



## Study Guide 2023-2024

# A Christmas Carol



**Adapted by Jim Helsinger,  
from the story by Charles Dickens**

## Florida Standards

### Language Arts

LAFS.910.RL.1: Key Ideas and Details

LAFS.910.RH.1: Key Ideas and Details

LAFS.1112.SL.1: Comprehension and Collaboration

LAFS.1112.RL.1: Key Ideas and Details

### Theater

TH.912.F.2: Careers in and related to the arts

TH.68.S.1: The arts are inherently experiential.

TH.68.S.3: Artists learn to master techniques.

**PG**

Mildly frightening content

Most appropriate for Grade 6 and up.

# *A Christmas Carol*

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# A Christmas Carol

## Introduction

Educators:

Thank you for taking the time out of your very busy schedule to bring the joy of theatre arts to your classroom. We are well aware of the demands on your time and it is our goal to offer you supplemental information to compliment your curriculum with ease and expediency.

We hope this Study Guide and the companion Spotlight Guide will help you prepare your students to experience live theatre at Orlando Shakes! Additionally, we would love to come to your classroom to introduce your students to the Shakespeare play of your choosing and teach them how to unlock the meaning of our favorite playwright. With a few simple tools, they will realize that Shakespeare isn't scary, rather can be quite contemporary!

Please take a moment to explore our website at [orlandoshakes.org/education](http://orlandoshakes.org/education) for the following ways to add to your curriculum.

- Our Virtual Workshop *Spotlight: Theatre Careers*, which introduces students to the many professions in Theatre Arts.
- Classroom Activities to energize students to explore character status and motivation
- Shortened Shakespeare scripts that range from 60 – 120 minutes long that are perfect for school productions

We look forward to hosting you at the Lowndes Shakespeare Center. Feel free to contact us at Orlando Shakes should you have any questions or suggestions on how we can better serve you. We are always learning from you.

Thank you for your tremendous work in nurturing our audiences of tomorrow.

Anne Hering  
Director of Education

Jennifer Paxton  
Education Coordinator



# *A Christmas Carol*

## Enjoying Live Theater

### Theater is a Team Sport

The **Playwright** writes the script. Sometimes it is from an original idea and sometimes it is adapted from a book or story. The Playwright decides what the characters say, and gives the Designers guidelines on how the play should look.

The **Director** creates the vision for the production and works closely with the actors, costume, set and lighting designers to make sure everyone tells the same story.

The **Actors** use their bodies and voices to bring the author's words and the director's ideas to life on the stage.

The **Designers** imagine and create the lights, scenery, props, costumes and sound that will compliment and complete the director's vision.

The **Stage Manager** assists the director during rehearsals by recording their instructions and making sure the actors and designers understand these ideas. The Stage Manager then runs the show during each performance by calling cues for lights and sound, as well as entrances and exits.

The **Shop** and **Stage Crew** builds the set, props and costumes according to the designer's plans. The Stage Crew sets the stage with props and furniture, assists the actors with costume changes and operates sound, lighting and stage machinery during each performance.

The **Front of House Staff** welcomes you to the theater, takes your tickets, helps you find your seat and answers any question you may have on the day of performance.

The **Theater** is where it all takes place. Orlando Shakespeare Theater In Partnership with UCF is the only professional, classical theater company in Central Florida, reaching students and audiences in the surrounding eight counties.

### Mission:

To enrich our community with engaging professional theater, inspiring educational experiences, and thought-provoking new plays.





# *A Christmas Carol*

## Enjoying Live Theater

### **The Actor/Audience Relationship**

The Audience is the reason Live Theater exists. At Orlando Shakes, we cherish the Actor/Audience relationship, the unique give and take that exists during a performance which makes the audience an ACTIVE participant in the event. The actors see the audience just as the audience sees the actors, and every, laugh, snifle, chuckle and gasp the audience makes effects the way the actor plays his next moment. We want you to be engaged, and to live the story with us!



