



# ***A Christmas Carol***

Respond to each statement by checking “Agree” or “Disagree.” Be prepared to justify your responses.

	Agree	Disagree
1. People can change.		
2. Money can buy happiness.		
3. “We do not learn from experience. We learn from reflecting on experience.”—John Dewey		
4. Being rich is a good goal in life.		
5. Workers exist to make money for their bosses.		
6. It is society’s duty to help those in need.		
7. Everyone deserves a second chance.		
8. Your past determines your future.		
9. “No one ever has become poor by giving.”—Anne Frank		
10. Money can solve most problems.		

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Go to Scope  
Online to listen  
to the words  
and definitions  
read aloud!

# Vocabulary:

## *A Christmas Carol*

1. **ambition (am-BISH-uhn)** *noun*; An *ambition* is a particular goal or aim; something a person hopes to do or achieve. Your best friend might be working hard to achieve her ambition of running a mile in under seven minutes.  
  
*Ambition* can also mean “a strong desire for success,” as in, “Steph Curry’s fierce ambition helped him become a professional basketball player.”
2. **dismal (DIZ-muhl)** *adjective*; If something is dismal, it is gloomy and depressing. If it’s cold and raining, you could say that the weather is dismal. *Dismal* can also mean “very bad or poor,” as in, “Last year, the football team’s record was dismal: zero wins and nine losses.”
3. **giddy (GID-ee)** *adjective*; *Giddy* can mean “dizzy,” or “playful and silly,” or “filled with joy.” *Giddy* can also mean a combination of these feelings—when you’re so happy and excited that you feel silly and a little dizzy.
4. **heed (heed)** *verb*; If you heed someone’s advice or warning, you pay close attention to it and do what they suggest. If a sign in the hallway says “CAUTION: WET FLOOR,” you should heed the warning and walk carefully so you don’t slip and fall.
5. **miserly (MAHY-zer-lee)** *adjective*; A miser (MAHY-zer) is a person who is stingy—someone who spends as little money as possible, to the point of living in harsher conditions than they need to. *Miser* is not a nice thing to call someone—it has negative connotations.  
  
*Miserly* means “like or typical of a miser.” A miserly tip for a server at a restaurant is a very small, ungenerous tip. A miserly billionaire is ungenerous and doesn’t give any money to charity.
6. **morose (muh-ROHSS)** *adjective*; Someone who is morose is extremely serious, unhappy, and quiet.
7. **ogre (OH-ger)** *noun*; An ogre is a frightening giant from myths and fairy tales that eats people. A person who is frightening and cruel might be referred to as an ogre.
8. **shabby (SHAB-ee)** *adjective*; If something is shabby, it is old and worn out. A shabby couch has gotten a lot of use—its color has faded, its fabric has frayed, and its stuffing might be coming out.

## **“An Imagined Interview With Charles Dickens”**

**1. galvanize (GAL-vuh-nahyz)** *verb*; The word *galvanize* means “to shock or excite a person into taking action.” In other words, to make people so excited or concerned about an issue that they feel they *have* to do something about it. Seeing a park covered in trash might galvanize a group of students to organize a park cleanup day.

**2. injustice (in-JUHS-tis)** *noun*; Justice (JUHS-tis) is treatment that is just, meaning that it is morally right and fair.

The prefix *in* means “not,” “opposite of,” or “without.” Injustice is the absence of justice—in other words, unfair treatment. *Injustice* can also refer to a particular act of unfair treatment—a situation in which the rights of a person or a group of people are ignored. For example, sending an innocent person to prison is an injustice.

**3. reform (rih-FORM)** *noun*; As it is used in the interview, *reform* means “the improvement or correction of what is wrong in a system or society.” If citizens think a law is in need of reform, they want the government to fix the problems with the law by changing it.

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**Directions:** On the back of this page, list any other words from the play or imagined interview whose definitions you are not sure about. For each word, use context clues to try to figure out the meaning. Then look up the word in a few different dictionaries. Discuss the meaning of the word with your teacher or another adult. Then write a definition for the word and one example sentence.

