

A Guide for Using  
**A**  
*Christmas*  
*Carol*

in the Classroom

*Based on the novel written by Charles Dickens*

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Westminster, CA 92683  
www.teachercreated.com

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Reprinted, 2003

Made in U.S.A.

**ISBN 1-55734-434-5**

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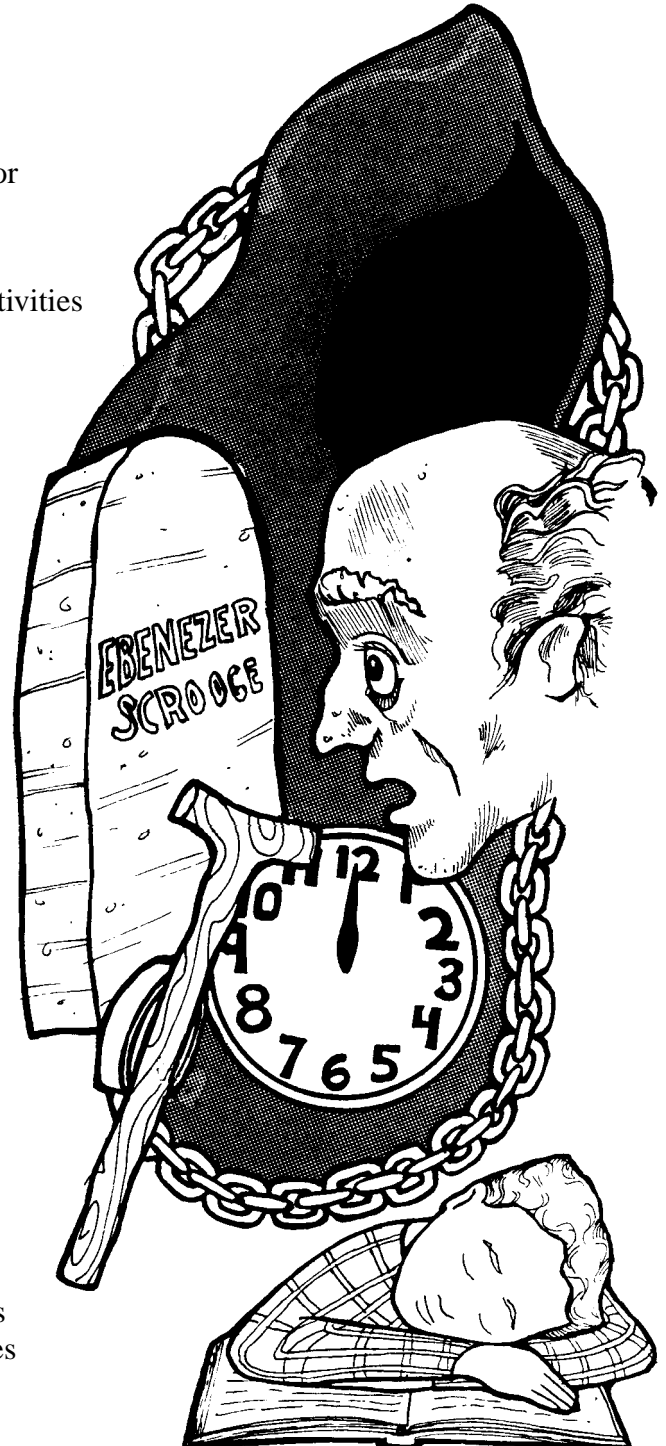
# Introduction

The holiday season would not be complete without a visit from the three Christmas Spirits and the transformation of Scrooge. This unit for Charles Dickens' *A Christmas Carol* will allow students to experience Scrooge's story and examine their own ideas and beliefs about Christmas.

Since Dickens' vocabulary and sentence structure present a challenge to modern readers, the story has been introduced by dividing Section One into two parts, with separate Hands-On Projects, Cooperative Learning Activities, etc. It is strongly suggested that much of the reading be done orally with special attention to the rich, but probably unfamiliar, vocabulary. Teachers who use this unit will find the following features to supplement their own valuable ideas.

