

Ebenezer Scrooge is an old man who lives to work and make money. He does not enjoy the same things that make other people happy; good food and drink, dancing, being with friends and family. One Christmas Eve, three ghostly visitors show him his life, past, present and future. When he sees how he has lived his life, and how it might end, he decides to change. He starts to spend his money on other people, begins to smile and is a different, nicer and happier person.



Charles Dickens wrote *A Christmas Carol* in the summer and autumn of 1843, the first of his five Christmas Books. It was partly to relieve his growing debts, but also, as he wrote, "to awaken some loving and forbearing thoughts, never out of season....." The story has been adapted by David A. Hill, a teacher trainer and materials writer who specialises in the teaching of English, particularly literature and poetry. He currently lives in Hungary.

Christmas is the celebration in the story. The topic provides plenty of ideas for activities, on Christmas itself or other celebrations. Do a class survey on why pupils celebrate. How many of their celebrations are annual?

Pupils may like to describe the Cratchit family, finding out all they can about them from the story. Many families appear in the story, rich and poor. Can the pupils find anything they have in common?

The story includes all the food traditionally served for Christmas celebration in England, which can be looked at. Extend to discuss food for the pupils at Christmas or for other celebrations.

(About 10 minutes) Ask the pupils to write the letter Bob Cratchit sends to his friend Thomas in Oxford for the New Year, describing the sudden change in his boss's behaviour, and his own and his family's thoughts and feelings about it.

Charles Dickens was a life-long publiciser of the poor social welfare conditions of Victorian Britain. The two men who ask for Scrooge's help for the poor and sick were volunteers. Expand to a discussion of how to help those who have problems. Issues include which groups may need help, (poor, sick, children, animals, old) how to give (the state or voluntary), what to give (goods/time/skills/money). Divide pupils into seven groups. Each group can work out the case for giving to a particular charity

Usually, unlike Scrooge, we do not know what is in the future. Ask pupils how they decide what they will do tomorrow/next week/next Christmas? How much do they think is in their control? Do they use past experience/present feelings? Do they find the future frightening/exciting and why?

The characters express a range of feelings, meanness, to being jolly and sad. Scrooge changes his behaviour only after his feelings change ('a change of heart'). Have pupils had a change of heart about something? What was it?

The story is set in the cold winter with snow and fog. Christmas is celebrated in the middle of cold, dark days of winter. The topic can be expanded to revise all weather vocabulary.

(their choice or yours). The whole class can vote to decide the most convincing argument.

Pupils can make a wall and table display of different recipes for celebration food, with ingredient samples, over a number of lessons.

This is a long-term activity. The story divides into five time frames, present and future reality, the ghosts' past, present and future. Divide the class into five groups, one to each time frame. The pupils should act out the scenes in their time frame, writing their own dialogue where necessary e.g., the group acting the ghosts' present would act the four scenes from pages 14–18. Record the scenes in sequence to make a complete audio or video play.



Once the pupils have read the story, divide them up into groups, taking a chapter each, or choose certain chapters if the class is small. Each group will elicit the vocabulary for the feelings mentioned in their chapter (like/hate/worry/nervous/surprise etc.) and the words for the expression of feeling (smile/laugh/cry/excited) and write them in a list on the board. Remind pupils that these may be used in different forms (eg. hated, hates, nervously, laughing). Now pick out the chapters on the cassette. Pupils should check when they hear a feeling word. They can either check their own chapter, or one from another group.

Once the pupils become familiar with the chants they will recognise some of the phrases from the text. For example, chant 1: 'Work, work work' comes from page 5. Chant 2: 'I'm the ghost of Christmas past' (page 10), 'I'm the ghost of Christmas Present (page 15), 'the ghost of Christmas Future does not speak, but his name is spoken by Scrooge on page 19. This is the odd one out. Chant 3 'merry Christmas' appears on pages 18, 28 and 29.

This is a very famous expression of Scrooge's, and the pupils may like to learn it for themselves after hearing it on the tape (page 6). It means, rubbish! or other similar expressions.

Pupils read the sentences and then write the sentence numbers in the boxes under the ghost it best describes.

Pupils read the text carefully and decide whether the sentences are true or false.

Pupils find the right word to fill the gap and write it into the crossword. Once they have completed all the clues correctly, another word appears in the vertical box.

Pupils write about their favourite character, giving reasons for their choice.

help pupils become familiar with the sounds and rhythm of English, in a fun way. The language in each chant recycles language from the story.

