

A Christmas Carol | Critical Thinking Questions

Post-Show Resource | Grades K-12

Alignment

- Learning Objective
 - Students will develop an understanding of the themes of *A Christmas Carol* through discussion of character experiences and social issues.
 - Students will reflect on personal connections to the story and its characters to foster empathy and critical thinking.

NOTE: This activity has been aligned with TEKS and [Universal Design for Learning](#). Demonstration of Learning and TEKS can be found at the end of this document.

Introduction

The following questions can be used to help your students examine the show they have just seen in a deeper way. These questions can be incorporated into activities such as class discussions, artistic responses, or journal entries.

Step 1 | Questions by Grade Level

- K-2 Questions
 - Who is your favorite character in "A Christmas Carol"? Why do you like them?
 - How do you think Scrooge feels at the beginning of the story? How does he change?
 - What does Tiny Tim teach us about kindness? Can you think of a time when you were kind to someone?
 - What was your favorite part of the story? Why did you like it?
 - How do you think people celebrate Christmas? What makes it special?
- 3-5 Questions
 - What lessons does Scrooge learn from the three ghosts? How do these lessons help him change?
 - In what ways do the characters in the story show generosity? How can we show generosity in our own lives?
 - Why do you think Charles Dickens wrote "A Christmas Carol"? What message do you think he wanted to share?
 - How does the setting of the story (the time and place it takes place) affect the characters and their actions?
 - What does the word "humbug" mean, and how does it reflect Scrooge's attitude at the beginning of the story?
- 6-8 Questions
 - How does Dickens use the character of Scrooge to comment on social issues, such as poverty and wealth?

- Discuss the role of family and community in the story. How do they impact Scrooge's transformation?
- What does the Ghost of Christmas Present reveal about society? How does this relate to our world today?
- In what ways does the story illustrate the importance of empathy and understanding towards others?
- How do the themes of redemption and forgiveness manifest in the story? Can you think of examples from your own life?
- 9-12 Questions
 - Analyze the significance of the three spirits in "A Christmas Carol." What do they represent, and how do they contribute to Scrooge's transformation?
 - What commentary does Dickens provide on the economic disparity between the rich and the poor? How can this be seen in modern society?
 - How does the structure of the novella (with its staves) affect the pacing and development of the narrative?
 - Discuss the moral implications of fear and change in Scrooge's character. Would he have changed without the ghosts?
 - How can the themes presented in "A Christmas Carol" be applied to contemporary issues of social justice and responsibility?

Step 2 | Reflection and Sharing

- Students can work in groups to answer questions together, in pairs, or part of a solo reflection. To share their findings with the class, students can:
 - Engage in a class discussion.
 - Create a tableau or short scene that demonstrates their thinking.
 - Create a poster or collage that illustrates elements or the main idea of their response.
 - Create a short multimedia presentation that combines images, text, audio, and video to illustrate their answer and explain their reasoning.
 - Answer selected questions in a journal.

Demonstration of Learning

- Students will express understanding of the story's themes through discussion, tableau, writing, or multimodal reflection that connects text and contemporary context.

TEKS

- ELA K-5: (1A-C), (2A-D), (3B), (6A) – Develop active listening and speaking skills; apply comprehension strategies to confirm predictions; use and expand vocabulary; express ideas clearly through shared reading and writing.
- Social Studies 3-5: 3.1A, 4.19E, 5.20B – Identify how individuals, events, and ideas change communities; recognize differing perspectives on historical issues; connect art and literature to historical context.

- ELA 6–12: (6A–C), (7A–B), (8A–C) – Analyze how historical, cultural, and social contexts influence literature; draw connections between themes and author perspective; use textual evidence to support interpretation and discussion.
- Theatre I–IV: (2A–B), (3A–C), (4A–B), (5A–B) – Interpret characters and social context through performance; collaborate to express meaning; analyze moral themes.

A Christmas Carol | Story Map

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Title

- *A Christmas Carol*

Author and Playwright

- Charles Dickens
- Adapted by Rob Melrose

Characters

- List of Main Characters:
 - Ebenezer Scrooge – A cold-hearted, miserly businessman who learns compassion and generosity.
 - Jacob Marley – Scrooge’s deceased business partner, condemned to wander the earth in chains.
 - Bob Cratchit – Scrooge’s loyal, underpaid clerk and loving father of Tiny Tim.
 - Tiny Tim – Bob Cratchit’s kind and sickly son, whose innocence symbolizes hope and faith.
 - Fred – Scrooge’s cheerful nephew who represents the warmth and joy of Christmas.
 - Belle – Scrooge’s former fiancée, lost to his obsession with wealth.
 - The Ghost of Christmas Past – A glowing, childlike spirit who reveals Scrooge’s memories.
 - The Ghost of Christmas Present – A jovial giant who shows the world’s current joys and sorrows.
 - The Ghost of Christmas Future – A silent, foreboding figure who shows Scrooge his fate if he does not change.
- Supporting Characters
 - Mrs. Cratchit, The Fezziwigs, Ignorance and Want, Charity Workers, Townspeople, and the Cratchit Children.

Character descriptions and printable worksheets are available on Alley Re-Sourced.

Setting

- Location
 - Victorian London — from bustling city streets to Scrooge’s cold office, his gloomy home, and the vibrant Cratchit household.
- Time Period
 - 1840s (Victorian Era, during England’s Industrial Revolution).
- Description of the Setting
 - The story shifts between the grim urban environment of London and scenes that reflect warmth and transformation — such as Fezziwig’s lively warehouse, the Cratchits’ cozy home, and ghostly dreamscapes that visualize Scrooge’s emotional journey.

Plot

- Exposition
 - Scrooge is introduced as a greedy, isolated man who despises Christmas and human connection. We meet his clerk Bob Cratchit and nephew Fred, who try to share kindness with him, but he dismisses them as fools.
- Rising Action
 - Scrooge is visited by the ghost of his late partner, Jacob Marley, who warns him to change his ways or suffer a similar fate. Three Spirits then visit Scrooge: the Ghosts of Christmas Past, Present, and Future.
- Climax
 - The Ghost of Christmas Future reveals Scrooge's lonely death and the suffering of Tiny Tim. Horrified, Scrooge realizes the cost of his greed and begs for a chance to change.
- Falling Action
 - Scrooge awakens on Christmas morning, overjoyed to find he is still alive. He buys the Cratchits a turkey, donates to charity, and reconciles with Fred.
- Resolution
 - Scrooge becomes a generous, kind man who embodies the spirit of Christmas all year long, declaring, 'I will honor Christmas in my heart, and try to keep it all the year.'

Types of Conflict

- Character vs. Self
 - Scrooge struggles with his guilt, regret, and fear of change.
- Character vs. Society
 - Scrooge's values conflict with the compassionate ideals of his community.
- Character vs. Supernatural
 - Scrooge faces the ghosts who confront him with truths from his past, present, and future.

Major Themes

- The possibility of redemption and personal transformation.
- The power of empathy, generosity, and community.
- Social justice and Dickens's critique of poverty and inequality.
- The spirit of Christmas as a symbol of renewal and compassion.