



The
SHAKESPEARE
Theatre of
New Jersey

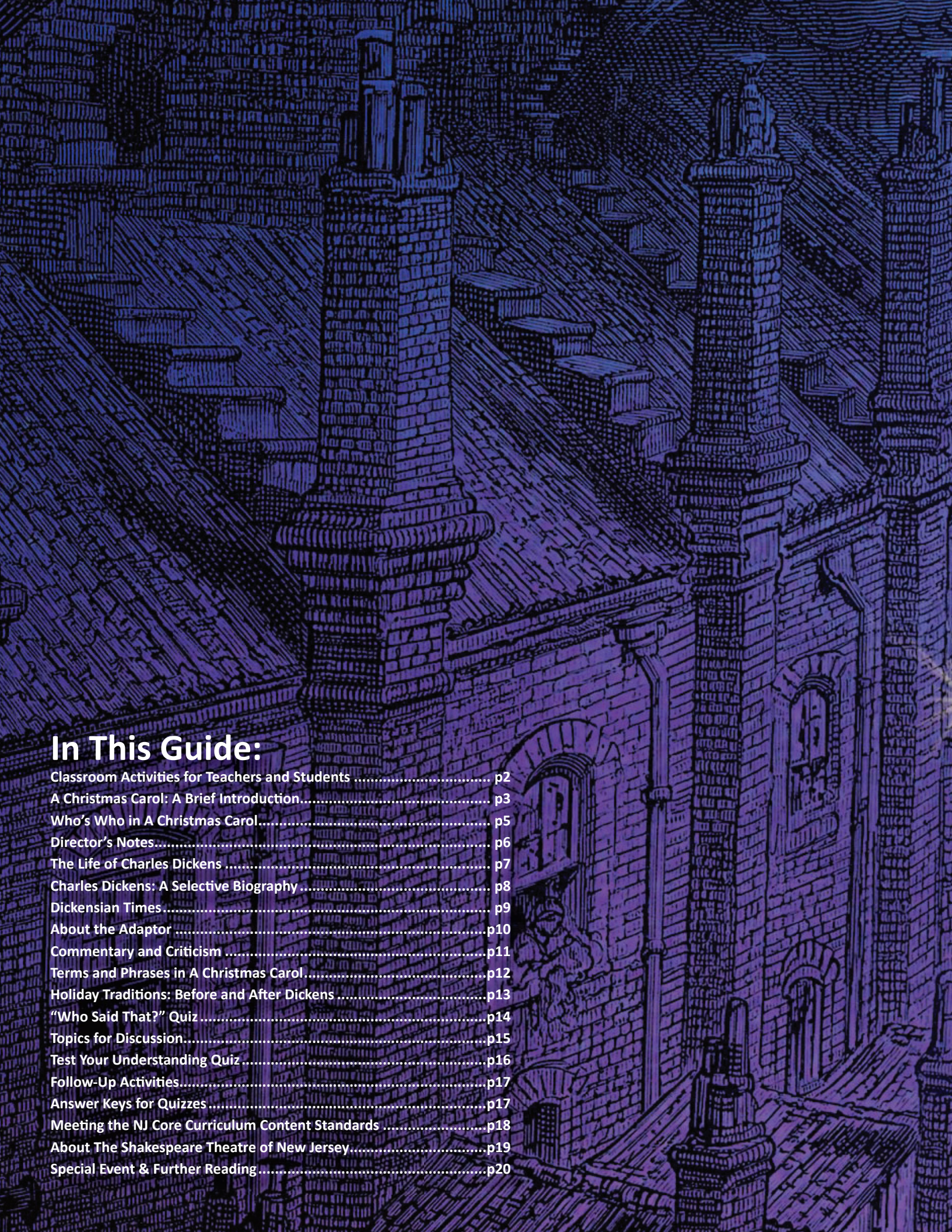
Charles Dickens'

A Christmas Carol

adapted for the stage by Neil Bartlett

**Student-Teacher
Study Guide**

compiled and arranged by
the Education Department of
The Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey



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CLASSROOM

FOR TEACHERS AND STUDENTS

ACTIVITIES

Some of the principal goals of The Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey's education programs is to demystify the classics, take them "off the shelf" and re-energize them for students and teachers alike. Toward these goals, this study guide provides educators with tools to both allay their own concerns and to expand the theatre-going experience for their students beyond the field trip to The Shakespeare Theatre.

The information included in this guide will help you expand your students' understanding of the classics in performance, as well as help you meet many of the New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards. We encourage you to impart as much of the information included in this Study Guide to your students as is possible. The following are some **suggestions from teachers** on how you can utilize elements of the guide given limited classroom time.

- Many teachers have found that distributing or reading the Short Synopsis and Who's Who pages has greatly increased students' understanding and enjoyment of the production. It provides the students with a general understanding of what they will be seeing and what they can expect. Some teachers have simply taken the last five minutes of a class period to do this with very positive results.
- When more class time is available prior to your visit, we recommend incorporating the background information on the author, the playwright and the play itself. One teacher divided her class into groups and assigned each group research topics based on the divisions found in the study guide. Using a copy of the corresponding study guide page as a launch pad, the students had one week to research the topics. The students then presented their information to the class in three- to five-minute oral reports. Including the questions that evolved from the presentations, the entire project took only one class period.
- Using the questions found in the "TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION," many teachers will opt to take a class period *after* the trip to The Shakespeare Theatre to discuss the play with their students. The questions help keep the comments focused on the production, while incorporating various thematic and social issues that are found in the play.

Again, we hope you will incorporate as many portions of this study guide as you are able into your classroom experience. If you have any suggestions for activities or topics not already found in the study guide, please contact our education department. We are always interested in hearing new ways to excite young people (and teachers) about the classics and live theatre.

"What's My Line?" Promoting Active Listening

Teacher-tested, student-approved!
Try this exercise with your students:

Before attending the production, give each student one line from the novel/play to listen for. Discuss the meaning of the line and encourage their input in deciphering what the author and playwright meant by the line. How would the student perform the line? Why is the line important to the play? Does it advance the plot, or give the audience particular insight into a character or relationship?

Following the production, discuss the line again. Did the actor present the line in the way your student expected? If not, how was it different?

Happy Teaching,



Brian B. Crowe,
Director of Education



The Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey's
Main Stage, The F.M. Kirby Shakespeare Theatre.

A Christmas Carol: A Brief Introduction

It is possible that no other single piece of fiction has had the kind of sweeping cultural influence that can be attributed to Charles Dickens' first "Christmas story."

To some extent, *A Christmas Carol* was written for financial reasons. By 1843, when he began work on the short novel, Dickens and his wife had four children with a fifth on the way, a large mortgage payment, and were subjected to frequent requests for financial assistance from family members. His latest serial novel, *Martin Chuzzlewit*, had suffered a disappointing fall-off in monthly sales. In hopes of getting a quick influx of cash from a bestseller, Dickens abandoned his usual serial form of writing his novels and made his first attempt at writing a novel all at once.

As usual with Dickens, the novel's form and content was principally dictated by a powerful social message he wished to convey. He had recently visited the Field Lane "Ragged School," part of a chain of charitable establishments that had been set up to provide free instruction in reading and math for the poor. He was appalled at the filth, misery and ignorance of the men and boys he met there, and at the thought of how his society mostly overlooked the sufferings of its vast lower class. He

An Installment Plan for Literature

A serial novel is any novel that has been printed in installments. One can think of these as a television series versus a full-length feature film. Most often, chapters are printed in a regularly published magazine, newspaper or other periodical.

Serialized fiction surged in popularity during Britain's Victorian era. This was in part due to the rise of literacy, technological advances in printing, and the improved economics of distribution. With the price of published books still considered high, especially for the working classes, a serial format proved to be a more appealing way to reach a wider audience. Many significant majority works of the Victorian era first appeared in either monthly or weekly installments in magazines or newspapers. Charles Dickens' *The Pickwick Papers*, first published in 1836, is credited with launching the wild success of the serial format.

resolved that the Christmas book which was taking shape in his head would "strike a sledgehammer blow... on behalf of the Poor Man's child." Indeed, its working title was *The Sledgehammer*.