There are certain Conventions of the Theatrical Event, like, when the lights go down you know that the show is about to start, and that the audience isn't encouraged to come and go during a performance. Here are some other tips to help you and your classmates be top notch audience members:

- Please make sure to turn off your cell phones. And NO TEXTING!
- Please stay in your seat. Use the restroom before you take your seat and stay in your seat unless there is an emergency.
- Please do not eat or drink in the theater.

### **Talkback**

After the performance, the actors will stay on stage for about 10 minutes to hear your comments and answer any questions you have about the play and the production. We'd love to hear what you felt about the play, what things were clear or unclear to you, and hear your opinions about what the play means. This last portion of the Actor/Audience Relationship is so important to help us better serve you and enrich your artistic experience.

Consider the Themes and Key Questions above and ask yourself:

1. What Key Questions did the play answer?
2. Do you agree with everything the play said about these themes?
3. How did the actors, directors, and designers all address these themes?
4. What opinion did the artists bring to the process, did those opinion change throughout the process (designing, rehearsing, performing) and how did that impact their work?

# A Christmas Carol

## About the Story

### Summary

A mean-spirited, miserly old man named Ebenezer Scrooge sits in his counting-house on a frigid Christmas Eve. His clerk, Bob Cratchit, shivers in the anteroom because Scrooge refuses to spend money on heating coals for a fire. Scrooge's nephew, Fred, pays his uncle a visit and invites him to his annual Christmas party. Two portly gentlemen also drop by and ask Scrooge for a contribution to their charity. Scrooge reacts to the holiday visitors with bitterness and venom, spitting out an angry "Bah! Humbug!" in response to his nephew's "Merry Christmas!"



Later that evening, after returning to his dark, cold apartment, Scrooge receives a chilling visitation from the ghost of his dead partner, Jacob Marley. Marley, looking haggard and pallid, relates his unfortunate story. As punishment for his greedy and self-serving life his spirit has been condemned to wander the Earth weighted down with heavy chains. Marley hopes to save Scrooge from sharing the same fate. Marley informs Scrooge that three spirits will visit him during each of the next three nights. After the wraith disappears, Scrooge collapses into a deep sleep.

He wakes moments before the arrival of the Ghost of Christmas Past, a strange childlike phantom

with a brightly glowing head. The spirit escorts Scrooge on a journey into the past to previous Christmases from the curmudgeon's earlier years. Invisible to those he watches, Scrooge revisits his childhood school days, his apprenticeship with a jolly merchant named Fezziwig, and his engagement to Belle, a woman who leaves Scrooge because his lust for money eclipses his ability to love another. Scrooge, deeply moved, sheds tears of regret before the phantom returns him to his bed.

The Ghost of Christmas Present, a majestic giant clad in a green fur robe, takes Scrooge through London to unveil Christmas as it will happen that year. Scrooge watches the large, bustling Cratchit family prepare a miniature feast in its meager home. He discovers Bob Cratchit's crippled son, Tiny Tim, a courageous boy whose kindness and humility warms Scrooge's heart. The specter then zips Scrooge to his nephew's to witness the Christmas party. Scrooge finds the jovial gathering delightful and pleads with the spirit to stay until the very end of the festivities. As the day passes, the spirit ages, becoming noticeably older. Toward the end of the day, he shows Scrooge two starved children, Ignorance and Want, living under his coat. He vanishes instantly as Scrooge notices a dark, hooded figure coming toward him.

The Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come leads Scrooge through a sequence of mysterious scenes relating to an unnamed man's recent death. Scrooge sees

businessmen discussing the dead man's riches, some vagabonds trading his personal effects for cash, and a poor couple expressing relief at the death of their unforgiving creditor. Scrooge, anxious to learn the lesson of his latest visitor, begs to know the name of the dead man. After pleading with the ghost, Scrooge finds himself in a churchyard, the spirit pointing to a grave. Scrooge looks at the headstone and is shocked to read his own name. He desperately implores the spirit to alter his fate, promising to renounce his insensitive, avaricious ways and to honor Christmas with all his heart. Whoosh! He suddenly finds himself safely tucked in his bed.



