



# Fantasy Playhouse Children's Theater & Academy

## Mainstage Production Study Guide

63<sup>rd</sup> SEASON 2023-2024



# A Christmas Carol

**Adapted & Directed by Cherie Evans**  
Based on the work of Charles Dickens

## A MESSAGE TO THE EDUCATORS

This study guide is designed to prepare educators and their students for a memorable and educational theatre experience. We hope this study guide assists in igniting the critical thinking process with your classes as you are transported to snowy streets of London during Fantasy Playhouse Children's Theater & Academy's production of A Christmas Carol. In this guide, you will find discussion topics for before and after the production, classroom activities with curriculum connections, and other resource materials. Thank you for joining us, and we hope you enjoy the show!

-Taylor Bogan, Education Director

## SYNOPSIS

On Christmas Eve a solitary businessman named Ebenezer Scrooge receives a haunting visit from the ghost of his old business partner, Jacob Marley. In this classic Dickens' tale the ghosts of Christmas Past, Present and Future take Scrooge on a supernatural journey to show him what truly matters.

## STANDARDS

Kindergarten: ELA: [K.1, K.2, K.4, K.5, K.8, K.9, K.17, K.20, K.27, K.28, K.29, K.30, K.33, K.34, K.37]; Mathematics: [K.8., K.15]; Art: [ K.1, K.2, K.3, K.4, K.6, K.14], Theatre: [ K.1, K.5, K.6, K.7, K.8, K.10, K.11, K.12, K.14, K.16]

1st Grade: ELA: [1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.11, 1.12, 1.16, 1.21, 1.22, 1.23, 1.24, 1.25, 1.26, 1.27, 1.29, 1.30, 1.32, 1.35]; Mathematics: [1.1, 1.19]; Art: [1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5, 1.14, 1.15]; Theatre: [1.6, 1.7, 1.9, 1.11, 1.14, 1.15, 1.16, 1.17, 1.21, 1.22, 1.24]

2nd Grade: ELA: [2.1, 2.3, 2.4, 2.15, 2.17, 2.19, 2.22, 2.23, 2.24, 2.26, 2.37, 2.43, 2.44]; Mathematics: [2.24]; Art: [2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 2.7, 2.14]; Theatre: [2.2, 2.3, 2.6, 2.9, 2.14, 2.15, 2.16, 2.20, 2.21, 2.23]

3rd Grade: ELA: [3.1, 3.4, 3.5, 3.13, 3.14, 3.19, 3.22, 3.24, 3.27, 3.29, 3.30, 3.32, 3.36, 3.40, 3.41]; Mathematics: [3.13, 3.14, 3.15, 3.19]; Art: [3.1, 3.2, 3.4, 3.5, 3.6]; Theatre: [3.10, 3.12, 3.14, 3.15, 3.17, 3.18, 3.19, 3.20, 3.21, 3.22, 3.23, 3.24]

4th Grade: ELA: [4.9, 4.12, 4.14, 4.15, 4.16, 4.19, 4.21, 4.22, 4.38, 4.39, 4.40]; Art: [4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5, 4.6]; Theatre: [ 4.1, 4.14, 4.15, 4.16, 4.17, 4.18, 4.19, 4.20, 4.21, 4.23]

5th Grade: ELA: [5.5, 5.9, 5.10, 5.11, 5.13, 5.14, 5.16, 5.17, 5.18, 5.19, 5.21, 5.22, 5.39, 5.40]; Art: [5.5, 5.3, 5.4]; Theatre: [5.1, 5.14, 5.15, 5.16, 5.17, 5.18, 5.19, 5.20, 5.21, 5.22, 5.23, 5.24]

## BACKGROUND ON CHARLES DICKENS



Born in Portsmouth, England in 1812, Charles Dickens had a grim start in life that would continue throughout his childhood. Dickens's father was a navy clerk who went to prison in 1824 for unpaid debts. At only the age of twelve, Dickens had to drop out of school and go to work in a factory to support his family. Many of his childhood adversities are echoed throughout his literary works, including *A Christmas Carol*. Dickens knew the impact of the written word, so he made each of his novels available to all classes of society! *A Christmas Carol* in its entirety was published on December 19, 1843. Even with the novel's low profits due to the choice to make it affordable to all, its popularity grew and has become one of his most known stories to date. Many people attribute Dickens' *A Christmas Carol* for capturing the spirit of Christmas that is celebrated today!