Although he was simultaneously finishing *Martin Chuzzlewit*, as Dickens plunged into his tale of Scrooge's fateful encounter with the Ghosts, he found himself increasingly

engrossed in and moved by his "little Christmas book." He later noted that, as he worked on *A Christmas Carol*, he "wept and laughed, and wept again... and thinking whereof, walked about the black streets of London fifteen or twenty miles many a night when all sober folks had gone to bed."

Dickens was determined that the book would be physically beautiful — his own personal Christmas gift to the English public — and also affordable for the average family. When his publisher was unwilling to do so, he paid out of his own pocket for the first edition's gold-stamped cover and hand-colored engravings. Ultimately this, combined with the fact that he held the price to five shillings (roughly \$20 in today's money), meant that Dickens made far less from the book than he had hoped.

Nevertheless, the sales of the book in sheer volume were (and continue to be) astounding. The first printing of 6,000 copies appeared in bookstores on December 19, 1843 and was sold out on December 22. Not only did the book continue to be printed and sold throughout Dickens' lifetime, but he then adapted it for public readings which he gave throughout the world up to the year of his death. In later years, when he was

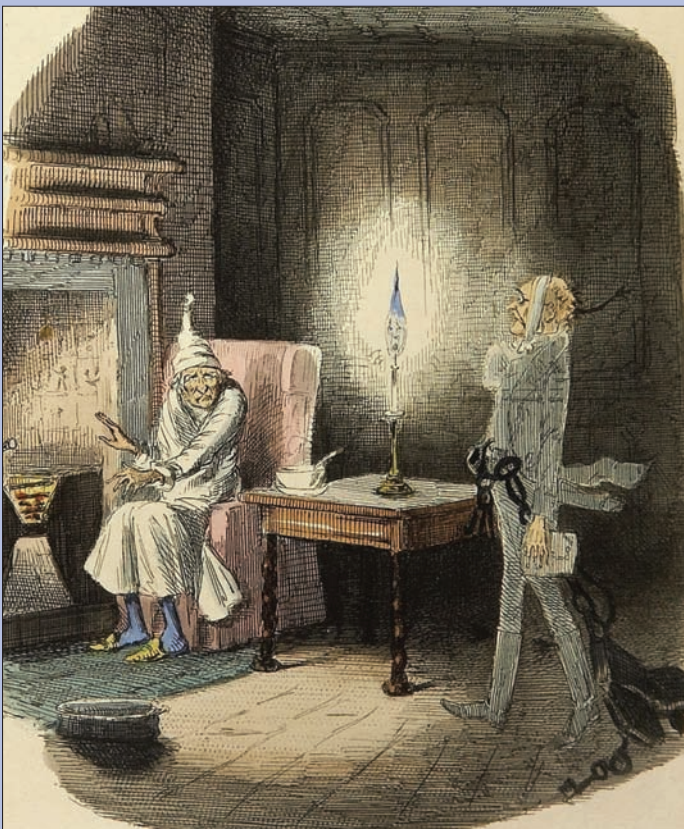


Gregory Jackson (Bob Cratchit) with Tina Stafford and Erin Partin in The Shakespeare Theatre's 2007 production of *Charles Dickens' A Christmas Carol*. Photo: Gerry Goodstein ©2007.

no longer writing as prolifically, these readings became one of his principal sources of income.

Driven by the demand from his reading public, Dickens went on to write four more “Christmas books” and numerous Christmas stories in his magazines. None of these achieved the popularity or lasting acclaim of *A Christmas Carol*, but nonetheless Charles Dickens was indelibly associated with Christmas by almost everyone in England for the rest of his life. Many years later, in a letter to his daughter Mamie, he would grumble that he felt as if he “had murdered a Christmas a number of years ago, and its ghost perpetually haunted me.”

Far from being the murderer of the Christmas holiday, however, Dickens’ *Carol* may have almost literally saved it. By 1843, most of the Christmas traditions depicted and alluded to in the novel were dying out. Many of them had originated in England’s farm culture, and were being left behind as more and more people flocked to cities and factory work. Other traditions had been suppressed by the Puritans and were never really revived. Scrooge’s attitude that Christmas should be just another day of work was by no means universal, but it was far more common than today’s reader might suspect.



Jacob Marley visits Scrooge in a colorized version of John Leech’s illustration from the first edition of *A Christmas Carol*, 1843.

Carol Transformations

Audiences around the world found themselves profoundly moved by Charles Dickens’ public readings of *A Christmas Carol*. In 1857, Dickens read the story in Chicago. One of the audience members, a factory owner named Fairbanks, was so affected by the reading that he decided to “break the custom we have hitherto observed of opening the works on Christmas Day.” Not only did he close the factory for Christmas Day, he gave a turkey to each of his employees.

Dickens was never comfortable with organized religion, and while he alludes to the religious nature of Christmas in the novel, the “sledgehammer blow” he strikes is on behalf of charity and human kindness rather than any specific religious belief. The association of the holiday with charitable giving and the opportunity to personally right society’s injustices is one of the novel’s most powerful legacies.

Dickens was also a gregarious, outgoing man who loved parties, games, and festivities of all kinds. Religious officials, particularly those in the Puritan tradition, had actually done much to strip Christmas of its festive qualities during the 17th and 18th centuries, but it was precisely this aspect of dancing, feasting and laughing with one’s neighbors that Dickens loved most about Christmas. There are few more powerful literary defenses of the humanizing value of a party than Dickens’ *Carol*.

Modern-day readers in England and the United States may take it for granted that nuclear families would gather for a special meal on Christmas, but this tradition is almost entirely attributable to *A Christmas Carol*, which essentially became a handbook for reworking the old rural Christmas traditions for a modern urban lifestyle. It sparked a “Christmas renaissance” that led directly to our contemporary traditions of exchanging gifts and Christmas cards, giving a Christmas bonus to employees, elaborately decorating the home and, most of all, roasting a “prize turkey.” It is even possible to argue that Dickens is the single individual most responsible for the fact that Christmas is celebrated today as a secular holiday by so many families outside the Christian tradition.

Who's Who in *A Christmas Carol*

Ebenezer Scrooge – The cold and miserly owner of a London counting-house, a nineteenth century term for a creditor or accountant's office. He is visited by three spirits of Christmas in hopes of reversing Scrooge's greedy, cold-hearted approach to life and his fellow man.

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

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.

The Portly Gentlemen – Two gentlemen who visit Scrooge at the beginning of the tale seeking charitable contributions for the poor and destitute of London.

Jacob Marley – In life, he was Ebenezer's equally greedy partner. Marley died seven years before the narrative opens on Christmas Eve. He appears to Scrooge as a ghost condemned to wander the world bound in heavy chains. Marley offers his old partner a chance to escape a similar fate.

The Ghost of Christmas Past – The first spirit to visit Scrooge, who takes him on a tour of the Christmases in Scrooge's own past, from early childhood and into his young adulthood.

Fan – Scrooge's sister; Fred's mother. Scrooge remembers that, as a child, Fan convinced her father to allow Ebenezer to return home one Christmas.

Mr. Fezziwig – The jovial merchant with whom Scrooge apprenticed as a young man. Fezziwig was renowned for his wonderful Christmas parties.

Dick Wilkins – a young man who apprenticed alongside Ebenezer for Mr. Fezziwig.

Belle – Scrooge's beloved fiancé when he was a young man. Belle broke off their engagement when Scrooge became consumed with greed and wealth. She later married Dick Wilkins.

The Ghost of Christmas Present – The second spirit to visit Scrooge, his lifespan is restricted to Christmas Day. He escorts Scrooge on a tour of holiday celebrations in the current time.

