodigious misery and ignorance of the swarming masses of mankind in England, the seeds of its certain ruin are sown. I never saw that Truth so staring out in hopeless characters as it does from the wall of this place.” - Dickens from a letter to Miss Burndett Coult, Sept. 16, 1843

“My purpose was, in a whimsical kind of masque which the good-humour of the season justified, to awaken some loving and forbearing thoughts, never out of season in a Christian land.”—Charles Dickens, 1852, Preface to a collection of his *Christmas Stories*

“I have endeavored in this Ghostly little book, to raise the Ghost of an Idea, which shall not put my readers out of humour with themselves, with each other, with the season, or with me. May it haunt their houses pleasantly, and no one wish to lay it!” - Charles Dickens, *A Christmas Carol*, December 1843

“I am played out. All I can do now is bring out my old puppets...But, if (Dickens) lives to be ninety, (he) will still be creating new characters. In his art that man is marvelous.” - William Makepeace Thackeray (1811-1863)

Michael Wilson: The Playwright



“A director is the sum total of all his experiences in the theatre. Talent is a mystery, but the craft, discipline and essential interest must be cultivated and passed down. Building a joyous esprit de corps among one’s team has been the basis of how I built ensembles for plays ever since.”

“Like most directors, I want to show a variety of work. I’ve done Shakespeare, Chekhov, and O’Neill, as well as new work. Some people have defined my body of work as being dominated by female characters...I am drawn to plays that deal with family situations. In the plays I work on I want there to be a real moment of catharsis. I am always looking to let the audience have some kind of emotional connection.”

– Michael Wilson

This adaptation of the Christmas classic was written by Michael Wilson (1964-), who led The Hartford Stage as Artistic Director from 1998 until 2011. His adaptation has been performed for almost a million people over the years and has become a seasonal tradition at theatres all over the United States, including the Washington D.C.’s historic Ford’s Theatre. Wilson originally wrote this adaptation for Houston’s Alley Theatre, now in production for its 28th year. While Artistic Director of The Hartford Stage, his version became their signature holiday show and is returning this year for its 22nd Season. He directed over twenty productions for The Hartford Stage as well as fourteen plays by Tennessee Williams as part of the Hartford Stage’s nine-year Tennessee Williams Marathon.

After his career at Hartford Stage, Wilson has become an accomplished freelance director on stage and screen. He made his screen directorial debut with the 2014 Lifetime/Ostar television film adaptation of Horton Foote’s *The Trip to Bountiful*, which was nominated for two 2014 Emmy Awards and six 2015 NAACP/Image Awards—including Outstanding Television Movie – as well as a DGA Award for Outstanding Direction of a Movie or Mini-Series for Television. On Broadway, Wilson directed the 2013 Tony Award-winning revival of *The Trip to Bountiful* starring Cicely Tyson, Cuba Gooding Jr, Vanessa Williams, and Condola Rashad. Other Broadway productions include the 2012 Tony nominated revival of *Gore Vidal’s The Best Man* (starring James Earl Jones, Angela Lansbury, Candice Bergen, John Larroquette, Eric McCormack, John Stamos, Kristin Davis, and Michael McKean); the Tony nominated Best Plays *Dividing the Estate* (starring Elizabeth Ashley and Gerald McRaney); and *Enchanted April* (starring Jayne Atkinson and Molly Ringwald).

About the Play

Synopsis:

New Stage presents *A Christmas Carol: A Ghost Story of Christmas*, a family-friendly adaptation of Charles Dickens' classic story. A solitary ghost appears and plays his violin, conjuring a swirling, dancing chorus of ghostly apparitions, who haunt Ebenezer Scrooge on Christmas Eve. Scrooge awakens from a nightmare by his housekeeper, Mrs. Dilber, who reminds him of the death of his former partner, Jacob Marley, seven years ago. Scrooge proceeds to his counting house, where his dutiful employee, Bob Cratchit, quietly endures the bitterness and tyrannical rants of the miserly Scrooge, concerning the celebration of Christmas, and the condition of the poor and needy. Scrooge rejects an offer by his nephew Fred inviting Scrooge to dine with him and his wife on Christmas Day. After collecting payment from his three debtors: Mrs. Pigeon, Bert, and Mr. Marvel, Scrooge retires to his home, yet he continues to be haunted by images from his past and the death of his former business partner. Marley, as well as other ghostly apparitions, reveal to Scrooge that they are doomed to wander the earth for eternity due to their lack of compassion for others in their lifetime and inform him of his own impending doom and wretched fate. Marley warns Scrooge that he will be visited by three Spirits on Christmas Eve and who are Scrooge's only hope of redemption. In this version, Scrooge's debtors transform into the Ghosts of Christmas Past, Present, and Future. Lovingly faithful to Dickens's beautiful prose, this masterfully crafted adaptation includes energetic dancing and beautiful music from some of our most beloved Christmas carols, while instilling a powerful message about hope, redemption, and the spirit of the holiday season.

Setting:

The streets of London, England: yet Scrooge also travels to other locations throughout England during Scrooge's mystical journeys with the Christmas Ghosts.

Time Period:

The novel is set in the middle of the 19th century, commonly known as the Victorian Era, during the reign of Queen Victoria (1837-1901). New technological advances, such as the steam engine, brought tremendous changes during the Industrial Revolution, in industry, global commerce, and transportation. These changes benefited a small portion of the middle and upper classes, yet tremendous hardships faced the working classes who lacked representation in government and the social reforms to aid their suffering.

A Guide to the Characters in Michael Wilson's *A Christmas Carol*

Ebenezer Scrooge, a miserly businessman consumed with wealth and personal gain

The Present:

Mrs. Pigeon, Doll Vendor/Ghost of Christmas Past

Bert, Cider Vendor/Ghost of Christmas Present

Mr. Marvel, Watchworks Vendor/Ghost of Christmas Future

Mrs. Dilber, Scrooge's housekeeper

First Solicitor, seeking charity for the poor of London

Second Solicitor, seeking charity for the poor of London

Bob Cratchit, Scrooge's clerk

Mrs. Cratchit

Cratchit Family: Belinda, Martha, Peter, and Tiny Tim

Fred, Scrooge's nephew

Fred's family: his wife, his sister-in-law, and the children

Mr. Topper, a guest at Fred's party

Turkey Boy and Street Urchins

Jacob Marley, Scrooge's dead business partner

Ghostly Apparition chorus



Turner Crumbley as Scrooge
Mandy Kate Myers as Ghost of Christmas Past
Joe Frost as Ghost of Christmas Present, 2019

From the Past:

Versions of Scrooge from the past: Boy Scrooge, Teen Scrooge, and Young Scrooge

Fan, Scrooge's sister

Belle, Scrooge's former fiancé

Mr. Fezziwig, Scrooge's first employer

The Fezziwig Family: Mrs. Fezziwig, and the daughters, Wendy and Nichola

Dick Wilkins, an apprentice at Fezziwig's

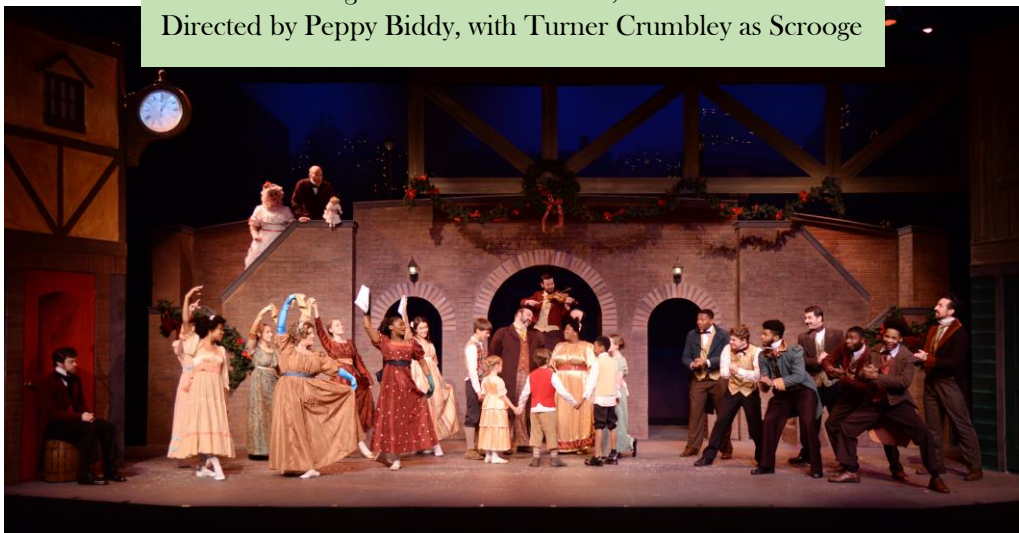
History of *A Christmas Carol* at New Stage Theatre

This year's production of *A Christmas Carol* will be our 25th season to produce this holiday favorite. New Stage first produced *A Christmas Carol* in 1984; the version was adapted by Peter DeLaurier and directed by John R. Briggs. Over the years, New Stage Theatre has presented four different adaptations of the classic tale. Former Artistic Director, Ivan Rider's adaptation has been produced the most with 18 productions, as well as adaptations by Peter DeLaurier (twice), John Jakes (once), and Richard Hellesen (twice). Last year, New Stage premiered Michael Wilson's adaptation and has revived the production for our 54th Season.

The character of Scrooge has been played by only a few New Stage actors: Bill Hill, Terry Sneed, Bill Ford Campbell, Jay Unger, and David Spencer. The show has been directed by thirteen different directors, including our current Artistic Director, Francine Reynolds, actor Chris Roebuck, and our Scrooge, Turner Crumbley. Our director, William "Peppy" Biddy, will be the 14th director of *A Christmas Carol*. His directing work includes New Stage's most recent production, *Agatha Christie's Murder on the Orient Express*, as well as *Sister Act*, *Ain't Nothin' but the Blues*, and Eudora Welty's *Robber Bridegroom*.



Cast of New Stage's *A Christmas Carol*, 2018
Directed by Peppy Biddy, with Turner Crumbley as Scrooge



NEW STAGE THEATRE EDUCATION
STUDY GUIDE: *A Christmas Carol: A Ghost Story of Christmas*

Pictures from previous New Stage Theatre productions of *A Christmas Carol*

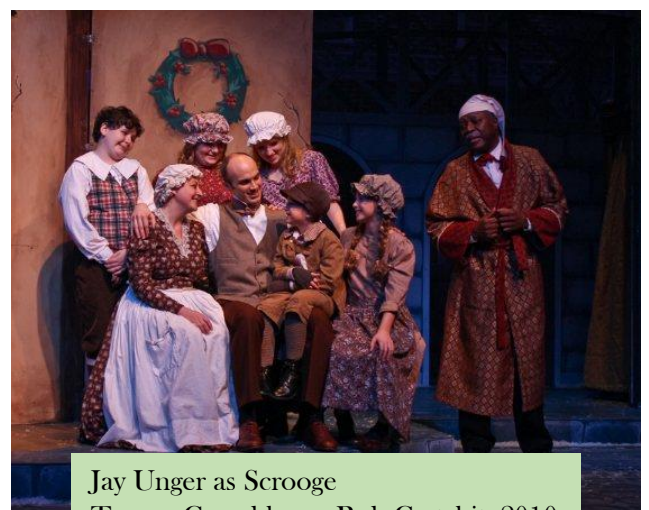


Above: Bill Hill as Scrooge, Cliff Coats as Ghost of Christmas Present, 1987

At top right: David Spencer as Scrooge, 2015

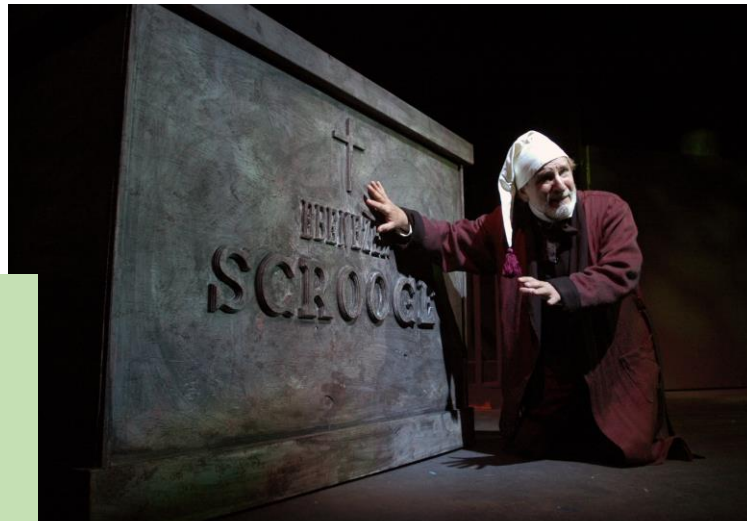
At right: David Spencer as Scrooge, 2013