Pupils listen to the chant a few times, clapping in time with the rhythm. Then they say the chant, verse by verse, with the cassette, beating out the rhythm as they say it, to become familiar with the words and rhythm.

A possible activity with the chants, is to split a class into groups and they each say one verse.

1. 1. pp. 10-13. 2. pp. 15-18. 3. pp.19, 20, 22-26.

2. a. On p. 5, Scrooge looks cross, he is working. On pp. 29-30 he is happy, smiling, drinking, celebrating.

b. He wanted to change the future shown to him by The Ghost of Christmas Future, so he changed how he acted.

3. f. b. c. a. e. g. d. 4.

**Activity 1** 1st ghost: 1, 4, 6, 9, 11.  
2nd ghost: 2, 5, 7, 12. 3rd ghost: 3, 8, 10.

**Activity 2** 1. False. He died seven years ago. 2. False, Scrooge sent the boy singer away.  
3. True. 4. False. He showed him three past Christmases. 5. False. Scrooge asked him to take him anywhere he wanted. 6. True. 7. False, Scrooge bought a turkey for Bob Cratchit and his family.

**Activity 3** 1. Christmas. 2. secretary.  
3. green. 4. foods. 5. London. 6. grave.  
7. nephew. The word in the box is Scrooge.

E	B	E	N	E	Z	E	R	S	C	R	O	O	G	E
B	O	D	F	H	J	L	C	E	G	I	K	M	O	Q
R	B	J	T	V	X	Z	N	M	P	S	V	W	Y	A
Z	C	A	C	E	G	I	K	R	M	O	R	S	U	W
Y	R	C	Z	H	J	L	N	F	R	E	D	P	R	T
V	A	O	X	B	D	F	H	J	L	E	N	P	Y	Z
C	T	B	E	G	I	K	M	Z	O	R	S	T	R	U
V	C	M	W	Z	Y	X	C	Z	B	A	Y	I	X	W
C	H	A	R	L	E	S	D	I	C	K	E	N	S	A
B	I	R	F	J	M	Q	U	W	A	F	K	Y	O	S
X	T	L	C	H	M	R	W	I	B	H	N	T	T	Z
P	W	E	B	R	I	C	T	G	U	E	N	I	H	O
A	Q	Y	D	J	L	S	F	K	M	P	R	M	V	G



# A Christmas Carol

Name.....

Which ghost? Read the sentences below the pictures, then choose one of the ghosts that matches the sentence.



First ghost



Second ghost



Third ghost

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|--|--|
| 1. He wore a short white dress and a bright belt. <i>First ghost</i> | 7. He showed Scrooge a miner's house.          |
| 2. He was happy.   | 8. He wore a long black cloak.                 |
| 3. He showed Scrooge a grave.  | 9. He carried a bunch of holly.                |
| 4. He was an old man.  | 10. He did not speak.                          |
| 5. He was a young giant.   | 11. He showed Scrooge Mr Fezziwig's office.    |
| 6. He came at 1 o'clock.   | 12. He wore a long green dress with white fur. |

Write True or False, next to the sentences. If the sentence is false, write down the correct sentence.

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|---|---|
| 1. Scrooge's partner died ten years ago. <i>False. He died seven years ago.</i> | 5. Scrooge didn't want to go with the second ghost. _____         |
| 2. Scrooge enjoyed the Christmas songs that Christmas Eve. _____                | 6. The third ghost was more frightening than the other two. _____ |
| 3. Marley's ghost was unhappy. _____  | 7. On Christmas Day Scrooge bought a turkey for himself. _____    |
| 4. The first ghost showed Scrooge two past Christmases _____.                   |   |



# A Christmas Carol

Name.....

Fill in the missing words then write them in the spaces. The letters in the box make a word. What is it?

1. A boy came to sing Christmas songs.

C	H	R	I	S	T	M	A	S
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---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

2. Scrooge's \_\_\_\_\_, Bob Cratchit, worked very hard.

3. The first ghost held a bunch of \_\_\_\_\_ holly.

4. The second ghost sat on top of lots of Christmas \_\_\_\_\_.

5. The third ghost showed him the City of \_\_\_\_\_.

6. In a churchyard, Scrooge was shown a \_\_\_\_\_.

7. Scrooge had Christmas dinner with his \_\_\_\_\_.

Write four or five sentences on your favourite character from the story.

*I like*

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