



Level 4

Suitable for:	young learners aged 9–11 years who have completed 300–400 hours of study in English
Type of English:	British
Headwords:	up to 1400
Words per page:	up to 100
Key grammar:	Past simple and continuous, past perfect, future (will and going to), relative clauses, reported speech.

Summary of the story

Ebenezer Scrooge is an old man who lives to work and make money. He does not enjoy the same things that make other people happy; good food and drink, dancing, being with friends and family. One Christmas Eve, three ghostly visitors show him his life, past, present and future. When he sees how he has lived his life, and how it might end, he decides to change. He starts to spend his money on other people, begins to smile and is a different, nicer and happier person.

Background to the story

Charles Dickens wrote *A Christmas Carol* in the summer and autumn of 1843, the first of his five Christmas Books. It was partly to relieve his growing debts, but also, as he wrote, “to awaken some loving and forbearing thoughts, never out of season.....” This popular story has been adapted for many films, animations, musicals, stage plays and even an opera and ballet.

Topics and themes

Christmas and Celebrations Christmas is the celebration in the story. The topic provides plenty of ideas for activities, on Christmas itself or other celebrations. Do a class survey on why pupils celebrate. How many of their celebrations are annual?

Family Pupils may like to describe the Cratchit family, finding out all they can about them from the story. Many families appear in the story, rich and poor. Can the pupils find anything they have in common?

Food The story includes all the food traditionally served for Christmas celebration in England, which can be looked at. Extend to discuss food for the pupils at Christmas or for other celebrations.

The Future Usually, unlike Scrooge, we do not know what is in the future. Ask pupils how they decide what they will do tomorrow / next week / next Christmas? How much do they think is in their control? Do they use past experience / present feelings? Do they find the future frightening / exciting and why?

Feelings and attitudes The characters express a range of feelings: meanness, to being jolly and sad. Scrooge changes his behaviour only after his feelings change (‘a change of heart’). Have pupils had a change of heart about something? What was it?

Winter The story is set in the cold winter with snow and fog. Christmas is celebrated in the middle of cold, dark days of winter. The topic can be expanded to revise all weather vocabulary.

Making use of the Reader

Write a letter (About 10 minutes) Ask the pupils to write the letter Bob Cratchit sends to his friend Thomas in Oxford for the New Year, describing the

sudden change in his boss's behaviour, and his own and his family's thoughts and feelings about it.

Helping others Charles Dickens made his readers aware of the poor social welfare conditions of Victorian Britain. The two men who ask for Scrooge's help for the poor and sick were volunteers. Expand to a discussion of how to help those who have problems. Issues include which groups may need help, (poor, sick, children, animals, old) how to give (the state or voluntary), what to give (goods / time / skills / money). Divide pupils into seven groups. Each group can work out the case for giving to a particular charity (their choice or yours). The whole class can vote to decide the most convincing argument.

Food display Pupils can make a wall and table display of different recipes for celebration food, with ingredient samples, over a number of lessons.

Time frame play This is a long-term activity. The story divides into five time frames, present and future reality, the ghosts' past, present and future. Divide the class into five groups, one to each time frame. The pupils should act out the scenes in their time frame, writing their own dialogue where necessary e.g., the group acting the ghosts' present would act the four scenes from pages 14–18. Record the scenes in sequence to make a complete audio or video play.

Using the accompanying audio

After reading Once the pupils have read the story, divide them up into groups, taking a chapter each, or choose certain chapters if the class is small. Each group will elicit the vocabulary for the feelings mentioned in their chapter (like / hate / worry / nervous / surprise etc.) and the words for the expression of feeling (smile / laugh / cry / excited) and write them in a list on the board. Remind pupils that these may be used in different forms (e.g. hated, hates, nervously, laughing). Now pick out the chapters on the audio. Pupils should check when they hear a feeling word. They can either check their own chapter, or one from another group.

Using the chants See the photocopiable activities within these Teacher's Notes. Once the pupils become familiar with the chants they will recognise some of the phrases from the text. For example, chant 1: 'Work, work work' comes from page 5. Chant 2: 'I'm the ghost of Christmas past' (page 10), 'I'm the ghost of Christmas Present' (page 15), 'the ghost of Christmas Future does not speak, but his name is spoken by Scrooge on page 19. This is the odd one out. Chant 3 'merry Christmas' appears on pages 18, 28 and 29.

"Bah humbug!" This is a very famous expression of Scrooge's, and the pupils may like to learn it for themselves after hearing it on the audio (page 6). It means, rubbish! or other similar expressions.

Notes on using the photocopiable activities

Activity 1 Pupils read the sentences and then write down which ghost it best describes.

Activity 2 Pupils read the text carefully and decide whether the sentences are true or false (correcting the false sentences).

Activity 3 Pupils find the right word to fill the gap and write it into the crossword. Once they have completed all the clues correctly, another word appears in the vertical box.

Activity 4 Pupils write about their favourite character, giving reasons for their choice.

A Christmas Carol

Name

Activity 1

Which ghost? Read the sentences below the pictures, then choose one of the ghosts that matches the sentence.