Below: Jay Unger as Scrooge, 2004



Jay Unger as Scrooge
Turner Crumbley as Bob Cratchit, 2010

STUDY GUIDE: *A Christmas Carol: A Ghost Story of Christmas*



Above: Jay Unger as Scrooge, 2010

Above at right: Jay Unger as Scrooge, 2004

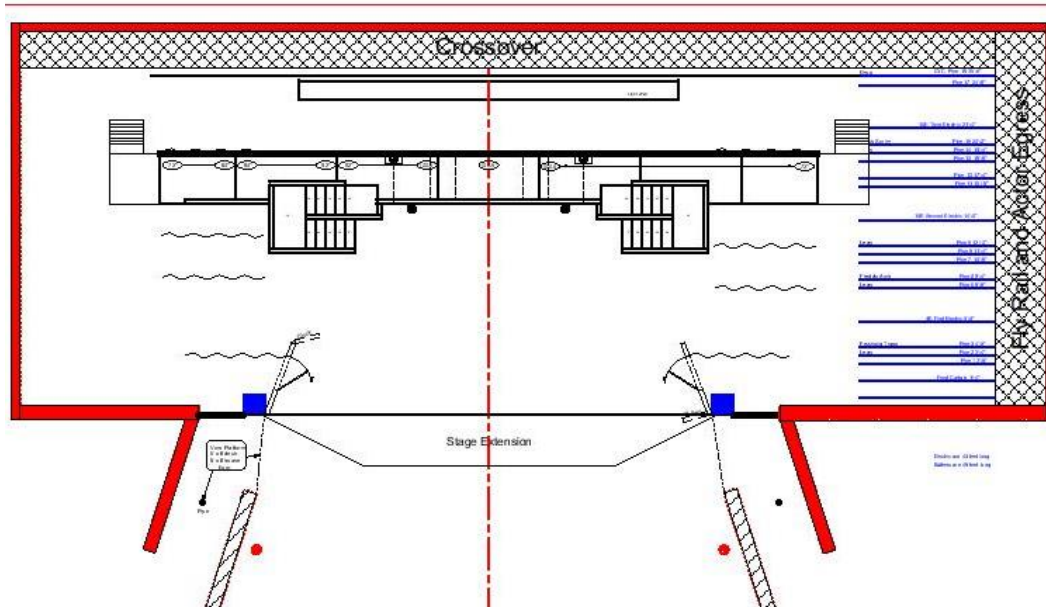
At Right and Below: Bill Campbell as Scrooge, 2006



NEW STAGE THEATRE EDUCATION

STUDY GUIDE: *A Christmas Carol: A Ghost Story of Christmas*

Scenic Design Elements



Scenic Design by Chris Rich

Above: Scenic Ground Plan, showing the Bridge

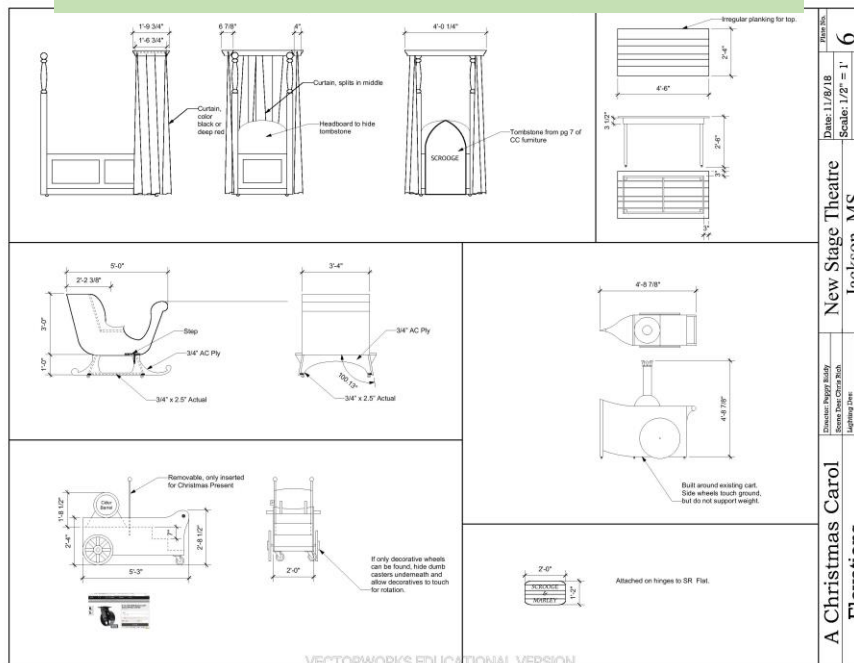
Designs shown below:

Scrooge's bed

Ghost of Christmas Past's Sleigh

Bert's Cider Cart/Christmas Present's Carriage

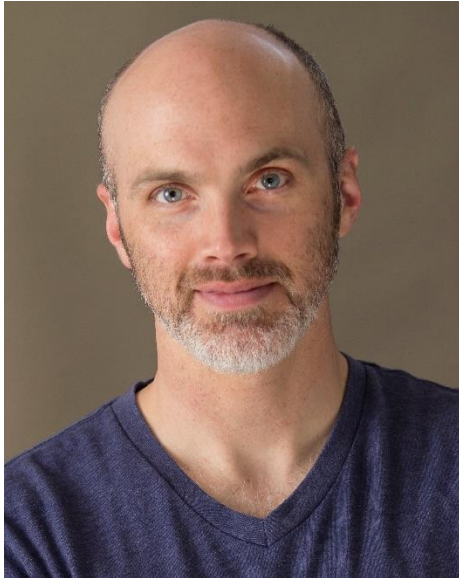
Marvel's Steam Cart



STUDY GUIDE: *A Christmas Carol: A Ghost Story of Christmas*

Thoughts on *A Christmas Carol*. In Prose. Being a Non-Ghost-Written Examination on the Play and its Attributes.

by Turner Crumbley



On the character of Scrooge:

One of the things that I've always enjoyed about Scrooge is that he is, in the best adaptations of Dickens's book, a bit of a rascal. He's witty, hard-edged, stubborn, with a wicked sense of humor. Efficient to the point of being cruel. He always strives to win his argument, and only concedes defeat when he absolutely must. He's tough on people and he's always getting right down to business.

So it's appropriate that, when he finally sees the error of his ways and chooses to begin doing good deeds, the way he *behaves* toward people doesn't fundamentally change. Okay, he's more jovial. But he still gets down to business, still plays practical jokes on people, still uses wordplay to catch people off-guard. (For a second there, he even pranks Cratchit, leading the poor guy to believe he's about to be fired on Christmas Day.) Only now it's the business of charitable giving for which he's doing all those things.

Who's to say what Dickens's inspirations were for the character? But Scrooge's journey very much reminds me of St. Paul's story in the New Testament of the Bible. Paul was reportedly an incredibly tough, scary person to deal with before his dramatic conversion to Christianity. And I get the feeling that his people skills -or maybe a lack thereof- didn't change much after he converted. He simply stopped behaving like an incredibly tough, devoted Pharisee and started behaving like an incredibly tough, devoted Christian.

That, to me, is Ebenezer Scrooge. He gives himself to the Christmas Spirit- this fundamentally Christian spirit- so immediately, so totally that it stuns everyone. But it's not a massive change of character. He simply stops focusing so hard on taking from people and starts focusing so hard on giving to people.

On Michael Wilson's adaptation:

I've always liked how Wilson's script uniquely and specifically emphasizes the supernatural aspects of *A Christmas Carol*. Dickens makes it very clear that this is "A Ghost Story of Christmas." And it is, at times, both fantastic and chilling. But it's never just fantastic for fantasy's sake. All of the great metaphysical imagery and ghostly happenings are used to highlight Dickens's themes in unique ways. They're very well incorporated into the action of the play.

I've also been impressed by the ways in which Wilson allows Scrooge to cope with the tragic realizations throughout this version. Who in his right mind shouldn't want a "potent beverage" after re-living much of the trauma from his past?

It doesn't hurt that Mr. Wilson's version can be really funny, too.

STUDY GUIDE: *A Christmas Carol: A Ghost Story of Christmas*On playing the role of Scrooge (after appearing in and directing):

I'm always excited to have another try at telling this story, even if my job requires different skills this time around.

I'd be lying if I said I don't enjoy playing a role of this size. But the size of the role matters less to me than the quality of the content. It's an offbeat role in many ways, which is fun. He's the hero of the story, but it's hard to find a less traditional hero. Especially in a Christmas story.

Also, there will come a night in which at least one audience member that has never encountered any version of the story will show up to experience this production. And the opportunity to embody someone's first impression of such an iconic character in this particular tale is a great privilege.

When Dickens first published *A Christmas Carol*, it was an instant phenomenon. It has remained in print for -I don't know- probably a hundred and seventy-five years. Who only knows how many different adaptations have been made from it? That's a powerful story, and the chance to take part in the telling of it is a big part of the reason I'm so attached to this business.



Turner Crumbley as Scrooge, Ethan Hartfield as Tiny Tim, 2019

STUDY GUIDE: *A Christmas Carol: A Ghost Story of Christmas*Vocabulary of *A Christmas Carol*

These terms are listed in the order in which they appear in the play, with the line from the script written below to provide context.



Screw: (noun) British slang for 1) a mean, old worn-out horse; or 2) an employer from whom you can obtain no more money

Mrs. Dilber: *Rise and shine, Mr. Scrooge, sir. Wicked old **screw**.*

Barley: (noun) a harvest grain used as food, or in the making of beer, ale, or whiskey

Mrs. Dilber: *I brought you your- **barley**, sir.*

Counting house: (noun) British, a business or place for accounting

Scrooge: *Yes. I remember thinking that night as I locked up the **counting house**, that "Scrooge and Marley's" would never open its doors again with both partners living.*

Sole: (adjective) being the only one; only

Assign: (noun) a person to whom a property or interest of another is or may be transferred

Scrooge: *I witnessed his death- for the record- and as his **sole assign**, I inherited his half of the business.*

Productivity: (noun) the quality, state, or fact of being able to generate, create, or bring forth goods and services

Scrooge: *Mr. Cratchit, I am deeply moved by your desire to increase our **productivity**, but your methods are too costly.*

Sufficient: (adjective) adequate for a purpose, enough

Scrooge: *I have furnished you with a candle to see by. Keep warm with that. If it is not **sufficient**, I am sure there are warmer places to work- elsewhere.*

Dismal: (adjective) causing gloom or dejection, dreary, cheerless

Morose: (adjective) gloomily or sullenly ill-humored

Fred: *Come, then, what right have you to be **dismal**? What reason have you to be **morose**?*

Humbug: (noun) something intended to deceive, or devoid of meaning, nonsense

STUDY GUIDE: *A Christmas Carol: A Ghost Story of Christmas*

Scrooge: *Bah, **Humbug!***

Christmas pudding: (noun) popular English dessert

Scrooge: *If I could work my will, every idiot who goes about with a “Merry Christmas” on his lips should be boiled with his own **pudding**, and buried with a stake of holly through his heart.*

Peter: *Help me stir the **pudding!***

Situation/Position: (noun) a post of employment, a job

Apprentice: (noun) a person who works for another in order to learn a particular job or trade

Scrooge: *Let me hear another sound from you, and you’ll keep Christmas by losing your **situation!***

Fan: *And Father’s found you a **position**. In the city. You start right after the new year.*