# Vocabulary Practice

## *A Christmas Carol*

**Directions:** Rewrite each sentence using a form of one of the words in the box. There are two words you will not use.

reform    ambition    ogre    galvanize    morose    giddy

1. Janna's dream is to secure a spot in one of the country's top ballet programs.
2. In the early 20th century, labor laws were changed; it became illegal for children to work.
3. In Carla's favorite movie *Shrek*, a big ugly monster learns the true meaning of self-worth.
4. Trey's passionate speech about the environmental damage caused by plastic bottles inspired his classmates to switch to reusable water bottles instead.

**Directions:** Choose the best answer to each question.

**5. Which item is shabby?**

- Ⓐ a brand-new shirt that you plan to wear to the school dance
- Ⓑ your favorite sneakers, which are dirty and have holes in the bottoms

**6. Which might be described as a dismal afternoon?**

- Ⓐ sitting outside in the rain watching your favorite soccer team lose the game
- Ⓑ having fun at an amusement park

**7. Which could be called an injustice?**

- Ⓐ not giving someone a job because of their gender
- Ⓑ giving someone a raise for doing a good job

**Directions:** Choose the word or phrase that is most similar in meaning to each word in bold.

**8. miserly**

- Ⓐ generous
- Ⓑ cheap

**9. heed**

- Ⓐ pay attention to
- Ⓑ ignore

**10. morose**

- Ⓐ cheerful
- Ⓑ gloomy

**11. giddy**

- Ⓐ lighthearted
- Ⓑ bored

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# Close-Reading Questions

## *A Christmas Carol*

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1. In Scene 1, Scrooge and Fred express very different views on Christmas. What do their differing points of view reveal about what they value? (character)
2. In Scene 1, who seems happier, Scrooge or Fred? What message do you think the authors want to convey with this scene? (theme)
3. In Scene 2, what does the fact that the fire in Scrooge's home is "weak" help you understand about Scrooge? (setting, character)
4. In Scene 2, when Scrooge points out that Marley was a "fine man of business," Marley says, "Mercy and charity should have been my business." What does Marley mean? (interpreting text)

7. Why do you think Scrooge makes his gift of a turkey to the Cratchits anonymously?  
(character's motivation)

## ***A Christmas Carol* and “An Imagined Interview with Charles Dickens”**

1. Based on what Charles Dickens says in the imagined interview, how did his own life experiences inspire his writing?
2. Dickens says he gave a speech calling for reform but wrote *A Christmas Carol* because he thought it would be more “galvanizing.” Why might this be?
3. What message is Dickens sending about money?

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# ***A Christmas Carol***

## **Character Thinking Tool**

The questions in this activity are about the character of  
**Ebenezer Scrooge**

**1.** In Scene 1, the ghost of Jacob Marley introduces Scrooge by saying, “This is Ebenezer Scrooge. His cheeks are as withered as his soul.”

**A.** What does Marley mean?

**B.** What details in Scene 1 support the idea that Scrooge’s soul is withered?

**2. A.** What does the description of Scrooge’s bedroom at the beginning of Scene 2 reveal about him as a person?

**B.** If someone were to write a story about you, what would your bedroom reveal about you?



**3.** In Scene 3, the Ghost of Christmas Past says, “You chose wealth over love.”

**A.** How might placing money above all else affect a person’s life?

**B.** If everyone placed money above all else, what would society be like?

**4.** Name one thing Scrooge learns from each ghost who visits him.

**Ghost of Christmas Past:**

**Ghost of Christmas Present:**

**Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come:**

**5.** How is Scrooge different in Scenes 6 and 7 from how he was in Scene 1?

**6.** Educator John Dewey once said, “We do not learn from experience. We learn from reflecting on experience.” What did he mean? How does this idea apply to Scrooge?

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# Exploring Mood

Mood is the feeling you get from reading a piece of writing. Another way to describe mood is *atmosphere*. When you walk into a place, it has an atmosphere that makes you feel a certain way; when you “walk into” a story, it too has an atmosphere that creates a feeling. Writers create mood through word choice, imagery, dialogue, setting, and plot.

**Directions:** Open your magazine to Scene 2 of *A Christmas Carol*. Reread the scene, then answer the questions below using details from the scene to support your answers.

## Mood Words

calm, dreadful, enraged, frightening, grim, joyful, lively, mournful, touching

## Scene 2

1. Describe the mood of Scene 2. Choose a couple of words from the box of mood words above or come up with your own words.