## BACKGROUND ON 'A CHRISTMAS CAROL'

Written by Charles Dickens in just six weeks and released in time for Christmas, this famous story is loosely based on a character from another of his novels, *The Pickwick Papers*. In it, Gabriel Grubb, a character from *The Story of the Goblins Who Stole a Sexton*, is kidnapped by goblins and persuaded to change his deplorable and grim ways. In *A Christmas Carol*, the protagonist Ebenezer Scrooge is a miserly businessman who has no sentiment for charity and those less fortunate. Scrooge is even hesitant to give his employee, Bob Cratchit, the day off to celebrate Christmas with his family. Cratchit knows the importance of family, especially given the circumstances of his youngest son Tiny Tim, who needs the aid of braces and a crutch to walk. Tiny Tim symbolizes the purity of heart which is in stark contrast to Scrooge's greedy nature. Throughout the story Scrooge will be challenged by three ghosts to change his cold-hearted ways before it is too late. The timing of the release of *A Christmas Carol* was significant because it reflected the decline in holiday celebrations for the poor; due to the significant gap between the rich and the poor and as the nature of child labor conditions. *A Christmas Carol* has played a role in shaping the giving nature associated with Christmas, as well as the significance of family gatherings being the way we celebrate the holiday today.

## ABOUT THE PLAYWRIGHT



Cherie Evans is an actor, director, choreographer, and writer from Huntsville, AL. She began acting at the age of 10 as a volunteer with Fantasy Playhouse Children's Theater and Academy. Cherie went on to earn a Bachelor of Arts in Theatre Performance from Freed-Hardeman University in Henderson, TN. There she studied acting, directing, and technical

theatre including set design, construction, and stage management under Dr. Cliff Thompson. Cherie directed and choreographed several theatrical productions as part of her Honors College studies and served as President of FHU's chapter of Alpha Psi Omega National Theatre Honor Society. In her junior year, Cherie was nominated for an Irene Ryan Scholarship for her portrayal of Helena in FHU Theatre's production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Cherie began her professional theatre career as a company member of ShoWagon, Theatre Memphis' touring children's theatre troupe. In addition to acting, she designed and constructed all of ShoWagon's costumes and collaborated with her fellow troupe members to adapt beloved children's stories such as *Rikki Tikki Tavi* and *Alice in Wonderland* into stage plays. She also served as a teaching artist for Theatre Memphis' summer acting programs. After leaving Memphis, Cherie continued her theatre career in Chicago and then Los Angeles where she added film and television work to her credits. Cherie quickly earned membership into the SAG-AFTRA entertainment union by working as a background actor on a multitude of commercials, films, and tv shows including *Grey's Anatomy*, *Modern Family*, *The Office*, and all iterations of *CSI*. Now back in her hometown, Cherie is an active volunteer, both on and off stage, in the Huntsville theatre community. Throughout all the stages of her career, *A Christmas Carol* has been the one constant. She has performed in 7 different versions of the Charles Dickens classic in three states. Besides the incredible source material, Cherie garnered inspiration for her retelling from all the previous adaptations she has been a part of.

## AUDIENCE ETIQUETTE

1. Please wait in the lobby to be seated.
2. Use the handrails when going up and down the stairs in the theater.
3. Pay attention when the lights go down.
4. The actors love to hear your response to the action taking place, but please do not talk or whisper during the performance.
5. Please do not eat, drink, or chew gum in the theatre.
6. Please turn off all cell phones and other electronic devices during the performance.
7. Actors love to hear applause! Show your appreciation by clapping at the end of the play.
8. After the performance, please remain seated until your school is dismissed.

## VOCABULARY

### K-3RD GRADE

Amend Carol Dismal Grave  
Forfeit Melancholy Merciless Misery  
Penance Spare Strive

### 4TH-5TH GRADE

Avarice Benevolence Bereft Covetous  
Credulity Demeanor Dispelled  
Encompass Malady Odious  
Reclamation Solitary

## PRE-SHOW DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Discuss proper theatre etiquette with your class. Describe several ways to be good audience members.
2. Discuss the story to prepare students. Have you seen or heard the story A Christmas Carol before? Can you name any characters? What are the central themes?
3. Discuss proper theatre etiquette with your class. What elements of technical theatre are most exciting to you? The set? Costumes? Lights? Sound? Make-Up? How does each element tell the story?
4. Discuss holiday traditions. What traditions do you and your family celebrate for the holiday season?

