

INDIANA REPERTORY THEATRE

*Lilly* PRESENTS  
**CHARLES DICKENS'  
A CHRISTMAS  
CAROL**  
adapted by Tom Haas

November 13 – December 26, 2014  
OneAmerica Stage

## STUDY GUIDE

edited by Richard J Roberts & Milicent Wright  
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# Charles Dickens' *A Christmas Carol* adapted by Tom Haas

The beloved classic of loss and redemption returns to IRT's snow-covered stage! Dickens' characters bring new life every season in this faithful, fanciful and frolicsome adaptation. It's Indy's favorite holiday tradition. Experience it for the first time all over again.

*Recommended for students in grades 4-12*

## Themes, Issues, & Topics

the consequences of greed  
humanity's ability to change  
the power of love and forgiveness

The performance will last 90 minutes with no intermission.

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*Robert Neal in  
A Christmas Carol, 2010.*



# The Story of *A Christmas Carol*

*A Christmas Carol* tells the story of Ebenezer Scrooge, a bitter, miserly man, who is visited by four ghosts on Christmas Eve. The first ghost, Jacob Marley—Scrooge’s former business partner—visits Scrooge to warn him against his miserly and heartless ways. Marley warns Scrooge that if he doesn’t change his selfish behavior and tend to the needs of his fellow man, he will be doomed to an afterlife of misery. In order to redeem himself, Scrooge must accept the visitations of three spirits: the ghosts of Christmas Past, Present, and Future.

The Ghost of Christmas Past shows Scrooge scenes from his childhood and early life. Along with such joyous events as a reunion with his sister and a lively holiday party, Scrooge relives many painful memories—including the day he lost the woman he loved.

The Ghost of Christmas Present shows Scrooge a range of Christmas gatherings. One is a lively celebration hosted by Scrooge’s nephew, at which the merry group plays a word game that mocks Scrooge’s greed. Another is a modest Christmas dinner at the home of Scrooge’s employee, Bob Cratchit. The meal is meager but joyous, the only cloud being the illness of Cratchit’s son, Tiny Tim. Even Scrooge is touched by the boy’s bravery.

The Ghost of Christmas Future shows Scrooge horrifying scenes of a dark, dismal future—vagrants looting through a dead man’s stolen belongings, laughing and mocking the deceased; an unmourned corpse, left alone in an empty room—remnants of a life whose absence from the world is no great loss, and to some a source of joy.

Scrooge’s fate depends on his response to the spirits of Christmas Past, Present, and Future. The final moments of the story radiate a spirit of generosity and redemption, as well as sheer, giddy joyousness, which have helped to make *A Christmas Carol* one of the world’s most popular tales.



*The Cratchit family in A Christmas Carol, 2012*

# Author Charles Dickens

Charles Dickens, the great English novelist, was born February 7, 1812, in Portsmouth, on the southern coast of England. His father lost his job in the Naval Pay Office when Charles was three, and the family moved to London. The Dickens family moved so often during Charles' childhood that he was unable to attend school regularly.

At the age of 12 Charles had to leave school to work in a rat-infested blacking (shoe polish) factory; two weeks later his father was sent to debtor's prison. Luckily, a small inheritance rescued the family, permitting Charles to return to school for two years; but his formal education was short-lived. At 15 he became a legal clerk and at 18 a court reporter for the *Mirror of Parliament* and the *True Son*. Dickens quickly acquired a reputation as a top reporter.



In 1834, Dickens began to publish short narrative sketches under the pseudonym "Boz" in the *Morning Chronicle*. Two years later he married Catherine Hogarth, daughter of a newspaper editor. Together, they had ten children before they divorced in 1858. Shortly after marrying Catherine, Dickens resigned from the newspaper and became editor of a new monthly magazine. This new job allowed Dickens more time to focus on his writing. He explored the difficult lives of pauper orphans in his second novel, *Oliver Twist*.

Although Dickens enjoyed great prosperity, the poverty of his youth left him suspicious of the ruling class and sensitive to the plight of the downtrodden. His research on the notorious living conditions in lower-class boarding schools resulted in *Nicholas Nickleby*, in which a youth escapes from a tyrannical schoolmaster.

Dickens held strong views about the relationship between a lack of education and social oppression. He was giving a speech on education as the solution to England's problems when he conceived the idea of *A Christmas Carol*. Shortly thereafter, in autumn 1843, he started writing the short book. He composed it in a frenzy, alternately laughing and crying at the images that occurred to him; and he polished it in his mind while walking the streets of London at night. With illustrations by Dickens's friend John Leech, the book was published at Christmastime 1843.

Over the next few years, Dickens capitalized on the popularity of *A Christmas Carol* with several short Christmas stories written in haste for quick reward. Dickens was obsessed with making a sufficient living to support his large family, which included not only his ten children, but his and his wife's parents and siblings. Much of Dickens's writing was done for commercial purposes, which may surprise those who consider Dickens a writer of mythic literary greatness.



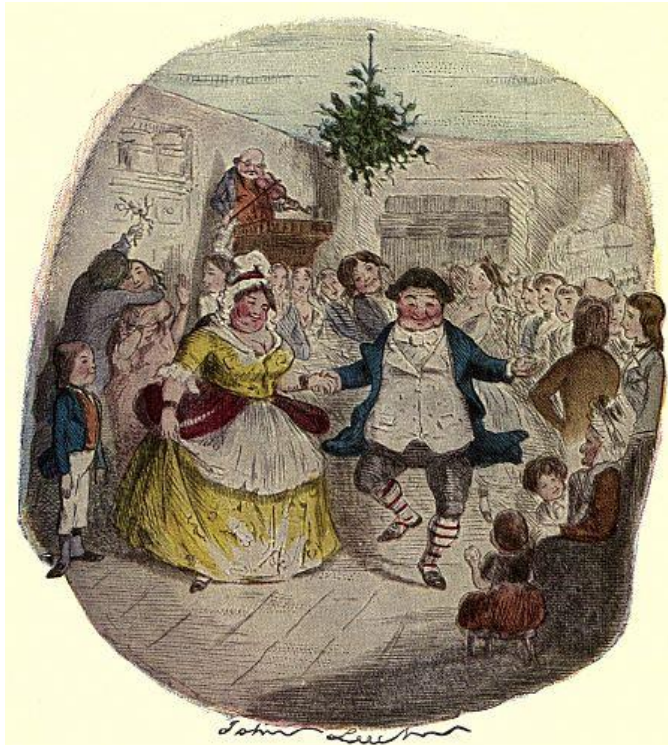
Dickens continued to incorporate his own life experiences into his works. *David Copperfield*, a semi-autobiographical novel about a young man who struggles through poverty to achieve respect, was an immediate success in 1849. The novels *Bleak House*, *Hard Times*, and *Little Dorrit* followed in rapid succession. Their genesis followed a similar pattern: Dickens wrote chapters of each book for publication in periodicals and later published them as complete novels. In this manner, the author was literally making up the story as he went along.

Dickens spent the last years of his life traveling throughout the world to perform public readings from his novels. He was hailed everywhere as the greatest writer of his age. Although he enjoyed traveling and exhibiting his acting skill, it was strenuous work. In June 1870 he suffered a stroke and died instantly at the age of 58. For three days, thousands of citizens passed by his open casket in Westminster Abbey, paying their respects to this most beloved of English writers.

## Charles Dickens and the Victorian Christmas

During the nineteenth century, as England became less rural and more industrial, old Christmas customs were lost. In *A Christmas Carol*, written and published in 1843, Charles Dickens found a way to both celebrate and revitalize old country holiday traditions by transplanting them to an urban setting.

As Scrooge revisited his childhood, readers were reminded of their own childhood celebrations, or those they had heard about from their parents and grandparents. When Scrooge journeyed with the Spirit of Christmas Present, readers encountered lavish and lengthy descriptions of a wide variety of holiday celebrations, from the humblest to the most luxurious. In reality, such Christmas revelry was largely a product of Dickens's imagination. But *A Christmas Carol*, along with



Dickens's other Christmas stories, enjoyed a wide audience, and these tales inspired readers as they prepared their own holiday celebrations.