Overwhelmed with joy by the chance to redeem himself and grateful that he has been returned to Christmas Day, Scrooge rushes out onto the street hoping to share his newfound Christmas spirit. He sends a giant Christmas turkey to the Cratchit house and attends Fred's party, to the stifled surprise of the other guests. As the years go by, he holds true to his promise and honors Christmas with all his heart: he treats Tiny Tim as if he were his own child, provides lavish gifts for the poor, and treats his fellow human beings with kindness, generosity, and warmth.

# *A Christmas Carol*

## About the Play

### Meet the Characters of the Story

**Ebenezer Scrooge** - The miserly owner of a London counting-house, a nineteenth century term for an accountant's office. The three spirits of Christmas visit the stodgy bean-counter in hopes of reversing Scrooge's greedy, cold-hearted approach to life.

**Bob Cratchit** - Scrooge's clerk, a kind, mild, and very poor man with a large family. Though treated harshly by his boss, Cratchit remains a humble and dedicated employee.

**Tiny Tim** - Bob Cratchit's young son, crippled from birth. Tiny Tim is a highly sentimentalized character who Dickens uses to highlight the tribulations of England's poor and to elicit sympathy from his middle and upper class readership.

**Jacob Marley** - In the living world, Ebenezer Scrooge's equally greedy partner. Marley died seven years before the narrative opens. He appears to Scrooge as a ghost condemned to wander the world bound in heavy chains. Marley hopes to save his old partner from suffering a similar fate.

**The Ghost of Christmas Past** - The first spirit to visit Scrooge, a curiously childlike apparition with a glowing head. He takes Scrooge on a tour of Christmases in his past. The spirit uses a cap to dampen the light emanating from his head.

**The Ghost of Christmas Present** - The second spirit to visit Scrooge, a majestic giant clad in a green robe. His lifespan is restricted to Christmas Day. He escorts Scrooge on a tour of his contemporaries' Holiday celebrations.

**The Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come** - The third and final spirit to visit Scrooge, a silent phantom clad in a hooded black robe. He presents Scrooge with an ominous view of his lonely death.

**Fred** - Scrooge's nephew, a genial man who loves Christmas. He invites Scrooge to his Christmas party each and every year, only to be refused by his grumpy uncle.

**Fezziwig** - The jovial merchant with whom the young Scrooge apprenticed. Fezziwig was renowned for his wonderful Christmas parties.

**Belle** - A beautiful woman who Scrooge loved deeply when he was a young man. Belle broke off their engagement after Scrooge became consumed with greed and the lust for wealth. She later married another man.

**Fan** - Scrooge's sister; Fred's mother. In Scrooge's vision of Christmases past, he remembers Fan picking him up from school and walking him home.





# *A Christmas Carol*

## About the Play

### Meet the Characters of the Play

**FATHER** - A large older man who wants to tell a ghost story to his children. Jovial and fun loving, but keeps bringing the family back to the point of the story, when they stray.

Portrays CHARITY COLLECTOR 1, FEZZIWIG, XMAS PRESENT, OLD JOE

**MOTHER** - Very much like one of her characters, Mrs. Fezziwig, she is bright, ebullient and fun loving. Portrays CHARITY COLLECTOR # 2, MRS. FEZZIWIG, MRS. CRACHIT, PARTY GUEST CHARWOMAN

**BROTHER!**- The unmarried brother of Father, he tries to assist Father and Mother with the children. Can have his hopes dashed. Portrays BOB CRACHIT, MARLEY, FEZZIWIG GUEST 1, TOPPER

**SON** - Like most of his characters, he has a cheery disposition. It is very hard to get him down. Loves the words of the story. Portrays FRED, XMAS PAST, QUARRELER #2, PETER

**DAUGHTER** - A bit more cynical of a story teller, she chides the others. A realist. Portrays FEZZIWIG GUEST 2, BELLE, QUARRELER #1, MARTHA, FRED'S WIFE, LAUNDRESS

**LITTLE SON** - Very young. His first time hearing the Christmas story. Often the story is being told to him, he participates when he can with enthusiasm. Portrays BOY SINGER, TINY TIM, IGNORANCE, TURKEY BOY