Mood of Scene 2: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Explain what creates that mood by answering the questions below.

**A. How does the plot help create the mood?** In other words, what is going on, and how does that help create the mood you named?

**B. How does the imagery the playwright uses help create the mood?** (Imagery is description that appeals to the reader’s sense of sight, hearing, taste, smell, or touch—also known as sensory details.)

Now imagine that you are the director of a movie version of *A Christmas Carol*. Your job is to visualize the script and then direct your crew and actors in fulfilling your vision. Follow the prompts below to brainstorm your vision for a scene of your choosing.

**Start here!**  
→

**Choose your favorite scene:**  
**Scene** \_\_\_\_

What mood do you want to create for this scene? Will the mood be just like in the play? Will you amp it up? Go in a different direction?

**Describe the mood (or moods) of your scene.**

What kind of music would help create the mood you want? How about sound effects?

**Music and Sound**

What lighting choices can help create the mood you want?

**Lighting**

Which expressions should the cameras be sure to capture? Should there be any special camera movements?

**Cameras**

What direction will you give each actor on the emotions he or she should be communicating?

**Actors**

What other elements will help create the mood of your scene? Jot down any notes on props, hair and makeup, costumes, or anything else.

**Other Ideas**

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# Making Inferences

Making an inference means using clues from the text to figure out something the author doesn't tell you directly.

**Directions:** Answer the questions or follow the directions that appear in italics to fill in the chart. We completed the first row for you.

Clues	Inference
<p><b>1.</b> Consider these lines from page 11:</p> <p><b>SD3:</b> . . . A white-haired man sits at a large desk counting money.</p> <p><b>Marley:</b> This is Ebenezer Scrooge. His cheeks are as withered as his soul.</p>	<p><i>What do these lines suggest about Scrooge?</i></p> <p><i>You can infer from these lines that Scrooge is old and miserable.</i></p>
<p><b>2.</b> <i>Find two lines in the play that support the inference on the right.</i></p>	<p>Marley has returned as a ghost to help Scrooge become a better person.</p>
<p><b>3.</b> On page 13, the Ghost of Christmas Past talks to Scrooge:</p> <p><b>Ghost 1:</b> Financial gain was your sole ambition. You chose wealth over love.</p> <p><b>Scrooge:</b> Spirit, why do you torture me with my past mistakes?</p>	<p><i>What can you infer about Scrooge's feelings from this dialogue?</i></p>

Clues	Inference
<p><b>4.</b> Find two lines in the play that support the inference on the right.</p>	<p>The Cratchits appreciate what they have.</p>
<p><b>5.</b> On page 14, Scrooge talks to Bob Cratchit:</p> <p><b>SD1:</b> Scrooge sits in his office, giddy with anticipation.</p> <p><b>Scrooge:</b> You're 18 and a half minutes late!</p> <p><b>Scrooge:</b> I won't stand for this any longer!</p>	<p>Based on Scrooge's feelings and words, what is he trying to do?</p>

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## ***A Christmas Carol Quiz***

**Directions:** Read *A Christmas Carol*. Then answer the questions below.

1. In Scene 1, SD1 says “The town clock chimes five. Cratchit stands expectantly, clutching his thin coat and hat.” What can readers infer from these lines? Choose TWO answers.
  - (A) Cratchit is eager to leave.
  - (B) Cratchit doesn’t have much money.
  - (C) Cratchit’s son Tim is in poor health.
  - (D) Mrs. Cratchit dislikes her husband’s boss.
2. Which best describes Fred’s role in the play?
  - (A) He resolves the conflict in the story.
  - (B) He signals shifts in setting.
  - (C) He causes a change in Scrooge.
  - (D) He provides a contrast to Scrooge.
3. Which lines support the idea that Scrooge is miserly? Choose TWO answers.
  - (A) **Ghost 1:** So much praise for such small things?
  - (B) **Scrooge:** And you expect me to pay you for a day when you’re not working?
  - (C) **Scrooge:** Spirit, why do you torture me with my past mistakes?
  - (D) **Scrooge:** Absolutely not! Coal costs money.
4. In Scene 7, Scrooge orders Cratchit to put more coal on the fire. This detail
  - (A) helps readers understand how poverty affects the Cratchit family.
  - (B) reveals that Scrooge spent Christmas with Fred.
  - (C) suggests that Scrooge is still an unkind boss.
  - (D) illustrates how much Scrooge’s attitude toward money has changed since the beginning of the play.
5. Which is NOT a theme of the play?
  - (A) Relationships with others give meaning to life.
  - (B) It is never too late to change.
  - (C) Money cannot buy happiness.
  - (D) Those who work hard find success.
6. Based on information in the imagined interview and the play, Charles Dickens wrote *A Christmas Carol* to
  - (A) earn enough money to free his father from debtors’ prison.
  - (B) provide a short, entertaining read to relieve people of holiday stress.
  - (C) draw attention to the injustices of poverty, as well as the dangers of putting money above all else.
  - (D) give people a glimpse of what city life was like in 19th-century England.