## POST-SHOW DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What was your favorite moment (or scene) from The Christmas Carol? Why was it your favorite part? What made it memorable?
2. How did the actors use the following Acting Tools to tell the story: Body, voice, mind, imagination, cooperation, and heart?
3. How did the actors use the following Acting Tools to tell the story: Body, voice, mind, imagination, cooperation, and heart?
4. Why do you think Scrooge decided to change by the end of the three spirits' visits? What did he see that influenced this change?
5. What lessons can we learn from Scrooge's journey about generosity, compassion, and family?

## THEATER VOCABULARY

- **Director:** develops and executes the creative vision of the show while helping the actors to develop their characters
- **Actors:** people who perform in the show to bring the words of the playwright to life
- **Production Manager:** manages the coordination and finances of the production team
- **Technical Director:** oversees the technical execution of the director's vision and manages the technical staff
- **Scenic Designer:** works with the Director and Technical Director to design what the stage will look like
- **Costume Designer:** works with the Director to design and execute all of the costumes and accessories worn by the characters in the play
- **Properties:** usually shortened to the phrase "props", these are objects carried on by actors, or are preset by the scenic design team
- **Lighting Designer:** the technician in charge of designing and occasionally executing the light plot of a show
- **Sound Designer:** the technician in charge of designing and occasionally executing the sound lot of a show
- **Stage Manager:** serves as the main point of contact for all of the departments to ensure effective communication and helps maintain the artistic integrity of the show
- **House Manager:** the person responsible for managing all of the ushers and front of house team to ensure patrons are seated correctly and have a positive experience
- **Stage Directions:** terminology used to describe different places onstage: Center Stage, Stage Right, Stage Left, Upstage, and Downstage

## SHARE YOUR CREATIVITY!

Share your creativity with us! We would love to hear from you! Please share your work, stories, or pictures from your class by sending to the address below or tagging us on social media with @FantasyPCTA or using #FantasyPCTA

## ACTIVITY #1 KEY

### Activity #1: A Christmas Carol Cross Word Puzzle

Use the clues below to solve the crossword! Blank crossword available on next page.

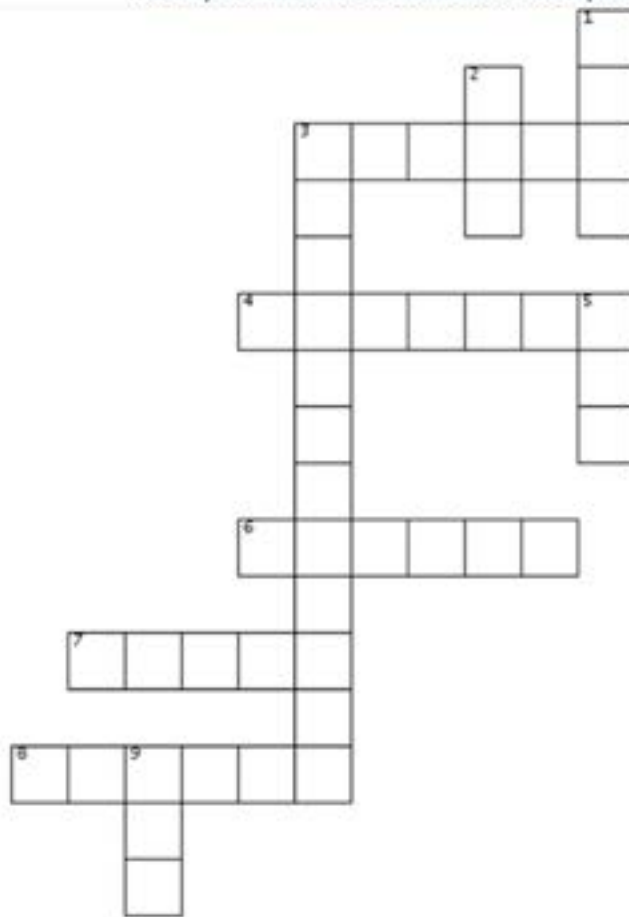
KEYS

# A Christmas Carol Crossword Puzzle Answer Key



# A Christmas Carol Crossword Puzzle

Can you find the answers to complete the puzzle?



