

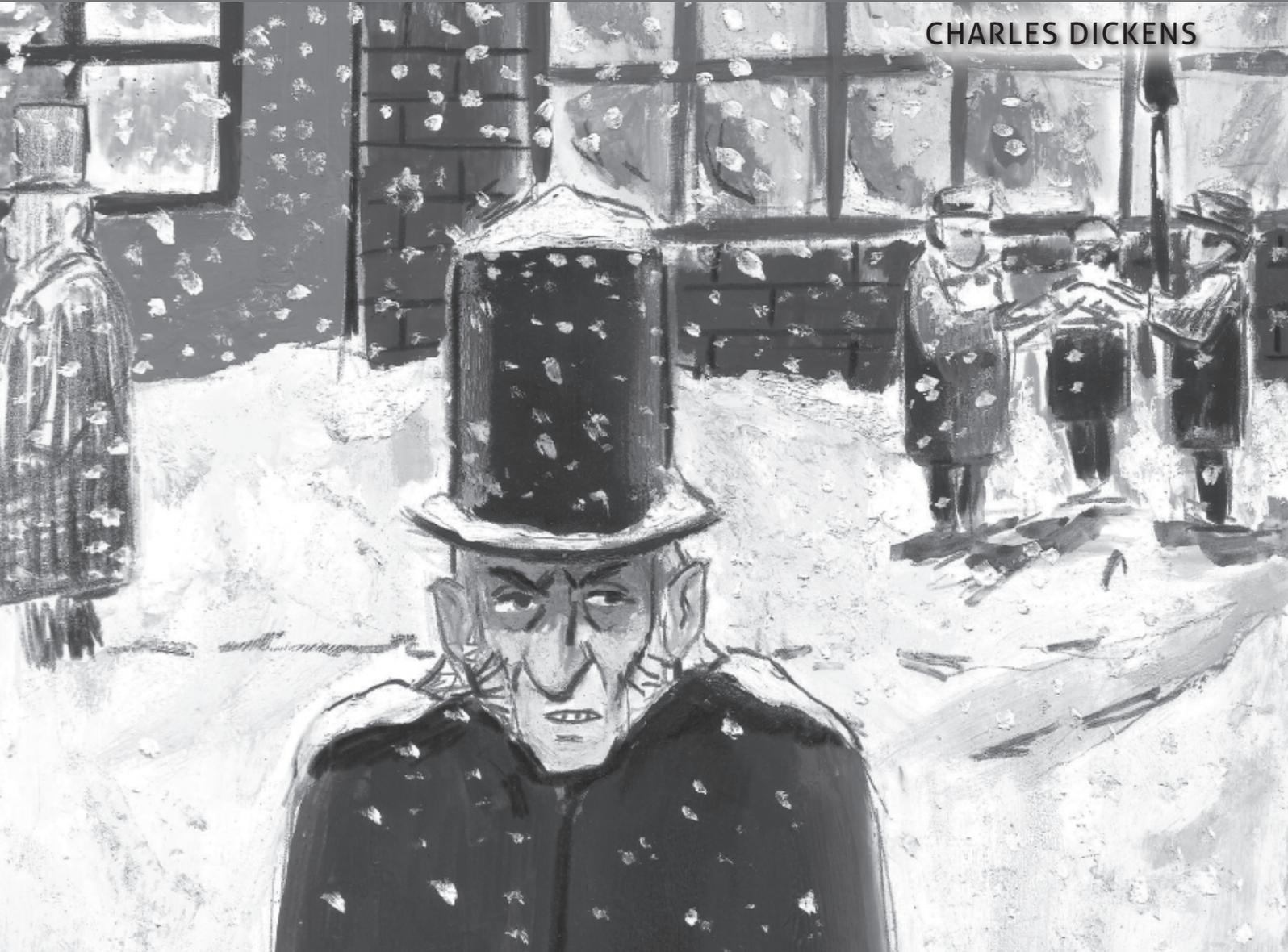
SIMPLIFIED READERS

A1

LEVEL 1

A Christmas Carol

CHARLES DICKENS



WORKSHEETS

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ABOUT THE NOVEL

A Christmas Carol is a novella (short novel) by the famous English writer Charles Dickens. It tells the story of Ebenezer Scrooge, a rich, mean and selfish old man who does not like Christmas. One Christmas Eve, he is visited by four ghosts. They help him to change into a kind and generous man in the end.