### **Constructed-Response Questions**



**Directions:** Write your answers in a well-organized response.

7. Analyze the role the three spirits play in Scrooge’s character development. Support your ideas with text evidence.
8. In the imagined interview, Charles Dickens says “No one is useless in this world who lightens the burdens of it for anyone else.” What does he mean? How does this idea apply to the play?

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## ***A Christmas Carol Quiz***

**Directions:** Read *A Christmas Carol*. Then answer the questions below.

**1. In Scene 1, SD1 says that Cratchit is “clutching his thin coat and hat.” What can readers infer from the fact that Cratchit’s coat is thin?**

- (A) He is excited to go home.
- (B) He doesn’t have much money.
- (C) His son is in poor health.
- (D) His wife dislikes Scrooge.

**2. The ghost of Jacob Marley introduces all of the following EXCEPT \_\_\_\_\_.**

- (A) the setting
- (B) the main character
- (C) the conflict
- (D) background information about the time period

**3. Which details support the idea that Scrooge values money above all else? Choose TWO answers.**

- (A) He sends a turkey to the Cratchits’ house.
- (B) He doesn’t want to pay Cratchit on Christmas.
- (C) He admired his former boss, Mr. Fezziwig.
- (D) He won’t allow Cratchit to put coal on the fire.

**4. Scene 7 shows \_\_\_\_\_.**

- (A) how big of a celebration Christmas has become in England
- (B) why Scrooge changes
- (C) what will happen to Tim Cratchit
- (D) that Scrooge has become caring and generous

**5. Which concept is NOT explored in the play?**

- (A) money
- (B) family
- (C) happiness
- (D) nature

**6. Based on information in the imagined interview and the play, Charles Dickens wrote *A Christmas Carol* to draw attention to \_\_\_\_\_.**

- (A) Christmas traditions
- (B) 19th-century England
- (C) the unfair treatment of the poor
- (D) the differences between England and America

### **Constructed-Response Questions**



**Directions:** Write your answers in a well-organized response.

**7.** Choose one of the ghosts that visits Scrooge and explain what Scrooge learns from that ghost. Use details from the play to support your answer.

**8.** How does Scrooge’s view of Christmas change over the course of the play? Support your answer using text evidence.



Note: *Scope* does not accept Google Docs. If you are e-mailing your entry, please send a .pdf or .doc file.

## Charles Dickens Contest

What do you think Charles Dickens wants readers to learn through the character of Scrooge? Support your answer with details from the play and imagined interview. Five winners will each get *Beverly, Right Here* by Kate DiCamillo.

### Entries will be judged on:

- ⇒ a clearly stated central idea
- ⇒ good organization and transitions
- ⇒ use of supporting text evidence
- ⇒ grammar, spelling, and punctuation

My name: \_\_\_\_\_

My home phone number: \_\_\_\_\_ My grade: \_\_\_\_\_

My teacher's name: \_\_\_\_\_ My teacher's e-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

School name: \_\_\_\_\_

School address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

School phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

My parent or legal guardian consents  
to my participation in this contest.

Parent's or legal guardian's signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Include this form with your entry and send both to: [scopemag@scholastic.com](mailto:scopemag@scholastic.com)  
or mail them to: Charles Dickens Contest, c/o *Scope*, P.O. Box 712, New York, NY 10013-0712

**ENTRIES MUST BE RECEIVED BY February 20, 2020!**