Dickens was not alone in revitalizing the holiday. The same year *A Christmas Carol* was published, the first Christmas card was printed, and three years later Prince Albert, Queen Victoria's husband, introduced the German Christmas tree to England. But it was Dickens who became so synonymous with Christmas that, when he died in 1870, a little girl in London asked, "Mr. Dickens dead? Then will Father Christmas die too?"

*The Fezziwigs*  
by Dickens's original illustrator, John Leech.

# A Christmas Carol on Stage

*A Christmas Carol*, like all of Charles Dickens's novels, contains a panorama of places and characters brilliantly described by a masterful storyteller. Bringing a novel to the stage is a challenge—the novel is primarily a narrative form and the theatre is a forum for action and dialogue—but it is a challenge the IRT embraces. Stage adaptations of novels recently produced by the IRT include *An Iliad*, *Jackie and Me*, *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, *Dracula*, *Holes*, *Around the World in 80 Days*, *Crime and Punishment*, and *To Kill a Mockingbird*, not to mention last season's production of *Who Am I This Time?* (an adaptation of three short stories by Kurt Vonnegut) and our 2011 production of the non-fiction classic *The Diary of Anne Frank*. Later this season the IRT will produce stage adaptations of *The Giver* and *The Hound of the Baskervilles*.

The richness of Dickens's prose makes the task of adaptation to the stage especially daunting. The IRT's adaptation of *A Christmas Carol* uses Dickens's language not only as dialogue, but also as narrative, so we experience the story much as the author wrote it. This technique allows the audience to hear the original language of the novel, where Dickens makes meaning not only through story, but also through his choice of rhythms, sounds, metaphors, and dialects. This uniquely theatrical way of telling a story is a celebration of the craft of the actor and the power of the audience's imagination.

Ben Tebbe and Ryan Artzberger in *A Christmas Carol*, 2011. The snow is made of thin shredded plastic. Each 25-pound box of "snow" covers a 7-by-7-foot square on stage. To cover the entire stage with snow requires 23 boxes of "snow," or 575 pounds. During the full run of *A Christmas Carol*, the IRT uses about 40 of these boxes, or 1,000 pounds total. That's half a ton!



The IRT's adaptation of Dickens's novella was written by former IRT artistic director Tom Haas and produced at the IRT every year from 1980 through 1984. After a twelve-year hiatus, the play was brought back in 1996 and is now making its 19th (or 24th) appearance.

The IRT production of *A Christmas Carol* varies from year to year, but always features Dickens's wonderful storytelling, presented by actors who play several roles. This year's production will be directed for the first time by the IRT's associate artistic director, Courtney Sale, who has also directed the IRT's productions of *The Mountaintop*, *And Then They Came for Me*, and *Jackie and Me*; later this season she directs *The Giver*.

As for the cast, some will return from previous years, some will be new, and some will be returning but in new roles. Ryan Artzberger, who has played many different roles in the Carol over the years, will play Scrooge for the fifth time. Lighting designer Michael Lincoln will fine-tune his special lighting effects. The production continues to use music by composer Andrew Hopson. Every year Murrell Horton's elaborate period costumes must be refit or rebuilt to suit a new company of actors; last year, after years of normal wear and tear, new party dresses were built for Felicity and her sisters.

One thing that will not change this year is the snow. Audiences and actors alike delight in this production's endless snow-covered field, first envisioned by scenic designer Russell Metheny. During the performance actors make tracks through the snow, symbolizing their individual journeys. Hidden objects and trap doors under the snow add to the mystery and spirit of this production. With the stage masking stripped away, the theatre's backstage area is revealed, allowing the audience to experience the magic of the story while seeing how it is created.

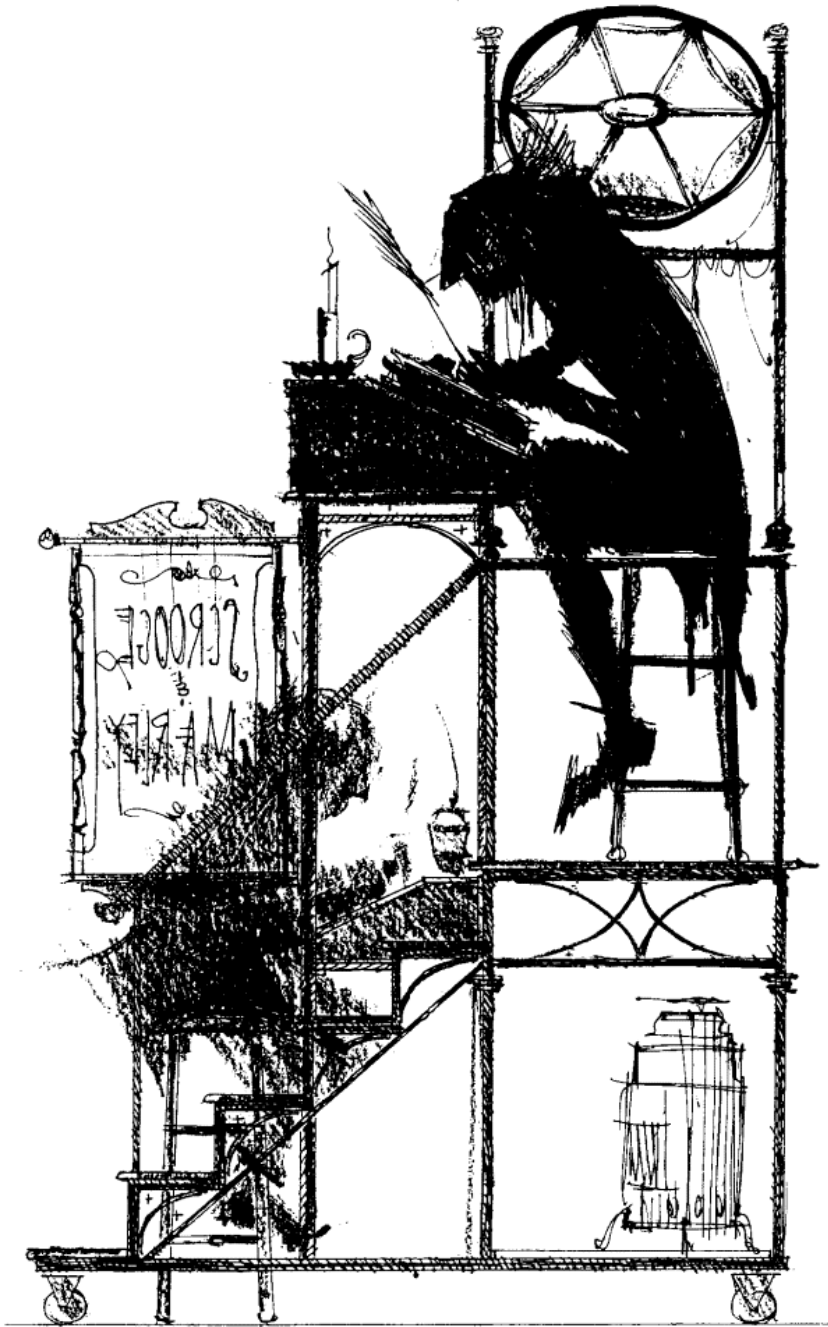
*A Christmas Carol* brings to mind visions of Christmas cheer and scenes of a distant past in which we wish we could participate: a merry gathering at the Christmas dinner table with roast goose and a steaming plum pudding; a lively dance of country folk on Christmas Eve; a family toast in which a poor boy calls forth the spirit of Christmas with a simple, "God bless us, everyone!" These impressions of *A Christmas Carol* are the essence of its lingering charm and create moments of celebration in the theatre. The IRT's production will be filled with such visions and much more; for these visions can inspire a spirit of generosity and goodwill that we need not only at the holiday season, but all the year through.



*Fred's party from  
A Christmas Carol, 2011.*



# “the merriest time in all the world”



## Russell Metheny

### Scenic Designer

It's ironic, but as a scenic designer the thing I love most is great performances. I love creating an empty space in which great performances happen. That's what this set is all about: an empty field of snow in which wonderful actors tell a wonderful story. When I see something on stage that is not what it is and looks like something else—that to me is great theatre.