Mrs. Cratchit – Bob's wife; a kind and loving woman, though she has little love and patience for Ebenezer Scrooge.

The Cratchit Children:

Peter Cratchit – Bob's oldest son, who inherits his father's stiff-collared shirt for Christmas.

Martha Cratchit – Bob's oldest daughter, who works in a milliner's shop. (A milliner is a person who designs, produces, and sells hats.)

Belinda Cratchit – Bob's youngest daughter.

Tiny Tim – Bob Cratchit's young son, crippled from birth.

The Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come – The third and final spirit to visit Scrooge. Silent throughout their visit, this spirit shows Scrooge images of future Christmases and the prospect of a lonely death.

Old Joe – a broker of stolen items.

Mrs. Dilber – Scrooge's cleaning lady.



Hugh Hanson's costume renderings for The Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey's production of *Charles Dickens' A Christmas Carol*, 2011.

Director's Notes

In 2007, when I first directed Neil Bartlett's ingenious adaptation of this tale, I wrote the following:

"As we all know, Charles Dickens' A Christmas Carol is the tale of one man's overnight spiritual reawakening. Neil Bartlett's adaptation of A Christmas Carol catapulted me into my own reawakening, albeit of a different sort, and it took all of four minutes. Over the years, I had become downright Scrooge-like in my dismissal of Dickens' story as a potential offering for our stage. I had flatly refused to consider it for production. My strongest connection to it, as a kid, was the Mr. Magoo cartoon version, which admittedly, I loved (and still do!). After that however, frequent, unfortunate doses of bad renderings of A Christmas Carol, both on stage and film, formed in me a kind of "Bah, humbug!" response every time the piece was mentioned. The only version to escape my disdain was Patrick Stewart's one-man, tour-de-force production. I loved it so much, I saw it twice in the early 1990's. That was the only instance where I relented (and somewhat begrudgingly) in my dismissal of the piece.

Not only did I find that most of the Christmas Carols that I had seen denied the Dickensian style and spirit, but so very many of them, in their effort to please, I suppose, indulged in saccharine sentimentality and glitzy extravaganza. There's no denying however, that it's a tale of a nasty, mean, fairly amoral man who has sold his soul to the idol of greed. To ignore that not only diminishes Dickens, but it diminishes the ultimate miracle of Scrooge's rediscovery of his humanity and his ability to be humanistic.

That humanistic view, so brilliantly depicted by Dickens, is part of what I was able to rediscover by virtue of Neil Bartlett's wooing me back to the tale, both in its original form and in Mr. Bartlett's exciting stage adaptation. What happens to Scrooge is a thing universal. Time, place, circumstances — all can change, but a man or woman finding their heart, soul, and fellow man again, before it is too late, is a tale for us all — no matter where or when or how we live.

Best of all, as a purveyor of the classics, Mr. Bartlett's vision for the piece is to honor Dickens' language and his vision, at the same time providing immense creative freedom for a director, designers and a cast. Not an easy feat. The piece is a director's dream challenge. It is essentially a bare bones "outline" in many ways — part tone poem, part Greek chorus, part music hall, part madrigal, part dance, part unadulterated emotional truth, requiring massive invention, but of the purest kind. Other than the songs, every word issued is Dickens' own. The use of a small ensemble to create this entire rich world is daunting, but massively satisfying once deciphered and discovered. It has been a delight. So, I humbly reverse my position on A Christmas Carol — for this year at least!"

Now, in 2011, I find myself back with Dickens' story and embracing it once again, no less enchanted by the exciting directorial challenges it provides, but more painfully familiar with the social milieu from which it sprang — because of course, our social milieu has become so eerily similar. The events affecting the global economy since 2008 have created a decidedly Dickensian atmosphere in cities around the world and in our own back yard. Greed has "not left the building" but has reared its ugly head, as always, and unfortunately, as ferociously as it ever has. *A Christmas Carol* will never lose its value and its importance — unless of course, mankind finds a way to erase Want and Ignorance and Greed.

What a blessing it is to have this tale to keep us honest!

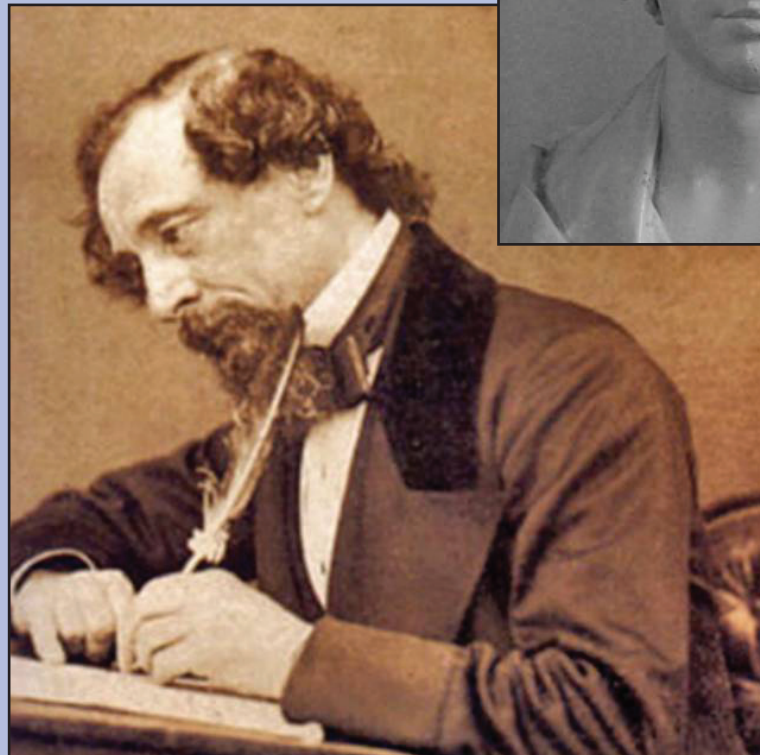
Happy Holidays!
Bonnie J. Monte

The Life of Charles Dickens

Charles Dickens was born February 7, 1812, the second child of John and Elizabeth Dickens. (His beloved older sister, Fanny, would be immortalized in *A Christmas Carol* as Scrooge's sister, Little Fan). John Dickens was a civil servant, who worked as a clerk in the Navy Pay Office at the time of Charles' birth.

In 1817, John Dickens was assigned to the huge Navy shipyards in Chatham, Kent. During the family's five years in Chatham, Charles started school, beginning his lifelong love affair with books. It was at this time that he also discovered the theatre, which he regularly attended with his uncle. Later he described this as the happiest period in his childhood, and moved back to the vicinity of Chatham as an adult.

By 1822, however, there were six Dickens children, and the family's finances, always stretched thin by John Dickens' inability to live within their means, took a further blow when he was transferred back to London. The family relocated to a four-room house in the seedy neighborhood of Camden Town. By 1824, their situation was so precarious that 12-year-old Charles was pulled out of school and sent to work full-time in a factory. Eleven days after Charles began work at the factory, John Dickens was imprisoned for non-payment of debts, and the rest of the family was placed with



him in the Marshalsea Debtors' Prison. Charles was left to fend for himself on his six shillings a week (barely enough for him to eat, let alone to help support his family).

For five long months, Charles Dickens worked long, tedious days in the rat-infested warehouse. This traumatic experience left deep emotional scars, and Dickens was so ashamed of his family's situation that he talked about his experiences at the factory to only two people during his life. Nevertheless, it would have a profound impact on his writing as well as his subsequent fierce devotion to social welfare, especially when it involved children and education. In particular, his time in the factory ingrained in him a sense of loneliness and isolation with which he struggled throughout his life. As his fictional alter ego David Copperfield put it, "I had no advice, no counsel, no encouragement, no consolation, no assistance, no support, of any kind, from anyone..."

By June of 1824, John Dickens was released from prison and Charles was able to return to school for a few more years. As a teenager, he again found work to support himself, first as a clerk in a law office, then as a newspaper reporter. He was eventually assigned to cover sessions of Parliament, and taught himself shorthand in order to take accurate transcripts of the speeches and debates, winning a reputation as London's fastest political reporter.