First ghost



Second ghost



Third ghost

- | | |
|--|---|
| <p>1 He wore a short white dress and a bright belt.</p> <p>2 He was happy.</p> <p>3 He showed Scrooge a grave.</p> <p>4 He was an old man.</p> <p>5 He was a young giant.</p> <p>6 He came at 1 o'clock.</p> <p>7 He showed Scrooge a miners house.</p> <p>8 He wore a long black cloak.</p> <p>9 He carried a bunch of holly.</p> <p>10 He did not speak.</p> <p>11 He showed Scrooge Mr Fezziwigs office.</p> <p>12 He wore a long green dress with white fur.</p> | <p><u>First ghost</u></p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> |
|--|---|

Activity 2

Write *True* or *False*, next to the sentences. If the sentence is false, write down the correct sentence.

1 Scrooge's partner died ten years ago.

False. He died seven years ago.

2 Scrooge enjoyed the Christmas songs that Christmas Eve.

3 Marley's ghost was unhappy.

4 The first ghost showed Scrooge two past Christmases.

5 Scrooge didn't want to go with the second ghost.

6 The third ghost was more frightening than the other two.

7 On Christmas Day Scrooge bought a turkey for himself.

Activity 3

Fill in the missing words then write them in the spaces.

The letters in the box make a word. What is it?

1 A boy came to sing Christmas songs.

2 Scrooge's _____, Bob Cratchit, worked very hard.

3 The first ghost held a bunch of _____ holly.

4 The second ghost sat on top of lots of Christmas _____.

5 The third ghost showed him the City of _____.

6 In a churchyard, Scrooge was shown a _____.

7 Scrooge had Christmas dinner with his _____.

C	H	R	I	S	T	M	A	S
—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

Activity 4

Write four or five sentences on your favourite character from the story.

I like

A Christmas Carol

Chants help pupils become familiar with the sounds and rhythm of English. The language in each chant recycles language from the Reader.

Suggested procedure

Pupils listen to the chant one or two times, clapping their hands or tapping their desks in time with the rhythm. Pupils then say the chant, verse by verse, with you, beating the rhythm as they speak, until they are familiar with the words and the rhythm.

You can then split the class into 2 or 3 groups and each group can say one verse of the chant in turn.

Chant 1

Work, work, work
Work, work, work
Work is important, work brings money
Work, work, work
Work, work, work
Scrooge works hard to make more money

Poor Bob Cratchit
He must work
Work, work, work
Work brings money

Bob is cold
Bob is poor
Work is important
Work brings money

Work, work, work
Work, work, work
Work is important, work brings money
Work, work, work
Work, work, work
Scrooge works hard to make more money

Chant 2

I'm the ghost of Christmas Past
What do you want?
What do you want?
Come with me and let's see Christmas
I'm the ghost of Christmas Past

I'm the ghost of Christmas Present
Take me with you, you must teach me
Come with me and let's see Christmas
I'm the ghost of Christmas Present

The ghost of Christmas yet to come
He says nothing, Scrooge must follow
Tell me ghost, who was that dead man?
He says nothing, Scrooge must follow.

Chant 3

Merry Christmas!
Merry Christmas!
Merry Christmas, everybody!

Merry Christmas Fred!
Merry Christmas Bob!
Merry Christmas Tiny Tim!
Merry Christmas, everybody!

Merry Christmas!
Merry Christmas!
Merry Christmas, everybody!

Answer Key

In the back of the Reader

Before you read

- 1** 1 pp. 10–13. 2 pp. 15–18. 3 pp. 19, 20, 22–26.
- 2a** On p. 5, Scrooge looks cross, he is working.
On pp. 29–30 he is happy, smiling, drinking, celebrating.
- 2b** He wanted to change the future shown to him by The Ghost of Christmas Future, so he changed how he acted.

After you read

- 3** f. b. c. a. e. g. d.
- 4** Wordsearch

E	B	E	N	E	Z	E	R	S	C	R	O	O	G	E
B	O	D	F	H	J	L	C	E	G	I	K	M	O	Q
R	B	J	T	V	X	Z	N	M	P	S	V	W	Y	A
Z	C	A	C	E	G	I	K	R	M	O	R	S	U	W
Y	R	C	Z	H	J	L	N	F	R	E	D	P	R	T
V	A	O	X	B	D	F	H	J	L	E	N	P	Y	Z
C	T	B	E	G	I	K	M	Z	O	R	S	T	R	U
V	C	M	W	Z	Y	X	C	Z	B	A	Y	I	X	W
C	H	A	R	L	E	S	D	I	C	K	E	N	S	A
B	I	R	F	J	M	Q	U	W	A	F	K	Y	O	S
X	T	L	C	H	M	R	W	I	B	H	N	T	T	Z
P	W	E	B	R	I	C	T	G	U	E	N	I	H	O
A	Q	Y	D	J	L	S	F	K	M	P	R	M	V	G

In the photocopiable activities

Activity 1

- 1st ghost: 1, 4, 6, 9, 11.
- 2nd ghost: 2, 5, 7, 12.
- 3rd ghost: 3, 8, 10.

Activity 2

- 1** False. He died seven years ago.
- 2** False, Scrooge sent the boy singer away.
- 3** True.

- 4** False. He showed him three past Christmases.
- 5** False. Scrooge asked him to take him anywhere he wanted.
- 6** True.
- 7** False, Scrooge bought a turkey for Bob Cratchit and his family.

Activity 3

- 1** Christmas.
- 2** secretary.
- 3** green.
- 4** foods.
- 5** London.
- 6** grave.
- 7** nephew. The word in the box is Scrooge.