- Sample Lesson Plans
- Pre-reading Activities
- A Biographical Sketch and Picture of the Author
- A Book Summary
- Vocabulary Lists and Suggested Vocabulary Activities
- Chapters grouped for study, with each section including:
  - quizzes
  - hands-on projects
  - cooperative learning activities
  - cross-curriculum connections
  - extensions into the reader's own life
- Post-reading Activities
- Book Report Ideas
- Research Ideas
- A Culminating Activity
- Three Different Options for Unit Tests
- Bibliography
- Answer Key

We are confident that this unit will be a valuable addition to your planning, and we hope your students will gain a new understanding of Scrooge and Charles Dickens through these activities.



# A Christmas Carol

*by Charles Dickens*

*(Scholastic, 1987)*

*(Available in Canada, UK, and Australia through Scholastic)*

*A Christmas Carol* is set in London, England in 1843; the time is Christmas Eve. We meet Ebenezer Scrooge, a miserly “man of business” without friends, unable to give or receive human kindness. Scrooge hates Christmas and all the sentiments of the season.

During the day, Scrooge is greeted by several Christmas well-wishers. His nephew Fred, his only relative, wishes Scrooge a Merry Christmas. Scrooge replies, “Bah. Humbug.” He then dismisses two gentlemen collecting for the poor of the city. A small boy stops to brighten his day with a Christmas song. Angry, Scrooge picks up a ruler and chases the child away.

At the close of business, Cratchit, Scrooge’s clerk, asks if he can have Christmas Day off. Scrooge reluctantly agrees, unhappy at paying a day’s wages for no work in return. After eating Christmas Eve dinner alone, Scrooge is visited by the first of four supernatural spirits. His old business partner, Jacob Marley, returns from the grave to warn that Scrooge must change his earthly ways or suffer a terrible fate after death. Marley further explains that Scrooge will be visited by three spirits and urges him to pay attention to the message that each spirit brings.

The first spirit, the Ghost of Christmas Past, takes Scrooge on a journey into the past. He sees himself as a young boy, alone and friendless. He is reminded of his own apprenticeship. He sees his first love and regrets having left her behind to pursue his career. Feeling remorse for his actions, Scrooge begs the spirit to take him home.

His second visitor, the Ghost of Christmas Present, takes Scrooge through the city of London, showing him how the season’s spirit has enriched the lives of all who accept it. The ghost takes Scrooge to Bob Cratchit’s house where he sees Tiny Tim for the first time and learns of his illness.

The third and most frightening of all the ghosts is the Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come, confronting Scrooge with his own death and showing him there will be no one to mourn him or miss him when he is gone.

Waking on Christmas morning, Scrooge is a changed man. He vows to keep Christmas throughout the year and follow the lessons of the spirits. He becomes known as the man who could keep Christmas well.



# Vocabulary Lists

On this page are vocabulary lists which correspond to each sectional grouping of *A Christmas Carol* as outlined in the table of contents. Ideas for activities using these words can be found on page 9.

Charles Dickens used a wide range of words in the English language, and studying his vocabulary broadens our own understanding and mastery of good literature.

## Section One (*Marley's Ghost*)

unhallowed	executor	legatee	covetous	solitary
entreaty	trifle	implore	replenish	intimation
impropriety	resolute	lunatic	credentials	ominous
multitude	tremulous	rapture	congeal	caustic
		garret	misanthropic	

## Section Two (*The First of the Three Spirits*)

paque	recumbent	tunic	lustrous	conductive
reclamation	jocund	instantaneous	latent	laden
expend	transition	loath	condescension	decanter
tumult	capacious	deftly	corroborate	aspiration
		brigands	pillaged	

## Section Three (*The Second of the Three Spirits*)

consolation	seething	demeanor	compulsion	intricate
glee	demurely	conspicuous	swarthy	bilious
subsequently	prematurely	shabby	ubiquitous	ensued
withered	goblets	exulted	blithe	dismal
		grog	abyss	

## Section Four (*The Last of the Spirits*)

repute	disgorge	reek	slipshod	beetling
flaunting	repent	scanty	revered	avarice
beseech	relents	faltered	essence	tarry
inexorable	replete	foreshadow	intercede	strive
		repulse	dwindle	

## Section Five (*The End of It*)

gruel	peals	jovial	loitered	poulterer
recompense	portly	pang	sidled	array
jiffy	feign	waistcoat	endeavor	borough
hearty	sealing wax	illustrious	amends	dispelled
		extravagance	giddy	