



trinity rep

STUDY GUIDE

A Christmas Carol

By Charles Dickens
with original music by
Richard Cumming



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Prepared by Trinity Rep's Education Department and Joi Wright

All photos are from past Trinity Rep productions of *A Christmas Carol*

Pictured of Cover:
Jude Sandy,
Costume by Amanda Downing Carney
Photo by Michael Guy

Designed by Zö Pezzano



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Brian McEleny as Scrooge, 2016

Theater Etiquette

Please read carefully and go over with your classes before the show

Teachers:

Speaking to your students about theater etiquette is ESSENTIAL. Students should be aware that this is a live performance and that they should not talk during the show. If you do nothing else to prepare your students to see the play, please take some time to talk to them about theater etiquette in an effort to help the students better appreciate their experience. It will enhance their enjoyment of the show and allow other audience members to enjoy the experience. The questions below can help guide your discussions. Thank you for your help and enjoy the show!

Etiquette:

What is the role of an audience in a live performance? How is it different from seeing a film? Why can't you chew gum or eat popcorn at a live theater performance? Why can't you talk? What can happen at a live theater performance that can't happen in cinema? Reiterate that students may not chew gum or talk during the performance. Please make sure all cell phones or other devices that may create sound are off. Recording devices and cameras are strictly prohibited. If there is a disturbance, they will be asked to leave and the class will not be invited back to the theater. Students are not permitted to leave the building during intermission.





2019–20 Season at the Lederer Theater Center
under the direction of

Curt Columbus
The Arthur P. Solomon and
Sally E. Lapidés Artistic Director

Tom Parrish
Executive Director

A Christmas Carol

by **Charles Dickens**
with original music by Richard Cumming

THE ARTISTIC TEAM

Directed by **Kate Bergstrom**
Music Direction by **Michael Rice**
Choreography by **Taavon Gamble**
Set Design by **Patrick Lynch**
Costume Design by **Olivera Gajic**
Lighting Design by **Barbara Samuels**
Sound Design by **Broken Chord**
Production Stage Managed by **Meg Tracy Leddy***

November 7 – December 29, 2019
in the Elizabeth and Malcolm Chace Theater

A Christmas Carol will be performed **with one intermission.**

Presented by **Cardi's**
FURNITURE & MATTRESSES

Supporting Sponsor **Amica**
AUTO HOME LIFE

Media Sponsors **B101** **coast93.3**

This production is dedicated to Stephen Hamblett
and his love for the story of A Christmas Carol, and to longtime
friend Nick Cardi, who embodied the spirit of Christmas
in his life and work.

Trinity Rep's 56th Season is sponsored by



Supporting Season Sponsor **PT PROVIDENCE TOURISM COUNCIL**

Trinity Rep gratefully acknowledges the past support of the B.B. Lederer
Sons Foundation, the State of Rhode Island, and the City of Providence.

Southwest Southwest is the official airline of Trinity Rep.

PLEASE TURN OFF cell phones and alarms during the performance.
Texting and cell phone use are limited to intermission, outside the
theater. **Photography, videotaping, and/or other video or audio
recording of the performance by any means are strictly prohibited.**

ON THE COVER: JUDE SANDY • COSTUMES BY AMANDA DOWNING CARNEY
BACKGROUND PHOTO BY MARK TUREK • IMAGE BY MICHAEL GUY

THE CAST

STAVE I: MARLEY'S GHOST

Ebenezer Scrooge **Jude Sandy**‡**
Jacob Marley **Taavon Gamble***
Emily Cratchit **Danielle Dorfman**
Bob Cratchit **Ricardy Fabre***
Frederika, Niece to Scrooge **Haley Schwartz***
Solicitors for the Poor **Michael Rosas*, Stephen Thorne* ‡**
Joe, Proprietor of Tavern **Timothy Crowe**‡**
Micawber **Mauro Hantman**‡**
Caroline, Daughter of Micawber **Vivien Thorne/Lily Butler**
Mr. Dilber **Henry Hetz**

STAVE II: THE FIRST OF THE THREE SPIRITS

The Ghost of Christmas Past **A.J. Baldwin**
Schoolmaster **Timothy Crowe**‡**
Young Scrooge **Warnsey Wiggins, Jr./Anthony Davis, Jr.**
Young Fan **Elizabeth Peart/Breyannie Davis**
Charman **Mauro Hantman**‡**
Fezziwig **Rachael Warren**‡**
Dick Wilkins **Henry Hetz**
Belle **Danielle Dorfman**

STAVE III: THE SECOND OF THE THREE SPIRITS

The Ghost of Christmas Present **Rachael Warren**‡**
Martha **Claudia Rufo/Hayley Pezza**
Belinda **Elizabeth Peart/Breyannie Davis**
Peter **Warnsey Wiggins, Jr./Anthony Davis, Jr.**
Tiny Tim **Honesto Aguinaldo/Adrian Amaya**
Lucy **A.J. Baldwin**
Sister-in-Law **The Band**
Topper **Jack Dryden***
Ignorance and Want **Vivien Thorne/Lily Butler**
Karyss Williams/Rylee Donelan

STAVE IV: THE LAST OF THE THREE SPIRITS

The Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come
**Honesto Aguinaldo, Adrian Amaya, Lily Butler,
Anthony Davis, Jr., Breyannie Davis, Rylee Donelan,
Elizabeth Peart, Haley Pezza, Claudia Rufo,
Vivien Thorne, Warnsey Wiggins, Jr., Karyss Williams**
The Royal Exchange **Michael Rosas*, Stephen Thorne* ‡**

STAVE V: THE END OF IT

Turkey Gal **Karyss Williams/Rylee Donelan**

Company: A.J. Baldwin, Timothy Crowe**‡, Danielle Dorfman, Jack Dryden*, Ricardy Fabre*, Taavon Gamble*, Henry Hetz, Mauro Hantman**‡, Jude Sandy**‡, Michael Rosas*, Haley Schwartz*, Stephen Thorne**‡, Rachael Warren**‡

Musicians: Randy Cloutier, drums substitute; Dave Geer, guitar substitute; Clay Nordhill, guitar; Tessa Sacramone, violin; Mike Sartini, drums; Brent Selby, substitute cello; Jackie Ludwig Selby, cello

Children: *Please note* that there are two casts of children for this production — Red/Green in the cast list below. The cast for your performance will be announced at the beginning of the show.

Red Cast: Honesto Aguinaldo, Elizabeth Peart, Claudia Rufo, Vivien Thorne, Warnsey Wiggins, Jr., Karyss Williams

Green Cast: Adrian Amaya, Lily Butler, Anthony Davis, Jr., Breyannie Davis, Rylee Donelan, Hayley Pezza

Understudies: Myka Cue, Michael Hisamoto, Jenny Nelson, Luis Rivera, Rebecca Ann Whittaker, Tobias Wilson

Understudies never substitute for a listed player unless a specific announcement is made at the time of performance.

Production Director **Laura E. Smith**

Assistant Stage Manager **James Kane***

* Member of Actors' Equity Association, the union of professional actors & stage managers

‡ Trinity Rep Resident Acting Company member



Discussion Questions Before Seeing the Show at Trinity Rep!

What are the differences between live theater and cinema? (Two dimensional vs. three dimensional; larger than life on the screen vs. life-size; recorded vs. live, etc.) Discuss the nature of film as mass-produced, versus the one-time only nature of live performances. Talk about original art works vs. posters. Which do they feel is more valuable? Why? What is the responsibility of an audience when watching a play? What is the responsibility of an audience when watching a Shakespeare play?

Observation #1

When you get into the theater, look around. What do you see? 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.