*Preliminary sketch for Scrooge's office by scenic designer Russell Metheny.*

## Michael Lincoln

### Lighting Designer

Well of course, the first thing is the snow. That enormous field of white offers a technical challenge to a lighting designer. It's harder to create isolated lighting effects; everything just bounces all over the place. But I also have unique opportunities, such as creating silhouettes against the snow. In terms of design, the snow functions very much like a sky drop—it's a blank canvas on which I can paint any color. This production does not rely on theatrical "effects." It's all about the magic created between the actors and the audience. There are always new discoveries to make in the snow. It's an unnerving yet exhilarating process.



### **Murell Horton** *Costume Designer*

One of the original goals for this design was to create costumes authentic to the period, based on real Victorian clothing rather than fanciful ideas of nostalgia. The clothes for this period (1840s) are industrial—top hats were called stove pipes—and dark, with sharp silhouettes against the beautiful snow (which is so white it makes its own set of rules). But the play also ventures into the past, which has a more dreamy, foggy, candlelit look; and into the future, which is darker and creepier. After designing the show a number of years ago, I returned to the IRT six years ago to create new dresses for the past and new uniforms for the present, and to look at how the show had evolved over time and give it a brush-up. It was interesting to re-examine my own ideas now that I'm a few years older. I'm pleased with how well the show holds up to my more experienced eye; but inevitably, there were colors to adjust and shapes to tweak. It was great to have the opportunity to revisit and refurbish an old favorite.

*Preliminary sketch for Mrs. Fezziwig by costume designer Murell Horton.*

### **Andrew Hopson** *Composer*

The pipe organ has the distinction of being associated with three diverse concepts: religion, theatre, and phantoms. Using an organ as one of the main instruments in *A Christmas Carol* was an obvious choice. For ghostly sound effects, I ended up using four metal instruments: for Marley, I used a waterphone (an instrument invented—I think—for the movie *Aliens*); for Christmas Past, I used wind chimes; for Christmas Present, I experimented with harp strings; for Christmas Future, I played a cymbal with a violin bow, and dragged a chain inside a piano.



# Tradition & Surprise

by Janet Allen, Artistic Director

Welcome to the IRT's annual production of Dickens's *A Christmas Carol*. We delight in bringing this production to the stage in celebration of the festive season, and to create in it a tradition of theatre-going at the holidays. We liken it to reading aloud a favorite holiday book, or trimming the tree, or baking cookies, or caroling: a yearly act without which the holidays simply wouldn't mean as much. Why are holidays so important in our lives, and why do we so carefully plan the events with which to celebrate them? Simply because they cause us to pause in our hectic lives, repeat a much-loved activity, and, as the Lamplighter says in the play, "think on those we care for at a distance" as well as those we care for right here at home. And what better way to do this than to bring a carload of family or friends to see the tale of Tiny Tim, told lovingly and live. You are sure to go home in greater hope.

David Alan Anderson in *A Christmas Carol*, 2011.



Charles Dickens's *A Christmas Carol* remains a beloved story here at the IRT: we love staging it, audiences love experiencing it. In dark times and good, it's a story that we return to for solace, for joy, for the thrill of the ghost story, for the promise of its good lesson, for the unity of family and friends. It's so basic to our cultural beliefs—Scrooge is right up there with Santa in seasonal recognition—that only our youngest generation comes to the story anew, and the opportunity to introduce this story to that young child is a particular pleasure. Only the most hardboiled among us are untouched by the sudden lightening of the heart that Scrooge feels when he learns that the horrors of the future have been a dream; one hopes that all of us share Scrooge's gratitude when he is granted a new lease on life. After all, who among us doesn't yearn for a chance to greet the world with a renewed sense of wonder?

We greet every year's retelling of *A Christmas Carol* with a perennial sense of delight: some new storytellers, new interpretations, new energies. At the same time we cherish the time-honored traditions of our production: the ensemble story-telling, the transformation of actors into multiple characters, the participation of many fine, local actors and a few new faces, and the ultimate

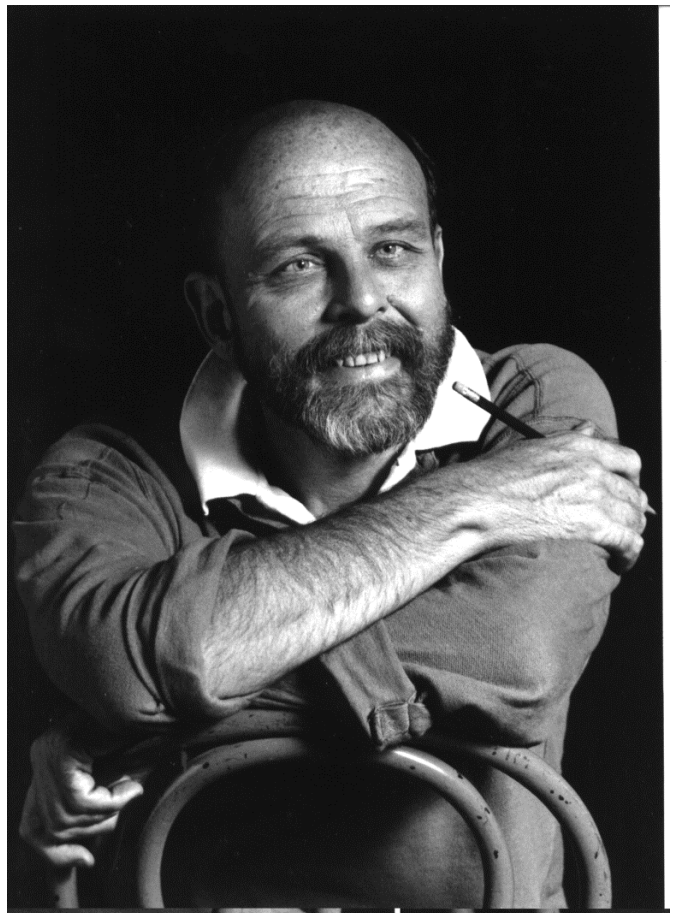
excitement of actor-based invention on the beautiful white snow field. A bit of surprise amid the celebration of tradition is our watchword for the retelling of this magnificent tale.

We've learned through the years that many of you who come to the theatre at the holidays are not our regular subscribers, and we take particular delight in welcoming you. We welcome your oohs and aahs at the new features of our production: a new piece of music here, a new costume there, and always a few new actors to delight you. And most of all, we offer you a warm invitation to return to the IRT throughout our season, to enjoy the many theatrical offerings we make especially for our Central Indiana audience. After all, IRT's "World Class: Made in Indiana" means that you can find the most competitive, high-quality productions of exciting theatrical work right here at home!

May your holidays be bright, and may the spirit of the redeemed Scrooge—who delights in human kindness—guide you into the new year.

## Playwright Tom Haas

Tom Haas was artistic director of the IRT from 1980 until his untimely death in 1991. Prior to his association with the IRT, he was artistic director of PlayMakers Repertory Company in Chapel Hill, North Carolina. He was associate director at Yale Repertory Theatre and head of the Acting-Directing Program at Yale University, where his students included Henry Winkler, Sigourney Weaver, and Meryl Streep. At the IRT, Tom directed 40 productions, including memorable renditions of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Mourning Becomes Electra*, *The Skin of Our Teeth*, *The Cocktail Party*, *Six Characters in Search of an Author*, and, of course, *A Christmas Carol*. IRT audiences also saw his stage adaptations of *Frankenstein*, *Dracula*, and *The Three Musketeers*, as well as the musical *Operetta*, *My Dear Watson* and dozens of Cabaret shows. Tom's adaptation of *A Christmas Carol* was produced at the IRT annually from 1980 through 1984. The play returned in 1996 and has been a holiday tradition ever since.



# The Joy of Influence

by Courtney Sale, director

A recent study by literary scholars at Boston University argues that Charles Dickens's *A Christmas Carol* was inspired by an unexpected source. In 1842 Dickens arrived in Boston Harbor to tour mill houses and take notes for a travelogue he intended to write about



Ben Tebbe, Mark Goetzinger, Ryan Artzberger, and David Alan Anderson in *A Christmas Carol*, 2012.

American institutions. Visiting Lowell, Massachusetts, he met a group of female millworkers who spent their leisure time as amateur writers. The workers' stories, published in the *Lowell Offering*, were populated with moments that we will see tonight, chief among them the "ghost as tour guide" motif. Dickens encountered these works, completed his American tour, returned home via steamship, and eighteen months later wrote *A Christmas Carol*.