During this time, Dickens began writing magazine stories, and then novels in the new serial form. Books were still fairly expensive items in Dickens's time, but the introduction of serialization made them far more available to a wide middle and lower-middle class audience. Essentially, serial novels were purchased on an installment plan, one chapter at a time. Charles Dickens became a master of this form, skillfully building suspense and inserting tantalizing details in each chapter.

ABOVE: A bust of Dickens was made from life by sculptor Henry Dexter during Dickens's 1842 trip to America, not long before he wrote *A Christmas Carol*. According to his wife and friends, it was extremely lifelike. This cast of the lost original is in the collection of the Dickens Museum in London.

LEFT: A photograph of Charles Dickens taken in 1850. From the collection of the Huntington Library, San Marino, CA.

In 1836, shortly after publishing his first novel, *The Pickwick Papers*, Dickens married Catherine Hogarth, the daughter of a newspaper editor. They would go on to have ten children together, and eventually to separate in 1858.

Between 1836 and 1865, Dickens worked extensively. He published several novels which met with extraordinary popular success, while also publishing and editing two magazines. He



traveled to the United States, Canada, Italy and Switzerland, and to purchase a large house in Gad's Hill, near his childhood home in Chatham. Nevertheless, maintaining this upper

The final spirit visits Scrooge in a colorized version of John Leech's illustration from the first edition of *A Christmas Carol*, 1843.

middle-class lifestyle with such a large family proved to be a continual challenge, and Dickens frequently worked to the point of exhaustion.

Charles Dickens was the first real "celebrity author," and he used this status to vehemently criticize all kinds of social injustice in Victorian England, from the slum conditions in which many people lived to the maltreatment of child laborers, prisoners, and others. He is still one of the most popular and widely read English authors, and not one of his books has ever gone out of print.

In 1865, Dickens was involved in a terrible train derailment that killed 10 people and seriously injured 49 others. Dickens (whose train car had tipped but not overturned) went to the aid of the injured passengers until rescuers arrived, then clambered back into his own carriage to retrieve his half-finished manuscript for *Our Mutual Friend*. While he had seemed relatively unscathed at the time, his health was never good following the accident, and in June of 1870 he suffered a stroke and died at home. He was laid to rest in the Poets' Corner of Westminster Abbey, in a tomb that reads: "He was a sympathizer to the poor, the suffering, and the oppressed; and by his death, one of England's greatest writers is lost to the world."

Charles Dickens: A Selective Bibliography

Sketches by Boz (1836)

The Pickwick Papers (1837)

The Adventures of Oliver Twist (1838)

The Life And Adventures of Nicholas Nickleby (1839)

Barnaby Rudge (1841)

Master Humphrey's Clock (1841)

A Christmas Carol (1843)

The Life and Adventures of Martin Chuzzlewit (1843)

The Chimes (1844)

The Cricket on the Hearth (1845)

The Battle of Life (1846)

Dombey and Son (1848)

The Haunted Man and the Ghost's Bargain (1848)

David Copperfield (1849)

Bleak House (1853)

Hard Times: For These Times (1854)

Little Dorrit (1857)

A Tale of Two Cities (1859)

The Uncommercial Traveller (1860)

Great Expectations (1861)

Our Mutual Friend (1865)

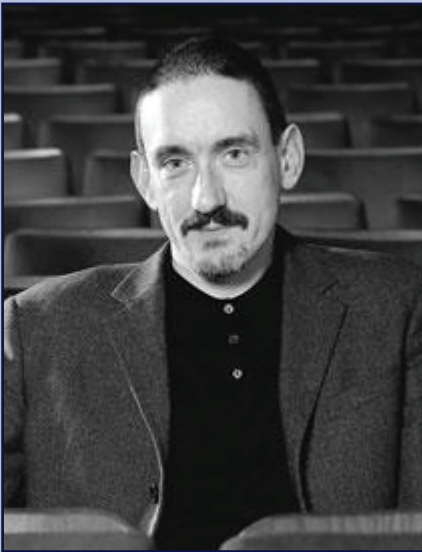
The Mystery of Edwin Drood (1870) - incomplete

Dickensian Times: A Chronology

Like most authors, Charles Dickens' work was heavily influenced by the time in which he lived and wrote. Living at the rise of one of the most impactful periods in the history of western culture, it is interesting to note the major achievements that were happening around Dickens as he penned his many masterworks.

- 1807: Robert Fulton invents the first successful steamboat. Slavery is abolished in England.
- 1812: Charles Dickens is born in Portsmouth, England.
- 1815: The Battle of Waterloo ends the Napoleonic Wars.
- 1824: Dickens's father and family are imprisoned for debt, while 12-year-old Charles begins a full-time job at Warren's Blacking Factory.
- 1825: Trade unions are legalized in England.
- 1827: The Dickens family is evicted from their new home for failing to make their mortgage payments. Charles leaves school for good and begins work as a clerk in a law office.
- 1830: The world's first commercial railway, the Liverpool and Manchester Railway, begins operation.
- 1834: Dickens becomes a reporter for the *Morning Chronicle* and meets his future wife, Catherine Hogarth. Parliament enacts the Poor Law Amendment, making the conditions of England's public assistance shelters deplorable.
- 1836: Dickens marries Catherine Hogarth, and publishes *Sketches by Boz* and his first serial novel, *The Pickwick Papers*.
- 1837: Dickens publishes *Oliver Twist*.
Queen Victoria ascends the throne of England, sparking a new era in English history and culture.
Samuel Morse invents the telegraph. The first ocean-going steamship is produced.
- 1838-39: Daguerreotype photographs and photographic paper are introduced.
- 1842: Dickens visits the United States for the first time.
- 1843: *Martin Chuzzlewit* and *A Christmas Carol* are published.
- 1849: Dickens publishes *David Copperfield*.
- 1854-56: The Crimean War takes place between England and Russia.
- 1858: Dickens separates from his wife and embarks on reading tours for additional income.
The first trans-Atlantic telegraph cable is completed.
- 1859: Charles Darwin publishes *On the Origin of Species*, which lays out his theory of evolution.
- 1860: Dickens publishes *Great Expectations*.
- 1865: Dickens is injured in the Staplehurst train crash, from which he never fully recovers.
- 1867: Dickens gives his final reading tour in the United States. Alfred Nobel invents dynamite.
- 1870: Dickens gives a dozen farewell readings in England, and is received by Queen Victoria.
He suffers a stroke on June 9 and dies at home, leaving his final novel, *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*, unfinished.

About the Adaptor



Born in 1958, Neil Bartlett grew up in Chichester, West Sussex, England, which he has described as a “boring town in the south of England.” For this prolific writer and dramatic artist-to-be, a very good secondhand bookstore turned out to be the town’s saving grace. He developed an abiding interest in literature and theatre.

Bartlett completed his undergraduate studies at Oxford University, where he became interested in a dramatic style called hypertheatricality that has permeated much of his work. In essence, hypertheatricality eschews realism and acknowledges its make-believe nature in strong and sometimes outrageous ways. Rather than using technical effects that create the illusion of reality, Bartlett’s hypertheatricality tended to be more minimalist in its design aspects and to rely more on the actors and the imagination of the audience members. In this adaptation of *A Christmas Carol*, Bartlett’s hypertheatrical style can be seen in the way the actors become everything from the Bells of London to Scrooge’s watch.

Shortly after graduating from university, Bartlett and a group of friends founded his first theatre company, the 1982 Theatre Company. He performed in or directed a number of performances in strange venues, such as street corners, staircases, or hospitals. He also worked as the administrator for a gay community theatre, as a street clown, and a supporting act for the famous Goth band Bauhaus. During the 1980s Bartlett also wrote his first book, *Who Was That Man?*, about the life of Oscar Wilde, and went on to write critically acclaimed novels about gay life in England.