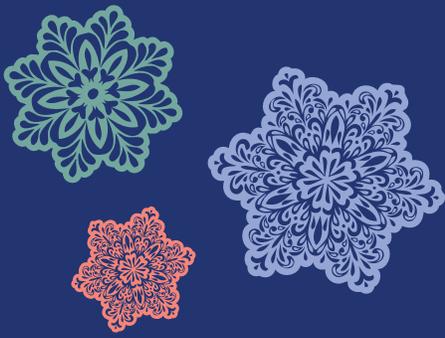
Observation #2

Discuss the elements that go into producing a live performance: The lights, set, props, costumes, and stage direction. All the people involved in the "behind the scenes" elements of the theater are working backstage as the play unfolds before the students' eyes. Tell them to be aware of this as they watch the show. Observe the lighting cues. How do special effects work? How do the actors change costumes so fast?

Pay attention to when you're excited about something on stage. What excited you? Pay attention to when you're bored. Why were you bored? What would you have done differently to make the play more interesting? Actors in a live performance are very attuned to the audience and are interested in the students' reactions to the play. Ask the students to write letters to the actors about the characters they played and to ask questions of the actors.

Send these letters to:

Trinity Repertory Company, c/o Education, 201 Washington St., Providence, RI 02903
or email to: education@trinityrep.com.



Using this Study Guide in Your Classroom

A Letter from School Partnerships Manager Matt Tibbs

Welcome to Trinity Rep and the 54th season of Project Discovery! The education staff at Trinity Rep had a lot of fun preparing this study guide, and hope that the activities included will help you incorporate the play into your academic study. It is also structured to help you to introduce performance into your classroom through the following elements:

- Community Building in Your Classroom
- Inspiration and Background on the Artist
- Entering and Comprehending Text
- Creating Text for Performance
- Performing in Your Class
- Reflecting on Your Performance

Trinity Rep's Project Discovery student matinées help high school students in the following common core areas (for more information on the National Core Arts Standards, visit <http://nationalartsstandards.org/>):

- Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 9-10 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively (CCS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.9-10.1)
- 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 theme (CCSS.RL.9-10.3)
- Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the cumulative impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone (CCSS.RL.9-10.4)
- Investigate how cultural perspectives, community ideas, and personal beliefs impact a drama/theatre work (TH: Cn10.1.1.)
- Analyze and compare artistic choices developed from personal experiences in multiple drama/theatre works (TH: Re8.1.1.)
- Respond to what is seen, felt, and heard in a drama/theatre work to develop criteria for artistic choices (TH: Re7.1.1.)
- Evaluate and analyze problems and situations in a drama/ theatre work from an audience perspective (TH: Re9.1.1)

Enjoy the show!

Matt Tibbs





Unit One: Background Information

A Conversation with the Director: Kate Bergstrom

Joi Wright: What do you like most about working on this production?

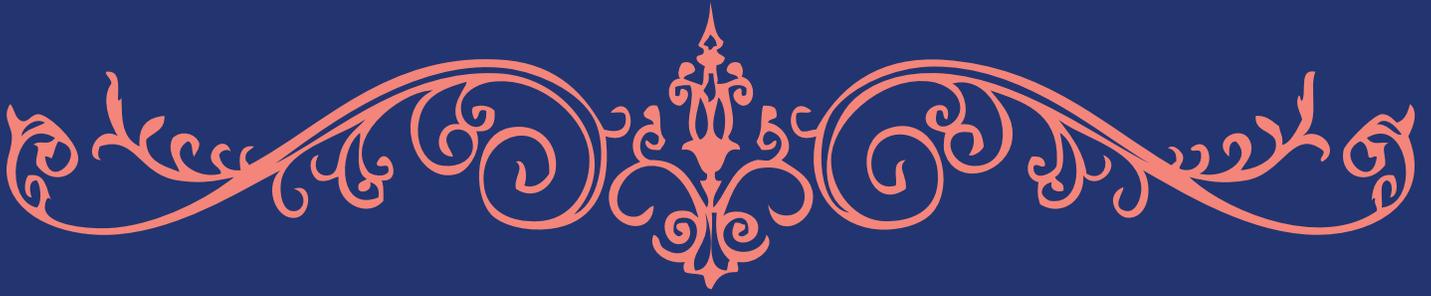
Kate Bergstrom: Honestly: I've loved every single thing about working on this production. I like telling this incredible, classic story. Dickens is a formidable voice -- an imaginary and brilliant writer who wanted more for the future of his country than dehumanizing its most vulnerable citizens: its children. His proposition to be together better is both timeless and timely in our national moment. However, there is no telling this story without this incredible team of collaborators -- who make this process a dream -- who bring this story to life with grace, grit and glee. It continues to be a gift working with the entire company of the production onstage and off.

JW: What has been one of the hardest challenges of directing this production?

KB: I want the story to feel provocative, moving and fresh -- like no one has ever heard it before -- while honoring the important traditional ritual of resurrecting and re-claiming the providencian tradition for the community every year. It is a fine line to tread -- maintaining the integrity of the Dickensian 1843 victorian world, the language and rich culture it implies, the theatricality and the need I feel for this story to feel like it is crucial and present with us in our fabric and being right now. We are treading a new path this year, as each creative team does every year -- one that I hope is inviting, provocative, intersectional, sensually astounding, highly theatrical and moving for all ages.

I'd say the challenge is to make sure we in the room and we -- the community -- do not take for granted the ending to a story we think we've got in the bag. This story must be transformative -- a call to action for makers and receivers alike. This a story many people have heard in various iterations for their entire lives. How can we see the intersectionality, humanity and journey anew within Dickens' world and our own? How can we not take one another for granted? How can we see ourselves in Scrooge? What was at stake if Scrooge chose not to





reform in the story? What is at stake if we choose not to live fully as ourselves, if we choose not to extend a generous hand to others?

JW: What excites you most about directing this year's production of *A Christmas Carol*?

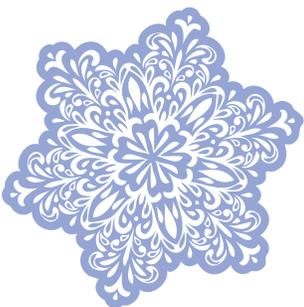
KB: Everything I've previously mentioned! I'm excited to reclaim Scrooge. Scrooge both as a man in 1843-- whose faults and foibles exist and add up and must be checked -- and as a path -- of fear, isolation and greed to which many of us in this day and age are susceptible -- no matter our age, race, gender identity or socioeconomic status. I'm excited to conjure some ghostly magic to help us rejoice in being together better.

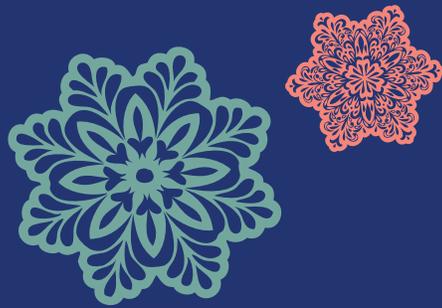
JW: What makes this year's production different from past productions?

KB: We are adding even more of the Dickensian language I love and Victorian context while using the identities of the eclectic and fabulous cast as springboards to make the story more robust, complex and resonant today. As Dickens' Christmas spirits are immortal, what might that mean for how we would understand them today? In terms of production -- the theatrical language is one kindred to Miranda's *Hamilton* or Cromer's *Our Town* -- the storytelling of the actor's bodies is primary -- in acting, song and dance -- with select gestures of scenic magic. I am really interested in the story's world progressing along with its protagonist and the theatrical gestures will reflect that.

JW: Are there any secrets or sneak peeks you can let us in on?

KB: Well...get ready for a fettered theatrical scare, a multiplicity of musical ghosts, and, perhaps, a reckoning with the younger self you may have left behind years ago..