Scrooge: *I was **apprenticed** here!*

Cratchit: *I shouldn’t be at all surprised if he got Peter a better **situation!***

Entreat: (verb) to ask a person earnestly; beseech; implore; beg

Fred: *I have tried to **entreat** you in homage of Christmas itself, and I’ll keep my Christmas humor to the last.*

Liberality: (noun) a quality or condition of being generous in giving, bounty

Solicitor: *We have no doubt his **liberality** is well represented by his surviving partner*

Provision: (noun) the providing or supplying of something, especially food or necessities

Destitute: (noun) those who are deprived or lacking in food, clothing, and shelter

Solicitor: *At this festive season of the year, Mr. Scrooge, it is more than usually desirable that we should make some slight **provision** for the poor and **destitute**, who suffer greatly at the present time.*

Workhouses: (noun) a place where the poor were forced to work in return for food and shelter

Scrooge: *And the **workhouses**? Are they still in operation?*

Endeavoring: (verb) to exert oneself to do or effect something; make an effort; strive

Solicitor: *Under the impression that they scarcely furnish Christian cheer of mind or body to the multitude, a few of us are **endeavoring** to raise a fund, to buy the Poor some meat and drink.*

Keenly: (adjective) characterized by strength or distinctness of perception; extremely sensitive or responsive

STUDY GUIDE: *A Christmas Carol: A Ghost Story of Christmas*

Solicitor: *We choose this time, because it is a time, above all others, when Want is **keenly** felt, and Abundance rejoices.*

Belle: *Your own feelings tell you that you are not what you were. I am. How often, how **keenly** I have thought of this I will not say.*

Surplus: (noun) an amount or quantity greater than what is needed or used

Population: (noun) the number of inhabitants belonging to a specific social, cultural, or socio-economic, ethnic, or racial subgroup

Scrooge: *If they would rather die, they had better to do it, and decrease the **surplus population**.*

Generosity: (noun) readiness or freedom in giving

Scrooge: *Jacob was not well-known for his- **generosity**- no, indeed.*

Bedlam: (noun) an insane asylum or madhouse

Scrooge: *Lunatic...Fifteen shillings a week, a wife and a family, squawking about a "Merry Christmas." I'll retire to **Bedlam**.*

Idler: (noun) a person who passes the time in a lazy or unproductive way

Scrooge: *Move out of my way, **idler**!*

Relics: (noun) an object having interest by reason of its age or association with the past

Doll Vendor: *They are fragile. **Relics** from the past, often are.*

Tenfold: (adjective) ten times as great or as much

Doll Vendor: *I cannot go against the law. But I know that any one of these dolls is worth **tenfold** what I owe you.*

Appraised: (verb) to estimate the value, or determine the worth of.

Scrooge: *Very well. I'll have its value **appraised**.*

Gulliver/Lilliputians: (proper names) From Johnathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* (1726), a book that describes an island of people who are only six inches tall

Fruit and Cinder Vendor: *Who might you be? You're **Gulliver**, with one of the **Lilliputians** in your captivity.*

Capons: (noun) a food delicacy of a male bird or chicken, distinctly prepared and fattened for feasts

Fruit and Cider Vendor: *Nuts! Candies, fruits, and **capons** have I for you...*

Varmints: (noun) 1) an objectionable or undesirable animal; 2) a despicable person

Scrooge: *Wrap it up then. Have one of these **varmint**s drop it off tomorrow.*

NEW STAGE THEATRE EDUCATION
STUDY GUIDE: *A Christmas Carol: A Ghost Story of Christmas*

Menace: (noun) something that causes evil, harm, or injury; a threat

Scrooge: *Infernal contraption- it's a **menace** to the City.*

Divulge: (verb) to disclose or reveal something that is previously unknown

Watchworks Vendor: *Money, Sir? Mere money is nothing compared to what I'm about to **divulge** to you, sir!*

Skeptical: (adjective) having an attitude of doubt

Watchworks Vendor: *And now, thanks to me, Mr. Marvel, it's about to change the way we tell time. You look **skeptical**, sir.*

Hearse: (noun) a vehicle used to carry the dead in a coffin, first used around 1650, adapted from the word French word *hearse*, meaning harrow, or spiked plow, due to the candles surrounding the wooden or metal framed cart

Undertaker: *Won't be long now, Guvnor. I've already ordered the **hearse**.*

Apparition: (noun) a supernatural appearance of a person or thing; a phantom

Scrooge: *Mercy! Dreadful **apparition**, why do you trouble me?*

Fettered: (adjective) from the word fetter, or the chains or shackles on the feet; anything that confines or restrains

Scrooge: *You are **fettered**- tell me why?*

Ponderous: (adjective) of great weight, massive

Marley's Ghost: *Or would you know the weight and length of the strong coil you bear yourself? It was full and heavy and as long as this, seven Christmas Eves ago. You have labored on it since. It is a **ponderous** chain!*

Roved: (verb- past tense) to have wandered without definite destination

Marley's Ghost: *I cannot rest, I cannot stay, I cannot linger anywhere. Mark me! In life my spirit never **roved** beyond the narrow limits of our counting house, and weary journeys lie before me!*

Incessant: (adjective) continuing without interruption, ceaseless, unending

Remorse: (noun) deep or painful regret for wrongdoing

Marley's Ghost: *No rest, no peace, **incessant** torture of **remorse**.*

Welfare: (noun) the good fortune, health, happiness, prosperity of a person or group

Forbearance: (noun) the act of refraining from something; patient endurance, self-control

Benevolence: (noun) the desire to do good to others, goodwill, charitableness

STUDY GUIDE: *A Christmas Carol: A Ghost Story of Christmas*

Marley's Ghost: *The common **welfare** was my business; charity, mercy, **forbearance**, and **benevolence** were, all, my business.*

Spirit of Christmas Past: ***Forebear**, until you know who that surplus is and where it is.*

Reclamation: (noun) 1) the reclaiming of desert or marshy areas for cultivation; 2) the process of deriving useful materials from waste

Spirit of Christmas Past: *Your **reclamation** then. Rise!*

Solitary: (adjective) alone; without companions; unattended

Spirit of Christmas Past: *The school is not quite deserted. A **solitary** child, neglected by his family and friends, is left there still.*

Swain: (noun) a male lover, or admirer; a country gallant

Mrs. Fezziwig: *So do I, but my young **swain** could dance. I seem to have misplaced him!*

Mortal: (adjective) belonging to this world; related to human beings as subject to death

Spirit of Christmas Past: *He has spent but a few pounds of your **mortal** money.*

Render: (verb) 1) to cause to be or become; to make 2) to furnish; provide

Burdensome: (adjective) 1) oppressively heavy 2) distressing; troublesome

Toil: (noun) a hard and continuous work; exhausting labor or effort

Scrooge: *He has the power to **render** us happy or unhappy. To make our service light or **burdensome**, a pleasure or a **toil**. The happiness he gives is quite as great as if it cost a fortune.*

Seamstress: (noun) a woman whose occupation is sewing

Spirit of Christmas Past: (Belle) *A poor struggling **seamstress**. She was on her own in the City.*

Idol: (noun) any person or thing regarded with blind admiration, adoration, or devotion

Displaced: (adjective) moved or put out of the usual or proper place

Belle: *Another **idol** has **displaced** me.*

Profess: (verb) to declare openly; announce or affirm

Condemn: (verb) to express unfavorable, or strong disapproval of

Severity: (noun) harshness, sternness, or rigor

Pursuit: (noun) an effort to secure or attain; quest

Young Scrooge: *There is nothing on which people are so hard as poverty, and yet there is nothing they **profess** to **condemn** with such **severity** as the **pursuit** of wealth!*

STUDY GUIDE: *A Christmas Carol: A Ghost Story of Christmas*

Engross: (verb) to occupy completely, as the mind or attention; absorb

Belle: *I have seen your nobler aspirations fall off one by one, under the master-passion, Gain, engrosses you. Have I not?*

Unprofitable: (adjective) 1) being without profit, 2) pointless or futile

Belle: *You may have some pain in this, the memory of what has passed between us half makes us hope you will, but after a brief time, you will dismiss the recollection of it gladly, as an **unprofitable** dream, from which it happened well that you awoke.*

Fortified: (verb) to protect or strengthen against attack

Scrooge: *Alright, Jacob Marley, the troops be fortified.*



Elixir: (noun) an alchemic preparation believed to be capable of prolonging life

Spirit of Christmas Present: *It is the **elixir** of life! Shall you drink from its cup?*

Rank: (noun) a number of persons forming a separate class in a social hierarchy

Spirit of Christmas Present: *Colonels, generals, bankers, men of **rank**, but also, men of **rank** and file, officers, clerks, grocers, and so on, and so on.*

Chalice: (noun) a drinking cup, or goblet

Spirit of Christmas Present: *They drink from this **chalice** in celebration of their brief but wondrous life on this earth.*

Brevity: (noun) shortness of time and duration; briefness

Spirit of Christmas Present: *You cannot have a wondrous- and what you call- profitable life if you do not treasure its **brevity**.*

Tarry: (verb) to delay or be tardy; to linger or loiter

Mrs. Cratchit: *Belinda, my dear, please don't **tarry**- run to the baker's my dear!*

Paltry: (adjective) ridiculous or insultingly small

Scrooge: *You sprinkle your drink over these gentlemen and bring laughter to their hearts, and out of this **paltry** goose, I imagine you make a feast!*

Gullible: (adjective) easily deceived or cheated

Mrs. Cratchit: *We had you going, didn't we Robert? Really, you are the **gullible** sort!*

Odious: (adjective) deserving or causing hatred; hateful; detestable

STUDY GUIDE: *A Christmas Carol: A Ghost Story of Christmas*

Mrs. Cratchit: *It should be Christmas Day, I am sure, on which one drinks the health of such an **odious**, stingy, hard, unfeeling man as Mr. Scrooge.*

Confounded: (adjective) 1) used euphemistically to damn, or curse 2) causing sudden bewilderment

Watchworks Vendor: *Look at the rust, there! Hear it squeak? Nothing but a **confounded** piece of junk!*

Penury: (adjective) scarcity; inadequacy, insufficiency

Spirit of Christmas Present: *Because even in their life of **penury**, they know me, and so receive my blessing!*

Cantankerous: (adjective) disagreeable to deal with; contentious; peevish

Fred: *In all earnest, I speak of my Uncle, not merely because he's a **cantankerous**, funny old man.*

Adamant: (adjective) utterly unyielding in opinion or attitude, in spite of all appeals or urgings

Bookish: (adjective) given or devoted to reading or study

Bric-a-Brac: (noun) miscellaneous small articles collected for decorative or sentimental interest

Daft: (adjective) senseless, stupid, or foolish

Fred: *I hate my love with an A because she is **Adamant**.*

Topper: *I hate my love with B because she is **Bookish**...and I treated her with **Bric-a-Brac**.*

Fred's Wife: *Because he's **Daft**!*

Trivial: (adjective) of very little importance or value; insignificant

Scrooge: *I know those men! Why do we attend their conversation? Is it not **trivial**?*

Gumption: (adjective) aggressive resourcefulness; courage; shrewdness

Old Joe: *Mrs. D you are a wonder. I'm going to give you seven shillings - with an extra shilling for pure **gumption**!*

Sponge: (verb) to wipe out or efface with or as with a sponge

Scrooge: *Spirit, tell me I may **sponge** away the writing on the gravestone!*

Munificence: (noun) showing unusual generosity

Solicitor: *I hardly know what to say to such **munificence***

Temerity: (noun) reckless boldness; rashness

Scrooge: *Why are you not at your job this morning! Your **temerity** astounds me!*

STUDY GUIDE: *A Christmas Carol: A Ghost Story of Christmas*

Christmas pudding: Also known as plum pudding, originated in England and was traditionally made five weeks before Christmas, before Advent. Each family member in the household gave the pudding a stir and made a wish. The rich and heavy pudding is boiled or steamed, made of heavy mixture of fresh or dried fruit, nuts, and suet, a raw beef or mutton fat. The pudding is very dark, and is saturated with brandy, dark beer, or other alcohols. Many households stirred silver coins (for wealth), tiny wishbones (for good luck), a silver

thimble (for thrift), a ring (for marriage), or an anchor (for safe harbor) into the mixture, and when served, whoever got the lucky serving, would be able to keep the charm. The pudding is left to ferment longer, and then finally steamed for a few more hours on the day it is served and presented ceremoniously, with either a holly spray or doused with brandy and set on fire.