I am not at all painting Dickens as a thief of literature. Conversely, if it indeed is as these researchers suggest, I celebrate this filtration of influence. Most artists are brought to their vocation when their own nascent gifts are awakened by another's art.

This year, my first time directing *A Christmas Carol*, I share hidden memories of all the art makers whose fingerprints have touched our particular production: Richard J Roberts, Priscilla Lindsay, Scott Wentworth, and Tom Haas, who have helmed beautiful iterations of this story; the amazing company of artists who have danced in and out of these characters; the dozens of designers, artisans, and technical wizards who transform the environment; the countless young actors who have discovered storytelling on this magical ramp of snow. Putting this show together requires a joyful impurity.

Whether Dickens borrowed from millworkers in Lowell, Massachusetts, or not, this story has become part of a cultural commons, and the IRT's production an Indiana tradition. The marvel of a commons, the wonder of a tradition is that it is a collective exchange. No one may claim the origin. What we are reminded through Scrooge, through the making of this play and the legacy of artists involved, is to always make ourselves available to the joy of influence in unexpected places.



# British Money in Scrooge's Day

The **pound** (or pound sterling) was (and still is) the official currency of Great Britain.

The term originated when it was equal to the value of one pound (weight) of silver.

The Bank of England began to issue paper money in 1694.

1 pound = 20 shillings      £1 = 20s

1 shilling = 12 pence (pennies)      1s = 12d (the d comes from the Roman *denarius*)

Amounts over a pound are written £2-12s-6d, etc.

Amounts below a pound can be written two ways:

12s-6d      or      12/6

4s-8d      or      4/8

Such notations would be pronounced "twelve and six" or "four and eight," etc.

**Coins** (*of those listed below, only the penny is still minted today*)

a **guinea** was a gold coin worth 21 shillings

guineas were used to pay gentlemen, artists, and other more genteel debts  
(pounds were used for everyday, lower-class debts to tradesmen and such)

a **sovereign** was a one-pound gold coin (equal to 20 shillings)

a **half-sovereign** is a gold coin worth 10s

a **crown** was a silver coin worth 5s

a **half-crown** is a silver coin worth 2s-6d

a **florin** was worth two shillings.

First minted in 1849, they were not as popular as half-crowns.

a **shilling** was a silver coin worth 12 pence (12d)

(a shilling is sometimes called a "bob")

a **sixpence** was a silver coin worth 6d

a **groat** was a silver coin worth 4d

a **threepence** was a silver coin worth 3d

(pronounced and sometimes spelled "thruppence")

a **penny** was a copper coin (pennies were sometimes referred to as coppers)

Small amounts involving pennies were sometimes expressed with "p"

eg: four pence might be written "4d" but spoken of as "4p"

a **halfpenny** was a copper coin worth half a penny

(pronounced *hayp-nee* and sometimes written "ha'penny")

a **farthing** was a copper coin worth a quarter of a penny

# Why Did They Say That?

## Victorian Life as Seen in *A Christmas Carol*

Charles Dickens wrote *A Christmas Carol* in 1843, early in the Victorian Era (named after Queen Victoria, who reigned in the United Kingdom from 1837 to 1901). Life and social customs in this time differed greatly from today, as seen in the following quotes from the *Carol*.

### “Why did you get married?”

Victorian economists did not approve of those who married before they had sufficient income to support a family. To marry for love was a fairly new idea, and thought to be sentimental nonsense. Arranged marriages for economic benefit were still the norm.

### “You’ll want all day tomorrow, I suppose.”

At this time, it was not uncommon for businesses such as shops and factories to operate as usual on Christmas Day.

### “Our contract is an old one”

Marriage in Dickens’s time was based more on economic arrangements than romantic interests. A “respectable” woman could not work for a living; therefore, if her father could not support her for life, she had no choice but to marry a man who could. Until the early 20th century, a man’s promise of engagement was considered a legally binding contract. If the man were to break the engagement, the woman’s reputation might be damaged, making it difficult or even impossible for her to find a husband to support her. The abandoned woman could therefore take him to court

and sue him for “breach of promise.” It was very unusual for a woman to break an engagement; Belle’s decision to do so puts her in a precarious situation, as she has no family income to fall back upon.



*Ashley Scallon, Matthew Brumlow, and Ryan Artzberger in A Christmas Carol, 2012.*

**“Outside the baker’s they had smelt the goose, and known it for their own.”**

Bakeries were forbidden by law from baking bread on Sundays and holidays. Since poor families usually had no stoves, they could take their dinner to the bakeshops on such occasions and have one hot meal a week. The young Cratchits claim to have identified their own goose from all the meals cooking at the local bakery.

**“... to the washhouse, that he might hear the pudding singing in the copper”**

The English Christmas pudding is not like our modern, creamy pudding; it is more like a bread pudding. Flour, milk, and eggs are often combined with dates, plums, figs, and/or nuts. (There are numerous references to plum pudding or figgy pudding at Christmastime.) The batter is placed in a lidded tin mold and immersed in simmering water to steam it. A poor family without a tin mold would use a cloth bag instead, resulting in a cannonball-shaped pudding. The Cratchits steam their pudding in the washhouse, a shed in the back yard which holds the copper, a large pot used for boiling the family’s laundry. Traditional Christmas pudding is somewhat cake-like around the outside but moister in the center. It is often presented aflame and served with a sauce. Any dessert at all would be a rare luxury for the Cratchits; pudding is quite an extravagance. (Today, in Great Britain, pudding is a general term for dessert.)



**“He might get Peter a better situation.”**

The word *situation* in this context means a position or job. Despite his young age, Peter has entered the work force. During the Industrial Revolution, the children of the poor were expected to help toward the family budget. Children as young as four were employed in factories, mines, and other locations under dangerous, and often fatal, working conditions. Charles Dickens worked in a blacking (shoe polish) factory as a child. He helped publicize the evils of child labor with his novel *David Copperfield*, published in 1850; although his efforts led to some restrictions, it was not until the early 1900s that child labor was finally banned in Great Britain.

# The Carols of Our *Carol*

The complete title of Dickens's most popular holiday book, as printed on the title page of the first edition, is *A Christmas Carol in Prose* (as opposed to the usual sung carol, which would be written in verse). Dickens extended the song metaphor by calling each chapter a "Stave," which is an archaic term for staff or stanza.

## "In the Bleak Midwinter"

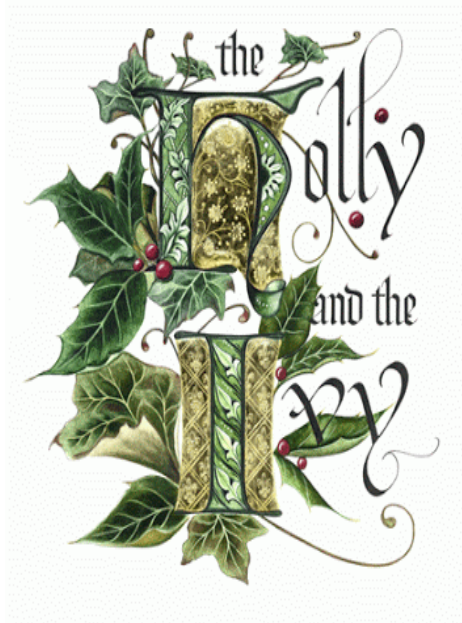
"In the Bleak Midwinter" is a Christmas carol based on a poem by the English poet Christina Rossetti (1830-1894), the sister of the famous Pre-Raphaelite painter Dante Gabriel Rossetti. Written around 1872 for *Scribner's Monthly*, it became the poet's most famous work. The poem describes Christ's birth in Bethlehem, contrasting his First and Second Comings as well as the care the infant received from both the angels and his mother. English composer Gustav Holst (1874-1934) set the poem to music for *The English Hymnal* in 1906. For this year's production of *A Christmas Carol*, Michael McFaden has written special lyrics.

## "God Rest Ye Merry, Gentlemen"

The sense of this song is not "God rest ye, merry gentlemen," but "God rest ye merry, gentlemen." "God rest ye merry" was an old greeting, meaning literally, "sleep well," and more generally, "May God keep you well." The origins of this song go back to the fifteenth or sixteenth century. Some believe that it was a hymn of protest against the banning of Christmas in England in the 1640s. At the time, England's Puritan government saw Christmas as a pagan holiday that had defiled Christianity. It is thought that the song was sung outside places where people were imprisoned for celebrating Christmas. This history may also explain the song's minor key, which is unusual among Christmas carols.