Biography of Dickens

(1812 – 1870)

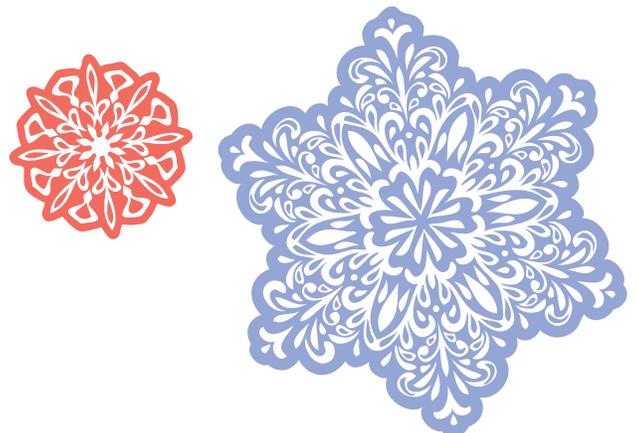
In his childhood, Charles Dickens (1812-1870) experienced first-hand the effects of poverty and suffering. His early education was interrupted at the age of twelve, when his father was sent to prison for debt. His entire family was imprisoned at Marshalsea in London, and the young Charles was sent to work in a boot-blackening factory, alone and miserable, living and working in atrocious conditions. However, after three years Dickens was able to return to school, and from there he went on to become a clerk in a law office. In 1828 he started working as a freelance journalist, a job which eventually developed into the illustrious career as a well-known journalist, novelist, and playwright.

Dickens achieved literary fame with novels such as *David Copperfield*, *A Tale of Two Cities*, and *Great Expectations*. These works focused on timeless themes that spoke to the Victorian society as much as they do to modern readers: the importance of friendship and family, helping the poor or suffering, and being compassionate to strangers and loved ones alike. These ideas were explored through the social issues of his time, like poverty and child labor, using vivid and enchanting characters; Scrooge, Tiny Tim, Oliver, and the Artful Dodger are all still memorable cultural symbols today. With the success of his writing career, Dickens was able to travel broadly and establish himself as a philanthropist, embodying the compassion for suffering that is the main theme of his works.

Despite Dickens's frequent criticism of organized religion and religious dogma, he loved celebrating Christmas. Of the Christmas following the publication of *A Christmas Carol*, Dickens wrote in a letter, 'Such dinings, such dancings, such conjurings, such blindman's bluffings, such theater-goings, such kissingsout of old years and kissings-in of new ones never took place in these parts before.'

After *A Christmas Carol*, Dickens wrote another Christmas book, *The Chimes*, for Christmas 1844. Dickens wrote three more Christmas books and many Christmas stories. He edited two magazines, *Household Words*, and *All the Year Round*, which published annual Christmas numbers for which he wrote and edited stories. Writing about Christmas and, later, giving readings from the Carol were important sources of income for Dickens for the rest of his life. It is possible that Dickens sometimes regretted this relentless association with the holiday. In a letter to his daughter Mamie he wrote that he felt as if he 'had murdered a Christmas a number of years ago, and its ghost perpetually haunted me.'"

In 1836, Dickens married Catherine Hogarth, with whom he went on to have 10 children. He continued to travel the world and work as a writer, speaker, and philanthropist until June of 1870, when he suffered a stroke and passed away. His last novel, *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*, remained unfinished with the identity of the murderer still unknown. Dickens was buried at Westminster Abbey alongside Geoffrey Chaucer, Ben Jonson, Edmund Spenser, and many other prestigious writers.







Plot Synopsis

The story begins with Ebenezer Scrooge, working at his office on a cold, snowy Christmas Eve with his clerk, Bob Cratchit. Two men come into the office and ask Scrooge to make a donation for people in need. Scrooge points out that he already supports prisons and workhouses through his taxes and refuses to contribute any more. After the men leave, Scrooge's niece, Fredrika, comes to the office to invite Scrooge to have Christmas dinner with her family. Scrooge tells her to go away and take her Christmas spirit with her. After resentfully granting Cratchit Christmas day off, Scrooge goes out, but not before he crosses paths with Tiny Tim singing Christmas carols. Scrooge advises him against singing and encourages him to focus his passions on more lucrative endeavors.

When Scrooge gets to his front door, he is shocked and terrified to see not the knocker on the door, but the face of Jacob Marley. He jumps back but then shakes it off, thinking it was just his imagination. Once in his home, suddenly the bells in the house begin to chime in unison and Scrooge hears the sound of dragging chains in the cellar. The ghost of Jacob Marley appears, heavy with chains. Marley warns Scrooge that three more spirits will visit him before the night is over, and Scrooge must listen to them if he wants to change his fate.

When the clock chimes one, the Ghost of Christmas Past appears. The spirit shows Scrooge his own lonely childhood and his sister Fan, who was his only friend. Then Scrooge watches himself as a happy young man at a Christmas Party with Mr. Fezziwig, his first employer. Finally, the spirit shows him the moment when Scrooge's fiancée, Belle, left him because he cared more about money than about her. She is now married to Dick and they have a lovely family.

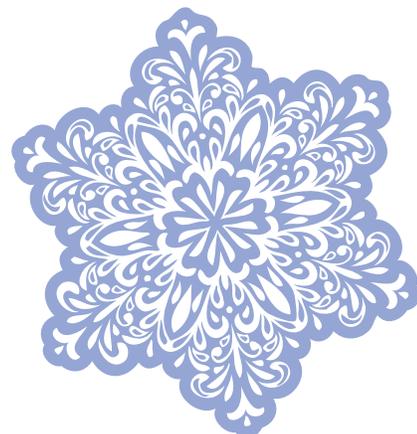
As the clock strikes four, the second spirit, The Ghost of Christmas Present, arrives and whisks Scrooge to Bob Cratchit's tiny home on Christmas Day. Cratchit proposes a toast to Scrooge's health, but the rest of the family makes several remarks about how stingy and mean Scrooge is. The ghost tells Scrooge that unless the future changes, Tiny Tim will die. Then the ghost takes Scrooge to a mining sight that has just dodged tragedy when all of a sudden it becomes Fredrika's party. At this party, everyone is playing games and making fun of Scrooge.





The third spirit does not speak but Scrooge guesses correctly that he is the Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come. The spirit shows him several conversations in which people are discussing the death of a lonely old miser. The spirit brings Scrooge to a pawnshop where the dead man's clothes and household items are being sold while he lies dead and alone. Finally, the ghost brings Scrooge to his own tombstone, and he realizes that the lonely miser whose death is being celebrated rather than mourned is himself.

Scrooge awakens on Christmas Day and vows to turn over a new leaf. He sends some children to buy the huge prize turkey in the window of the poultry shop and to bring it to the Cratchits' house as a surprise. Then he goes to his niece's house and sings and dances with them. The next day when Cratchit comes in to work, Scrooge gives Cratchit a raise, and offers to be a second father to Tiny Tim and pay for his medical care. Scrooge vows to keep the spirit of Christmas alive and well for the rest of his life.





