

A Christmas Carol | Exploring Themes

Post-Show Activity | Grades 6-12

Alignment

Learning Objective

- Students will identify and analyze key themes in the play adaptation of *A Christmas Carol*.
- Students will connect themes to characters, plot, and historical context.
- Students will develop critical thinking through group discussion and written reflection.

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.

Materials Needed

- Re-Sourced Guide for *A Christmas Carol* (found [here](#))
- *A Christmas Carol* Story Map (included)
- Writing materials or digital devices for note-taking
- Art supplies

Introduction

- Start with a brief discussion about the concept of themes in theatre. *Explain how A Christmas Carol* addresses various themes such as redemption, community, compassion, and transformation.
 - A printable Story Map is included with this document. Encourage students to use this outline to organize their notes during the discussion and group work time.
- Ask them to brainstorm any themes they observed during the play. Write their ideas on the whiteboard or chart paper. Guide them to consider specific scenes.

Step 1 | Group Discussion

- Divide students into small groups and assign each group a specific theme from the play. Possible themes could include:
 - 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.
- Have each group discuss how their assigned theme was portrayed in the play by analyzing:
 - Key scenes that highlighted the theme.
 - Character interactions that exemplified the theme.
 - Any dramatic or theatrical elements that contributed to their understanding of the theme.

Notes for UDL alignment: Bridge the language of the students (the way they phrased their ideas) with any academic or formal variations you wish to support. "Just cause you're poor doesn't mean you're a bad

person” would be another way of saying “Dickens’s critique of poverty and inequality.” Learn more about UDL guidelines for language and symbols [here](#).

Step 2 | Group Work Time

- Each group will create a visual representation of their assigned theme. They can choose from various formats, including:
 - A poster that includes memorable quotes from the play, visuals, and explanations of the theme.
 - A collage using magazine cutouts, drawings, or digital images that symbolize the theme.
 - A short multimedia presentation that combines images, text, and audio to convey the theme.
- Use a visible timer while students are creating and give them verbal warnings.
- Keep the list of themes visible if possible.
- Encourage the use of the Story Map and discussion notes.

Step 3 | Sharing and Feedback

- Designate a stage area and have each person or group present their work, explaining their theme and how it was expressed in the play.
 - If time allows, students can display their work in a gallery walk.
- During presentations, use “See / Think / Wonder” to encourage reflection from the rest of the class:
 - What did you see in this visual? Objectively, without interpretation. Just visual details.
 - What do you think is happening in this visual? What do you see that makes you think that?
 - What do you wonder? What questions come up for you as you look at this stage picture?

Demonstration of Learning

- Students articulate, through discussion and written or visual representation, how a chosen theme is expressed in *A Christmas Carol*.
- Groups analyze characters, dialogue, and key scenes to explain how the playwright’s adaptation reinforces Dickens’s central messages.
- Students present their thematic interpretations through a creative medium (poster, collage, or digital presentation) and participate in peer reflection using the See / Think / Wonder routine.

TEKS

- English Language Arts and Reading (Grades 6–12): (2A–E), (3A–C), (5A–C), (6A–B), (7A), (8A) – Analyze theme and genre; interpret character and plot development; make inferences and draw conclusions with textual evidence;
- Theatre I–IV: (1A–C), (2A–C), (3A–B), (4A–B) – Develop and sustain characters using voice, movement, and imagination; interpret scripts and dramatic literature; collaborate to express ideas and themes through performance; analyze and critique theatrical works and performances.

A Christmas Carol | Story Map

Post-Show Resource for K-12

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.