**LITTLE DAUGHTER** - Full of hope, but also a bit sassy, a teenager.

Portrays FAN, FEZZIWIG GUEST 3, BELINDA, FRED'S GUEST, WANT, LAUNDRESS

**GRANDFATHER** - Hopefully we see him as only Scrooge and not a family member until the end, when he joins the Christmas party as the fun loving paternal

Grandfather figure. Portrays SCROOGE



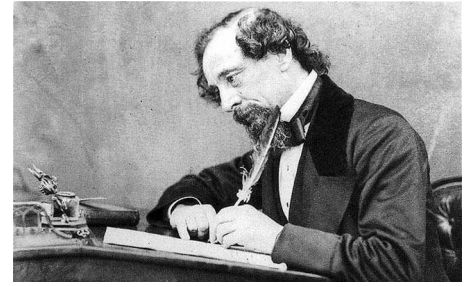
# A Christmas Carol

## About the Play

### Meet the Author of the Story

**Charles Dickens** is much loved for his great contribution to classic English literature. He was the quintessential Victorian author. His epic stories, vivid characters and exhaustive depiction of contemporary life are unforgettable.

His own story is one of rags to riches. He was born in Portsmouth on 7 February 1812, to John and Elizabeth Dickens. The good fortune of being sent to school at the age of nine was short-lived because his father, inspiration for the character of Mr Micawber in 'David Copperfield', was imprisoned for bad debt. The entire family, apart from Charles, were sent to Marshalsea along with their patriarch. Charles was sent to work in Warren's blacking factory and endured appalling conditions as well as loneliness and despair. After three years he was returned to school, but the experience was never forgotten and became fictionalized in two of his better-known novels 'David Copperfield' and 'Great Expectations'.



Like many others, he began his literary career as a journalist. His own father became a reporter and Charles began with the journals 'The Mirror of Parliament' and 'The True Sun'. Then in 1833 he became parliamentary journalist for The Morning Chronicle. With new contacts in the press he was able to publish a series of sketches under the pseudonym 'Boz'. In April 1836, he married Catherine Hogarth, daughter of George Hogarth who edited 'Sketches by Boz'. Within the same month came the publication of the highly successful 'Pickwick Papers', and from that point on there was no looking back for Dickens.

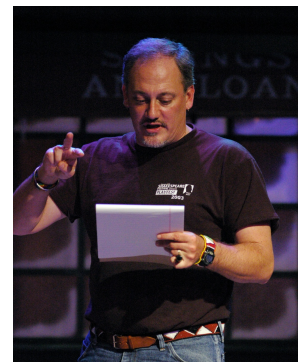
As well as a huge list of novels he published autobiography, edited weekly periodicals including 'Household Words' and 'All Year Round', wrote travel books and administered charitable organizations. He was also a theatre enthusiast, wrote plays and performed before Queen Victoria in 1851. His energy was inexhaustible and he spent much time abroad - for example lecturing against slavery in the United States and touring Italy with companions Augustus Egg and Wilkie Collins, a contemporary writer who inspired Dickens' final unfinished novel 'The Mystery of Edwin Drood'.

He was estranged from his wife in 1858 after the birth of their ten children, but maintained relations with his mistress, the actress Ellen Ternan. He died of a stroke in 1870. He is buried at Westminster Abbey.

## Meet the Playwright

**Jim Helsinger** has directed many Orlando Shakespeare Theater productions including *The Life and Adventures of Nicholas Nickleby*, *Titus Andronicus*, *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, *Crime and Punishment*, *Every Christmas Story Ever Told*, *The Imaginary Invalid*, *Tartuffe*, *The Comedy of Errors*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Richard III*, *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, *The Taming of the Shrew*, *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare (Abridged)*, *The Curate Shakespeare: As You Like It*, and *Hamlet*.

Other directing credits include The Actor's Theatre of Louisville (*A Tuna Christmas* and *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare (Abridged)*), Pennsylvania Shakespeare Festival (*The Mystery of Irma Vep*, *Sleuth*, *Imaginary Invalid*, *Charley's Aunt* and *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare (Abridged)*), Florida Studio Theatre (*Good Evening*) Cape May Stage (*The Big Bang*, *Stones in His Pockets*, *King Mackerel* and *the Blues are Running and The Fourposter*).