Serial novel: In literature, a serial is a printing format by which a single larger work, often a work of narrative fiction, is published in smaller, sequential installments. The installments are also known as numbers, parts or fascicles, and may be released either as separate publications or within sequential issues of a periodical publication, such as a magazine or newspaper. Serialized fiction surged in popularity during Britain's Victorian era, due to a combination of the rise of literacy, technological advances in printing, and improved economics of distribution. Most Victorian novels first appeared as installments in monthly or weekly periodicals. The success of Charles Dickens's *The Pickwick Papers*, first published in 1836, is widely considered to have established the viability and appeal of the serialized format within periodical literature. Writers received constant feedback for their work due to a serial's popularity when published, and many left the endings open, to tantalize or intrigue their audience into subscribing to their next installment. Other famous writers who wrote serial literature for popular magazines were Wilkie Collins, inventor of the detective novel with *The Moonstone* and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, who created the Sherlock Holmes stories originally for serialization in *The Strand* magazine.

Umbrella: also called a brolly or gamp (UK slang). The word umbrella evolved from the Latin umbel is a flat topped rounded flower or umbra, meaning shaded or shadow. In Britain, umbrellas were sometimes referred to as "gamps" after the character Mrs. Gamp in the Charles Dickens novel *Martin Chuzzlewit*. Her character was well known for carrying an umbrella. Carrying an umbrella was considered a fashionable accessory for both men and women by the late 18th century. The first lightweight folding umbrella in Europe was introduced in Paris in 1710, opening and closing in the same way as modern umbrellas and weighed less than one kilogram. The use of the umbrella was uncommon in England until the mid-18th century, but gained enough popularity to be advertised in current newspapers as early as the mid 1770's.

Queen Victoria and the Victorian Era



The Victorian Era (1837-1901) is defined by the reign of Queen Victoria, who ruled during the Industrialization of England, and encouraged tremendous change and expansive growth in England's domestic and foreign power. This period of England's history is delineated by stark contrasts: the beauty and richness of the aristocracy versus the poverty and depression of the poor working class. Industry shifted the balance of power from the aristocracy, whose position and wealth was based on land, to new industrial leaders. The explosion of the Industrial Revolution accelerated the migration of the population from the country to urban centers and by 1900, 80% of the population lived in cities. The result was a cramped and ill-managed civil system, where overcrowded cities led to horrifying slums and conditions of the poor, and in geographic zones stratified by social status. The poorest lived in the inner city, with the more fortunate living further away from the city core.

Alexandrina Victoria was born on May 24, 1819. Her father died when she was eight months old and her mother was overly protective. Her mother made Victoria sleep in the same bedroom as her. When she became queen at the age of 18, on June 20, 1837, she finally had a room to herself.

On February 10, 1840, Queen Victoria married her distant cousin Prince Albert of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha in the Chapel Royal at St. James Place. The Queen and Prince Albert became models of the middle class in domestic and public life. The aristocracy discovered that Free Trade was enriching rather than impoverishing their estates. Agriculture, as well as trade and industry, flourished under her reign due to technological advances within her lifetime. In 1851, Prince Albert opened the Great Exhibition in Hyde Park where a gigantic glass greenhouse, the Crystal Palace, was built to display the exhibits of modern industry and science. The passage of the Factory Acts in Parliament, which restricted child labor and limited hours of employment, aided the plight of the working classes. In December of 1861, Albert died from typhoid fever and Victoria withdrew from public life for years. Her own strict standards and morality gained her public's approval and she often tried to privately influence government policy. She died on January 22, 1901 at 82 years old. She was the longest reigning British monarch in history, until the current monarch Elizabeth II surpassed her in 2017.

Pagan Winter Traditions

Yule Log

The Yule Log is a specially selected log burnt on a hearth as a Christmas tradition. Although the folk custom is unclear, the custom derives from Germanic paganism, as the burning fire is an emblem of the returning sun, increasing light and heat. The burnt log was then used to light the yule log for the following year, and kept around the house to ward off a range of misfortunes, including toothaches, mildew, house-fires, hail and even the common cold. It is considered unlucky to light it again after the fire has been started, and ought not to go out until the log is completely burned away. Ghost stories were often told around the fire, similar to the earlier Germanic Yule feast, a tradition of venerating their ancestors during this mid-winter sacrifice. Colorful candles also adorned the Yule log, similar to the Christian tradition of lighting Advent candles to symbolize the light in the darkness and mankind's preparation for the arrival of the Christ child.

Saturnalia



Saturnalia was an ancient Roman festival in honor of the god Saturn, held on the 17th of December and later expanded through the 23rd of December. The holiday was celebrated with a human sacrifice at the Temple of Saturn, and public banquet, followed by gift-giving, continual partying, and a role-reversal of social norms, where masters would invite their slaves to dine at his table. The day was supposed to be a holiday from all forms of work. A gladiator's trials served as a brutal sample of how the demand for human sacrifice to Saturn was expressed. Schools and courts were closed, and after public rituals had concluded, families conducted their own domestic rituals.

The Sigillaria on the 19th of December was designated as a day of gift giving. Because gifts of value would mark social status contrary to the spirit of the season, these were often wax figurines made specifically for the day, or trivial or token gifts inversely measured the high quality of a friendship. Similar to our modern-day greeting cards, these gifts were sometimes accompanied by prose or poems.

The Origin of the Christmas Celebration

Christmas was first promoted as a major holiday in Western Europe by Pope Gregory in 601 AD. The Pope urged Christian missionaries to adapt the many local, pagan traditions of a winter festival around the solstice into a celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ. Pope Gregory and his successors hoped that by integrating local customs into the church rituals, the English and others would be more likely to accept the Christian religion.

The Rediscovery of the Christmas holiday

Following the Protestant Reformation, the Puritans in England sought to eliminate the celebration of Christmas, since it had no Biblical basis. They viewed it as a Catholic invention and denounced the lax morality of drinking and dancing to celebrate the Nativity. Following the English Civil War (1642-1651), the Puritans effectively banned Christmas in 1647 and it remained in effect throughout the Commonwealth and Protectorate of Oliver Cromwell. Christmas became legal again with the restoration of the monarchy in 1660, but celebration remained sparse.



The use of mistletoe and arrangements of evergreen branches and garlands inside the home were based in medieval pagan traditions meant to ward off evil spirits and to express the hope of the coming spring. The Royal Family was responsible for importing the Germanic traditions of Prince Albert to England, including the tradition of a Christmas tree. In 1848, a picture of the Royal Family was printed showing Queen Victoria, Prince Albert, and their children gathered around the Christmas tree at Windsor Castle. The trees at Windsor Castle were decorated with spun-glass ornaments, chocolate wreaths, gilded apples, glazed cherries, tiny wrapped presents, as well as wax candles. The trees were lit only on Christmas morning and New Year's Eve. The trees and other decorations were removed on Twelfth Night (January 6). To do so before or after was considered bad luck.

STUDY GUIDE: *A Christmas Carol: A Ghost Story of Christmas*

Ghost Stories

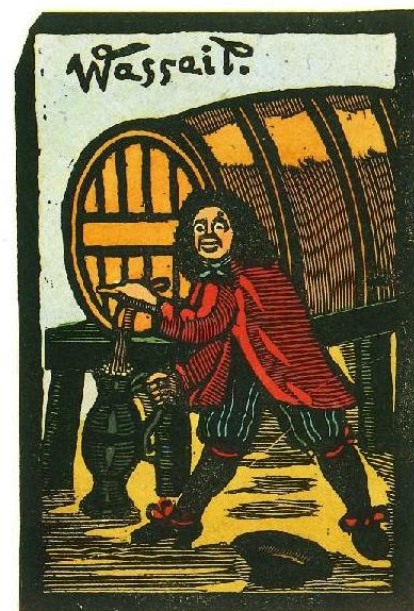


The cold and dark of winter was foreboding to the Victorians. The chilling winds and freezing temperatures were incredibly dangerous for the many impoverished people who lacked proper clothes and shelter. Winter was also frequently accompanied by death. The original text of the preface of *A Christmas Carol* was a “ghost story of Christmas.”

“I have endeavored in this Ghostly little book, to raise the Ghost of an Idea, which shall not put my readers out of humour with themselves, with each other, with the season, or with me. May it haunt their houses pleasantly, and no one wish to lay it.”
- Charles Dickens

The Origin of Caroling or *Wassail*

Caroling in England began in late medieval times, derived from the French word *carole*, meaning dancing accompanied by song. The tradition of singing songs, where the drinking toast was “*waes hal*” or to “your health.” Groups of singers went from home to home, offering songs in return for drinks of spiced ale with cinnamon, nutmeg, ginger, and lemon. The word first appeared in English texts about 1300 and remained a centerpiece of festivity until the mid-sixteenth century. Generally, one group sang while another danced, both telling and reenacting a story well-known to the audience. One of first English caroling books was a book by William B. Sandys, *Christmas Carols Ancient and Modern*, published in 1833. This book, along with the 1871 publication of the *Victorian Collection of Christmas Carols Old and New*, helped contribute to the revival of the musical tradition at Christmastime.



STUDY GUIDE: *A Christmas Carol: A Ghost Story of Christmas*

Dickens's Transformation of Christmas

Along with his many accomplishments, Dickens sparked a “Christmas renaissance” that led directly to our contemporary traditions of exchanging gifts and Christmas cards, including a Christmas bonus to employees, displaying elaborate holiday decorations, and roasting a “prize” turkey for the Christmas feast. Dickens chooses to focus this holiday on the celebration of family and as a time of reflection of the past year. Christmas is celebrated today not only in the Christian tradition, but also as a secular holiday of charitable giving and compassion for those less fortunate. The phrase “Merry Christmas,” coined by Dickens in his classic novel, continues today to be a standard holiday greeting.



Audiences around the world found themselves touched by the public readings of *A Christmas Carol*. In 1857, Dickens read the story in Chicago. One of the audience members, a factory owner named Fairbanks, was so affected by the reading that he decided to “break the custom we have hitherto observed of opening the works on Christmas Day.” Not only did he close the factory for Christmas Day, he gave a turkey to each of his employees.



Ethan Hartfield as Tiny Tim, 2018 and 2019

Victorian Etiquette and Leisure

Victorian leisure expressed social hierarchy and assigned gender roles. Literacy among less educated social circles was limited, so reading aloud was fairly common. Sharing texts orally was traditionally used for religious purposes, as a sermon would expound upon Biblical text. The growing literate Victorian middle classes popularized the idea of reading for pleasure.



New printing technologies made publishing works easier to produce and circulate, allowing educated people to engage in political and theoretical discourse. Serial novels and other print materials became popular among Victorians and were able to reach a wide literary audience. As reading aloud facilitated emotional expression as well as intelligent thought, parlor games enhanced fashionable sociability through elaborately constructed games. Private theatricals, considered a past-time for children in previous generations, became popular amongst Victorian adults, providing amusement and an expression of new social ideas.

Importance of Social Advancement

The concern for family honor and advancing social status constrained individuals to anticipate public opinion of personal actions. Sons who overlooked their fathers' wishes with their careers and couples who married for love instead of social advancement defied convention and took for granted their position and reputation in society. Personal happiness was considered less important than a family's reputation. Children sent off to boarding school was considered less a punishment than an outward display of their family's own wealth and status. Children were obligated to obey their parents and give their lives, particularly for young girls to advantageous marriages, for the betterment of the family unit. Some parents, when confronted with hardships, like Dickens's parents, used their children to either work off debts or released their sons at an early age because they were too poor to support them.