Characters

EBENEZER SCROOGE

A wealthy moneylender who is known by all as selfish and greedy

JACOB MARLEY

Scrooge's best friend and fellow moneylender, he died seven years before and is now a ghost filled with guilt and remorse

MICAWBER & MICAWBER'S DAUGHTER CAROLINE

Londoners who owe Scrooge money and cannot pay it

BOB CRATCHIT

Scrooge's clerk, a devoted and hard-working family man with little money

MRS. CRATCHIT

Bob Cratchit's wife, she dislikes Scrooge and struggles to make ends meet

MARTHA, BELINDA, PETER, AND TINY TIM

The Cratchit children. The oldest work to support the family while Tiny Tim is ill

LIL SCROOGE

Past Scrooge

SCHOOLMASTER

Scrooge's teacher in school

DICK WILKINS

Scrooge's coworker and Fezziwig's, marries Belle

FREDRIKA

Scrooge's cheerful niece, who believes in celebrating the holiday season and the goodness of others

SISTER-IN-LAW

Lucy's sister

MASONRY JO, PARTY PEOPLE, STAHLER TOP, GIB GIB, TOPPER:

Guests at Fredrika's party





TOPPER

A guest at Fredrika's and Lucy's Christmas party

FAN

Scrooge's beloved sister who died giving birth to Fredrika

MR. FEZZIWIG

Scrooge's first employer, a kind and generous Man

BELLE

The former fiancée of Scrooge

ROYAL EXCHANGE

Businessmen of London

LOW LIFE CHORUS, OLD JO, CHARWOMAN, LAUNDRESS, UNDERTAKER

Poor people of London, selling Scrooge's possessions

THE GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PAST

A spirit who represents the past years of Scrooge's life, and shows him images of events that have occurred in the past

THE GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PRESENT

A jolly spirit of the present day, showing Scrooge what's happening around him right now

THE GHOST OF CHRISTMAS YET TO COME

A darker spirit who shows Scrooge what will happen in coming years



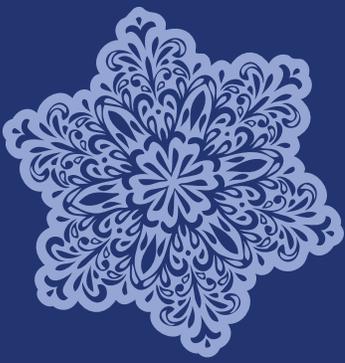


The History of English Christmas

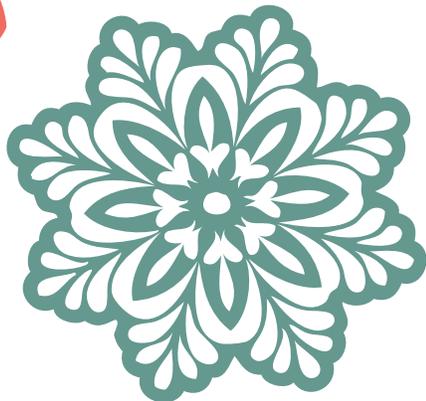
When Charles Dickens wrote *A Christmas Carol* in 1843, English Christmas traditions had been in decline for centuries. Stores and factories remained open on December 25, and many people were forced to work on Christmas Day. Pope Gregory, in 601 C.E., first promoted Christmas as a major holiday in England. In his effort to convert the Anglo-Saxons to Christianity, he urged Christian missionaries to adapt the local traditions of pagan winter festivals into a celebration of Christ's birth, which was traditionally placed around December 25. The traditional Christmas celebration that we are familiar with is primarily a mixture of pre-Christian elements: Druid Festivals, the Saxon feast called Yule, and the Roman Saturnalia, all of which celebrated the winter solstice and the return of lengthening days.

Pope Gregory and his successors did not see a conflict between pagan roots and Christian applications of the hybrid holiday. On the contrary, they hoped that by adapting the Anglo-Saxons' own traditions into the Catholic Church, they would be more likely to accept the religion. At this time, and for the next several centuries, the English lived in rural areas and rarely left the place where they grew up, which made it easier for traditions to be preserved and passed on. "Christmas" was a 12-day festival, taking place in the manor of the local lord, and included burning the Yule log, playing traditional games and telling folktales, and feasting on traditional foods. By Shakespeare's time, these Anglo-Saxon traditions had grown into elaborate Christmas revels with evenings of elaborate feasting and theatricals among the wealthy.





All of this came to a halt when the Puritans took control of the English government in 1642. The Puritans felt that Christianity should be purged of pagan elements and restored as closely as possible to the form of worship used by Jesus and the apostles. Not only did Puritan leader Oliver Cromwell close England's theaters, but also, distressed by its pagan roots, his Parliament also outlawed the holiday of Christmas. When the Puritans were finally overthrown at the end of the 17th century, and the English monarchy reestablished, the Christmas traditions were slow to reappear. Many Christmas traditions had been forgotten or survived only in rural areas and among the elderly. Dickens was one of the first of these writers not only to record the old holiday traditions in his story, but also to show his readers a way to adapt them to their modern lives. Instead of gathering an entire village, Dickens showed his readers Christmas celebrations that brought together the "nuclear family" and close friends. *A Christmas Carol* made the Christmas traditions accessible to an urban, industrial society, and evoked the childhood memories of people who had moved to the cities as adults.





Fun Facts: The Development of Christmas

- The Norse had a holiday called Yule, when the men in the family would bring home the largest log they could find and set it on fire. The Yule log burned for 12 days while the family celebrated by eating recently slaughtered cattle and collecting evergreens, the only Norse plant that could survive the winter.
- Germans had a myth in which Odin, the Germanic king of the gods, flew about deciding who would live and who would die.
- In Rome, December 25 was the winter solstice and the birthday of Mithra, the sun god. Saturnalia would begin on this holiday, and society would turn upside down.
- Though the Bible does not state the exact day Jesus was born, most scholars assume it was in the spring. However, Christ's birthday was assimilated to be on December 25, in order to align the pagan traditions with the church. Apples were hung on the tree to symbolize the Garden of Eden; they became ornaments. Holly represented Christ's crown of thorns.
- On December 25, the pious would attend "Christ's Mass" (Christmas).
- The Puritans instituted religious reform in England during the 17th century, and they attempted to legalize Christmas. The holiday went underground; since "Christmas pie" was outlawed, people changed the name to "mince pie". When the monarchy was restored, Christmas was brought back by popular demand.
- Prince Albert of Germany marries Princess Victoria, and brings his decorated, German Christmas tree with him to England.
- The Puritans sail the Mayflower to the American colonies and outlaw Christmas in their new settlement.
- John Smith celebrates Christmas in Virginia. The colonists are the first to drink eggnog.
- Following the independence of the United States, Americans reject Christmas as an English holiday.
- Washington Irving writes about Christmas, predating Dickens' *A Christmas Carol*. The American author imagined St. Nicholas flying over New York City in a large wagon, an image that became the enduring Santa Claus in his magical flying sleigh.
- Good children are given gifts on December 24, St. Nicholas Day. Bad children do not receive presents and sulk.
- Clement Clarke Moore writes *A Visit from St. Nicholas*, which famously begins, "Twas the night before Christmas..." His story inspires the belief that Santa Claus enters each home through its chimney.
- Thomas Nast, a cartoonist, sets the lasting image for Santa Claus: a jovial man with a white beard and a large stomach.
- The tale of Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer was originally written for Montgomery Ward, a department store. The story-and-coloring book was given away as Christmastime promotion.





Trinity Rep's Tradition

42 Years of Holy and Ivy, Spirits and Smiles

Just as Charles Dickens had no idea that his little book would sell 6,000 copies on its first day of publication, Trinity Rep's founding artistic director Adrian Hall and composer Richard Cumming had no idea that tickets for their premiere stage adaptation of Dickens' classic would nearly sell out before it was even written. Over four decades later, *A Christmas Carol* is Trinity Rep's favorite holiday tradition.

In 1977, Hall and Cumming wrote an adaptation with music of the Dickens novel for the stage. It was such a great success that audience demand warranted another production the following year. This challenged the company of directors, designers and actors to re-invent the story of *A Christmas Carol* each season. It remains the most anticipated and highly attended production in Trinity Rep's season, a family tradition for forty-two years... and counting!

If you were directing *A Christmas Carol*, how would YOU do it...?

A Christmas Carol has been directed in many different ways throughout its run at Trinity Rep, everything from traditional Dickensian interpretations to setting it in Rhode Island, or even making it reminiscent of a Japanese horror film, or a page from a storybook...Create a mood board for your own concept for the show! You can include drawings of the set or costumes, pictures of props, taglines, music, etc. Get creative! Include a description of why you chose your interpretation and how your original concept will best serve to tell the story.