As a playwright, he is the author of *Robinson Crusoe*; *A Christmas Carol in Five Parts*; *The Trial of Joan the Maid*; *Frankenstein*, *the Modern Prometheus*; and *Dracula: The Journal of Jonathan Harker*. As an actor he has appeared in the titles roles of *Henry V*, *Cyrano De Bergerac*, *Oscar Wilde*, *Dracula*, and *Hamlet*.

Jim is also a member of the Shakespeare Theatre Association of America (STAA), the National Theatre Conference (NTC), Actor's Equity Association (AEA), the Screen Actor's Guild (SAG), and the American Federation of Radio and Television Artists (AFTRA). He holds a BA from Miami University (Ohio), and an MFA from the Alabama Shakespeare Festival/University of Alabama - Professional Actor Training Program.



# A Christmas Carol

## About the Play

### Glossary

**'Change** - The Royal Exchange, London's financial center

**"Nuts" to** - If something is "Nuts" to someone, it gives them pleasure

**counting-house** - Business office

**humbug** - Nonsense

**workhouses** - Publicly supported institutions to which the sick, destitute, aged, and otherwise impoverished went for food and shelter

**half a crown** - a British coin equal to 2-1/2 shillings, or 30 pence

**next morning** - Boxing Day, the day after Christmas, did not become a legal holiday in Britain until 1871

**great-coat** - overcoat worn outdoors, often accompanied by a short cape worn over the shoulders

**blindman's-buff** - popular parlor game in which the contestant is blindfolded and then must catch another player and then guess who he had caught

**fancy** - creative imagination

**gruel** - cheap food made by boiling a small amount of oatmeal in a large amount of water

**cravat** - a fine scarf worn around the neck and tied in a bow

**waistcoat** - a vest

**kerchief** - the head of the dead was wrapped to keep the mouth closed

**apprenticed** - bound by agreement to work for another for a specific amount of time usually seven years in return for instruction in a trade, art or business

**forfeits** - group of popular parlor games in which play goes round the room with each player needing to supply an answer and is penalized if an answer is not supplied

**Bob** - Cockney slang for shilling, Cratchit earns 15 shillings a week

**blood-horse** - racehorse

**fetch the goose** - The homes of the poor were equipped with open fireplaces for heat and cooking but not with ovens. Thus many, like the Cratchits, took their Christmas goose or turkey to the baker's shop. Bakers were forbidden to open on Sunday's and holidays but would open their shops on these days to the poor and bake their dinners for a small fee.

**twopence** - two pennies, pronounced tuppence

**five and sixpence** - five shillings and six pennies, or 5 and a half shillings shilling=12 pence

**milliner** - maker of women's hats: long hours, low pay

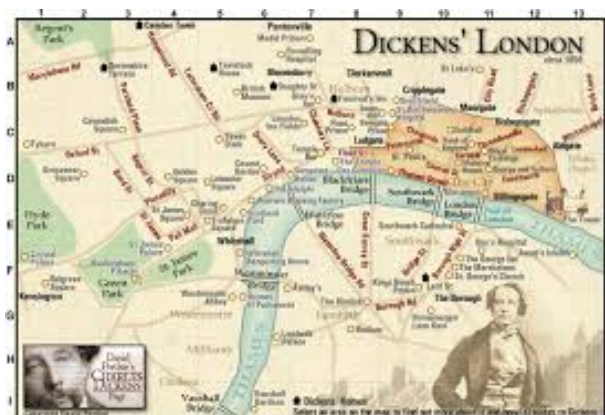
**menagerie** - collection of wild animals held in cages; a zoo

**charwoman** - a cleaning woman, from the root for "chore"

**poulterer** - butcher who deals in fowl, mainly chicken and turkey

**Walk-ER** - Cockney exclamation of disbelief

[http://charlesdickenspage.com/carol-dickens\\_reading\\_text.html#change](http://charlesdickenspage.com/carol-dickens_reading_text.html#change)



# A Christmas Carol

## About the Play

### Historical Context

#### The Poor

The Victorian answer to dealing with the poor and indigent was the New Poor Law, enacted in 1834. Previously it had been the burden of the parishes to take care of the poor.