Social Interaction in the Ballroom

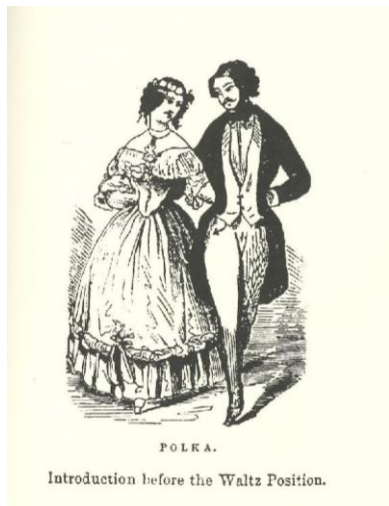
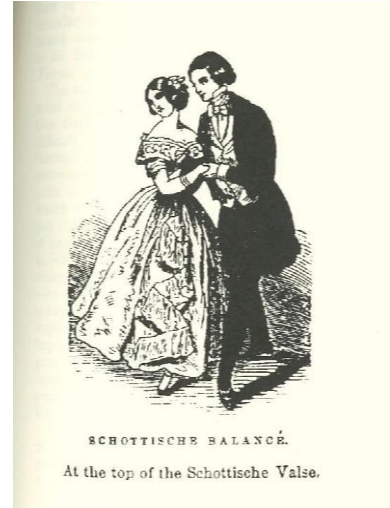
Victorian ballrooms exemplified social convention and properly displayed interactions between the sexes. When a gentleman went alone to a ball, he requested the master of ceremonies to introduce him to the lady guests. A gentleman who is introduced by the master of ceremonies to a lady should never be refused a dance: a refusal would be a breach of a lady's good manners. If a gentleman was politely refused, he would be obligated to not show any outward signs of dissatisfaction, but would be justified in never repeating the request.



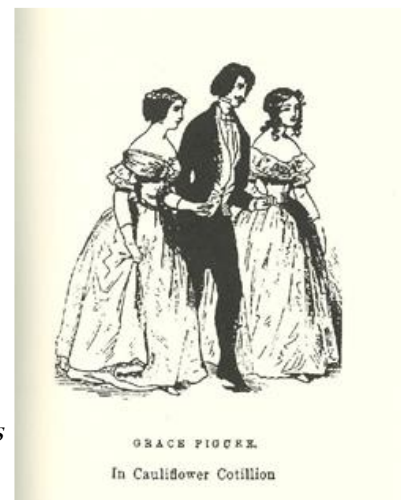
STUDY GUIDE: *A Christmas Carol: A Ghost Story of Christmas*

Ladies were not entitled to the privilege of asking gentlemen to dance. Gentlemen were expected to not let the ladies wait to dance, as a lady should not wait for a partner, and was considered ill-mannered of a gentleman to stand idle, having the appearance of someone too proud or ill-tempered to dance with any but his own favorites. The ballroom was a place for perfect politeness and agreeable association, but lacked favoritism, and outward public displays of affection.

The standard Victorian greeting was for women to bow to all men. Men were only expected to bow if they had been previously introduced, or unless a woman bowed first. In a society firmly rooted in proper introductions for both men and women, ladies could not afford to lose good opinion of the society in which she moved. "Beauty without good manners speedily creates feelings very different from those of love." (18) A gentleman should never whisper to a lady, nor lounge about on chairs while the dance is proceeding. Engagements to dance should not be made until the dance was announced. Married couples were expected not to dance with each other, as it was more generous for a wedded gentleman to dance with other ladies.



One of the more popular dances was the Quadrille. "Even a slight mistake committed by the unskillful in this dance, will not interrupt the progress of the movement." (24) It was customary to bow to each other beginning the Quadrille and the conclusion of the dance. A Quadrille consisted of five sections, with transitions generally walking to a formation-like arrangement, passing through each with a gliding, side step. The lady generally stood on the gentlemen's right side.



Source: *Fashionable Dancer's Casket* by Charles Durang

Victorian Parlor Games



The Victorians loved to play games and the winners of these games would receive prizes. The losers would have to pay a penalty or perform a forfeit, such as having to recite a poem while hopping on one foot. Some examples of Victorian parlor games are listed below. While demonstrating mental skill and agility, it developed qualities like imagination, concentration, and cooperation.

Yes and No

The first player chooses something and commits it to memory. The other players then, one at a time, ask yes or no questions to try to determine what the first player is thinking. When a player thinks they know the answer, they can make a guess on their turn, but should only do so if they are certain they know the answer. When a guess is made, the game ends, even if the guess is incorrect.

Blind Man's Bluff

One of the group is chosen to be the first blind man. A handkerchief or scarf is tied over his eyes, and he is turned around three times. He then tries to catch any other player he can. The other players tease him by pushing him, pulling his clothes, tickling his face with a feather, etc. When he finally catches someone, he has to guess who it is. If he is right, his prisoner becomes the new blind man.

In another version known as French Blind Man's Bluff, the blind man's hands are tied behind his back, and he is only permitted to walk backwards; he captures his prisoner by touching him.

Hunt the Slipper

The players crouch or sit in a circle surrounding one person while a slipper is passed around behind their backs out of the sight of the player in the middle. Then this player must guess where the slipper is in order to get out of the circle. If he or she guesses correctly, then the person who was hiding the slipper hands it over and takes his or her place in the middle.

Lookabout

The first player shows the group a small object. The group then leaves the room while the first player hides it. When the group returns, they search for the item until they find it. When a player finds the object, they sit down. Continue until all the players have found the object.

Opposites

The guests are arranged in a semicircle, each with a chair behind him. One of them moves from person to person, either performing some action or giving some instruction. The person who is instructed must then do the opposite. If told to raise his right leg, he must raise his left; if told to take

STUDY GUIDE: *A Christmas Carol: A Ghost Story of Christmas*

off his hat, he must put it on. One by one, the players drop out, and the one who holds out the longest is the winner.

Charades

Victorians liked to act out historical events or scenes from famous stories in pantomime (act out silently). Also, the common game where a player must pantomime each syllable of a word or group of words which the other players are trying to guess. This game can be played by teams who compete to get the most correct guesses.

Penalties or Forfeits:

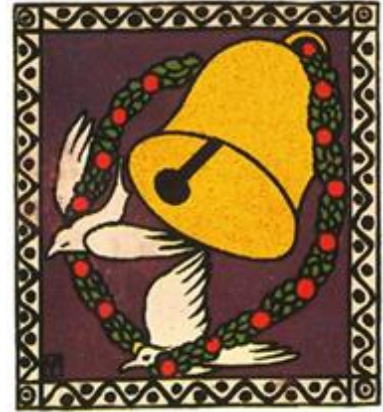
Kiss your own shadow

Call your sweetheart's name up the chimney

Lie down on the floor and rise with your arms folded

Kneel to the wittiest, bow to the prettiest, and kiss the one you love

Source: *Victorian Parlor Games* by Patrick Beaver



Christopher Sfera as Bob Cratchit with Chloe Vizier, Ethan Hartfield, Darby Frost, Kendra Quartermann, and Malaika Quartermann as Mrs. Cratchit, 2019

Timeline of Important Events

1759: Modern canals built in England.

1776: Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations* published, introducing *laissez-faire* doctrine in economics

1785: Watt's steam engine used in industry. Power looms created for large textile factories.

1792: Cotton gin invented, making cotton easier to refine into textiles.

1798: Robert Thomas Malthus published "An Essay on the Principle of Population"

1807: Robert Fulton invents the first successful steamboat. Slavery is abolished in England.

February 7, 1812: Charles Dickens is born near Portsmouth, England.

1815: The Battle of Waterloo ends the Napoleonic Wars.

1824: Dickens's father and family are imprisoned for debt, while 12-year old Charles begins work at Warren's Blacking Factory.

1825: Trade unions are legalized in England.

1827: The Dickens family is evicted from their new home for failing to make their mortgage payments. Charles leaves school and begins work as a law clerk.

September 15, 1830: The Liverpool and Manchester Railway opens. It is the world's first intercity commercial railway operated by steam locomotives.

October 1831: The first cholera epidemic in England begins in Sunderland, an industrial city in northeast England.

1832: The first Reform Act is passed, granting voting rights to members of the industrial middle class by reappointing representation in Parliament to better represent the rapidly growing northern cities. Any man owning a household worth at least 10 pounds is permitted to vote, which makes one man out of every five a voter.

February 1832: The second cholera epidemic spreads through London, where 6,536 people die. British colonialism is heavily criticized for contributing to the spread of the disease.

August 29, 1833: Parliament passes the Factory Act, which makes it illegal to employ children younger than 9 years old and limits workers between the ages of 9 and 13 to nine hours of work per day.

1834: Dickens becomes a reporter for the *Morning Chronicle* and meets his future wife, Catherine Hogarth.

August 1, 1834: The Slavery Abolition Act of 1833 goes into effect, outlawing slavery in most of the British Empire.

STUDY GUIDE: *A Christmas Carol: A Ghost Story of Christmas*

August 14, 1834: The Poor Law Amendment Act aims to transfer unemployed rural workers to urban areas where more jobs are available. Public assistance shelters become the responsibility of privately-run organizations, which make living conditions there worse.

1835: The Municipal Corporations Bill gives 178 boroughs the right to form their own town councils to take control of local social services such as education, housing, and street lighting.

1836: The London Working Men's Association is formed. The Anti-Corn Law Association is established in London, aiming to repeal the Corn Laws of 1815, which forced people to pay high food prices to survive. Dickens marries Catherine Hogarth, and publishes *Sketches by Boz* and his first serial novel, *The Pickwick Papers*.

June 20, 1836: King William IV dies. He has no legitimate children, so his niece, Princess Victoria of Kent, becomes next in line for the throne.



1837: Dickens publishes *Oliver Twist*. Queen Victoria ascends the throne of England. Samuel Morse invents the telegraph. The first ocean-going steamship is produced.

July 1, 1837: The General Register Office begins formally keeping records of births, deaths, and marriages.

1838-39: Daguerreotype photographs and photographic paper are introduced.

Photograph of Queen Victoria with her eldest daughter circa 1845

May 1838: The People's Charter is published by a committee of six members of Parliament and six working men, beginning the world's first working-class labor movement.

September 17, 1838: The London and Birmingham Railway opens.

1839-1843: The Rebecca Riots take place in South and Mid Wales, in which farmers and agricultural workers protest what they see as unfair taxation and toils.

1839: The Anti-Corn Law Association is renamed the Anti-Corn Law League (ACLL), advocating for free trade in Britain and overseas.

July 4, 1839: Chartists riot in Birmingham.

November 4, 1839: Coal miners from Newport, Monmouthshire, march in an attempt to free Chartist prisoners.

January 10, 1840: A uniform postage rate of one penny is established.

April 15, 1840: Kings College Hospital opens in London.

STUDY GUIDE: *A Christmas Carol: A Ghost Story of Christmas*

July 20, 1840: The National Charter Association is formed to unite the local Chartist organizations.

August 7, 1840: The Chimney Sweep Act prohibits the employment of those under the age of 21 as chimney sweeps.

June 6, 1841: The United Kingdom conducts its first national census, totaling a population of 15.9 million in England and Wales, 8.2 million in Ireland, and 2.6 million in Scotland.

1842: An estimated one third of the underground workforce in British coal mines and one fourth in British metal mines is under the age of 18. Dickens visits the United States for the first time.

May 4, 1842: A second Chartist petition is presented to Parliament. It is rejected by the House of Commons.

June 1842: The first peacetime income tax is collected. Incomes of 150 pounds per year are taxed 3 pence per pound, a rate that exempts virtually all working classes.

Summer 1842: The General Strike, also known as the Plug Plot Riots, takes place in northern England and Scotland, demanding that recent pay cuts be reversed and the Charter become law.

August 1842: The Mines Act prohibits women and children from working in mines.

August 7-27, 1842: Riots erupt in and around Lancashire, protesting the Corn Laws and supporting Chartists.

1842-43: Dickens publishes *Martin Chuzzlewit*.

December 1843: The world's first Christmas cards are sent.

December 19, 1843: Charles Dickens publishes *A Christmas Carol*.

June 15, 1844: The Factory Act imposes a maximum twelve-hour workday for women and a maximum six-hour workday for children ages 6-13.

August 9, 1844: England abolished imprisonment for debt.

1845-1849: The Irish Potato Famine breaks out.