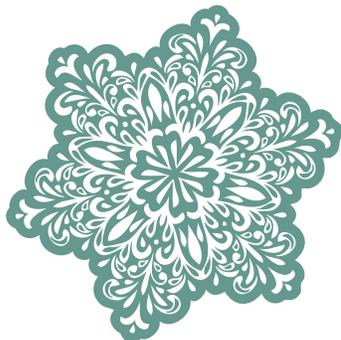
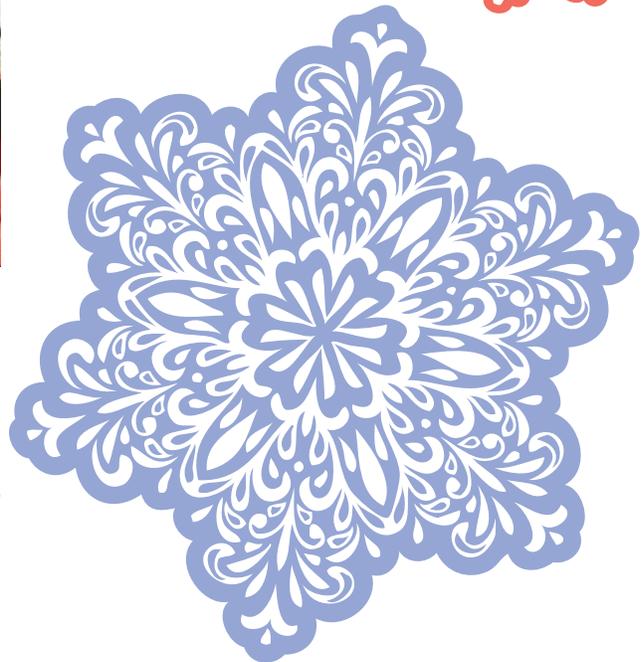
Unit Two: Entering The Text

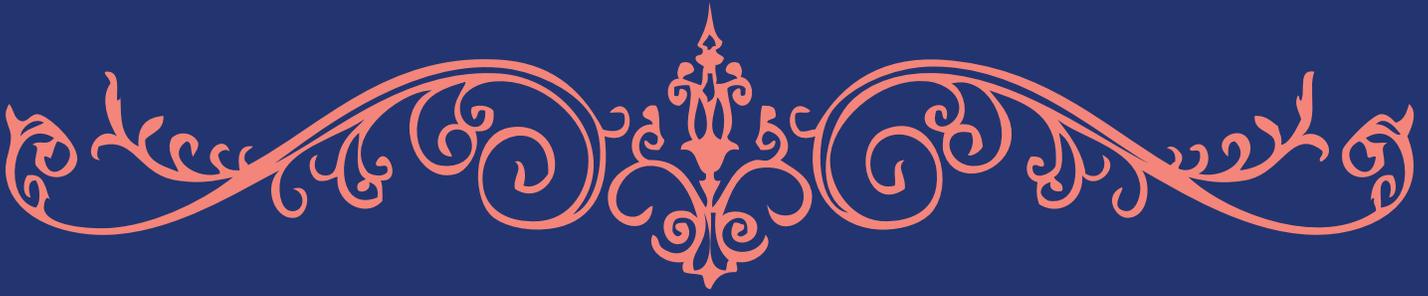
Rachael Warren



Exercise 1: Create Your own *Christmas Carol*

Create your own concept for the show! You can include drawings of the set or costumes, pictures of props, taglines, music, etc. Get creative! Include a description of why you chose your interpretation and how your original concept will best serve to tell the story.





Exercise 2: Scrooge's Journey

This exercise introduces students to the dramatic changes that happen to the character Ebenezer Scrooge in *A Christmas Carol*. Depending on the number of students in your class, assign each person one of the following lines:

1. Bah! Humbug!
2. You're poor enough. What right have you to be merry?
3. Out upon Merry Christmas!
4. What's Christmastime to you but a time for paying bills with no money?
5. Money will keep you warm. Think about money.
6. Let me hear another sound from you and you'll keep your Christmas by losing your job.
7. Are there no prisons?
8. I don't make merry myself at Christmas, and I can't afford to make idle people merry.
9. If they would rather die, they had better do it and decrease the surplus population.
10. I like darkness. Darkness is cheap.
11. Dreadful apparition, why do you trouble me?
12. I'm not a spirit, I can not fly.
13. I wish... but it's too late now.
14. The happiness he gives, is quite as great as if it cost a fortune.
15. I should like to be able to say a word or two to my clerk, Cratchit, just now.
16. Why do you delight to torture me? Spirit! Show me no more. Conduct me home!
17. Remove me! I can't bear it!
18. By tomorrow, we can put this whole ordeal behind us.
19. If you have aught to teach me, let me profit by it.
20. Spirit, tell me if Tiny Tim will live?
21. Say he will be spared!
22. Have they no refuge or resource?
23. Ghost of the Future, I fear you more than any Spectre I have seen.
24. I know your purpose is to do me good, and as I love to live to be another man from what I was, I am prepared to bear your company, and do it with a thankful heart!
25. This is a fearful place. In leaving it, I shall not leave it's lesson, trust me.
26. Are these the shadows of the things that will be, or are they shadows that may be, only?
27. I am not the man I was!
28. Why show me this if I am past all hope?
29. I will honor Christmas in my heart and try to keep it all the year.
30. I will live in the past, the present and the future. The Spirits of all three shall strive within me. I will not shut out the lessons that they teach.
31. I am as light as a feather. I am as happy as an angel and as carefree as a schoolboy.
32. I thank you fifty times! Bless you!
33. A Merry Christmas! To Everybody!
34. I'll raise your salary and endeavor to assist your struggling family.

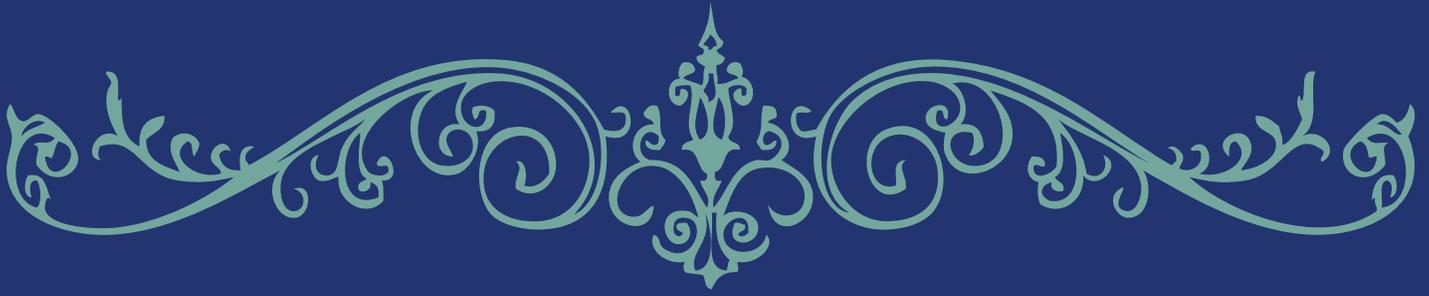
Even though each of the lines is taken out of context, the tone and the meaning of each line is very clear. Ask each reader to make a clear vocal and physical choice for each line. What might Scrooge be doing while saying the line? What might he be feeling?

Give the students a minute to rehearse their line and their action or physicalization of the line. Have the students stand in numbered order and speak their lines one after the other.

Discussion Questions:

- Can you trace the arc of Scrooge's character after completing this exercise?
- What information could you discern about Scrooge's character from your line of dialogue?
- What causes the changes in Scrooge? What made him so unpleasant in the first place?