During the mid to late 1980s, he was a key director for England’s renowned Theatre de Complicité (now known simply as Complicité), and his production of *More Bigger Snacks Now* helped define the company’s ground-breaking reputation as well as his own reputation as an up-and-coming director. Complicité’s experimental, movement-based approach has

had a profound influence on Bartlett’s subsequent work as a director.

In 1988, Bartlett formed another theatre company called Gloria, which created and toured close to twenty shows in a ten-year period. Gloria went to major theatres across England and the United States, including the Royal National Theatre and the Goodman Theatre in Chicago. Gloria’s signature musically-imbued theatre productions were adaptations of classics as well as new works with the high level of theatricality for which Bartlett had become known. He wrote or adapted thirteen plays and performed in six of the productions. In this period Bartlett was also highly productive in the activist scene, working with London’s first International AIDS Day and many other rallies, benefits and sociopolitical causes.

In what was considered a controversial move, Bartlett was appointed the artistic director for London’s run-down and failing Lyric Hammersmith Theatre in 1994. He drastically altered the pricing policy to attract new audiences, included young people and minorities, and his season selections were considered challenging and quite unusual. Over the ten years of Bartlett’s tenure, however, the Lyric Hammersmith became one of London’s most cutting-edge and critically-acclaimed theatres. It specialized in outrageous musicals, unique Christmas shows, experimental theatre, and work that consistently challenged both the audience and performers. Bartlett was also instrumental in adding strong educational components to the Lyric’s programming.

In 2000, Bartlett received an O.B.E. (Officer of the British Empire) for his remarkable work in restoring the Lyric Hammersmith to thriving artistic success. He left in 2004 to return to a life as a freelance director and writer, and now lives in Brighton with his partner James Gardiner.

He has developed a reputation as a wildly intelligent writer, translator, and adaptor as well as a talented performer, director, and teacher, and has been described as a “protean polymath of a creator.” His work is almost always perceived as “edgy” and often more than slightly controversial. Bartlett frequently takes on older plays or stories and brings them to the present age, giving a fresh approach and perspective on their themes. He has notably adapted three of Dickens novels for the stage, *A Christmas Carol*, *Oliver Twist* and more recently, *Great Expectations*.

Commentary and Criticism

“Dickens is one of the masters of prose.”

George Gissing
Charles Dickens: A Critical Study

“Because *A Christmas Carol* has never lost the power of its original impact as the epitome of the spirit of Christmas festivities, Dickens’ connection with the season is nearly always associated with the trappings of the book.”

Ruth F. Glancy
“Dickens and Christmas: His Framed-Tale Themes”

“Was there ever a better charity sermon preached in the world than Dickens’ *Christmas Carol*? I believe it occasioned immense hospitality throughout England; was the means of lighting up hundreds of kind fires at Christmas time; caused a wonderful outpouring of Christmas good feeling, of Christmas punch-brewing; an awful slaughter of Christmas turkeys, and roasting and basting of Christmas beef.”

William Makepeace Thackeray
from an 1852 speech

“The story sings from end to end like a happy man going home....It is lyric and exclamatory, from the first exclamatory words of it. It is strictly a Christmas Carol.”

G.K. Chesterton
*Appreciations and Criticisms
of the Works of Charles Dickens*

“As for *A Christmas Carol*, the individual critic had quite best hold his peace... it is so spread over England by this time that no skeptic could review it down...I am not sure the allegory is a very complete one, and protest, with the classics, against the use of blank verse in prose; but here all objections stop. Who can listen to objections regarding such a book as this? It seems to me a national benefit, and to every man or woman that reads it, a personal kindness.”

William Makepeace Thackeray
reviewing the book for
The Independent in February 1844

Dickens on Childhood Poverty

“The careless maintenance from year to year, in this, the capital city of the world, of a vast hopeless nursery of ignorance, misery and vice...is horrible to contemplate.

I know the prisons of London well...I have visited the largest of them more times than I could count; and the children in them are enough to break the heart and hope of any man. These children pass and repass through the prisons all their lives; they are never taught; the first distinctions between right and wrong are, from their cradles, perfectly confounded and perverted in their minds; they come of untaught parents, and will give birth to another untaught generation; in exact proportion to their natural abilities, is the extent and scope of their depravity; and there is no escape or chance for them in any ordinary revolution of human affairs.

The frightful neglect by the State of those whom it punishes so constantly, and whom it might, as easily and less expensively, instruct and save; together with the sight I had seen there, in the heart of London; haunted me, and finally impelled me to an endeavour to bring these Institutions under the notice of the Government.”

The Daily News
March 13, 1852

“Dickens... wrote the story not just to be read, but to be read out loud, for an audience. His words don’t describe; they enact. When London freezes, the prose stamps and chatters; when Scrooge is in his counting house, the words are as cramped as his miserable clerks... When the story rises to its great emotional and moral climaxes, the prose tolls like a bell...”

Neil Bartlett
from his introduction to this adaptation
of *A Christmas Carol*

Terms and Phrases Found in *A Christmas Carol*

avarice - greed

baleful - deadly, malicious

beguile - to deceive

bob - slang for a shilling (a coin worth 1/20 of a British pound)

cant - insincere or cliché sayings

congeal - to solidify or thicken

corroboration - confirmation

Dandini and the Princess - a reference to the composer Rossini's version of the Cinderella story, which featured the faithful servant Dandini

deft - skillful

dirge - a funeral hymn or lament

entreaty - a plea

execrable - despicable, disgusting

farthing - a coin equal to 1/4 of the British penny

gratis - free

gruel - thin, watery oatmeal or porridge

ha'penny - a half-penny coin

infernal - of or relating to hell

intercede - to intervene

latent - dormant

liberality - generosity

loiter - to linger idly or aimlessly

morose - sullen or gloomy

munificent - very generous

odious - hateful, repellent

officious - overly dutiful or obliging

opulence - richness

peal - a loud ringing (as of bells)

(plum) pudding - a traditional Christmas dish more like a soft fruitcake than American pudding

poulterers - a butcher shop specializing in poultry (chickens, turkeys, etc.)

profundity - depth

replete - full

savory - good-tasting

scanty - meager, insufficient

scuttle - a metal bucket with a conical top, used for storing coal

Social Services - in Dickens' time, a phrase that referred mainly to workhouses and other means of essentially incarcerating the poor

sordid - filthy, foul

tacit - understood, implicit

terrestrial - of or relating to the earth

venerate - to honor or revere

workhouses - a publicly-funded place where people who were unable to support themselves could live and work. The 1834 Poor Law Amendment controversially aimed to make English workhouses as harsh and degrading as possible so that only the truly destitute would choose to live there. Dickens and others criticized the squalor and sometimes abusive treatment that resulted from this law



Scrooge is visited by the Ghost of Christmas Present in a colorized version of John Leech's illustration from the first edition of *A Christmas Carol*, 1843.

Further Reading

The Annotated Christmas Carol by Charles Dickens with an introduction by Michael Patrick Hearn; W.W.Norton & Company, 2004.

Christmas: A Candid History by Bruce David Forbes; University of California Press, 2007.

A Little Book About A Christmas Carol by Linda Rosewood Hooper; University of California Santa Cruz, 1993.

The Man Who Invented Christmas by Lee Standiford; Crown Publishing, 2008.

The Origins of Christmas by Joseph F. Kelly; Liturgical Press, 2004.

The Feast of Christmas by Joseph F. Kelly; Liturgical Press, 2010.

Christmas in America: A History by Penne L. Restad; Oxford University Press, 1995.

The Battle for Christmas by Stephen Nissenbaum; Vintage Press, 1997.