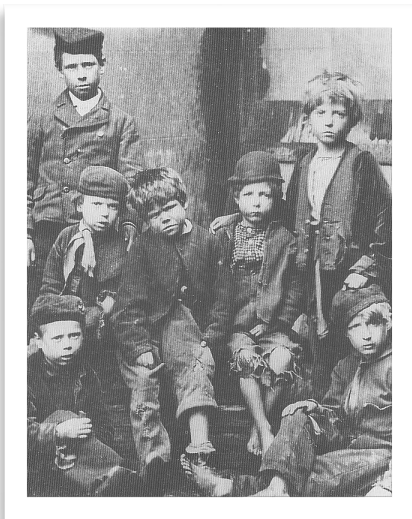
The new law required parishes to band together and create regional workhouses where aid could be applied for. The workhouse was little more than a prison for the poor. Civil liberties were denied, families were separated, and human dignity was destroyed. The true poor often went to great lengths to avoid this relief.

Dickens, because of the childhood trauma caused by his father's imprisonment for debt and his consignment to the blacking factory to help support his family, was a true champion to the poor. He repeatedly pointed out the atrocities of the system through his novels.

Journalist Henry Mayhew chronicled the plight of the London poor in articles originally written for the *Morning Chronicle* and later collected in *London Labour and the London Poor* (1851).

With the turn of the century and Queen Victoria's death in 1901 the Victorian period came to a close. Many of the ills of the 19th century were remedied through education, technology and social reform... and by the social consciousness raised by the immensely popular novels of Dickens.

[charlesdickenspage.com](http://charlesdickenspage.com)



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*Report of Dr. Parre and Mr. Grainger*

No. 16.

*Wapping Workhouse of the Stepney Union.*

(Visited 22 February.)

**Numbers.**

This constitutes the fourth house of the Stepney Union. It is used for the able-bodied and infirm women. The number of inmates at present is 386, of whom 33 are infants, 17 being at the breast. The limit of this house is 380; this was greatly exceeded in April last, when the numbers reached 460.

**Dormitories crowded.**

Some of the dormitories in this house appear to be crowded. The large dormitory, No. 20, has three rows of double beds, and eight of these contain three women in each. The same is the case also in ward 27. These and other sleeping apartments have no means for receiving the air at night, except a small moving fanlight over the door of each, but these at night would be closed; they should be removed and fixed hoppers substituted.

**No alterations since 1848.**

The general arrangements remain the same as in 1848. It is said that the water-closet with a trap cannot be employed in this house, on account of the mischievous character of the inmates, which would also prevent those kinds suggested in the Report from being used. Nor is there any power over the adjoining houses to abate the nuisance mentioned in the Report as arising from the privies in the adjoining houses; but it is said that the nuisance has been diminished by the addition of a drain.

**Dietary.**

The same dietary, with slight variation, is employed for the three adult houses of this union; viz.—

For breakfast; gruel, and 5 oz. to 7 oz. of bread.

Dinner; three days, meat 5 oz. to 6 oz., and potatoes, half to three-quarters of a pound.

„ three days, soup 1 pint to 1½ pint.

„ one day, suet or rice pudding.

Supper; bread, 5 oz. to 7 oz.; cheese or butter; gruel or broth.

At the Ratcliffe House tea is used instead of gruel, night and morning.

At Wapping and Mile End the same to all above 60, and to women nursing.

It

House of Commons Parliamentary Papers Online.

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Workhouse Article - House of Commons  
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# A Christmas Carol

## Activities

### Page to Stage

Bringing a story to life on stage is difficult. It sometimes means cutting out events, storylines and even whole characters. Our playwright turned some of Dickens' prose into narration for the actors, interspersing it with lines spoken by the characters in the story.