The novella was published on December 19, 1843. It became a popular book immediately, and it is still very popular today. It has been translated into several languages and has been adapted for the cinema, theatre and opera many times.

At the time when Dickens wrote this book, reading ghost stories was very common at Christmas time. And people

were beginning to celebrate Christmas with carols and Christmas trees. Dickens introduced new Christmas customs like family gatherings and dinner parties with music, dancing and games. The book made the phrase "Merry Christmas" popular. The name 'Scrooge' and the phrase 'Bah! Humbug' also became popular after this book.

Charles Dickens wrote three Christmas stories before writing *A Christmas Carol*. He was influenced by the events that happened in his life when he was a boy and by the Christmas stories of other writers. He was also influenced by a visit to a school for the street children in London.

SUMMARY

On a cold and gloomy Christmas Eve, a rich old man named Ebenezer Scrooge is working in his counting house. His clerk, Bob Cratchit, is also working in his tiny cold room. Scrooge's business partner, Jacob Marley, has been dead for several years. Scrooge does not like Christmas at all and refuses a dinner invitation from his nephew, Fred, the son of his dead sister. He rudely sends away the men who are collecting money for the poor and homeless. Then he scares away the little boys who sing Christmas carols at his door. He unwillingly gives the afternoon off to Bob because it is Christmas Eve. Then he himself leaves the counting house at three pm. That night, Marley's ghost, who is wandering the Earth in chains as a punishment for his greed, visits him in his bedroom. The ghost tells Scrooge that three spirits will visit him the next three nights and that he must do what they tell him. If he doesn't, he will also be punished like him when he dies.

The first spirit, the Ghost of Christmas Past, takes Scrooge to places where Scrooge was at Christmas when he was a little boy and when he was a young man. Scrooge watches a scene of a Christmas Eve at his school and another scene with his sister. Then he watches a Christmas party in the warehouse where he worked as a young man. He remembers that he had a very good time at that party and that his boss was like a father to him. The spirit also shows him a scene in which his first love, Belle, was leaving him forever. Finally, the ghost shows him Belle with her husband and children at their home on the Christmas Eve that Marley died.

The second spirit, the Ghost of Christmas Present, takes Scrooge to the suburbs where poor people are happily getting ready for Christmas Day. Then they go to Bob Cratchit's house and watch the family having Christmas dinner joyfully. Scrooge gets very sad when he sees Bob's youngest son, Tiny Tim, because he is crippled. The spirit tells Scrooge that Tiny Tim will die unless Bob takes him to a doctor. Unfortunately, Bob is very poor; Scrooge does not pay him much money. Afterwards, Scrooge and the ghost watch Christmas parties in poor people's cottages and in several different places where people are poor but happy.

The third spirit, the Ghost of Christmas Future, shows Scrooge a Christmas Day in the future. Scrooge sees his merchant friends talking about the funeral of an unpleasant man. Scrooge wonders who has died. Then the spirit shows him a dead old man lying in a bed with no one around. Scrooge wonders who the man is. Afterwards, they go to a poor couple's house. Scrooge hears them happily talking about someone's death. Next, they go to a bad part of the city where thieves are sharing Scrooge's belongings. Scrooge is terrified. When he wants to see a house where people are sad about a person's death, the ghost shows him Bob and his family. Next, the ghost lets him see a grave which is covered with bushes. Scrooge becomes terrified when he sees his name on the tombstone. He understands that he is the dead man in the bed, and people are talking about his funeral. He begs the Spirit to change his future and promises to become a better man.

Finally, Scrooge wakes up on Christmas morning as a new man. There are no more ghosts around. He happily goes out and roams the streets. He gives money for poor people. He sends the Cratchits a Christmas present. Then he goes to Fred's house and has dinner with them. The next day, he is very kind to Bob and increases his salary. He promises to take care of Tiny Tim. Scrooge is now a kind, generous man, and everyone likes him.