May 16, 1846: Parliament repeals the Corn Laws and introduces Free Trade.

March 5, 1847: Seventy-three coal miners are killed in an explosion in Yorkshire.

June 8, 1847: The Factory Act establishes a ten-hour maximum workday for women and for boys ages 13-18.

1848-1849: Another cholera epidemic sweeps through industrial cities in Great Britain, killing approximately 15,000 people in London alone.

April 10, 1848: Approximately 150,000 people attend a Chartist rally in Kennington Park, London, and present a petition to Parliament.

July 1848: Parliament aims to reduce death rates by passing legislation to improve urban health conditions.

STUDY GUIDE: *A Christmas Carol: A Ghost Story of Christmas*

1849: Dickens published *David Copperfield*.

1851: Dickens publishes *Bleak House*.

1853: Dickens publishes *Hard Times*.

1854: Another cholera epidemic sweeps through industrial cities in Great Britain. The first trans-Atlantic telegraph cable is completed.

1858: Dickens separates from his wife and embarks on reading tours for additional income.

1859: Charles Darwin's *On the Origin of Species* is published, laying out his theory of evolution. Dickens publishes *A Tale of Two Cities*.

1860: Dickens publishes *Great Expectations*. Abraham Lincoln elected 16th President of the United States.

1861: Outbreak of American Civil War.

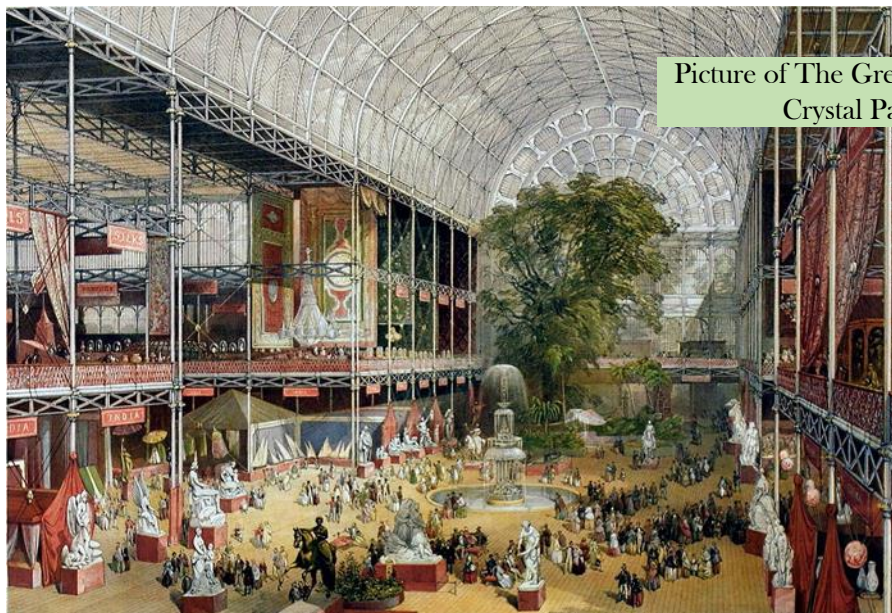
1864: The Corn Laws are repealed.

1865: Dickens is injured in the Staplehurst train crash, from which he never fully recovers. The last Confederate army surrenders in Shreveport, Louisiana. Lincoln is assassinated.

1867: Dickens gives his final reading tour in the United States.

1870: Dickens gives a dozen farewell readings in England and is received by Queen Victoria.

June 9, 1870: Charles Dickens dies after suffering a stroke, leaving his final novel, *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*, unfinished.



Picture of The Great Exhibition,
Crystal Palace

Early 1800's and the Industrial Revolution



The concept of “reducing the surplus population” was not an idea unique to Scrooge in the early 19th century. In 1798, Robert Thomas Malthus, an English minister and influential economic thinker, expressed his concerns with England’s rising population in “An Essay on the Principle of Population.” He believed the rising population would outstrip the nation’s ability to produce food. Nature’s own system of checks and balances for human population, such as disease and hunger, continued to ravage the lower classes. He proposed preventative measures to curb population growth, including postponing marriage until later in life or until financially stable, and celibacy. He believed that aid to the poor should come from private charities instead of the government. He speculated that a certain segment of the population was simply meant to be destitute, and that if left unchecked, more people would resign to a life of poverty.

London expanded from about two million inhabitants to six and a half million during the Victorian Era. Dickens was not the only Victorian novelist to be critical of society’s shortcomings. One of Queen Victoria’s prime ministers and Victorian novelist, Benjamin Disraeli (1804-1881), said that England was two nations- a nation of the rich and a nation of the poor- and that each group was “as ignorant of each other’s habits, thoughts, and feelings as if they were inhabitants of different planets.”

The Industrial Revolution, which was a period during which the predominately agrarian, rural societies in Europe and America became industrial and urban. Previously manufacturing was often done in people’s homes, but later shifted to powered, special purpose machinery, factories, and mass production. The iron and textile industries, along with the development of the steam engine, played central roles in the Industrial Revolution. These new resources made for fast railways and iron ships, faster looms, printing presses, and farmers’ combines. One of the first countries in Europe to become industrialized, Britain’s great deposits of coal and iron ore within its borders were crucial for industrial growth. As the world’s leading colonial power with territories around the globe, England became the marketplace for manufactured goods facilitating international trade. English factories had become the world’s workshop, and London, in turn, became the world’s banker.

STUDY GUIDE: *A Christmas Carol: A Ghost Story of Christmas*

While the increased volume and variety of manufactured goods improved the standard of living for the middle and upper classes, the grim employment and living conditions worsened for the poor and working classes.

The passage of the Reform Bill of 1832 provided some representation of the middle classes in Parliament, extending the right to vote to all males owning property. In 1840, a severe economic depression and widespread unemployment led to riots, who complained of the miserable conditions in the industrial and coal-mining areas. The owners of mines and factories regarded themselves as innocent of blame for these conditions, claiming that a *laissez-faire* economic theory, or lack of government regulation of working conditions, would ultimately benefit everyone. Tariffs on foreign grains, such as wheat and corn, had been established to protect English farm products competing with low-priced products imported from abroad. The victims of these tariffs were the lower classes, who struggled to pay the exorbitant price of bread, or in the years of bad crops, the scarcity of food. The Corn Laws, as they were became known, were eventually repealed in 1846.

The Plight of the Working Class

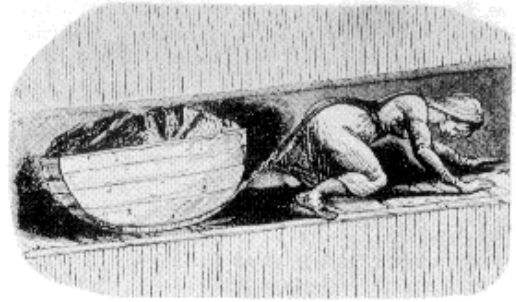


Debt was easily acquired through the overuse of the trust-based credit system, and were not so easily paid off. The Poor Law of 1834 established a system of regional workhouses for debtors. This law was devised to make workhouses responsible for the general welfare of the poor rather than each local government. These workhouses were awful places, and so brutal that only the people who desperately needed help would go willingly. These conditions were unavoidable for orphans and other abandoned children, the elderly, and single mothers. Workhouses utilized the poor for manual labor in return for shelter, medical care, and food. They split families apart, meals were meager, and rules were very strict. Children were also likely to be 'hired out' to mines or factories.

Industrial workers labored from 6 a.m. to 9 p.m. daily, without health benefits, bonuses, or vacation. Adult factory workers were forced to leave their children unattended in poorly constructed homes, with inadequate septic systems, no running water or toilets, and little ventilation. Half of all children died before the age of five due to neglect and malnourishment. Children made up 50% of the workforce. Children with parents began their work between the ages of 9 and 14, while orphans could be put to work as young as 4. One fifth of the workers in Britain's textile industry were younger than 15. Children worked excessively long hours at the lowest possible rates, earning one-eighth of the salary of an adult. Orphans and extremely impoverished children were purchased by factory owners and required to sign contracts indebtedting them until the age of 21. By 1839, nearly half of all funerals were for children under the age of ten. In addition to long hours, the miserable work conditions of these factories produced many accidents, where children were scalped, maimed, crushed, and killed while falling asleep operating a machine.

STUDY GUIDE: *A Christmas Carol: A Ghost Story of Christmas*

Coal mines sought child labor because of their small bodies to work in cramped shafts. Stripped of most of their clothes and chained to their coal carts, they were responsible for pulling and holding the heavy doors open. In match factories, children were used to dip matches in phosphorous, which caused their teeth to rot and death to those who inhaled too much of the toxic substance



As representation for all people grew during the 19th century, social reforms were implemented to improve the working conditions for children. In 1833, the first Factory Act was passed to establish a 15-hour workday. The Ten Hours Act, passed in 1847, stated that women and children are not to be made to work more than 10 hours a day on weekdays, eight hours on Saturdays, and not at all on Sundays. The working classes had no representation until the Reform Bill of 1867, when the right to vote extended to the working classes.

Education

Upper and middle class families could afford to pay for an education for their sons. Boys were taught technology, woodwork, mathematics, and technical drawing. Girls were generally taught in the homes by governesses or at boarding schools. Those subjects included cooking, sewing, drawing, and music.

Although without a proper literary education, many children were hired as apprentices for various tradesmen such as tailors, cobblers, and bricklayers. In an apprenticeship, a child would help with the more tedious work, but in turn, would also learn the valuable skills necessary of the trade.

Ragged Schools or charity schools were established by area churches. These schools were severely overcrowded and only taught the basics of reading and writing. Many teachers used cruel beatings to punish students, believing kindness was not effective in teaching children. The conditions of such schools are described in many of Dickens' books, most notably in *Nicholas Nickleby*.

In 1870, Parliament decreed that every town and village had to have at least one school. By 1880, all children between the ages of five to ten had to go to primary school so that every child received at least a basic education.

Money

A shilling was a valuable type of coin. It was worth 12 pence or 1/20 pound, and usually minted in silver. A crown is worth about 5 shillings.



Disease and Illness

Diseases were easily spread in London because the water wasn't clean, the ventilation was poor, and living spaces were so crowded. Cholera, tuberculosis, smallpox, typhoid, and dysentery were widespread with the lack of knowledge about proper sanitation and germs. In London and other large towns, the waste from houses drained into the sewers that ran down the center of the street, tainting the air with the smell of human and animal waste. More than 31,000 people died from an outbreak of cholera in 1832. Many of the upper classes were unaware of the living conditions of the poor, and many also believed that their suffering was punishment for their sins and laziness.

Polio is a viral disease in which the infection enters the blood stream through the digestive tract, then spreads through the lymphatic system, attacking and destroying nerve endings. Children now are routinely immunized, but during the 1840s up until the 1950s, polio was a worldwide epidemic. The lack of proper sanitation in Victorian London, combined with poor hygiene and the Victorian's lack of knowledge about germs as a source of illness, resulted in conditions ideal for the spread of the disease. Bathing was a luxury afforded to only by the wealthy, and impoverished people would have washed themselves with a cloth and cold water, if they washed at all. Poor families had little or no access to what limited, but potentially life-saving, medical treatments existed for diseases.

As scientific breakthroughs revealed more about germ theory and the importance of sanitation, an appeal was made for public health to Parliament. In 1875, a Public Health Act was passed which led to improvements in drainage and sewage disposal.

Steam Engine and Transportation



Water power was first used to run the machines of this new technological age, but it had many disadvantages. A factory had to be close to a swift-flowing river, and England did not have enough rivers of this type. Also, many of the most desirable rivers for water power were located far from sources of raw materials and markets for products.

STUDY GUIDE: *A Christmas Carol: A Ghost Story of Christmas*

By 1705, steam engines were pumping water out of English coal mines. In 1769, James Watt, a Scottish instrument maker, presented a steam engine which worked better than any engine ever made before. These engines became vital machinery of many industries. Steamboats and railroads penetrated the interior of countries, including those of the United States, encouraging new settlements and a population shift to the newly-open land. John Rennie, appointed by King William IV and Queen Adelaide, completed the construction of a new London Bridge in 1831, improving water traffic under the bridge and replacing the decrepit, medieval bridge.