## "The Holly and the Ivy"

"The Holly and the Ivy" is a traditional English Christmas carol that intermingles Christian and pagan imagery. Holly was sacred to the Druids, who associated it with the winter solstice; for Romans, holly was considered the plant of Saturn. It is thought that in ancient English village life there was a midwinter custom of holding singing-contests between men and women, where the men sang carols praising holly (for its "masculine" qualities) and disparaging ivy, while women sang songs praising the ivy (for its "feminine" qualities) and disparaging holly. The resolution between the two was under the mistletoe. These three plants are the most prominent green plants in British native woodland during the winter; holly and ivy have been the mainstay of English Christmas decoration for church use since at least the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.





## “Tomorrow Shall Be My Dancing Day”

“Tomorrow Shall Be My Dancing Day” is a traditional English carol. The word *carol* derives from the French *carole* or the Latin *carula*, meaning a circular dance. Old carols that were written in three-quarter time were written as Creche dances: as these carols were sung, people would dance around the creche or manger. The verses of “Tomorrow Shall Be My Dancing Day” progress through the story of the life of Jesus told in his own voice. “My dancing day” refers to the day of Jesus’s birth; throughout the carol, his life is repeatedly characterized as a dance. “My love” and “my true love” are references to the church, which is called the bride of Christ in many Christian writings.

## “Deck the Hall”

“Deck the Hall” is a traditional Yuletide carol. The melody is Welsh dating back to the 16th century, and belongs to a winter carol, “*Nos Galan*” (which means New Year’s Eve). The English words are ascribed to Thomas Oliphant, translated from the Welsh poet Talhaiarn. Although the song is often sung as “Deck the Halls” (plural), the correct title is “Deck the Hall” (singular). The meaning is not to decorate the hallways which lead from room to room in one’s home, but to decorate the great hall of a castle or manor house, the large central room where celebrations would be held.

## “Here We Come a-Wassailing”

“Here We Come a-Wassailing” is a traditional English Christmas carol and New Year song thought to have originated in the mid-19th century. The “a-” is an archaic intensifying prefix, such as seen in the lyrics to *The Twelve Days of Christmas* (“Seven swans a-swimming,” etc.). Wassail is a punch made of wine, beer, or cider mixed with sugar, spices, and baked apples. It is served hot in a very large bowl—the wassail bowl. The word “wassail” is derived from the Middle English “wass-heil”—a greeting that meant “be of good health.” To go wassailing is to go from door to door singing carols; often, hosts who receive such visitors choose to treat them to something warm and comforting, such as wassail.



## Works of Art – Kyle Ragsdale & the IRT

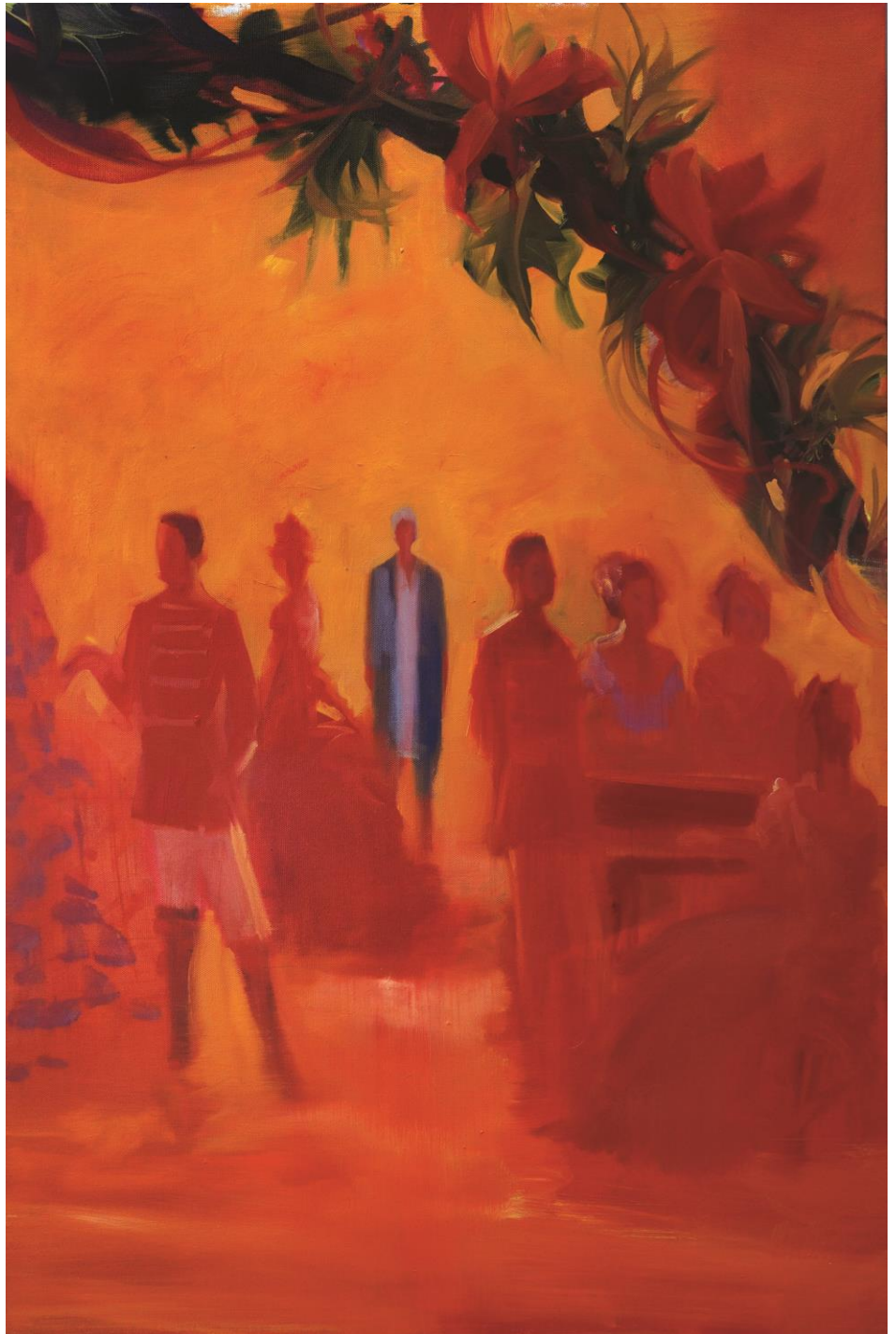
This summer the IRT initiated a unique collaboration with one of Indianapolis's most prolific artists, Kyle Ragsdale. IRT executive artistic director Janet Allen worked with Kyle as he created an original piece of art to represent each of the IRT's nine plays that make up the 2014-15 season. The IRT will use these images throughout the season and display them in the theatre. The IRT hosted a First Friday event in October to unveil these original pieces as well as some of Kyle Ragsdale's other pieces.

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

"I love *Carol* so much. Since I moved here, I've been going to *Carol* and loving it, so I wanted to focus in on kind of the festiveness and not so much the things you always think of when you represent *A Christmas Carol*. So I focused more on the party scenes, which is kind of what I like in art my art."

—Kyle Ragsdale

*A Christmas Carol by Kyle Ragsdale*



# Indiana Academic Standards Alignment Guide

## Reading – Literature

RL.2 – Build comprehension and appreciation of literature by analyzing, inferring, and drawing conclusions about literary elements, themes, and central ideas

RL.3 – Build comprehension and appreciation of literature, using knowledge of literary structure and point of view

RL.4 – Build comprehension and appreciation of literature by connecting various literary works and analyzing how medium and interpretation impact meaning

Sample: 4.RL.2.2: *Paraphrase or retell the main events in a story, myth, legend, or novel; identify the theme and provide evidence for the interpretation.*

What does Scrooge learn at the end of the play? How did the ghosts help him learn that?