Discuss before you begin reading:

- 1 What does Christmas make you think of? Which countries celebrate Christmas? How do they celebrate it?
- 2 What do you think about rich but stingy people? Do you know anyone like that? Do you know a grumpy elderly person? Who is he/she?

A Word Search

In the puzzle below, there are ten words about Christmas. Can you find them and complete the sentences below the puzzle with those words?

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

Write the words in the blanks below.

- 1 Christmas Day is on the 25th of _____.
- 2 The day before Christmas Day is called Christmas _____.
- 3 People say '_____ Christmas' to each other at Christmas.
- 4 People send Christmas _____ cards or messages to each other.
- 5 People buy and give each other _____ s at Christmas.
- 6 At Christmas, children wait for _____ Claus to come to their homes and bring them gifts.
- 7 People sing religious or traditional songs at Christmas. These are Christmas _____ s.
- 8 People buy or make Christmas _____ s for their homes.
- 9 People decorate their Christmas _____ s with colourful balls and lights.
- 10 People usually have a big _____ at Christmas dinner.

A What kind of person is Scrooge?

When you finish **Chapter 1**, look at the table below and read the sentences about Scrooge. Put a tick under the words that match the sentences.

Scrooge ...	stingy	heartless	angry about Christmas	selfish	grumpy
keeps the fire in his fireplace very small, and his room is very cold					
keeps the coal box inside his room so that Bob can't get much coal					
says 'Bah! Humbug' when his nephew says 'Merry Christmas' to him					
gets angry at Bob Cratchit when Bob listens to Fred with a smile on his face					
doesn't want to have Christmas dinner with his nephew and his wife					
doesn't want to help poor and homeless people					
shouts at the little boys who sing carols and sends them away					
doesn't look at anyone in the street, and no one speaks to him					

B How does Scrooge feel while travelling with the Spirit of Christmas Past?

Stop reading at the end of **Chapter 2**. Match Scrooge's feelings (1-5) with the scenes (a-e).

- | |
|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 He's sorry about the boys singing carols and for sending them away. ____ 2 He is sorry that he refused his nephew's dinner invitation. ____ 3 He is sorry for his clerk Bob. He decides to be nicer to him. ____ 4 He is sad that he left Belle for money. ____ 5 He is upset because Belle says he is alone in this world. ____ |
|--|

- | |
|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a a young girl and a little boy walking to the carriage in front of the school b his boss having a Christmas party with his family and his workers at the warehouse c Belle talking to her husband about him and laughing d a lonely little boy reading in an empty classroom e a young woman and a young man speaking in the woods |
|---|

Complete the tables in Exercises A and B.

A Read Scrooge's statements and write *who* Scrooge is saying them to. And look at the underlined word in each statement. Write *who* or *what* Scrooge is speaking about.

Scrooge says, ...	To whom?	About Whom / What?
And why do you have <u>those things</u> and chains around your body?'		cash boxes, keys, purses and padlocks made of steel
<u>She</u> is taking me home in that carriage.	the Spirit of Christmas Past	
I like <u>him</u> very much. He is like a father to me.		
How can <u>they</u> be so happy? They are poor. They don't have much food.	to himself	
Oh, look. <u>They</u> are starting a new game. Let's see this game, please.		
So, there is no chance for me. Are you trying to tell <u>this</u> ? Do I have no hope?		dying miserably / his death
I'll call a carriage for you. You can't walk all the way there. <u>It's</u> quite far from here.		

B Read the statements. Write *who* is saying them *to whom*, and look at the underlined words and write *who* or *what* the person is speaking about.

Statements	Who is speaking?	To whom?	About who/ what?
There is a lonely boy in it. I will show him to you.			
He doesn't like us. He doesn't like anybody.			
But this is good news for us. We don't owe him any money now.			
I am selling these too. He doesn't need them anymore.			
He is very sad about Tiny Tim. He wants to help us with the funeral.			