The advancement of the steam engine and expansion of the railroad connected goods and trade across England. Rail travel by the 1860's became a popular mode of transportation that was both fashionable and efficient. More people took advantage of the new technology to see other parts of the country. The first trains traveled at only 12 miles an hour, yet this was considered at the time a dangerous speed. Train schedules were somewhat irregular due to weather or daylight hours. When it rained, trains could not run because they had no way to keep from slipping on the wet tracks. They could not run at night because there were no lights on the trains. Service delays often occurred when the train ran out of firewood, and the train's passengers were expected to help gather more wood. As time went on, transportation became more rapid and reliable, increasing the span of commerce of goods and services across the globe.

Art and New Technology

Rapid technological advances in the 19th century presented artists with a number of challenges. Silver-plate photography, which spread as a practical tool from the 1840's onward, challenged the artists' previously exclusive ability to make a visual record. At the same time, bright new synthetic colors, which had been produced for the cloth industry, became available to artists. In 1848, several young English artists formed a group to challenge what they regarded as the 'emptiness of the current state of "High Art."' They sought to bring a fresh moral seriousness to painting, and to take the precise observation of nature as their standard, rather than the styles of their Old Masters. The Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, founded by William Holman Hunt (1827-1910), John Everett Millias (1829- 1896) as well as several others, prided themselves on attention to accuracy of local detail. In contrast to the Dutch genre scenes of the previous century, which treated the theme of sexual license and prostitution with tolerance and humor, the Victorians expressed a stern and strong moral message in their work. Evangelicals, referring to a select group of parishioners of the Church of England called the Low Church, who dedicated themselves to good causes. They became a powerful and active minority in the early nineteenth century and advocated for good causes, as well as a strict code of morality for British society. In addition to social reforms, these religious political groups were responsible for the emancipation of all slaves in the British Empire as early as 1833. Their sobriety, hard work, and a joyless abstention from worldly pleasures influenced the artists in the Victorian Era.

The rising social tensions of a stratified class system became popular subjects for artists in the late 19th century. The rivalry between the 'losers' of society, both exploited and manipulated by the rich and powerful, was expressed symbolically through the subjects of late 19th century painters, such as the French painter, Gustave Courbet (1819-1877). Late Victorian artists favored Realism, proposing that art should take as its subject matter the actualities of life and show them without elaboration, idealization, or sentimentality. Subjects included peasants, prostitutes, beggars, and other aspects of modern life that the bourgeoisie preferred to overlook.

Women in Victorian Society

Women at this time were considered second-class citizens. Queen Victoria herself was an antifeminist and motivated a renewed emphasis on home and family, separating the concept of men's work and women's work. The Puritan view of encouraging a woman's ignorance, and in turn, her innocence, was to lower her position beneath a man's in the home and society. The explosive growth of the textile industry gave women the opportunity to work outside the home, albeit in miserable conditions. This opportunity challenged the traditional role of women in Victorian society. Bad working conditions in factories and workhouses as well as underemployment drove thousands of women into prostitution, which became increasingly professionalized in the nineteenth century. Higher education for women was denied until 1848 with the establishment of the first women's college in London. The only respectable occupation for an unmarried, educated middle-class woman was a position as a governess, but this had no security of employment and minimal wages. Women also had no representation in government, although petitions in Parliament advocating for women's suffrage were introduced as early as the 1840's, yet they did not gain the right until 1918.

Extending the Day



Before the eighteenth century, the sun regulated how people lived their lives. Most artisans operated during daylight hours. Candles provided some light in the evening, but they were costly and their illumination was flickering and undependable. Innovations that created brighter and more dependable light modified the very concepts of time and work productivity. Industrialists, driven by efficiency, added shifts to factories so that machines would never stop. Clocks measured workers' punctuality and managers ensured a pattern of routinized work. Dependable lighting helped shop owners stay open later for customers, increasing sales. New forms of lighting, such as gas lamps of the late eighteenth century, or oil lamps, such as Betty lamps, which consisted of a twisted cloth wick soaked in fats or grease and enclosed in a brass or iron receptacle, became common. Factory owners used the steady, bright light of the tinsplate Argand lamps (shown below) filled with whale oil or lard oil. These lamps increased productivity, but also created

dangerous conditions for workers. Fires in factories was common, and most likely these open flames were likely the cause.

America in the 1800's



The territory of the United States expanded across the continent through a variety of treaties, purchases, and negotiations. The Purchase of Louisiana, which included Mississippi territory, from France in 1803 doubled United States territory. Florida was bought from Spain in 1821, Texas was annexed in 1845. The Mexican War added the Southwest and California. The Oregon Territory was annexed through a treaty with the British in 1846 and the Gadsden Purchase from Mexico completed continental expansion in 1853. The closing of the African slave trade in 1808 escalated the domestic commerce of slaves, creating enormous profits for businessmen in both North and South. The majority of slaves lived in the Chesapeake region for their work in the tobacco fields. Due to the depletion of the soil in that area, slave owners looked for new markets and lands and found them in the lower South, where the rise of cotton created a growing need for labor. The largest slave-trading operation in the South, owned by John Armfield and his partner, Isaac Franklin, was run out of Alexandria, Washington D.C., New Orleans, and Natchez, Mississippi. By 1850, slaves numbered over 3.1 million and the commerce in the slave trade was the country's most valuable form of investment. In 1860, the value of slave property in the South totaled at least \$3 billion.

The mid 1820s and early 1830s, white settlers were moving west into the land the United States had acquired through the Louisiana Purchase. Indian removal expanded and became more systematic in 1830s. The federal government passed the Indian Removal Act, which authorized the relocation of five tribes from the South to designated reservations in the West. These included the native Mississippi Chickasaw and Choctaw, as well as the Muscogee-Creek, Seminole, and Cherokee. This was later called the "Trail of Tears" due to the rough and perilous conditions these Native Americans suffered traveling west during their sanctioned removal from their native lands.

The expansion of rails across the United States also contributed to the distribution of goods, as well as distributing the mail. In 1833, the Southern line, powered by a steam engine, was extended to 136 miles, making it the longest railroad in the world at the time. The network of railroads across the United States also contributed to making the Civil War the bloodiest conflict in American history with the efficient transfer of supplies and mechanisms of war.

Christmas Crafts

Herb Kissing Ball

- 1 piece of floral foam 4 1/2 inches long × 4 inches high × 3 1/2 inches wide
- 1 piece of chicken wire 17 inches × 18 inches
- 2 pieces of #18 gauge floral wire in 10-inch lengths
- 1/4 bushel of 3- to 4-inch sprigs of bayberry foliage
- 1/4 bushel of 3- to 4-inch sprigs of dried sage
- 25-30 3- to 4-inch bunches of rose hips
- 2 yards of red ribbon + a double length for hanging
- 2 3-inch floral picks

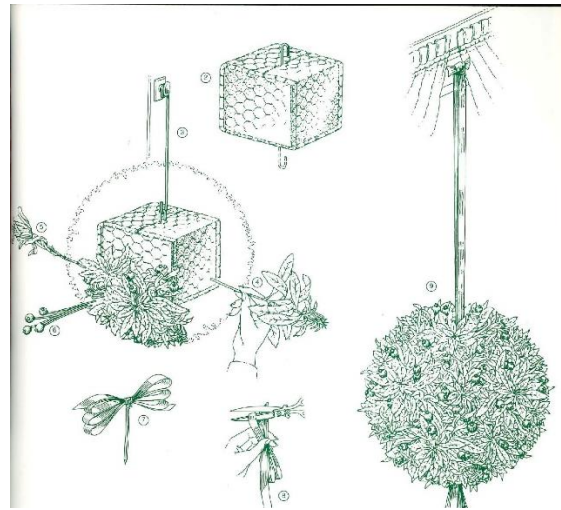
ENCASE the floral foam securely in the chicken wire to form a cage. ① Insert 1 10-inch piece of #18 gauge floral wire down through the center of the cage. Bend the bottom of the wire into a fishhook shape. Make certain that the hook is firmly attached to the outside of the wire cage. Bend the top of the wire into a loop. ② Attach the other 10-inch piece of #18 gauge floral wire to the loop. Bend the top of the second wire into a loop. Use the second piece of wire to suspend the kissing ball at a convenient working height. ③

Insert 3- to 4-inch sprigs of bayberry foliage into the floral foam so that the ball is entirely covered. ④ The bayberry will dry slowly and will keep its green color. Insert the 3- to 4-inch sprigs of dried sage. ⑤ Insert the 3- to 4-inch bunches of rose hips. ⑥

Turn the ball frequently while working on it to be sure that its shape is uniform. The finished ball should be about 8-10 inches in diameter.

To make the bow, fold the ribbon as shown in the illustration into 3 6-inch loops. ⑦ Wire the bow in the top of the kissing ball. To make the streamers, fold and cut the ribbon as shown in the illustration into 5 6-inch pieces. ⑧ Wire the streamers on a floral pick. Insert the streamers into the bottom of the kissing ball. Use a double length of ribbon for hanging. ⑨

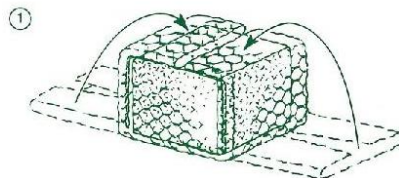
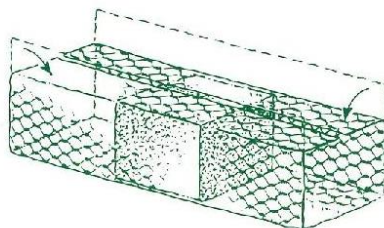
NOTE: This same basic technique can be used to make a fresh boxwood kissing ball. The floral foam should first be soaked in water until it is saturated. Let the ball hang until all excess water



has dripped out. Approximately 1/4 bushel of 3- to 4-inch sprigs of boxwood is needed for a boxwood kissing ball.

Sphagnum moss encased in chicken wire can be used as a base instead of floral foam. A styrofoam ball may be used if the kissing ball is to hang for only three or four days.

A boxwood kissing ball may be decorated in many ways: drape strings of cranberries around the ball in a scallop design; add a sprig of holly at the top and bottom of the ball; add sprigs of holly or pyracantha berries at random around the ball; add small cones at random around the ball.