Sample: 8.RL.2.3: *Analyze how particular lines of dialogue or incidents in a work of literature propel the action, reveal aspects of a character, or provoke a decision.*

In the scene where Belle and Young Scrooge part ways, she continually refers to their relationship as “this contract.” Why does she do this? What does her use of that phrase reveal about Young Scrooge? Does it confirm your beliefs about Old Scrooge? Why or why not?

## Reading – Vocabulary

RV.3 – Build comprehension and appreciation of literature and nonfiction texts by determining or clarifying figurative, connotative, and technical meanings

Sample: 9-10.RV.3.1: *Analyze the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in works of literature, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including words with multiple meanings.*

The Ghost of Christmas Present tells Scrooge: “Man, if man you be in heart, forbear this wicked cant until you have discovered what true surplus is and where it is. Will you decide what man shall live, what man shall die?” Given Scrooge’s earlier feeling that the poor should “die and decrease the surplus population,” what does the Ghost mean by “true surplus”? Explain your answer using evidence from the text.

## Writing: Extension

4.W.3.3: *Write narrative compositions in a variety of forms that – A) Establish an introduction, with a context to allow the reader to imagine the world of the event or experience; B) Organize events that unfold naturally, using meaningful paragraphing and transitional words and phrases; C) Use dialogue and descriptive details to develop events and reveal characters’ personalities, feelings, and responses to situations; D) Employ vocabulary with sufficient sensory details to give clear pictures of ideas and events; E) Provide an ending that follows the narrated experiences or events.*

Sample: Would you recommend that other students see *A Christmas Carol* at IRT? Why or why not? Write a persuasive letter to another student explaining your answer, using examples from the play.

## Cross-Curriculum: World History

WH.5.6 *Explain the causes and conditions of the Industrial Revolution in England, Europe, and the United States.*

Throughout Dickens’ work there are reactions and responses to England’s Industrial Revolution. How did the Industrial Revolution inform the plot, characters, and setting of *A Christmas Carol*? Explain each thoroughly, and cite examples from the text.

# Resources

## Books

Other novels by Charles Dickens:

*The Pickwick Papers, Oliver Twist, Nicholas Nickleby, David Copperfield, Bleak House, Hard Times, Great Expectations*, many more

*What Jane Austen Ate and Charles Dickens Knew* by Daniel Pool

*The Friendly Dickens* by Norrie Epstein

*Charles Dickens* by Jane Smiley

*Charles Dickens: An Authentic Account of His Life & Times* by Martin Fido

*Charles Dickens: A Centennial Volume* edited by E.W. F. Tomlin

*Dickens and His World* by Ivor Brown

*Dickens of London* by Wolfe Mankowitz

*Dickens's Christmas: A Victorian Celebration* by Simon Callow

*The Annotated Christmas Carol* (2004), edited by Michael Patrick Hearn

*The Dickens Encyclopedia* by Arthur L. Hayward

*The Lives and Times of Ebenezer Scrooge* by Paul Davis

*The Man Who Invented Christmas: How Charles Dickens's A Christmas Carol Rescued His Career and Revived Our Holiday Spirits* by Les Standiford

*Charles Dickens: The Dickens Bicentenary 1812-2012* by Lucinda Dickens Hawksley

*Charles Dickens: England's Most Captivating Storyteller* by Catherine Wells-Cole

*Charles Dickens and the Street Children of London* by Andrea Warren

*The Financial Wisdom of Ebenezer Scrooge: Five Principles to Transform Your Relationship with Money* by Tom Klontz, Brad Klontz, & Rick Kahler



## Websites

Literature, history, and culture in the age of Victoria; the section on Dickens is quite extensive

<http://www.victorianweb.org/index.html>

Charles Dickens Page, dedicated to bringing the genius of Dickens to a new generation of readers

<http://www.fidnet.com/%7Edap1955/dickens/>

Watch an animation on Dickens's life, or play the Dickens on-line game and fight your way through Dickens's London to get to the author himself.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/drama/bleakhouse/animation.shtml>

Children in Victorian Britain—an interactive history

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/victorians/>

Websites created in celebration of Charles Dickens's Centennial (2012)

<http://charlesdickenspage.com/>

<http://www.dickens2012.org/>

[http://www.byerschoice.com/Page-Dickens>Returns\\_47.aspx](http://www.byerschoice.com/Page-Dickens>Returns_47.aspx)

<http://www.themorgan.org/exhibitions/exhibition.asp?id=48>

Information about 5/3 Bank's financial empowerment programs for youth of all ages

<https://www.53.com/financial-empowerment/>

*A Christmas Carol* text online

<http://www.stormfax.com/dickens.htm>

YouTube selections

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L189MhnAloM&feature=related>

Charles Dickens biography

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SEYdX5\\_U0Yg&feature=relmfu](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SEYdX5_U0Yg&feature=relmfu)

Charles Dickens documentary (part 1 of 3)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c06WUYsI0ic&feature=relmfu>

"The Signal Man" – a ghost story by Charles Dickens (part 1 of 4)

## Video

*A Christmas Carol* (2009), Disney animated film starring Jim Carey

*A Christmas Carol* (1999) with Patrick Stewart

*The Muppet Christmas Carol* (1992), starring Michael Caine

*Scrooged* (1988) starring Bill Murray – a contemporary update

*A Christmas Carol* starring George C. Scott (1984), an excellent TV version

*Scrooge* (1970) – a musical starring Albert Finney

*A Christmas Carol* (1951) starring Alastair Sim (British title: *Scrooge*)

*Doctor Who: A Christmas Carol*, the 2010 Christmas special

*The Mystery of Charles Dickens*, starring Simon Callow, directed by Patrick Garland

Biography - Charles Dickens (A&E 2004 DVD Archives)

Charles Dickens

boxed set exploring the life, times, and works of Charles Dickens

DVD 1 – Uncovering the Real Dickens

DVD 2 – David Copperfield (BBC Television, 1999)

DVD 3 - *A Christmas Carol*; Songs from Grape Lane;  
The Making of “Uncovering the Real Dickens”

*The Young Victoria* (2009)

*Her Majesty, Mrs. Brown* (1997)

*Becoming Jane* (2007)

*Amazing Grace* (2006)

*Willy Wonka & the Chocolate Factory* (1971), with Gene Wilder

*A Canterville Ghost* (1996), with Neve Campbell and Patrick Stewart

# Discussion Questions

Why is this story still relevant today?

At the end of the play Scrooge says, “And it was always said of him [Scrooge] that he knew how to keep Christmas well, if any man alive possessed the knowledge. May that truly be said of us, and all of us!” Keeping this line in mind, discuss how we keep Christmas in today’s world. What does this holiday mean to you and to others? What does the world do well today? How might the world do better? How might these ideas extend beyond December 25?

We live in a time of incredible and constant change in technology, medicine, the economy, society, and much more. Although today we might think of the Victorian Era as old-fashioned, it was also an era of innovation: the Industrial Revolution, advances in medicine and psychology, the rise of the middle class, and more. How do today’s changes make our lives easier? How do they make things more difficult? What technological advances and inventions made the Victorians’ lives easier? What elements of the Industrial Revolution made life more difficult? How do such issues as poverty, homelessness, health care, race relations, sexual equality, and social class compare between the two eras?

Although he gives us scenes from Scrooge’s past, Dickens does not dwell on the motivation behind Scrooge’s dark view of the world and of Christmas in particular. What hints are included in the story that might suggest the source of his miserly attitude? Imagine other events in Scrooge’s past, not depicted in Dickens’s story, which might help explain Scrooge’s outlook.

Imagine Scrooge’s future. What would the last year of his life have been like if the ghosts had not visited him? What changes—in his workplace, in his home, in his daily life—will Scrooge make as a result of his transformation?

The IRT production of *A Christmas Carol* uses very little scenery; the audience is asked to imagine the many environments suggested. Picture a particular scene from the play in your imagination. How large or small is the space? Picture the floor surface, the walls and ceilings, the windows, the furniture. Compare and contrast your ideas with those of your classmates.

The actors in *A Christmas Carol* each play a number of different characters. Choose one actor and think about his or her performance. What acting tools did the performer use to differentiate between characters? Think about posture, voice, gesture, costuming, and make-up. How effective were the transformations between characters?

Do some research to learn more about the history of child labor in America. What types of jobs did children do? Who were early advocates for children’s rights? Where in the world today is child labor still practiced? How would you feel if you had to go to work in a factory instead of going to school? How would that situation affect your future opportunities?