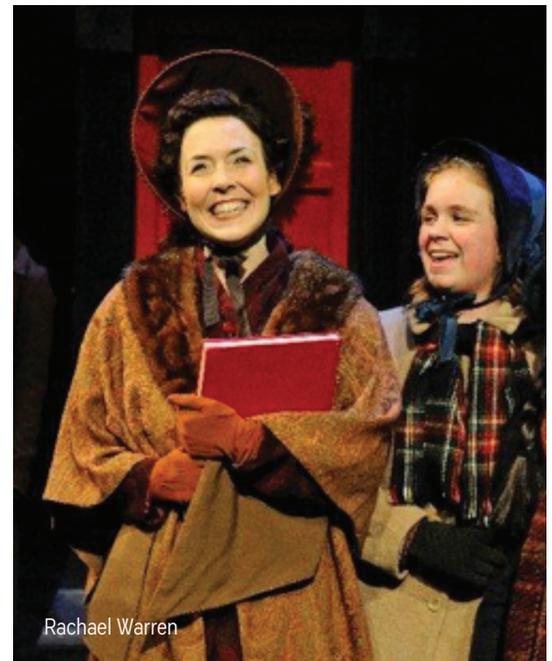


Exercise 3: Scene Study, Characters & Conflict

Although acting is a very physical art form, it is also involves a great deal of writing and reading. In order to best portray their character wants, and what is keeping that character from getting what they want. In addition, it is important to create a back-story for your character if it is not already in the script. For example, from the text, we know where Scrooge lives and how long he has lived there, but we do not know where Belle lives and how long she has lived there. It is up to the actor to fill in all the aspects of a life that the text does not supply.

For this activity, split the class up into groups and assign each group a scene (attached at the end of the study guide). Have the students go through the scene and try to create a full life for their character. Additionally, have them work to understand the driving forces in the scene making people do and say the body of the scene. Let the students read the scene once amongst each other, and ask them to build a character based off the speech patterns and responses within the scene. Once the students have read the scene and started marking down what is sticking out to them, ask the students to write a description of their *A Christmas Carol* characters. Use the following questions to prompt writing:

- What seems to be at stake?
- Is there a conflict?
- Where does this person live?
- Does the character have certain morals and values?
- What is his/her everyday behavior and mood?
- What is something he/she would never tell anyone about himself/herself?
- Does the character work for a living?
- What is his/her economic situation?
- Who takes care of him/her, and whom does he/she take care of?
- Who does he/she love? Hate? How does he/she feel about himself?
- Does the character value friendship? How old is the character?
Personal habits: nail biter? Nose picker?
- Character-mood-intensity (vital statistics on the character):
- Heartbeat: rate
- Perspiration: heavy, light, etc.
- Stomach condition: ulcers, light or heavy eater
- Speech patterns: slow, medium or fast speaker
- Posture



An Example of a Character Description:

Elvin Crumbs is a 68-year old garbage collector. He and his wife have six children and he figured that he would never get to retire. He is a small, wiry man, with large, scarred hands. His hair is fine and very white and he keeps it cut in a military crew cut. All of his children went to the best colleges, but only their third child, Charlie, stays in touch with them. Even though he complains about it, Elvin secretly loves trash collecting. He loves getting out of bed at 3:00 a.m. and especially enjoys driving the truck. He and his wife have played the same Powerball numbers every week for 11 years. Last Saturday, their numbers came up and they won 31 million dollars, but he hasn't told anyone yet.

Exercise 4: Music Match up

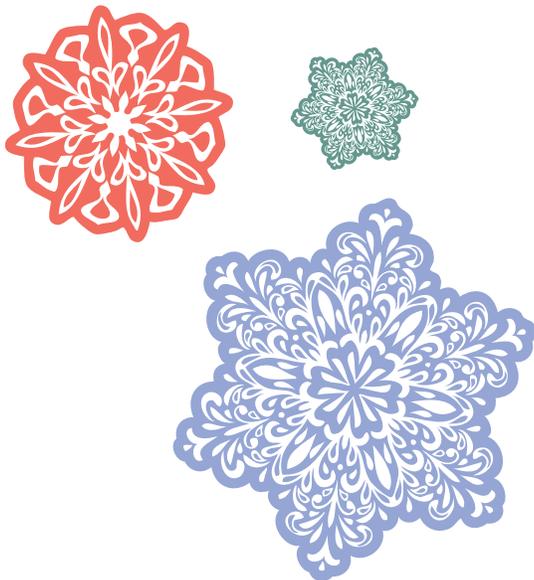
Trinity Rep's production of *A Christmas Carol* uses music throughout the show. Think about songs you would use in your production of *A Christmas Carol*; remember, this particular production can be set anywhere and have any sort of theme you want. You can use popular songs, traditional Christmas songs, or any music that you think suits your production.

Think up theme songs for some of the main characters, such as Scrooge, Tiny Tim, the Ghost of Christmas Present, or Fredrika. How is Scrooge's music different from Tiny Tim's? Do some of the characters have different theme songs by the end of the show?

How does music affect the way we feel? Decide how you want your audience to feel during certain scenes of the play and pick the music to match the tone. Think of songs for:

- A scary scene
- A suspenseful scene
- A welcoming scene
- A joyful scene
- A triumphant scene
- A surprising scene

Make a musical map, either for the show as a whole, or for one specific character's journey. Label each part of the play with different songs. How does the music change depending on what is happening in each scene?



Exercise 5: 101 ways to read a monologue

A monologue, or soliloquy, is a long speech made by one person. Sometimes it can be a challenge for a young actor to take on a piece of text and perform it on his or her own, so this activity is a way to get your students to forget their inhibitions and have fun with it.

Pick one or more of the monologues attached at the end of the packet, and hand them out to your students. You can assign or let them choose which monologue they want to do and give them a few minutes to read it over a few times and familiarize themselves with it.

In partners, let them read it out loud to one another a few times in whichever way they want to.

Pick a few brave souls to come up and read/perform their own interpretation of the monologue for the rest of the group.

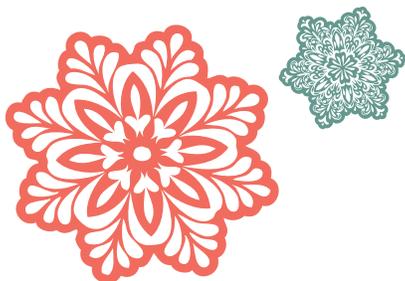
After this, using your own suggestions and those of your students, throw out different ways to read the monologue. Feel free to be as wacky as you want – this is supposed to be fun. You can filter the suggestions and pick one that you think would work and let them do it that way. Let each volunteer perform the monologue, or part of the monologue, three different ways before moving on. Some examples of different ways to read it include (but are definitely not limited to): an aerobics instructor, an army general, a drunk, someone who desperately has to go to the bathroom, a squirrel, the laziest person in the world, singing it, whispering it, telling it like it's a scary story, like an interpretive dancer, like they are in a musical, like a President, or a King...you can even use celebrity names and have them imitate them using the monologue.

After every willing student has performed, take some time to talk about what they got from it. Did it help them understand the monologue better? If so, how? Did they find that any of the interpretations, as silly as they may have been, actually worked and made some sense? Which ones, and why? How does this help them as actors?





Fred Sullivan as Mr. Fezziwig and Janice Duclos as Mrs. Fezziwig, 2015



Unit Three: Themes, Questions, and Exercises

Exercise 6: Walk the Walk

Clear room for your students and coach them to avoid eye contact with anyone and to create their own focus while moving amongst the group. Have them freeze and call out a word. Ask them to create a pose physicalizing that phrase, and hold it for a few seconds. Encourage the students to be as physical as they want, using their whole bodies and going with their first instinct! There are no wrong answers and every interpretation is valuable. Once they have held their pose for a moment, encourage them to look around and see what other students are doing (while attempting to stay as still as possible) Then ask the students to continue walking.