ON THE WEB:

THE DICKENS PROJECT: dickens.ucsc.edu

THE VICTORIAN WEB: www.victorianweb.org

Holiday Traditions: Before and After Dickens

When we think of Christmas, there are many iconic images that will come to mind for those who have grown up in the Anglo-American culture. Santa Claus, presents, wreaths, poinsettias, and Christmas trees are just a few of the dominant symbols each holiday season. Most of this Christmas paraphernalia originated only within the last 150 years, however. In fact, the celebration of Christmas in England and the United States was revolutionized by Charles Dickens' *A Christmas Carol*. His "little Christmas book" had a huge impact on popular culture, and solidified many of our traditions for the holiday.

When Dickens wrote *A Christmas Carol* in 1843, English Christmas traditions had been in decline for centuries. Stores and factories remained open on December 25th, and many people were forced to work on Christmas Day.

Christmas was first promoted as a major holiday in Western Europe by Pope Gregory in 601 CE. The pope urged Christian missionaries to adapt the many local, pagan traditions of a winter festival around the solstice into a celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ. Throughout Europe, many cultures had a tradition of celebrating the slow return of the sun after the winter solstice. Pope Gregory and his successors hoped that by integrating local customs into the church rituals, the English and others would be more likely to accept the Christian religion.

The very date of Christmas, December 25, seems to have originated from one of these pagan traditions. Mithraism was an early Iranian religion focused around the sun god Mithras. In Mithraic tradition, Mithras was born to a virgin in a cave on December 25th. The Roman Emperor Constantine declared the date to be the Roman Christmas holiday in 325 CE. Because Mithraism had a large following in the Roman army, he reasoned that it would be an easy transition for them to worship Jesus' virgin birth on the same day on which they were already used to celebrating such an event.

For several centuries after Pope Gregory's proclamation, almost everyone in England lived an isolated, rural lifestyle which made it easy to preserve and pass on traditional celebrations. These usually involved the entire village community centered around the local lord's manor house. Feasting, traditional games and music, and the burning of a Yule log over the twelve-day Christmas period made up the bulk of the medieval English Christmas. By Shakespeare's time, wealthy people would sponsor elaborate Christmas revels that included sumptuous feasts, live music and theatrical entertainment.

All of this changed when the Puritans took control of the English government in 1642. The Puritans were concerned that many aspects of traditional Christmas festivities originated from pagan celebrations, right down to the date. The Puritan dictator Oliver Cromwell, who also notoriously banned theatre in England, said that celebrating Christmas in the traditional way was "an extreme



Mr. and Mrs. Fezziwig in a colorized version of John Leech's illustration from the first edition of *A Christmas Carol*, 1843.

forgetfulness of Christ." In 1652, Parliament actually banned Christmas, declaring: "No observance shall be had of the five and twentieth day of December, commonly called Christmas Day; nor any solemnity used or exercised in churches upon that day in

respect thereof." Because so many early settlers in America were Puritans, this distaste for Christmas celebrations made itself felt in this country as well.

By the time the Puritans were driven from power, both England and the United States were entering the throes of vast economic and social changes. Brought about by industrialization and the radical change from rural to urban societies, both countries saw many ethnic and religious communities dispersed, and saw that fewer and fewer people practiced (or even remembered) the old traditions.

The revival of Christmas in England, and then America, was due in part to the popularity of Queen Victoria and her husband Prince Albert, role models for many people in the 19th century. Albert, who was German, brought many Germanic Christmas traditions, including the placement of a decorated Christmas tree in the home, to Buckingham Palace, and English and American families were eager to imitate the royal family.

A Christmas Carol may have done the most to inspire the holiday's renewed popularity, however. Dickens' little book depicted humble family celebrations that almost anyone could aspire to, even in an urban setting. Although Christmas was a normal workday for most people at the time, by portraying this as a miserly practice, Dickens literally shamed untold thousands of business owners into making it a day off.

Dickens also did a great deal to separate Christmas from its religious context, so that families from all Christian denominations (and even some from other religious traditions) felt free to celebrate the holiday in the traditional way once again. While *A Christmas Carol* briefly alludes to Jesus Christ, Dickens was never comfortable with organized religion, and he took pains to ensure that his story was not explicitly religious. Rather, he used it to promote what he held to be universal values of kindness and charity. *A Christmas Carol* helped create a new secular tradition that merged feasting and fun with social charity, and which continues to inspire both Christians and non-Christians to this day.

Who Said That?

Match the spoken line to the character who speaks it. One character speaks four of the lines listed below, one character speaks two lines from the list, and seven characters speak none of the quotes listed below.

- | | |
|---|------------------------------------|
| A. "There are many things from which I might have derived good, by which I have not profited, I dare say, Christmas among the rest." | Ebenezer Scrooge |
| B. "What's Christmas to you but a time for paying bills without money, a time for finding yourself a year older and not a dollar richer, a time for balancing your books and having every item...dead against you?" | Bob Cratchit |
| C. "It is required of every man that the spirit within him should walk abroad among his fellow men, and travel far and wide; and if that spirit goes not forth in life, it is condemned to do so after death." | Tiny Tim |
| D. "No more work tonight boys – Christmas Eve!" | Jacob Marley |
| E. "Happiness need not cost us a fortune." | The Ghost of Christmas Past |
| F. "Another idol has replaced me: Gold." | The Ghost of Christmas Present |
| G. "It should be Christmas day, I am sure, for me to drink the health of such an odious, stingy, hard, unfeeling man as Mr. Scrooge." | The Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come |
| H. "If these shadows remained unaltered by the Future, the boy will die." | Fred |
| I. "God bless us – every one." | Mr. Fezziwig |
| J. "A poor excuse for picking a man's pocket every twenty-fifth of December." | Dick Wilkins |
| K. "At this festive season of the year, it is more than usually desirable that we should make some slight provision for the poor and destitute..." | Belle |
| L. "Business?! Mankind was my business. Charity and mercy were my business. The common welfare was my business." | Mrs. Cratchit |
| M. "He told me, coming home, that he hoped people saw him, because they might remember the stories of who made the beggars walk and the blind man see. I am quite sure his is growing stronger and hearty." | Peter Cratchit |
| N. "I don't make myself merry at Christmas, and I can't afford to make idle people merry." | Belinda Cratchit |
| O. "Father is so much kinder than he used to be, and we're all to be together all Christmas long. At home. Home. Home!" | Martha Cratchit |
| P. "A small matter, to make folks so full of happiness. He has spent but three, or perhaps four, pounds on his Christmas." | Fan |
| | The Portly Gentlemen |
| | Mrs. Dilber |
| | Old Joe |

Topics for Discussion

About the Play

1. *A Christmas Carol* is, in part, a novel about personal transformation. Ebenezer Scrooge is a very different person as a man than he was as a boy, and changes still further as a result of his ghostly encounters on Christmas Eve. Does Dickens provide any explanation for Scrooge's initial transformation into a cold-hearted and antisocial old man? What specific tactics do the three spirits use to reverse this? How do these tactics combine to change Scrooge's outlook on life? Is this transformation plausible? Compare the events of the novel/play to experiences you may have had that have drastically changed your beliefs and behaviors.

2. Scrooge's relationship with Belle changes irrevocably when he becomes obsessed with money, success and material gain. What do you think is the novel's attitude towards making money? How does Dickens' depiction of attitudes towards business and making money compare with the attitudes in our own modern society? Discuss the relative value of money and material possessions in your own life.

3. Dickens, like many other writers and thinkers in the Victorian era, was deeply interested in the concept of childhood. Victorian society came to emphasize childhood as a critical, formative period which determined what kind of adult a person would become. How are children depicted in *A Christmas Carol*? What do you think Dickens was trying to say about the importance of childhood, and how children should be treated? Why do you think Want and Ignorance are depicted as children, and why specifically as "Man's children?" Support your answer.

4. Though frequently spooky tales are associated with Halloween, the telling of ghost stories at Christmas-time is a long-standing English tradition. Have you ever told ghost stories at Christmas with your family? Why do you think this tradition exists in much of the United Kingdom? In many ways *A Christmas Carol* can be viewed as an English ghost story. Why do you think Dickens chose this format to tell his tale? The "Christmas Yet to Come" sequence is often quite dark and scary. How does this influence your view of the redemption that follows?