A Mark the sentences as True (T) or False (F). (10x2=20 pts)

- 1 Scrooge's partner, Jacob Marley, died seven years ago.
- 2 Scrooge's nephew, Fred, doesn't like Bob.
- 3 Fred works for his uncle, Scrooge.
- 4 Scrooge makes Bob work until very late on Christmas Eve.
- 5 Marley's ghost comes to Scrooge's room to frighten him.
- 6 Jacob Marley was a greedy man like Scrooge.
- 7 Scrooge sees Marley's ghost on Christmas Eve for the first time.
- 8 Scrooge can't sleep after Marley's ghost leaves. He is awake all night.
- 9 The first spirit takes Scrooge to a small town.
- 10 Scrooge's first love, Belle, is happily married and has a kind husband and nice children.

B Mark the correct answers. (10x3=30 pts)

- 1 **While Scrooge is walking home on Christmas, no one in the street talks to him because they - - - .**
 - a don't know him
 - b don't like him
 - c are in a hurry to go home
- 2 **Scrooge started his business - - - .**
 - a with his nephew Fred
 - b by himself
 - c with Jacob Marley
- 3 **What does Marley's ghost say to Scrooge?**
 - a They must leave together.
 - b He misses him.
 - c He wants to help him.
- 4 **When Marley's ghost comes to Scrooge's bedroom, he - - - .**
 - a looks miserable
 - b is invisible
 - c talks cheerfully
- 5 **What does old Scrooge see at his school?**
 - a the saddest moments in his childhood
 - b a sad and a happy moment in his childhood
 - c the happiest moments in his childhood
- 6 **Why did Belle leave Scrooge?**
 - a She did not want to marry a poor man.
 - b He was going away to become richer.
 - c She wanted to marry a kind man.
- 7 **Why doesn't anyone talk to Scrooge when he goes to places with the Spirits?**
 - a He hides behind the Spirits.
 - b He cannot be seen by them.
 - c They don't recognize him.
- 8 **Why does Scrooge become very sad when the Spirit of Christmas Future shows him Bob's house?**
 - a Bob is very ill and dying.
 - b The family is poorer than before.
 - c Tiny Tim is dead.

9 When Scrooge goes to Fred's house with the Spirit of Christmas Present, he understands that Fred - - - .

- a loves him
- b hates him
- c is mad at him

10 Scrooge realizes that when he dies, - - - .

- a people won't want to come to his funeral
- b his maid will start to live in his house
- c Fred will be the owner of his counting house

C Match the words (1-10) with the chapters (a-e). (10x2=20 pts)

- 1 green robe: _____
- 2 thieves: _____
- 3 black cloak and hood: _____
- 4 a ship: _____
- 5 the face of a child: _____
- 6 chains: _____
- 7 butcher's boy: _____
- 8 knocker: _____
- 9 warehouse: _____
- 10 big turkey: _____

- a The Ghost of Jacob Marley
- b The Spirit of Christmas Past
- c The Spirit of Christmas Present
- d The Spirit of Christmas Future
- e Scrooge – A New Man

D Who says this, Scrooge, Fred, Mrs Cratchit, Bob, or Belle? (8x2=16 pts)

- 1 You are very rich, but you are miserable and grumpy.
- 2 We must be thankful for this food.
- 3 He makes you work very hard and late.
- 4 For you, money is more important than love.
- 5 I'm leaving. Show me another house.
- 6 My dear, it's Christmas Day. Don't speak like that, please.
- 7 What day is it today?
- 8 Are you joking with me, Sir?

E Match the two halves of the sentences (1-7 with a-g). They are connected with 'because'. (7x2=14 pts)

- 1 Scrooge is the only one in the school ...
- 2 The Cratchits' happiness surprises Scrooge ...
- 3 Fred feels sorry for his uncle ...
- 4 The poor man and his wife are happy about Scrooge's death ...
- 5 When Fred says, 'Merry Christmas', Scrooge says 'Bah, humbug' ...
- 6 Scrooge promises to be a kind man ...
- 7 Scrooge wants to pay Bob more money ...

because ...

- a ... they don't have much money.
- b ... it is Christmas holiday.
- c ... he is miserable and lonely
- d ... he wants to change his future.
- e ... he is generous and kind now.
- f ... he dislikes Christmas.
- g ... they don't have to pay him any money.

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