#### Read this excerpt from the story.

Now, it is a fact, that there was nothing at all particular about the knocker on the door, except that it was very large. It is also a fact, that Scrooge had seen it, night and morning, during his whole residence in that place; also that Scrooge had as little of what is called fancy about him as any man in the city of London, even including -- which is a bold word -- the corporation, aldermen, and livery. Let it also be borne in mind that Scrooge had not bestowed one thought on Marley, since his last mention of his seven years' dead partner that afternoon. And then let any man explain to me, if he can, how it happened that Scrooge, having his key in the lock of the door, saw in the knocker, without its undergoing any intermediate process of change -- not a knocker, but Marley's face.

Marley's face. It was not in impenetrable shadow as the other objects in the yard were, but had a dismal light about it, like a bad lobster in a dark cellar. It was not angry or ferocious, but looked at Scrooge as Marley used to look: with ghostly spectacles turned up on its ghostly forehead. The hair was curiously stirred, as if by breath or hot air; and, though the eyes were wide open, they were perfectly motionless. That, and its livid colour, made it horrible; but its horror seemed to be in spite of the face and beyond its control, rather than a part or its own expression.

As Scrooge looked fixedly at this phenomenon, it was a knocker again.

To say that he was not startled, or that his blood was not conscious of a terrible sensation to which it

had been a stranger from infancy, would be untrue. But he put his hand upon the key he had

relinquished, turned it sturdily, walked in, and lighted his candle.

He did pause, with a moment's irresolution, before he shut the door; and he did look cautiously behind it first, as if he half-expected to be terrified with the sight of Marley's pigtail sticking out into the hall. But there was nothing on the back of the door, except the screws and nuts that held the knocker on, so he said "Pooh, pooh!" and closed it with a bang.

#### Now compare it with the same scene from the play:

FATHER:" Now, it is a fact, that there was nothing at all particular about the knocker on the door, except that it was very large.

LITTLE DAUGHTER: It is also a fact, that Scrooge had seen it, night and morning, during his whole residence in that place.

MOTHER: And it is also a fact that Scrooge had not bestowed one thought on Marley for seven years. Then explain to me how it happened that Scrooge saw in the knocker, not a knocker, but...

BROTHER (MARLEY): Scrooge! GRANDFATHER: Marley's face!

SON: To say that he was not startled, would be untrue. But he put his hand upon the key, turned it sturdily, walked in, and lighted his candle.

GRANDFATHER: Pooh, pooh!

1. What are some things the playwright did to turn the story into the play?
2. What details are included in the narrative that are not in the play? Did the actors convey those things in the way they acted the scene? How?
3. Dickens sets an ominous, scary tone in his writing. In the production you saw, what did the director, actors and designers do to set the same tone? Did they succeed? If not, why not?



# A Christmas Carol Activities

## Write a Review

Explain to students that the director's job is to take the words on the script from the printed page to the stage and bring them to life. Explain that theater critics review shows and publish their opinions. For [AmericanTheatreCritics.org](http://AmericanTheatreCritics.org), critic Sherry Eaker wrote, "My point of view was that it wasn't the theatre critic's place to tell the playwright what he or she should be doing; instead, the critic should focus on what is already there and explain either why it works or why it doesn't work."

After seeing the production, have each student write a review of Orlando Shakes' production. The review should include one paragraph each for:

- Introduction – What did you watch, where and when, and maybe, why?
- The script – Did you like the writing, the story, the characters? Why or why not?
- The acting – Did you believe and care about the characters as portrayed? Why or why not?
- The design – Did you like the set, costume and light designs? Why or why not?
- The staging – How did the director stage the violence? Was it effective?
- The audience – What ways did the audience respond to particular moments?
- Conclusion – What will you remember about this performance?

If you wish, send your reviews to us at: [anneh@orlandoshakes.org](mailto:anneh@orlandoshakes.org)

We'd love to hear your opinions of our show!