Compare the IRT production of *A Christmas Carol* to other stage or film adaptations you have seen of the same story. What scenes and elements seem to be common to all adaptations? What scenes appear in some versions and not others? What scenes have you seen that are inventions of the adaptors and not found in the original book? Why do you suppose the creators of these adaptations made the choices they did? What are the advantages and disadvantages of the IRT's use of narration?

Discuss some of the different charities in your community that help people during the holidays. Are you involved with them? What else could you do to help your community at this time?.

The three spirits show Scrooge scenes from the past, present, and future. Which of these visions do you think is most responsible for Scrooge's change? Why?

The Ghost of Christmas Present shows Scrooge two children who represent "want" and "ignorance." Why do you think Dickens chose these two issues to highlight in this way? Why do you think he chose children to represent these issues? If you were Dickens, what two or three issues would you choose to highlight for today's readers?

Scrooge and his nephew Fred suffer similar challenges in their childhoods: the death of a mother, and a distant or absent father. How is it that the two characters' attitudes toward life are so different? Why do some people accept adversity as an obstacle while others make it an inspiration?

*A Christmas Carol, 2012*





# Writing

With the theme of Christmas past and present, interview one of your elders about how Christmas was celebrated when he/she was a child. Write a comparison of the events of his/her holiday and the Christmas holiday of today. What has changed? What has remained the same? What does this person miss and cherish? What is the happiest part of the holiday for you and your interview subject?

Dickens's stories are lush with imagery. Working in pairs, each person should write three basic plain sentences on a piece of paper. Then exchange papers with your partner and expand their sentences with as much imagery and descriptive language as you can. Make use of adjectives, adverbs, alliteration, onomatopoeia, similes, and other literary devices. Read aloud to the class: first the basic sentence, and then how it has been Dickensified!

Scrooge visits Christmases from his past, the present, and the future. Write about a memorable winter celebration in your life from the past. What made it memorable? What were the sights, the sounds, and the smells? Or imagine a celebration in your future. Let your imagination run wild.

*A Christmas Carol* is a holiday story told to teach something to its readers. Write a holiday story of your own that has a moral or teaches a lesson. Share it with your class and family.

Dickens wrote most of his books because he wanted to focus attention on a particular social issue he wanted to highlight. Write your own brief version of the story set in contemporary times. What social issue(s) in today's world do you want to highlight? In what business does Scrooge work? Who are the three ghosts? What scenes do they show him? How does he change his ways?

Write a review of the play. What moments made an impression on you? How do the elements of scenery, costumes, lighting, and sound work with the actors' performance of the text to tell the story? What ideas or themes did the play make you think about? How did it make you feel? To share your reviews with others, send to: [education.irt@gmail.com](mailto:education.irt@gmail.com)

# Activities

The actors use the Dickens's story to help build their characters. After seeing the show, choose one of the characters, go through the story, and build a character analysis as if you were going to portray the character. Use the three big questions of character to begin your analysis: What does the character say? What does the character do? What do others say about the character? In addition, how does the author describe the character? What type of relationships does the character have with others? As an acting exercise, create physical mannerisms for your character. How does he or she move, walk, gesture, talk? Or, as a design exercise, create a visual palette for your character. Create drawings or collages of what he/she might wear, with fabric swatches to show color and texture.

The Victorians did not have TVs or computers to entertain themselves as we do today. One of their forms of entertainment was reading aloud. Choose another holiday story, perhaps one of Dickens's other Christmas stories, and take turns reading it aloud to the class. What do the actors at the IRT do with their voices that you can incorporate when you are reading?

Working in pairs or groups of three, choose one of the topics listed below to research and report on. Take your reports to the creative edge: sing a carol, make a Victorian Christmas card, create a financial game that illustrates how debtor's prison worked, etc.

England • London • Industrial Revolution • Queen Victoria

Debtor's Prison • British Empire • British Class System

Wassail • Carols • Christmas Tree • Christmas Cards • Plum Pudding

Look up holiday traditions from different religions and cultures around the world. What holiday traditions do we celebrate here in the United States that originated in other countries? Share your findings with your class.

Find the rules of Blind Man's Buff or other Victorian parlor games and play them. What similar games do we play today?

Look up recipes for a Christmas pudding or wassail and try your hand at preparing them. Ask an adult first!

# Game: 20 Questions on *A Christmas Carol*

1. In what city is *A Christmas Carol* set?
  - a. New York City
  - b. Edinburgh
  - c. London
2. How many ghosts visit Scrooge?
  - a. Three
  - b. Four
  - c. Six
3. Who was Scrooge's business partner?
  - a. Jacob Marley
  - b. Bob Marley
  - c. Christopher Marlowe
4. Who is Scrooge's employee?
  - a. Bob Cratchit
  - b. Philip Pirrip
  - c. Fred Cheriabie
5. What establishments does miserly Scrooge support?
  - a. The homeless shelters
  - b. The local charities
  - c. The prisons and the workhouses
6. Does Scrooge give Cratchit Christmas Day off work?
  - a. No, it is too much of a financial burden
  - b. Yes, if he comes in early the following day
  - c. He is only allowed half the day off
7. How many children do the Cratchits have?
  - a. Four
  - b. Five
  - c. Six
8. Which of the following is a place where the Ghost of Christmas Past takes Scrooge?
  - a. To the local convenience store
  - b. To his childhood boarding school
  - c. To his grave
9. Where did young Scrooge spend Christmas?
  - a. At school alone
  - b. At home with his family
  - c. At his grandparents' home
10. What is the name of Scrooge's sister?
  - a. Candace
  - b. Felicity
  - c. Fan
11. What dessert do the Cratchits eat on Christmas?
  - a. Pudding
  - b. Cheesecake
  - c. Baked Alaska
12. Who was Scrooge's first employer?
  - a. Topper
  - b. Mr. Fezziwig
  - c. The Lamplighter
13. What does Mrs. Cratchit use to decorate her dress on Christmas day?
  - a. Ribbons
  - b. Flowers
  - c. Buttons
14. Whose funeral do the Brokers discuss?
  - a. Tiny Tim's
  - b. Scrooge's own
  - c. One of Scrooge's business colleagues

15. Which ghost shows Scrooge Ignorance and Want?
  - a. Christmas Past
  - b. Christmas Present
  - c. Christmas Future
16. What does Scrooge anonymously send to the Cratchits on Christmas morning?
  - a. A prize turkey
  - b. A snow shovel
  - c. A television set
17. When Scrooge visits his nephew on Christmas Day, what game does he not want to play?
  - a. Yes and No
  - b. Blind Man's Buff
  - c. Duck, Duck, Goose
18. When Cratchit arrives late to work the day after Christmas, what does Scrooge give him?
  - a. A harsh reprimand
  - b. A whack on the hand
  - c. A raise
19. What is Tiny Tim's signature phrase?
  - a. God help us.
  - b. God bless us, everyone.
  - c. God watch over the poor people.
20. Who adapted *A Christmas Carol* for the IRT?
  - a. Tom Haas
  - b. Charles Dickens
  - c. J. K. Rowling

*Ryan Artzberger and Robert Neal  
in A Christmas Carol, 2012*





# Game Key

1. In what city is *A Christmas Carol* set?  
c. London
2. How many ghosts visit Scrooge?  
b. Four
3. Who was Scrooge's business partner?  
a. Jacob Marley
4. Who is Scrooge's employee?  
a. Bob Cratchit
5. What establishments does miserly Scrooge support?  
c. The prisons and the workhouses
6. Does Scrooge give Cratchit Christmas Day off work?  
b. Yes, if he comes in early the next day
7. How many children do the Cratchits have?  
c. Six
8. Which of the following is a place where the Ghost of Christmas Past takes Scrooge?  
b. To his childhood boarding school
9. Where did young Scrooge spend Christmas?  
a. At school alone
10. What is the name of Scrooge's sister?  
c. Fan
11. What dessert do the Cratchits eat on Christmas?  
a. Pudding
12. Who was Scrooge's first employer?  
b. Mr. Fezziwig
13. What does Mrs. Cratchit use to decorate her dress on Christmas day?  
a. Ribbons
14. Whose funeral are the Brokers discussing?  
b. Scrooge's own
15. Which ghost shows Scrooge Ignorance and Want?  
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a. Yes and No
18. When Cratchit arrives late to work the day after Christmas, what does Scrooge give him?  
c. A raise
19. What is Tiny Tim's signature phrase?  
b. God bless us, everyone.
20. Who adapted *A Christmas Carol* for the IRT?  
a. Tom Haas



At Fifth Third Bank, we believe in the value of curiosity and innovation. We believe in thinking about things differently, challenging ourselves to find new ways of doing things, and always having our customers' best interest at heart.

