

‘Scrooge: A Christmas Story’

An adaptation of Charles Dickens’ classic novel:

A Christmas Carol

LEVEL B1



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A Dark Winter's Afternoon

Preview Questions

1. If someone is described as 'mean', how do they behave?
2. What would it be like to work for someone who is mean?

Ebenezer Scrooge was an unfriendly, miserable old man. His heart was as cold as a chill, winter wind that gave no warmth or comfort. The cold within him froze his features and gave his whole face a mean, pinched appearance. He was nobody's friend and was happy to be ignored by people in the street. Many people would avoid him if they saw him approaching; even blind men's dogs would pull their owners out of the way.

In business he was just as mean. He had started a business with Jacob Marley who had died seven years earlier. Marley had been as mean with his money as Scrooge, so they had made a lot of money together but they had made enemies, too. Scrooge didn't trust anybody with his money and he watched the people who worked for him carefully to make sure that they worked hard all the time and didn't steal from him.

His clerk, Bob Cratchit, knew how mean Scrooge was. He knew better than to ask Scrooge if he could have some coal for the fire in his office. Scrooge kept the coal box in his own office and never gave Bob enough coal to make a real fire. So on this cold winter's afternoon, Bob was trying to warm his hands over a candle flame in his dark, cold room. He was exhausted but still was working hard as usual.

Today was Christmas Eve and Bob wanted to finish his work so he could leave early. His family would be waiting for him when he got home. This made him feel happy and he smiled to himself when he thought about the warm welcome he would receive. How different to the cold, chill, damp office of Ebenezer Scrooge!

Then the door flew open and a cold gust of air came in.

"Merry Christmas, Uncle!" said a cheerful young man. The young man was Fred, Scrooge's nephew. He was as happy and joyful as Scrooge was mean and miserable. "What's so merry about it? It's just another day, the same as any other. There are still bills to pay," replied Scrooge. "Oh, Uncle Scrooge, don't be so grumpy. Why don't you come to our house for dinner tomorrow? There'll be a warm fire, good company and lots of food. Christmas is meant to be a happy time when people are kind and forgiving and look after each other."

At this, Bob Cratchit looked up from his work and began to applaud. The smile on his face disappeared immediately when he saw Scrooge glare at him.

"If I hear another sound from you, you'll lose your job!" Scrooge cried angrily.

"And as for you, my young nephew, you can celebrate Christmas in your own way, without me. I hate Christmas. I'm going to stay here and work tomorrow."

Fred sighed and said "Oh, well. At least I tried."

He waved merrily to Scrooge as Bob Cratchit opened the door for him to go out.



Review Questions

1. What do we learn about Scrooge from the reaction of blind men's dogs?
2. What can you tell about Fred's character?

Workbook

- ❖ *Glossary*
- ❖ *Vocabulary Building Exercises*
- ❖ *Reading Comprehension Questions*

Chapter 1

chill *n* a cold feeling especially when you are feeling scared or unwell

feature *n* what a part of a person's face looks like

pinched *adj* (of a person's face) looking cold, pale or thin because of illness, sadness, the cold, etc.

ignore *v* to not listen to, or look at something or someone

clerk *n* a person who works in an office, performing general office duties

coal *n* a hard, black thing made of very old wood that is found in the ground and burned to create heat

flame *n* hot, bright fire

damp *adj* slightly wet, usu. in a bad way

gust *v* a sudden strong wind

joyful *adj* very happy

grumpy *adj* being in a bad mood and easily annoyed and complaining

forgiving *adj* not staying angry with someone who has done something to hurt or annoy you

applaud *v* to show you like something by clapping your hands together

sigh *v* make a noise by blowing through your nose because you are sad, tired etc.

Chapter 2

donate *v* to give money or something else to help a person or organisation

charity *n* an organisation whose purpose is to help people by giving money, free food, etc.

workhouse *n* a building where very poor people in Britain used to work in the past and they would be given food and a place to sleep

traditionally *adv* in a way that has been done for many years

fortunate *adj* lucky

carol *n* a happy or religious song, usually sung at Christmas

scare sb away *phr v* to make someone so worried or frightened that they leave or decide not to do something that they were going to do

sadly *adv* in an unhappy way

day off *n* a day when you do not work

oblige *v* to make someone do something, or to make it necessary for someone to do something

stammer *v* to speak or say something with unusual pauses or repeated sounds, either because of speech problems or because of fear or nervousness

wise *adj* having knowledge in something

wrap *v* to cover someone or something with a piece of material for protection, to keep warm or clean etc