## ACROSS

3. I like to sing Christmas
4. The author of The Christmas Carol is
6. Scrooge's partner at his business
7. Scrooge is Fred's
8. The ghost that takes Scrooge to visit his grave

## DOWN

1. The first ghost that visits Scrooge
2. Complete the quote. 'What business have you at the coal... Mr. Cratchit?'
3. The day before Christmas
5. Cratchit has how many children?
9. Tiny...



## ACTIVITY #2

### Activity #2: Wordsearch



## ACTIVITY #3

### Activity #3: Family Tradition

During A Christmas Carol we see multiple families using tradition to celebrate. Some families eat turkey, some open presents on Christmas eve, and some families celebrate Hanukkah. Have students fill in the sheet below. They can draw or write in their answers!

The worksheet is set against a vibrant red background. It features several white shapes for student input: a large circle at the top right, a rounded rectangle on the left, and two rectangles at the bottom. The text 'Ways We Decorate' is written vertically inside the circle. 'A Fun Thing We Do' is written vertically inside the rounded rectangle. 'Favorite Holiday Treat' is written vertically inside the top-right rectangle, with a small white star to its left. 'Favorite Holiday Tradition' is written vertically inside the bottom rectangle. The right side of the page is decorated with a sprig of green pine, red and gold ornaments, and a string of warm white lights. The text 'Fantasy Playhouse' is written vertically in a small font at the bottom center.

Ways We Decorate

A Fun Thing We Do

Favorite Holiday Treat

Favorite Holiday Tradition

Fantasy Playhouse

# A CHRISTMAS CAROL STORY SCRAMBLE!

**Directions:** Oh no! It looks like the pages of Tiny Tim's favorite book have gotten out of order! Can you put the pages back in the correct order? Recall what you saw on stage during 'A Christmas Carol' to help you put them in order. Cut and paste the events in order.

**Materials Needed:**

Scissors

Tape or Glue

1  
Fred invites his uncle to his house for Christmas.

2  
A charity worker asks Scrooge to give money to the poor.

3  
Jacob Marley warns Scrooge to change his way of life.

4  
The Ghost of Christmas Past arrives.

5  
Scrooge sees his younger self at school.

6  
Scrooge watches the moment his girlfriend left him.

7  
The Ghost of Christmas Present meets Scrooge.

8  
Scrooge visits his own grave.

9  
Scrooge buys a giant turkey for the Crachit family

10  
Scrooge wakes up on Christmas morning and is very happy.

Scrooge visits his own grave.

A charity worker asks Scrooge to give money to the poor.

The Ghost of Christmas Past arrives.

Scrooge buys a giant turkey for the Crachit family

The Ghost of Christmas Present meets Scrooge.

Scrooge sees his younger self at school.

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# A CHRISTMAS CAROL STORY SCRAMBLE!

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1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10

Scrooge visits his own grave.
A charity worker asks Scrooge to give money to the poor.
The Ghost of Christmas Past arrives.
Scrooge buys a giant turkey for the Crachit family
The Ghost of Christmas Present meets Scrooge.
Scrooge sees his younger self at school.
Jacob Marley warns Scrooge to change his way of life.
Scrooge watches the moment his girlfriend left him.
Fred invites his uncle to his house for Christmas.
Scrooge wakes up on Christmas morning and is very happy.

# A CHRISTMAS CAROL

## WHO SAID THAT?

**Directions:** Draw a line to connect the character to their quote!

<b>Ebenzer Scrooge</b>	If I could work my will, every idiot who goes about with 'Merry Christmas' on his lips, should be boiled with his own pudding, and buried with a stake of holly through his heart.
<b>Bob Cratchit</b>	I am here tonight to warn you, that you have yet a chance and hope of escaping my fate. A chance and hope of my procuring, Ebenezer.
<b>Jacob Marley</b>	We have traveled through time. Do you not remember this place?
<b>The Ghost of Christmas Past</b>	If these shadows remain unaltered by the Future, the child will die. What then? If he would like to die, he had better do it, and 'decrease the surplus population'.
<b>The Ghost of Christmas Present</b>	Yes. So I shall yet again invite Uncle Scrooge to dinner and bear his icy-tempered response, but first, I shall very much like to sing Christmas carols with my most lovely wife.
<b>Fred</b>	Oh, yes... yes sir, Mr. Scrooge. Thank you, Mr. Scrooge, and Merry- good evening, sir.