5. Almost every culture reserves particular days to set aside daily routines for a short time as people gather for special activities and observances. *A Christmas Carol* changed the way many people in England and America viewed the Christmas

holiday. What do you think is the purpose and importance of having holidays? Compare Christmas as Dickens depicts it in his story with other holidays that you celebrate or know about. How do holidays impact your life throughout the year?

About this Production

1. In this stage adaptation of *A Christmas Carol* by Neil Bartlett, a small group of actors play all the roles, create most of the sound effects and, as Bartlett puts it, "even, on occasion, impersonate props." Why do you think Bartlett chose this style of telling this holiday classic? Did you like this approach? Why? How do these choices affect you as an audience member?

2. In this production, Dickens' words are interspersed with several traditional Christmas carols that are sung by the actors. How does the addition of this music affect the telling of the story? Why do you think particular songs were chosen to be sung during particular scenes? How did they influence the scene? Be specific. Do you think the play would have been less effective if the music had been omitted?

3. Have you read Dickens' original *A Christmas Carol*? If so, how did this production differ from how you envisioned the story when you read it? What was the most impactful moment in the story when you read it? What was the most impactful moment as you watched the story live on stage? Were any characters different than you imagined? How so? Name one element from the play that you did not remember from your reading. Be specific. There have been hundreds of stage productions and numerous film versions of Dickens' holiday classic over the years. If you have seen one of these films, how is the play different? What characters and events have been removed? Is there an event or character that you particularly missed? Did any scenes affect you differently seeing them live on stage as opposed to simply reading them? Did seeing the play performed alter your interpretation of the story? How so? Be specific.

4. How did the design choices (lighting, costumes, scenery, and sound) influence your interpretation of the play? Did you agree with the choices the director and the designers made? How did the set establish the tone for the production as you entered the theatre? The story spans the majority of Ebenezer's life. How do the costumes help to convey this story? What colors have the designers chosen to establish the mood and character of the piece? What do you think was the most effective element of the design? Why? Be specific.

“Test Your Understanding” Quiz

- What is Scrooge’s attitude toward Christmas at the beginning of the story?
 - It’s a day wasted when work could be done.
 - It’s a chance to get some sleep.
 - It’s a wonderful holiday.
 - It’s the reason so many people in London are poor.
- The author states that it is essential to know that “Jacob Marley was as dead...
 - ...as a coffin-nail.”
 - ...as a dormouse.”
 - ...as a door-nail.”
 - ...as a humbug.”
- Scrooge scolds his employee for wanting...
 - ...to place another piece of coal on the fire.
 - ...to stay home with his family on Christmas Day.
 - both a & b
 - none of the above
- Who is the young man that comes to Scrooge’s counting house in hopes of spreading Christmas cheer and inviting Scrooge to Christmas dinner?
 - Bob Cratchit
 - Jacob Marley
 - Peter, Cratchit’s son
 - Fred, Scrooge’s nephew
- How does the author portray the Christmas holiday in *A Christmas Carol*?
 - as a solemn Christian religious holiday
 - as a time to experience family dysfunction
 - as a time to get lots of presents
 - as a joyous time to spend feasting with family and friends
- What significant character flaw does Scrooge exhibit at the beginning of the story?
 - bad temper
 - selfishness
 - greed
 - all of the above
- How does Jacob Marley’s ghost first appear to Scrooge?
 - in his door knocker
 - as a human phantom
 - in his dinner plate
 - as a disembodied voice
- How many ghosts visit Scrooge in *A Christmas Carol*?
 - one
 - two
 - three
 - four
- Where does the Ghost of Christmas Past take Scrooge first?
 - to the Fezziwigs
 - to Scrooge’s old school
 - to Belle
 - to a ship on the sea
- Scrooge makes many grand statements in the story. From the list below, which of them does the Ghost of Christmas Present repeat back to him?
 - “Bah! Humbug!”
 - “Are there no prisons? Are there no workhouses?”
 - “I wish to be left alone.”
 - “Show me no more!”
- What are the names of Mankind’s children, according to the Ghost of Christmas Present?
 - Apathy and Greed
 - Ignorance and Want
 - Sadness and Sloth
 - Indolence and War
- What is the final image the Ghosts show Scrooge before he awakes back in his bedroom?
 - his boyhood home
 - the family he might have had if he weren’t selfish
 - his own grave
 - Tiny Tim running
- How long does Scrooge’s transformation by the ghosts take?
 - three nights
 - one night
 - one year
 - twelve days
- What surprise does Fred receive on Christmas Day?
 - a new tie from his wife
 - a visit from three ghosts
 - a raise from his employer
 - a visit from his uncle
- Who receives the prize Christmas turkey at the end of the story?
 - Scrooge
 - Fred
 - the Cratchits
 - Belle
- In what era does the story of *A Christmas Carol* take place?
 - Victorian
 - Elizabethan
 - Present
 - Jacobean

Follow-up Activities

1. **“Critics’ Corner”** — Write a review of this production of *A Christmas Carol*. Be sure to include specific information and your own reactions to both the acting and the design elements (lights, set, costumes and sound). Explain what you liked about the production, and what you disliked, and support your opinions. Then submit your review to The Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey’s Education Department, or see if it can be published in your school newspaper.
2. **“Fred’s Party”** — Scrooge’s fun-loving nephew, Fred, is planning a Christmas party in the novel. Using print and online sources, research what kind of party he would be throwing. Would there be music? If so, what kind? Remember, there weren’t any ipads, radio stations or boom boxes at that time. What kind of food would be served? How would people have dressed? How would their etiquette be different than ours? What games would they have played? There were no television or video-game distractions in Dickens’ era, so how did they entertain themselves? Research actual Victorian party games and, for extra credit, teach them to the class and incorporate them into a classroom celebration.
3. **“Ten Years Later...”** — Dickens famously wraps up *A Christmas Carol* with just a few sentences that hint at the future lives of Scrooge, the Cratchits, and many of the other characters. Using Dickens words as a starting point, write your own sequel with additional details about what becomes of the iconic characters. How do the lives of the characters change as a result of Scrooge’s transformative experience? Do you think his change has an effect on the community as a whole? If so, how? Be as creative and specific as you can be, and be sure to use references from the novel.
4. **“Tradition Exchange”** — Survey your class about their holiday traditions, and discuss what these traditions have in common as well as how they are different. Discuss the role that tradition plays in our lives. Then hold a classroom celebration in which each person shares an aspect of his/her holiday traditions with the group: a food, a song, a story or so on.
5. **“Ghost Story”** —The four ghosts in *A Christmas Carol* provide the design team for any production of the play with an array of possibilities. Though Dickens does describe each of them in his novel, he leaves much room for interpretation. Imagine yourself as the director or designer focusing on one ghost. How does it look, sound, smell, and move? What color is it? Does it glow? Does it ever laugh? What about it is magical or supernatural? Be sure to start with Dickens’ description of the ghost. Create a collage with all the ghosts created by the class and display it in the classroom.
6. **“Adaptations”** — Neil Bartlett used Charles Dickens’ words to create a particular kind of adaptation for the stage. *A Christmas Carol* has also been adapted into films, cartoons, television shows and comic books. Using Dickens’ original novel as a basis, create a visual or literary adaptation of *A Christmas Carol* that can be presented to the class. Your adaptation could be a mural on craft paper or the storyboard for a film. It might take the story into a new context, such as modern-day New Jersey. Afterwards, discuss both the process of adaptation and how your adaptation (and others) communicated the story and themes of the original.
7. **“Your Fellow Man”** — Charles Dickens wrote this book, in part, to “strike a sledgehammer blow on behalf of the Poor Man’s child.” Discuss some other ways in which people advocate for social causes they believe in. Working individually or in small groups, design a campaign that will “strike a sledgehammer blow” for a cause that you think is important. Try to use the full range of media available to you: pictures, words, music, etc. If possible, implement your campaign in your classroom or school, and assess its impact.