Read more: How to Become a Theater Critic | [eHow.com http://www.ehow.com/how\\_2079002\\_become-theater-critic.html#ixzz1v9tEyMnc](http://www.ehow.com/how_2079002_become-theater-critic.html#ixzz1v9tEyMnc)



# A Christmas Carol

## Discussion and Themes

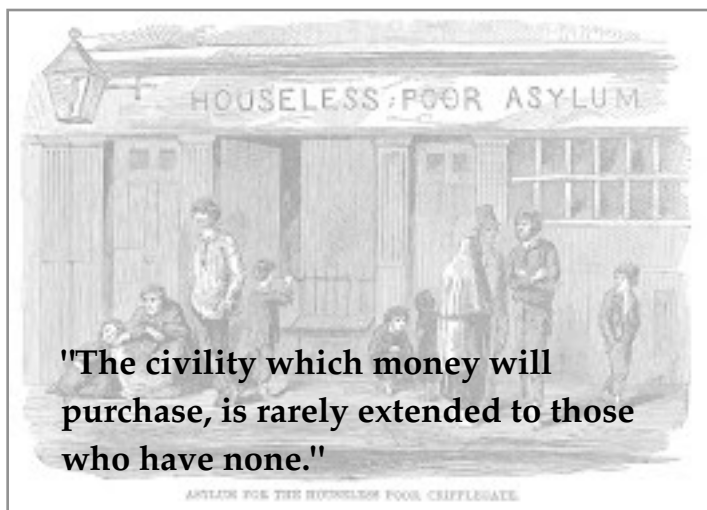
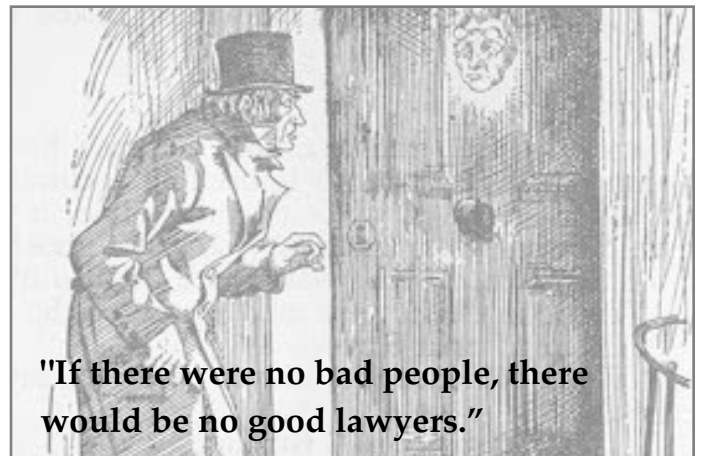
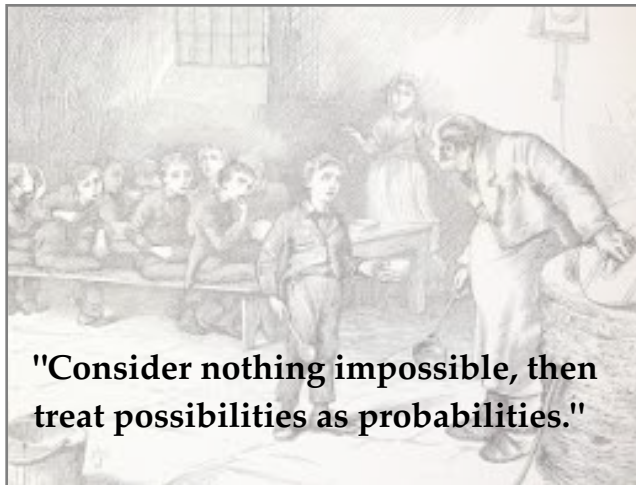
### Themes

Forgiveness - Who must Scrooge forgive in order to be transformed? Is it harder to forgive someone else or ourselves?

Redemption - What are the steps of Scrooge's redemption? Is anyone besides Scrooge redeemed in the story?

Social Change - Should we all take responsibility for social ills and poverty, or should it be "every man for himself?"

**Pick one of these Charles Dickens quotes and explain whether or not it is true today:**



### Supplemental Resources & Bibliography

<http://www.charles-dickens.com>

<http://www.readbookonline.net>

[classiclit.about.com](http://classiclit.about.com)

[www.dickensmuseum.com](http://www.dickensmuseum.com)

[www.dickens.port.ac.uk](http://www.dickens.port.ac.uk)

[www.telegraph.co.uk](http://www.telegraph.co.uk)