We also believe it is vitally important that we financially empower the communities we serve through financial education. *A Christmas Carol* is a wonderful story with great meaning. Most people, however, have probably not thought about the financial story within the greater story.

We at Fifth Third challenge you to think about the story a little differently. Money and finances impact many aspects of our lives. The Cratchits and Mr. Scrooge are no different. As a class, discuss the information below and complete the activities—challenge yourselves, think differently, offer suggestions in which others might not have thought. In other words, be curious and innovative ... like a Fifth Third banker.

### **For Discussion**

After Scrooge is reformed, he says to Bob Cratchit, his clerk, "I'll raise your salary, and endeavor to assist your struggling family, and we will discuss your affairs this very afternoon...." As the Cratchits' financial advisor, considering Bob's family size and salary, what types of action would you advise Bob to take? What things are we advised to do today, to ensure financial stability for our family's futures? What actions did Scrooge take in his lifetime to acquire his wealth and retain his wealth? The Cratchits aren't financially wealthy, but what other parts of their life are valuable? What are they rich in?

### **Activities**

Mrs. Cratchit has to be a frugal homemaker as Bob Cratchit's salary is very meager. Yet she is able to prepare a feast for their family of eight. Go through the story, make a list of all the things served at the Cratchit dinner, and create a shopping list of all the ingredients needed to prepare the meal for eight. Find the prices of all the ingredients and add up what the Cratchit meal would cost in 2013. Who can get your meal for the lowest amount of money? What choices can you make to bring the cost of your meal down without changing the menu?

Bob Cratchit's salary is 15 shillings per week. Using the internet, try to figure out what the purchasing power of 15 shillings was in 1840. What would be the equivalent amount in American dollars today? How does Bob's salary compare to US poverty levels for a family of eight today? How does it compare to the US minimum wage today?

# Glossary

## **apparition**

something existing in perception only; a ghostly appearing figure

## **apprenticeship**

At this time, an apprentice was basically an indentured servant, bound to work for a prescribed number of years in exchange for room and board and the opportunity to learn a trade.

## **bedight**

adorned, arrayed, dressed

## **benevolence**

kindness, charity, an inclination to do good

## **Bah!**

an exclamation expressing contempt, scorn, or disgust

## **banker's book**

a small paper book used to record bank transactions on a bank account

## **Blind Man's Buff**

a children's game, a variant of tag

## **brave ("brave in ribbons")**

In this context, brightly colored or showy.

## **brokers**

A broker arranges transactions between a buyer and a seller and gets a commission when the deal is executed. An example would be a stockbroker, who makes the sale or purchase of securities on behalf of his client. Brokers play a huge role in the sale of stocks, bonds, and other financial services.

## **business ("an excellent man of business")**

Scrooge is a financier, or money-lender; he does not provide any actual goods or services; he deals only in the exchange of money.

## **capacious**

large in capacity; capable of containing a great deal

**charwoman**

A servant hired by the day to do odd housework. She has been hired, not by Scrooge, but by whoever is settling his affairs. “Char” is a corruption from Middle English of “chore.”

**coalscuttle**

A coalscuttle is a metal bucket with a handle and a sloped lip used for carrying coal. Here, Scrooge means buy another scuttle-full of coal.

**comforter**

scarf

**counting house**

a building, room, or office used for keeping books and transacting business

**covetous**

having or showing a great desire to possess something belonging to someone else

**double-ironed**

fettered; bound by chains fastened around both ankles

**Ebenezer**

from the Hebrew “stone of help”; the word can be used to describe a tombstone

**the Exchange**

the Royal Exchange, the financial center of London; the British equivalent of Wall Street

**execrable**

abominable; detestable

**flint**

a hard quartz that produces a spark when struck by steel; in the days before matches, this was one method of starting a fire

**forbearance**

patience, restraint, self-control

**half of half-a-quartern**

A quartern is a quarter of a pint, so half of half-a quartern is one ounce.

**hob**

an old-fashioned fire grate; a raised stone or iron shelf on either side of an open fireplace where things are set to keep warm



**Humbug!**

drivel, nonsense

**lamplighter**

In the 19th century, gas lights were the dominant form of street lighting. A lamplighter was a town employee who lit the street lights, generally by means of a wick or link on a long pole. (A link was a torch made of tow [short, untwisted, broken fibers of rope] daubed in pitch or tar.) At dawn, he would return and turn them off using a small hook on the same pole. Eventually systems were developed which allowed the lights to operate automatically. There is a long history in literature of the symbolic role of the lamplighter as a bringer of enlightenment.

**lowering**

scowling, frowning, glowering

**milliner**

one who makes hats

**nip and tuck**

a close result in a race or contest; neck and neck

**Parliament**

the national legislative body of Great Britain; the British equivalent of the U.S. Congress

**plump (“the plump sister”)**

having a full, rounded, pleasing form; in this time, plumpness was a sign of wealth and therefore a compliment

**portly**

stout; heavyset

**post boy**

the driver of a vehicle

**poulterer’s**

a dealer in poultry: flesh of chickens, ducks, turkeys, or geese raised for food

**residuary legatee**

the person to whom the remainder of the estate is bequeathed after the payment of debts

**Scrooge**

the colloquial expression “to scrooge” means to crowd or squeeze someone

**shutters**

Exterior shutters would have been used to protect street-level windows when the business was closed. Unlike most shutters seen since the Victorian era, Fezziwig's shutters are not mounted on hinges next to the window; they must be stored inside during the day and then carried outside and mounted on the windows at closing time.

**smoking bishop**

A hot punch made from red wine, oranges, and spices (chiefly cloves, star anise, and cinnamon). The name comes from its red color, like a bishop's robes.

**sweetmeats**

candied fruit

**twice-turned gown**

When a dress became worn, it could be turned inside out to get further wear from it. A twice-turned gown would be so worn on the inside that the outside is once again the best side.

**tucker**

a piece of lace or other delicate fabric worn in the neckline of a woman's dress and covering part of the bosom

**ubiquitous**

being present everywhere at the same time

**waistcoat**

vest

**Walk-er!**

A Cockney expression of surprise or incredulity, one which Dickens himself used. Several origins are suggested for the expression, each involving an untrustworthy person named Walker with a large nose.

**workhouse**

A home for the destitute where they labored in exchange for their room and board; conditions were little better than prison. Once a family got into a workhouse, it was very difficult to get out because there was no way to pay off debts and no opportunity to seek employment.

# Going to the Theatre

You, the audience, are one of the most important parts of any performance. The theatre is a group activity shared not only with the actors, but also with the people sitting around you. Your attention and participation help the actors perform better, and allow the rest of the audience to enjoy the show. Here are a few simple tips to help make each theatre experience enjoyable for everyone:



Leave CD players, mp3 players, cameras, cell phones, beepers, and other distracting and noise-making electronic devices at home.

You may think texting is private, but the light and the motion are very annoying to those around you and on stage. Do not text message in the theatre.

Food and drink must stay in the lobby.

The house lights going out signal the audience to get quiet and settle in your seats: the play is about to begin.

Don't talk with your neighbors during the play. It distracts people around you and the actors on stage. Even if you think they can't hear you, they can.

Never throw anything onto the stage. People could be injured.

Remain in your seat during the play. Use the restroom before or after the show or during intermission (a 10-minute break half-way through some plays).

Focus all your attention on the play to best enjoy the experience. Listen closely to the dialogue, and look at the set, lights, and costumes. These elements all help to tell the story.

Get involved in the story. Laugh, cry, sigh, gasp—whatever the story draws from you. The more emotionally involved you are, the more you will enjoy the play.

Remain at your seat and applaud during the curtain call because this is part of the performance too. It gives you a chance to recognize a job well done and the actors a moment to thank you for your attention.