The activities on this page can each fulfill multiple Language Arts Literacy and Visual/Performing Arts standards. See P18 for a guide to New Jersey’s Core Curriculum Content Standards.

Do you have activities or exercises to suggest for this play? We are always looking for new ideas to inspire students (and teachers). Send your suggestions to info@ShakespeareNJ.org and we will share them with other teachers, and maybe even include them in future study guides.

“Who Said That?” Answer Guide

A. Fred	G. Mrs. Cratchit	L. Jacob Marley
B. Ebenezer Scrooge	H. The Ghost of	M. Bob Cratchit
C. Jacob Marley	Christmas Present	N. Ebenezer Scrooge
D. Mr. Fezziwig	I. Tiny Tim	O. Fan
E. Ebenezer Scrooge	J. Ebenezer Scrooge	P. The Ghost of
F. Belle	K. The Portly Gentlemen	Christmas Past

“Test Your Understanding” Quiz Answer Guide

1. A	5. D	9. B	13. B
2. C	6. D	10. B	14. D
3. C	7. A	11. B	15. C
4. D	8. D	12. C	16. A

Meeting the Core Curriculum Content Standards

In 1996, the New Jersey State Board of Education adopted Core Curriculum Content Standards that set out to clearly define what every New Jersey student should know and be able to do at the end of his/her schooling. The Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey is committed to supporting teachers by ensuring that our educational programs are relevant to standards-based teaching and learning.

Viewing a performance at The Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey and participating in the post-performance discussion can serve as a powerful springboard for discussion, writing, and other outlets for higher-order thinking. On this page you will find suggestions for ways to align your study of our production to each standard.

LANGUAGE ARTS LITERACY STANDARDS

As a theatre dedicated to the classics, we are continually engaged in exploring some of the world's greatest literature, and the relationship between the written text and performance. Our philosophy and practice follow the four underlying assumptions of the Language Arts Literacy CCCS: that "language is an *active process* for constructing meaning," that "language develops in a *social context*," that language ability increases as learners "engage in texts that are *rich in ideas and increasingly complex in language*," and that learners achieve mastery not by practicing isolated skills but by "*using and exploring language* in its many dimensions." In the practice of theatre, we merge all areas of the language arts, as the standards suggest, "in an integrated act of rehearsal, reflection, and learning." Below, you will find just a few of the possibilities for aligning your study of our productions to each of these standards.

STANDARD 3.1: All students will apply the knowledge of sounds, letters and words in written English to become independent and fluent readers, and will read a variety of materials and texts with fluency and comprehension. *Read a scene from the play as a class and use context clues to interpret new words and expand vocabulary (3.1.C/F); demonstrate understanding by performing a scene from the play (3.1.G); compare and contrast literary elements in the play with another text being studied (3.1.H).*

STANDARD 3.2: All students will write in clear, concise, organized language that varies in content and form for different audiences and purposes. *Write a new ending for the play in blank verse or in modern prose (3.2.D), write a critique of the play which will be workshopped and published in a classroom setting (3.2.A/B/D).*

STANDARD 3.3: All students will speak in clear, concise, organized language that varies in content and form for different audiences and purposes. *Participate in a post-show discussion (3.3.A/B), memorize and perform a monologue or scene from the play (3.3.D).*

STANDARD 3.4: All students will listen actively to information from a variety of sources in a variety of situations. *Select one speech or line from the play and compare how it was performed in the stage and film version (3.4.A/B).*

STANDARD 3.5: All students will access, view, evaluate and respond to print, nonprint, and electronic texts and resources. *Discuss how the play expresses cultural values of the playwright's time (3.5.A); compare and contrast the printed text with its staged version (3.5.B).*

VISUAL & PERFORMING ARTS STANDARDS

According to both No Child Left Behind and the New Jersey CCCS, the arts (including theatre) are a core subject and "experience with and knowledge of the arts is a vital part of a complete education." In the area of performing arts, performances, workshops and study guide exercises developed by The Shakespeare Theatre address all five state standards.

Below, you will find just a few of the possibilities for aligning your study of our productions to each of these standards.

STANDARD 1.1: All students will use aesthetic knowledge in the creation of and in response to dance, music, theatre and visual art. *Discuss the use of metaphor in both the text and the design of the production; discuss how the play expresses cultural values of its period and/or of today.*

STANDARD 1.2: All students will utilize those skills, media, methods, and technologies appropriate to each art form in the creation, performance, and presentation of dance, music, theatre and visual art. *Perform a monologue or scene from the play; participate in a classroom workshop that develops the physical and technical skills required to create and present theatre.*

STANDARD 1.3: All students will demonstrate an understanding of the elements and principles of dance, music, theatre and visual art. *Participate in a post-show discussion of elements such as physicality and creating motivated action; discuss the relationship between play text and production design.*

STANDARD 1.4: All students will develop, apply and reflect upon knowledge of the process of critique. *Write a review of the production using domain-appropriate terminology; develop a class rubric for effective theatrical presentations; compare and contrast the play with work by other artists.*

STANDARD 1.5: All students will understand and analyze the role, development, and continuing influence of the arts in relation to world cultures, history, and society. *Discuss the representation of social issues (class, political leadership, etc.) in the play; research how the historical period affected the writer's work; compare the play to work from other historical periods.*

About The Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey

The acclaimed Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey is one of the leading Shakespeare theatres in the nation. Serving approximately 100,000 adults and young people annually, it is New Jersey's only professional theatre company dedicated to Shakespeare's canon and other classic masterworks. With its distinguished productions and education programs, the company strives to illuminate the universal and lasting relevance of the classics for contemporary audiences. The longest-running Shakespeare theatre on the East Coast and the seventh largest in the nation, The Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey marks its 49th season in 2011.



The company's 2011 Main Stage season features six productions presented in its 308-seat F.M. Kirby Shakespeare Theatre and runs June through December. In the summer, an Outdoor Stage production is also presented at the Greek Theatre, an open-air amphitheatre nestled in a hillside on the campus of the College of Saint Elizabeth in nearby Morristown.

In addition to being a celebrated producer of classic plays and operating *Shakespeare LIVE!* (one of the largest educational Shakespeare touring programs in the New York/New Jersey region), The Shakespeare Theatre is also deeply committed to nurturing new talent for the American stage. By providing an outstanding training ground for students of the theatre, and cultivating audiences for the future by providing extensive outreach opportunities for students across New Jersey and beyond, The Shakespeare Theatre is a leader in arts education. For additional information, visit our web site at www.ShakespeareNJ.org.

The Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey is one of 25 professional theatres in the state of New Jersey. The company's dedication to the classics and commitment to excellence sets critical standards for the field. Nationwide, the Theatre has emerged as one of the most exciting "new" theatres under the leadership of Artistic Director, Bonnie J. Monte since 1990. It is one of only a handful of Shakespeare Theatres on the east coast, and in recent years has drawn larger and larger audiences and unprecedented critical acclaim. The opening of the intimate, 308-seat F.M. Kirby Shakespeare Theatre in 1998, provided the Theatre with a state-of-the-art venue with excellent sightlines, and increased access for patrons and artists with disabilities.

The Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey is a member of ArtPride, The Shakespeare Theatre Association, Theatre Communications Group, and is a founding member of the New Jersey Theatre Alliance.

The Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey's programs are made possible, in part, by funding from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts/Department of State, a Partner Agency of the National Endowment for the Arts, as well as funds from the National Endowment for the Arts. Additional major support is received from

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The Shakespeare Theatre is an independent, professional theatre company located on the Drew University campus.



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Further Reading

The Annotated Christmas Carol by Charles Dickens with an introduction by Michael Patrick Hearn; W.W.Norton & Company, 2004.

Christmas: A Candid History by Bruce David Forbes; University of California Press, 2007.

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