Some topics and phrases:

»Factory	»Fairness	»Ghosts
»Equality	»Greed	»Poor
»Celebration	»Turkey	»Mercy
»Soul	»Money	»Charity
»Injustice	»Winter	»Christmas
»Future	»Death	»Transformation

Afterward, write the words on the board and ask the students to define what each means to them.

Discussion Questions:

What words were the easiest to physicalize? Where did you struggle the most? Was there a pose a classmate did that you found interesting? Which pose felt the most honest? Which word felt the most physical? There are a lot of words in this list that mean similar things, like fairness and equality, how did those words feel different? Relating to that idea, why is this useful exercise for actors?

Exercise 7: What Do You Think?

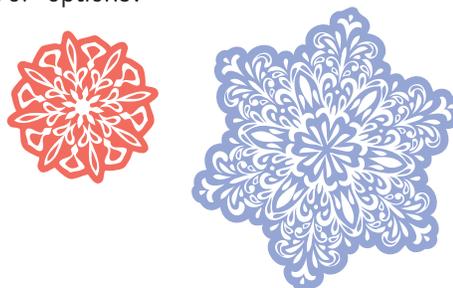
Divide the room in half with a line in the middle. Give students the following prompts based on the words and topics raised above. As you ask each question, tell the students to go to one side of the room

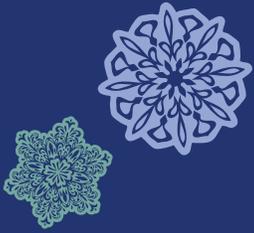
or the other depending on their feelings. For example, ask the students if they like wintertime. The yes's go to one side, the no's to the other. Allow the students a moment to pause and consider the configuration of the classroom. If any students want to explain their answer or their choice at the time of the choice it is up to the teacher whether or not they want this to be a silent exercise with a discussion afterwards or during and afterwards.

- »If you like wintertime...
- »If you like to eat turkey...
- »If you celebrate Christmas
- »If you believe people are naturally greedy
- »If you believe people are naturally generous
- »If you believe in ghosts
- »If you think people who have money should be required to give it away to others
- »If you believe there is equality in the world
- »If you believe everyone is treated equally
- »If you believe people can change
- »If you believe how people choose to spend their own money is their business
- »If you believe we all must work together for change
- »If you believe in forgiveness

Discussion Questions:

Was it difficult to make up your mind on some of the questions? Which questions were the most challenging to answer? How did you feel about the questions? Did any of the differences of opinion between you and your classmates surprise you? Why? Did you answer truthfully? Did you feel any social pressure to choose a certain answer? How did you feel about having to pick either yes or no and having no "sort of" options?





Exercise 8: M&M'S (Me and Mine)

In *A Christmas Carol*, Scrooge's obsession with his wealth perpetuates greed. Wealth and greed can often be part of a vicious cycle. The following essay and exercise give some students the choice of being greedy or charitable with their "wealth," and other students the feeling of being cut off from material goods.

"Scrooge Times"

By Roger Rosenblatt, PBS essayist

GENTLEMAN: What can I put you down for?

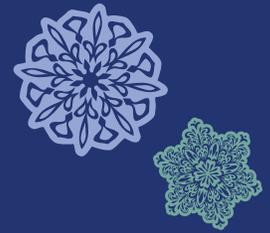
EBENEZER SCROOGE: Nothing.

Until recently, the idea of being fascinated with something as intrinsically dull as money made people like Ebenezer Scrooge seem unusual. Today everybody is a little like Scrooge--not selfish necessarily but given to crediting money with a lot more importance than it deserves. Even the richest people in history had the good sense to realize that money was only interesting in proportion to the things one could do with it. What happens, though, when every ordinary Jack and Jill is presented with a culture that declares money is significant? I am not suggesting that one ought to follow Thoreau into the woods. Some portion of one's gray matter has to be given over to green matter as a matter of necessity and security and blah, blah, blah. But to actually think about money really is blah, blah, blah. Divorced from function it cannot compare to thinking about art, or sports, or politics, or nature, or God, or other people. Ah, yes, other people. One of the dangers in taking money seriously is that it may get in the way of taking people seriously--seriously. Who would have believed that of all the potential lessons to have emerged from *A Christmas Carol* the most durable would turn out to



be Scrooge in his dark dullness? With the rich wide universe outside his door, filled with people he could help if he lifted a finger, he remained closeted in the gloomy contemplation of paper and coins. What a waste, suggested Dickens, and how fitting for the darkest time of year, when all that Scrooge ever had to do was turn off the TV, put down the magazines, step out into the light, and embrace the needy world.





Bring in a bag of M&M's or mini bags of M&M's and let them know that you will be playing a game to win the candy! Have the students sit in rows facing the front of the class. Place a trash can at the front of the class and give each student paper that they must get into the trash can. Have the students write their names on the sheets of paper. Some students should be much farther away than other students, as they are in the back row. The students are not allowed to move and must all throw the paper from the same, seated position. Split up the candy so that those who got the most in the trashcan get the most candy and those who got the least in the trashcan do not get any candy. Be sure to tell each student how much they are allowed to take based on how well they did in the game. Hand out the winners first, working backwards to the losers. Encourage the students to eat their candy

Discussion Questions:

Whole Group: How does this exercise relate to real life? What could you have done better throughout the course of this exercise?

Students without candy: How did you feel not getting any candy? How did you feel competing in the game? Why didn't you get candy?

Students with candy: How did you feel eating candy? What were your thoughts about those who did not have candy? What were your thoughts about sharing your candy? Why didn't the other students have candy and why? How did you feel competing in the game?

Exercise 9: The Past & The Curious

This activity is especially good for younger students. Have students take out a piece of paper, and draw a line down the center. Write on the top margin of the left hand side "If I had" and on the right, "I would." For example:

If I had...

A car

\$100

Too much food to eat myself

An extra jacket

Two free tickets to Disney World

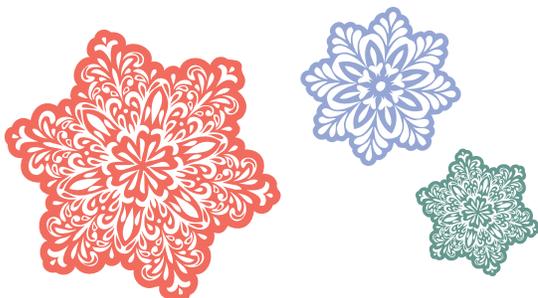
An airplane

A bouquet of flowers

I would....

(Student fills in their wish)

Use other prompts if needed. Ask students to turn these lists into a list poem. The last "If I had" is to end with "Give it all to you." For example, "If I had a bouquet of flowers, I'd give them all to you." Share the poems within the class.





SCENES & MONOLOGUES

CRATCHIT

There. Tim-- I have walked here, as I promised, on a Sunday. (a moment) I wish your mother would visit, Tim, to see how green a place it is. She's ...she'll see it often, won't she? Yes, yes, of course she will. You know I met Mr. Scrooge's niece, Fred, in the street today. She seems- well- in any case, she was extraordinarily kind. Yes ... extraordinarily kind. She asked what it was that distressed me, and when I told her about... about you, she said: "I am heartily sorry for it, Mr. Cratchit, and heartily sorry for your good wife." How she knew I have a good wife I'll never know! But of course, everybody knows how good your mother is. Your poor mother. But Tim- It really did seem as if she had known our family and felt with us -- I shouldn't be at all surprised if she helps to get Peter better employment, mark what I say. There's plenty of time for that. (he touches the ground) I am sure of one thing though: that we shall none of us forget you, Tim. How patient and- and kind you were. We shall not quarrel easily among ourselves and forget the lessons you taught us! We are quite happy to have- to have you even for a little-... my... My little, little boy.