parlour *n* (in the past) a room in a house used for relaxing, like a living room

blind man's bluff a children's game that was played as early as 2,000 years ago in Ancient Greece

deepening *adj* increasing or becoming worse or more serious

Chapter 3

tavern *n* a place where alcohol is sold and drunk

book of accounts *n* an official record of all the money a person or company has spent and received

gloomy *adj* dark in a way that is unpleasant and makes it difficult to see

gateway *n* an entrance through a wall, fence, etc. where there is a gate

darkness *n* being without light; a situation in which there is little or no light

door knocker *n* a metal object on a door that visitors use to hit the door in order to let someone know that they want to enter the building

vanish *v* to disappear or to stop being present, especially in a sudden, surprising way

horror *n* an extremely strong feeling of fear and shock, or the frightening and shocking character of something

hearse *n* a vehicle used to carry a body in a coffin to a funeral

reassure *v* to make someone feel better and stop them from worrying

dressing gown *n* a piece of clothing like a coat, worn informally inside the house, especially before getting dressed in the morning or after getting undressed in the evening

slipper *n* a type of soft, comfortable shoe for wearing inside the house

gruel *n* cheap simple food (in the past), made by boiling oats with water or milk

shiver *v* shake slightly because you feel cold, ill, or frightened

bell *n* a hollow metal object shaped like a cup that makes a ringing sound when hit by something hard

gaze *v* to look at something or someone for a long time, especially in surprise or because you like them very much

cellar *n* a room under the ground floor of a building, usually used for storing things

chain *n* (a length of) rings usually made of metal that are connected together and used for fastening, pulling, or limiting freedom, or as jewellery

drag *v* to move something by pulling it along a surface, usually the ground

Chapter 4

waistcoat *n* a piece of clothing that covers the upper body but not the arms and usually has buttons down the front; it is worn over a shirt

terror *n* extreme fear

waist *n* the middle part of the body where you might wear a belt

tail *n* a part of an animal's body, sticking out from the base of the back, or something similar in shape or position

safe *n* a strong box or cupboard with special locks where valuable things (money or jewels) are kept

courage *n* the ability to control your fear in a dangerous or difficult situation

spirit *n* the form of a dead person, similar to a ghost, or the feeling that a dead person is present although you cannot see them

wander *v* to walk around slowly in a relaxed way or without any real reason

punishment *n* doing something not nice to someone for something bad they have done

soul *n* the spiritual part of a person that some people believe continues to exist in some form after their body has died

moan *v* to make a long, low sound of pain, sadness or another strong emotion

Chapter 5

flash *n* a sudden bright light that quickly disappears

wrinkle *n* a small line in the skin caused by old age, or anger, surprise, etc

fearfully *adv* with fear

affect *v* to have an influence, or cause a change

strongly *adv* very much, or in a very serious way

pretend *v* to behave as if something is true when you know that it is not or to make people think you are something that you aren't

Chapters 1-5

Exercise A

Complete the sentences by choosing the correct answer A, B or C.

1. Please don't me when I'm talking to you!
A. sigh B. ignore C. pretend
2. Markus has, I can't find him anywhere.
A. vanished B. dragged C. donated
3. The fire will go out if you don't put some more on it.
A. coal B. chill C. gruel
4. Tom knew he had to find the to ask his boss for more money.
A. soul B. terror C. courage

Exercise B

Complete the sentences below by using the correct form of the words in the box.
There are two extra words that you do not need to use.

stammer	grumpy	applaud	wise
wrap	gloomy	reassure	joyful

1. Everyone loudly when the singer finished singing the beautiful song.
2. Mr Browning is very so I'm sure he will know the answer to your difficult question.
3. The nervous young man when they asked him questions at the interview.
4. I tried to her that everything would be alright.
5. Why don't you turn on the light because it's very in here?
6. It was a day when our baby girl was born.

Exercise C

Complete the sentences using the correct form of the word given in CAPITALS at the end of each sentence.

1. I'm sure it will be OK if you say sorry as he's a very man. (FORGIVE)
2. We couldn't see where we were going in the (DARK)
3. It was that we got here early as the time of the train had changed. (FORTUNE)
4. I'm sure they will get some kind of for what they did. (PUNISH)
5. He looked at the big spider (FEAR)
6. The poor people had to work for many hours every day in that horrible (WORK)

Chapters 6-15

Exercise A

Complete the sentences by choosing the correct answer A, B or C.