Coloring Sheets

Images taken from:

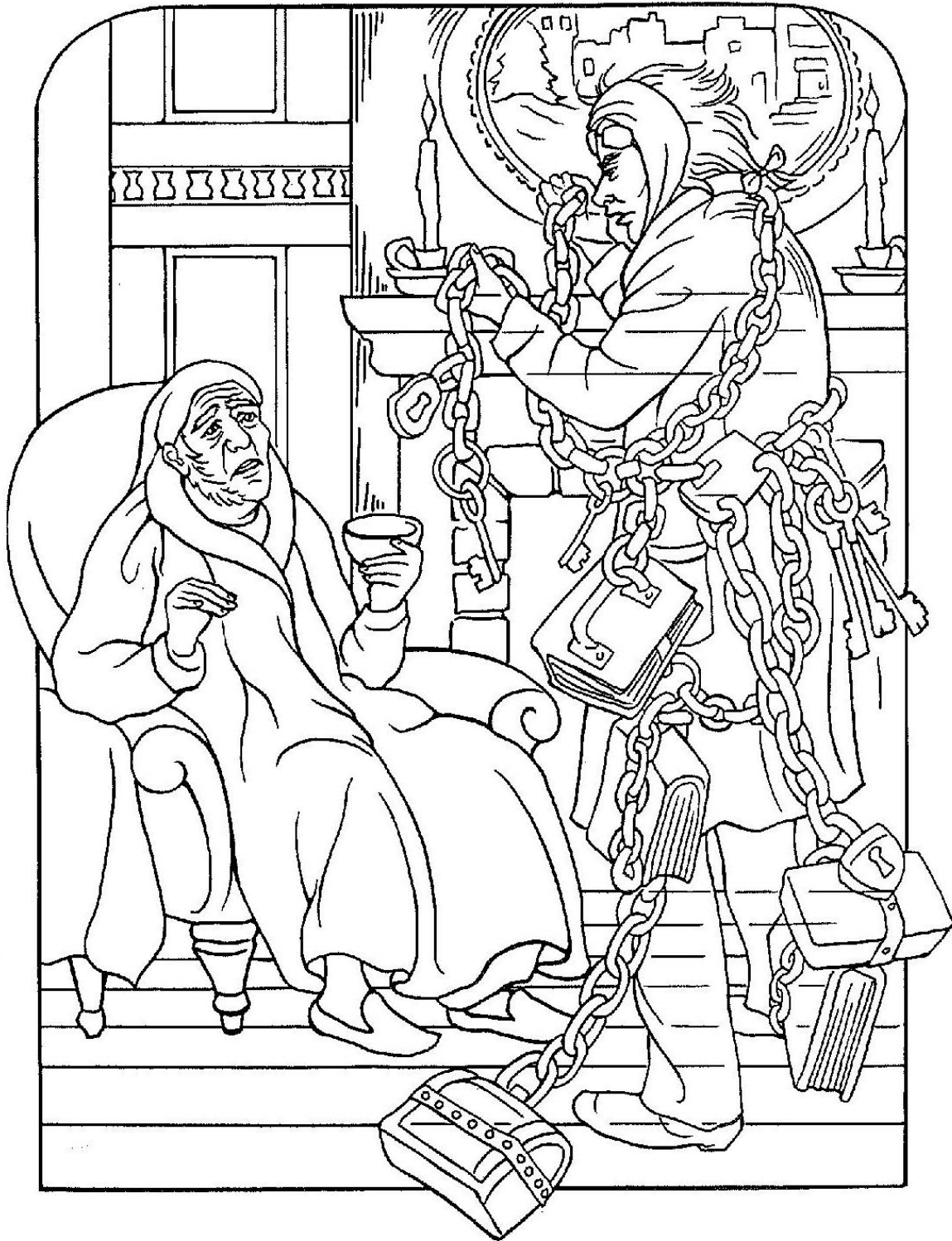
A Christmas Carol

Coloring Book

Dover Publications, Inc.
Mineola, New York

Illustrated by
Marty Noble











STUDY GUIDE: *A Christmas Carol: A Ghost Story of Christmas*

Who Said That?

Match the spoken line to the character who says the line. Not all names are used and some are repeated more than once.

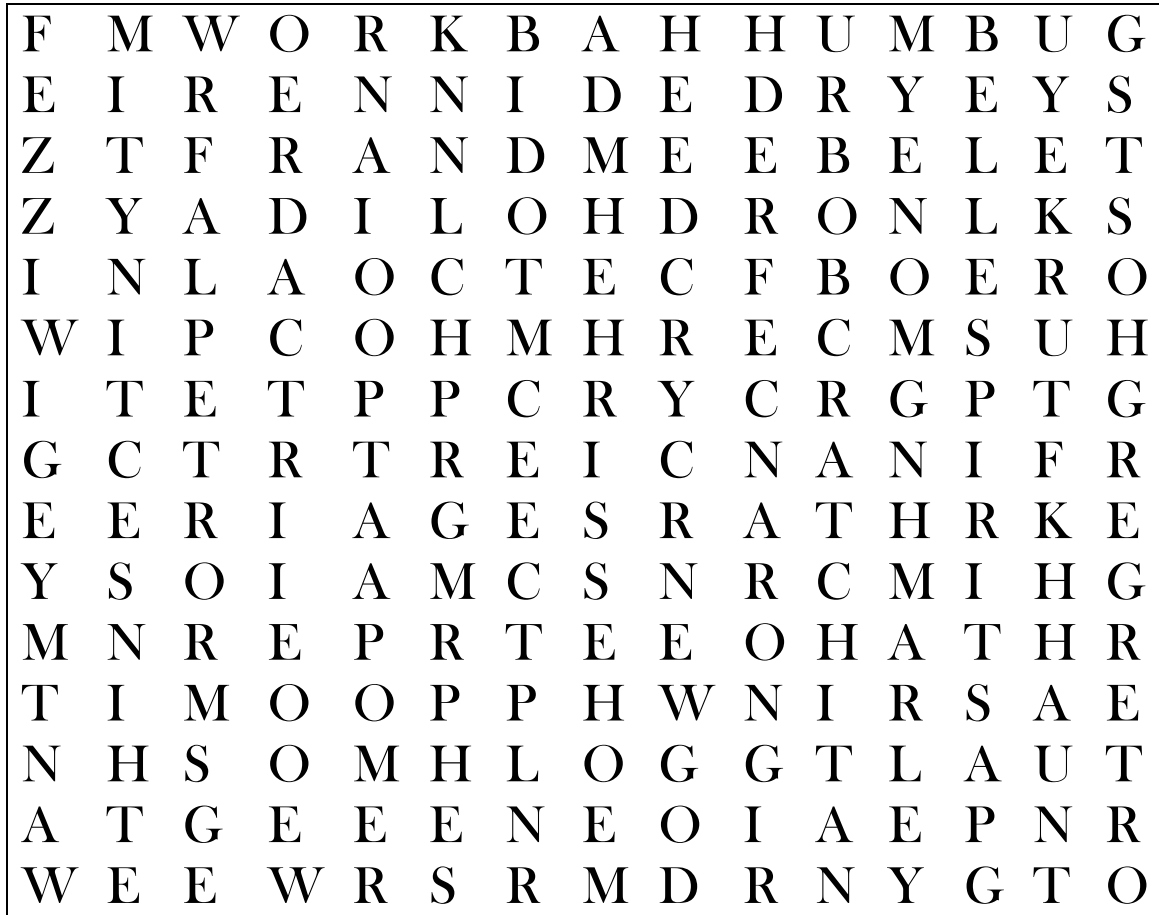
- A. "What's Christmas to you but a time for paying bills without money. A time for finding yourself a year older, and not a dollar richer. If I could work my will, every idiot who goes about with "Merry Christmas" on his lips should be boiled with his own pudding, and buried with a stake of holly through his heart."
- B. "It is required of every man that the spirit within him should walk abroad among his fellow men, and travel far and wide; and if that spirit goes not forth in life, it is condemned to do so after death."
- C. "No more work tonight boys - Christmas Eve!"
- D. "Another idol has displaced me, a golden one."
- E. "It should be a Christmas Day, I am sure, on which one drinks the health of such an odious, stingy, hard, unfeeling man as Mr. Scrooge."
- F. "If these shadows remained unaltered by the future, the child will die."
- G. "God bless us - every one!"
- H. "A poor excuse for picking a man's pocket every twenty-fifth of December."
- I. "At this festive time of year, Mr. Scrooge, it is more than usually desirable that we should make some slight provisions for the poor and destitute, who suffer greatly at the present time."
- J. "Business! Mankind was my business; charity, mercy, forbearance, and benevolence were, all, my business."
- K. "He told me, coming home, that he hoped the people saw him in the church, because he was a cripple, and it might be pleasant for them to remember upon Christmas Day who made lame beggars walk and blind men see."
- L. "I don't make myself merry at Christmas, and I can't afford to make idle people merry."
- M. "Home for good and all. Home for ever and ever. Father is so much kinder than he used to be that home is like heaven."
- N. "A small matter, to make these silly folks so full of gratitude. He has spent but a few pounds of your mortal money. Three or four, perhaps. Is that so much that he deserves this praise?"

Ebenezer Scrooge
Bob Cratchit
Jacob Marley
Fred
Mr. Fezziwig

Tiny Tim
Ghost of Christmas Past
Ghost of Christmas Present
Ghost of Christmas Future
Dick Wilkins

Mrs. Dilber
Solicitor
Fan
Mrs. Cratchit
Belle

Christmas Carol Word Search



BAH HUMBUG
BELLE
BOB CRATCHIT
COAL
COLD
CRIPPLED
DINNER
FEZZIWIG
FRAN

FRED
GHOSTS
HAUNT
HOLIDAY
IGNORANCE
MARLEY
MEAGER
MISER
MONEY

NEPHEW
NIGHTMARE
PAST
POOR
PRESENT
REDEMPTION
REGRET
REMORSE
RICH

SCROOGE
SNOW
SPIRITS
TINY TIM
TURKEY
WANT
WEALTHY
WORK

Adapted from John's Word Search Puzzles

www.thepotters.com/puzzles.html

Answers to Who Said That?

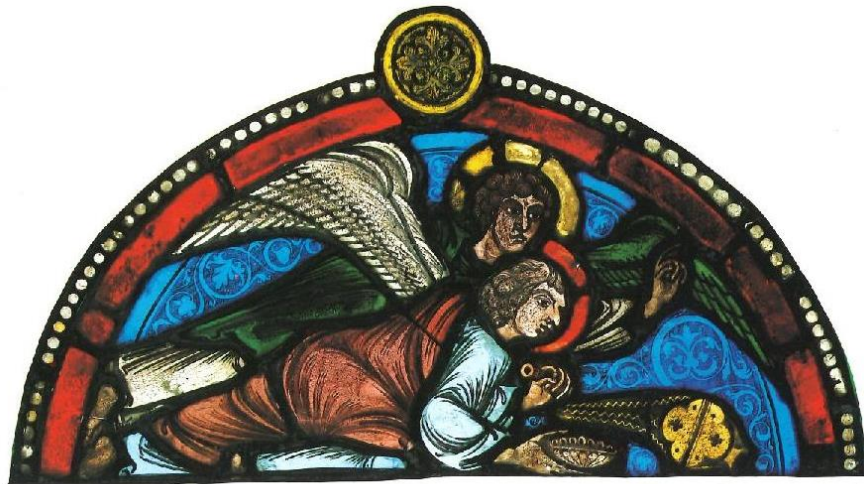
- A. Ebenezer Scrooge
- B. Jacob Marley
- C. Mr. Fezziwig
- D. Belle
- E. Mrs. Cratchit
- F. Ghost of Christmas Present
- G. Tiny Tim
- H. Ebenezer Scrooge
- I. Solicitor
- J. Jacob Marley
- K. Bob Cratchit
- L. Ebenezer Scrooge
- M. Fan
- N. Ghost of Christmas Present

Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays

from all of us at New Stage Theatre.

We wish you a Merry Christmas and many blessings in the New Year.

May God bless us- every one!



STUDY GUIDE: *A Christmas Carol: A Ghost Story of Christmas*

Teacher Evaluation Form for Michael Wilson's *A Christmas Carol: A Ghost Story of Christmas*

Name: _____ School: _____

What is your overall reaction to the production? How does this production compare to other New Stage productions?

How would you rate the production values of the play (costumes, set, props, lighting, special effects)?

How did your students react to the production?

Please comment on the educational value of the program.

What is your overall reaction to the question and answer (talk-back) session?

How did you hear about New Stage's production of *A Christmas Carol*? What other plays would you like your students to see?

How could this Study Guide be more effective for use in your classroom? Please explain.

Please have your students fill out the enclosed student evaluation forms. We want to hear from them too! Evaluations not only help us improve our programming, but help us find sponsorship for bringing quality theatre to you!! Thank you for your continued support!

Please return this form with any additional comments to:

New Stage Theatre Education
1100 Carlisle Street, Jackson, MS 39202 or email at education@newstagetheatre.com

STUDY GUIDE: *A Christmas Carol: A Ghost Story of Christmas*

Student Evaluation Form for Michael Wilson's *A Christmas Carol: A Ghost Story of Christmas*

Name: _____ School: _____

What was your overall reaction to the play?

How would you rate the production values of the play (costumes, scenery, props, lighting, special effects)?

What was your favorite part of the play?

Did you learn anything from this production? If so, what?

Which character in the play did you most identify with? Why?

What other stories would you enjoy seeing staged by live actors?

Have you seen a staged production of *A Christmas Carol* at New Stage, or elsewhere? Have you seen one of the many movie versions? How does this production compare to what you have seen?

Other comments and observations:

Please return this form with any additional comments to:

New Stage Theatre Education

1100 Carlisle Street, Jackson, MS 39202 or email at education@newstagetheatre.com