SCROOGE

No, Spirit! Oh, no, no: Spirit. Hear me! I am not the man I was. I will not be the man I must have been but for these hauntings. Oh what had I done to abandon myself thus? Why show me this if I am past all hope?! (he lifts his young self from the bed- lays him at the feet of the children.) Good Spirit, No- pity me! Assure me that I yet may change these shadows you have shown me by an altered life! I will not shut out the lessons the Spirits have taught me! I will honor Christmas in my heart and try to keep it all the year. I will live in the Past, the Present and the Future. I will not shut out the lessons you teach. Oh tell me I may entreat! For his sake! Spirit!

FREDRIKA

I have always thought of Christmas time as a good time a kind, forgiving, charitable, pleasant time. The only time I know of in the long calendar of the year when men and women seem to open their shut up hearts freely, and to think of people below them as if they were fellow passengers to the grave. And, therefore, Uncle, though it has never put a scrap of gold or silver in my pocket, I believe that it has done me good and will do me good. And I say, God bless.



SCENE 1

SCROOGE

Cratchit! ... What is the meaning of that liberality, sir?

CRATCHIT

C-c-c-c-cold, sir. It's very cold. In here. (coughs) Sir.

SCROOGE

I find the temperature to be perfectly comfortable, Mr. Cratchit. I see no need for another, whole piece of coal. Unless you would like to pay for it? Shall I dock your wages to pay for your excess? Mr. Cratchit?

CRATCHIT

No, sir. I will put the coal back, sir.

SCROOGE

You are too liberal in your ways, Mr. Cratchit. Industry and thrift are rewarded.

CRATCHIT

Yes, sir. I will put it back. (FRED, SCROOGE's niece, enters the office, festive bells a-blazing; the bell over the door rings)

FREDRIKA

A MERRY CHRISTMAS UNCLE!!! God save you.

SCROOGE

Bah. Humbug.

FREDRIKA

You don't mean that, I'm sure?

SCROOGE

I do. Merry Christmas! What right have you to be merry? You're poor enough.

FREDRIKA

Come, then. What right have you to be dismal? You're rich enough.

SCENE 2

SCROOGE

You there, Mr. Dilber!

MR DILBER

Mr. Scrooge! Why, Hello! A Merry- (DILBER is about to grab a second drink for SCROOGE, when...)

SCROOGE

Dilber- You've left your work for the day already? Did you finish my laundry?

MR DILBER

(oh...) Ah, Mr. Scrooge, I...um- Oh, well, sir, not exactly...

SCROOGE

Not exactly! That's a fine answer.

MR DILBER

Oh, well, sir – it's Christmas Eve!

SCROOGE

UGH, another one with 'Christmas'... I trust you'll finish it for me first thing in the morning? I'll want it ready, day after tomorrow, for the start of business.

MR DILBER

In the morning? But it's... (off his look) Yes, sir.

SCROOGE

First thing, Dilber!

MR DILBER

Yes, sir, whatever you say sir. A Merry...

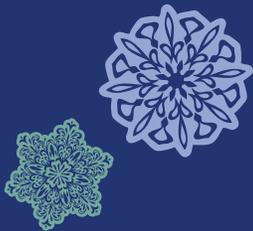
SCROOGE

(Interrupts) Alright, off with you then, no use prattling on. (SCROOGE is getting up to leave, checks his wallet to leave his money down and not a penny more-)

MR DILBER

Yes, sir-thank you, sir. Pleasure as always...sir





SCENE 3

SPIRIT #2

Look upon me! You have never seen the likes of me before?

SCROOGE

I- You look...- well -No, I suppose not SPIRIT #2
You have never walked forth with any of my older brothers and sisters? for I am very young.

SCROOGE

Well, I am afraid I ... I do not know. You look familiar...
have you had many brothers and sisters?

SPIRIT #2

What year is this?

SCROOGE

1843.

SPIRIT #2

Well then I have over eighteen hundred. One for each season of Christmas.

HENCHMAN

Yay!

SCROOGE

That is a tremendous family to provide for!
The loudest burst of laughter from SPIRIT #2.

SCROOGE

Spirit, conduct me where you will. Tonight, if you have anything to teach me, let me profit by it.

SPIRIT #2

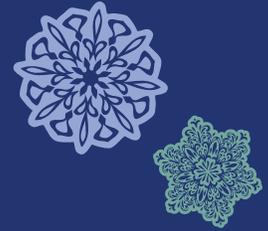
Touch my robe.

(SCROOGE goes to touch the SPIRIT's robe and the bed starts to lift- oh no!- SCROOGE hangs on for dear life grabbing onto one of the fabric swaths hanging from the posts of the bed.)

HENCHMAN

Yay





SCENE 4

MAN #2

So I am told, but I don't know much about it. I only know he's dead.

MAN #1

When did he die?

MAN #2

Last night, I believe.

MAN #1

Why, what was the matter with him?

MAN #2

(he snaps at FRED to get his snuff box) She hasn't said a word.

MAN #1

Do you know what he died of?

MAN #2

God knows. And only God cares. (they laugh)

MAN #1

What has he done with his money?

MAN #2

I haven't heard. He hasn't left it to me. That's all I know.

MAN #1

It's likely to be a very cheap funeral, for upon my life, I don't know of anybody to go to it.

Suppose we make up a party and volunteer?

MAN #2

I don't mind going if a lunch is provided. But I must be fed if I am to go.

MAN #1

I'll offer to go if you will. Come to think of it, I'm not sure that we weren't his best friends.

Remember? We actually spoke once. (they laugh) Old Scratch has got his own at last. Well I must be off. Bye bye.

SCROOGE

Spirit, what is important for me in such trivial conversation. It can have no bearing on the death of Jacob Marley, for that is Past and you are here to show me the Future. What is there for me to learn here?



Further Reading and Watching

More Holiday Reading from Charles Dickens:

- » *The Chimes*
- » *Cricket on the Hearth*
- » *The Haunted Man*
- » *A Christmas Tree*
- » The "Christmas chapter" of *Pickwick Papers*

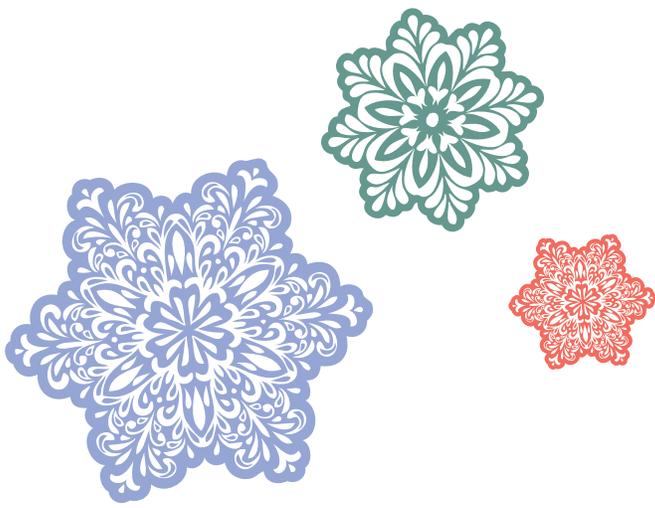


A Christmas Carol Films:

Reginald Owen as Scrooge, 1938
Alastair Sim as Scrooge, 1951
George C. Scott as Scrooge, 1984
Patrick Stewart as Scrooge, 1999
Kelsey Grammar as Scrooge, 2004 musical TV film
Jim Carrey as Scrooge, 2009 animated film

Adapted Christmas Carol Flicks:

Scrooged, Bill Murray, 1988 American contemporary
The Muppet Christmas Carol, 1992 musical
The Mr. Magoo's Christmas Carol, 1962 animated musical



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Brian McEleney as Ghost of Christmas Present, 2003