1. You don't need to, we have plenty of time.
A. exclaim B. tremble C. rush
2. The boy can't run and play with his friends.
A. crippled B. cold-hearted C. thrilled
3. It's a big that father didn't lose his job.
A. quarrel B. dismay C. relief
4. The captain of the ship saw the so he didn't go near the dangerous rocks.
A. tombstone B. lighthouse C. graveyard

Exercise B

Complete the sentences below by using the correct form of the words in the box.
There are two extra words that you do not need to use.

terror	affect	struggle	wig
identify	rub	gathering	miracle

1. It's a that no one was killed when the plane crashed into the river.
2. Don't your eyes when your hands are dirty.
3. I didn't realise it was Jenny because she has blond hair and she was wearing a brown
4. Moira to control her feelings when her boyfriend left her.
5. Simon was filled with when the man ran towards him with a knife.
6. The police asked me if I could the man who had taken my bag.

Exercise C

Complete the sentences using the correct form of the word given in CAPITALS at the end of each sentence.

1. Luckily the crowd was so the police did not have to act. (PEACE)
2. Hold my hand when we cross the busy road. (TIGHT)
3. Thank you for your at such a difficult time. (KIND)
4. It's been a day with all my friends here with me. (DELIGHT)
5. The children sat down when the teacher walked into the room. (OBEY)
6. Because of his he is getting very fat. (GREED)

Scrooge: A Christmas Story is a short story, based on Dickens' popular book **A Christmas Carol** and adapted by **Global ELT** for learners of English.

Being a Ghost Story of Christmas, also known as **A Christmas Carol**, is a short book by Charles Dickens, first published in London by *Chapman & Hall* in 1843 and illustrated by John Leech.

A Christmas Carol tells the story of Ebenezer Scrooge, an old man who is visited by the ghost of his former business partner Jacob Marley and the spirits of Christmas Past, Present and Yet to Come. After their visits, Scrooge is changed into a kinder, gentler man.

Dickens wrote **A Christmas Carol** during a time when the British were thinking carefully about Christmas traditions, including carols, and newer customs such as Christmas trees. Dickens had written three Christmas stories before this one and was inspired following a visit to the Field Lane Ragged School, one of several places for London's street children.

The treatment of the poor and the ability of a selfish man to save himself by changing into a more sympathetic character are the main ideas of the story.

Published on 19 December, the first edition sold out by Christmas Eve; by the end of 1844 thirteen editions had been made. Most critics liked the book. The story was illegally copied in January 1844; Dickens took legal action against the publishers, who lost all their money. In 1849 he began public readings of the story, which were so successful that he did 127 further performances until 1870, the year of his death.

A Christmas Carol has never been out of print and has been translated into several languages; the story has been changed many times for film, stage, opera and other media.

Writing history

Dickens began writing **A Christmas Carol** in October 1843. It was completed in six weeks, the final pages being written in early December. He wrote much of the work in his head while taking night-time walks of 15 to 20 miles (24 to 32 km) around London.

He wanted **A Christmas Carol** to open its readers' hearts towards those people who were struggling to survive and to encourage kindness, but also to warn of the terrible danger to society created by the needs of the poor.

Main character

The central character of **A Christmas Carol** is Ebenezer Scrooge, a mean person, a London-based businessman, described in the original story as "a squeezing, wrenching, grasping, scraping, clutching, covetous old sinner!"

Scrooge may have been influenced by Dickens's feelings for his father, whom he both loved and hated. This psychological conflict may be responsible for the two very different Scrooges in the tale - one a cold, mean and greedy loner, the other a kind, sociable man.

Charles Dickens

Charles Dickens was the most popular English writer of the Victorian era, and is one of the most popular of all time. He created some of literature's most famous characters, with the theme of social reform running throughout his work.

His own story is one of rags to riches. He was born in Portsmouth, on February 7, 1812, to John and Elizabeth Dickens. The good luck he had of being sent to school at the age of nine was short-lived because his father was sent to prison for bad debt. The whole family, apart from Charles, were sent to Marshalsea. Charles was sent to work in Warren's blacking factory and suffered terrible conditions, as well as loneliness and sadness.

After three years he was returned to school, but the whole experience was never forgotten and he wrote about it in two of his better-known novels: *'David Copperfield'* and *'Great Expectations'*.

Six months after John Dickens was sent to Marshalsea, one of his relatives died, leaving him enough money in the will to pay off his debts and to leave prison. Some of the money was used to educate Charles at a nearby private school, Wellington House Academy.

By the end of 1842 Dickens was a well-established author, having written six major works, as well as several short stories, short novels and other pieces.