# A CHRISTMAS CAROL WHO SAID THAT?

**Directions:** Draw a line to connect the character to their quote!

**Ebenzer Scrooge**

**Bob Cratchit**

**Jacob Marley**

**The Ghost of  
Christmas Past**

**The Ghost of Christmas  
Present**

**Fred**

If I could work my will, every idiot who goes about with 'Merry Christmas' on his lips, should be boiled with his own pudding, and buried with a stake of holly through his heart.

I am here tonight to warn you, that you have yet a chance and hope of escaping my fate. A chance and hope of my procuring, Ebenezer.

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Yes. So I shall yet again invite Uncle Scrooge to dinner and bear his icy-tempered response, but first, I shall very much like to sing Christmas carols with my most lovely wife.

Oh, yes... yes sir, Mr. Scrooge. Thank you, Mr. Scrooge, and Merry- good evening, sir.

Name: Date: 

## Help Scrooge count his money!

Scrooge is a greedy man who is always counting his money. Can you help?

Count the coins in each box and write the total above.

Total: 

25¢

10¢

5¢

5¢

Total: 

50¢

5¢

10¢

Total: 

25¢

25¢

10¢

Total: 

5¢

25¢

50¢

50¢

Total: 

25¢

5¢

5¢

5¢

Total: 

10¢

10¢

50¢

10¢



# A CHRISTMAS CAROL COLORING



## ACTIVITY #8

### Let's Write a Letter

Actors, directors, and technicians love hearing from audience members! Did you have a question about something you saw onstage? Did you wonder how something worked offstage? Did you have a favorite scene in the play? Use the template below to write a letter to someone in the cast and crew (use the Who's Who Onstage and the Who's Who Offstage lists to decide who to write to).



FPCTA  
ACC Cast & Crew  
3312 Long Ave. SW  
Huntsville, AL 35805

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# FANTASY PLAYHOUSE

## CHILDREN'S THEATER & ACADEMY

### ABOUT US

Fantasy Playhouse Children's Theater & Academy (FPCTA) provides theatre arts access through production, education, and outreach, reaching more than 31,000 residents annually, including 21,000 children and youth. FPCTA enriches the lives of children and families through theatre and arts education, encouraging students to become self-confident, academically successful, creative-thinking citizens who are more likely to invest in their communities as adults. FPCTA's core programs include live children's theatre productions, classes, camps, workshops, and educational outreach through after school classes and In-School Touring programs. Recognizing the transformative power theatre arts can have in the life of a child, FPCTA prioritizes theatre arts access for all by engaging local underserved communities.

### FANTASY STAFF

Executive Director ..... Karen Mockensturm  
 Education Director ..... Taylor Bogan  
 Artistic Director ..... Stephen Tyler Davis  
 Associate Education Director ..... Kailey Burkhardt  
 Education Coordinators ..... Matlin Niemann  
 Business Administrator ..... Andrea Boswell  
 Community Outreach Coordinators ..... Carissa Conley  
 Marketing/PR Manager ..... Emily Rodrick

### THANK YOU!

FPCTA gratefully acknowledges the support from the following.



### SCHOOL TOURING SHOWS

#### BRING PROFESSIONAL SHOWS TO YOUR SCHOOL



#### About

Our In-School Touring Program introduces students to the art of theatre through age appropriate curriculum based pieces, which are socially relevant, entertaining, and exciting. Our professional actors will bring to life an experience for each child in hopes of stretching the mind, inspiring the heart, and promoting education through our plays.

By: Mariah Beachboard  
 APPROPRIATE FOR GRADES 3-5

#### For booking information, please contact:

[FieldTrips@FantasyPlayhouse.com](mailto:FieldTrips@FantasyPlayhouse.com)

ATTN: School Touring Show

256-539-6829



APPROPRIATE FOR GRADES K-9

### STUDENT MATINEES

#### SEATS AVAILABLE!

We have daytime performances for our 2024 mainstage performances!

For reservations, please contact:

[FieldTrips@FantasyPlayhouse.com](mailto:FieldTrips@FantasyPlayhouse.com)

ATTN: Student Matinee Reservation [INSERT SHOW TITLE]

Additional information available on our website:

[FantasyPlayhouse.org/Student-Matinees](https://FantasyPlayhouse.org/Student-Matinees)



February 22, 2024  
 9 a.m. & 11:30 a.m.

May 9, 2024  
 9 a.m. & 11:30 a.m.