

THE NIGHT BEFORE CHRISTMAS CAROL

STUDY GUIDE



Questions About Charles Dickens and "A Christmas Carol"

1. Where was Charles Dickens born? (Portsmouth, England.)
2. Did Dickens finish school? (12-year-old Charles was removed from school and sent to work at a boot-blackening factory earning six shillings a week to help support the family.)
3. What kind of stories did Dickens ask his nursemaid to tell when he was a child? (Ghost Stories.)
4. What year did Dickens write "A Christmas Carol"? (1843.)
5. Who was the ruler of England in 1843? (Queen Victoria.)
6. What was Dickens' pen name for his early writings? (Boz.)
7. What inspired Dickens stories? (His own experiences, including the poverty of his own childhood and his observations of child poverty in the streets of London.)
8. Name three of Dickens' leading characters who are children. (Oliver, Tiny Tim, Little Nell.)
9. What is the main course of the Cratchit family Christmas dinner? (A goose.)
10. What did Scrooge do for the Cratchit family after his transformation? (Bought them a large turkey, gave Bob Cratchit a raise, and paid for all of Tiny Tim's medical care as if Tim was his own son.)

Websites

Dickens: PBS

<http://www.pbs.org/wnet/dickens/>

Charles Dickens Page

<http://charlesdickenspage.com>

Charles Dickens Museum

<http://www.dickensmuseum.com/>

VOCABULARY WORDS:

Bob, Calico, Coal Scuttle, Doornail, Farthing, Gruel, Humbug, Miser, Pickpocket, Poulterer, Portly, Quill, Serial, Smoking Bishop, Tuppence, Workhouse.

Serial Writing

Most of Dickens' novels were serialized in 20 monthly installments, or numbers.

The publication of fiction in parts grew dramatically in the 1830s, as a direct result of the wild success of THE PICKWICK PAPERS. Serial publication had several advantages. For the reader, it substantially reduced the cash outlay required to pay for fiction: for a novel in monthly installments like PICKWICK, one had to pay only one shilling a month, instead of a guinea (21 shillings) or more for an entire novel. For the publisher, it expanded the market for fiction, as more people could afford to buy on the installment plan; it also allowed the opportunity to advertise, as ads could easily be incorporated into the little booklets in which a typical Dickens novel was issued. And for the author, it created a greater intimacy with the audience, something Dickens always relished.

(From *Dickens and Serial Publication* by Joel J. Brattin
http://www.pbs.org/wnet/dickens/life_publication.html



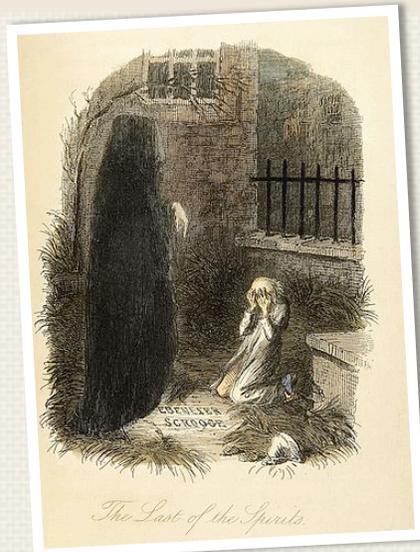
THE GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PAST

Returns Scrooge to his childhood and the joy he experienced at The Fezziwig Ball.



THE GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PRESENT

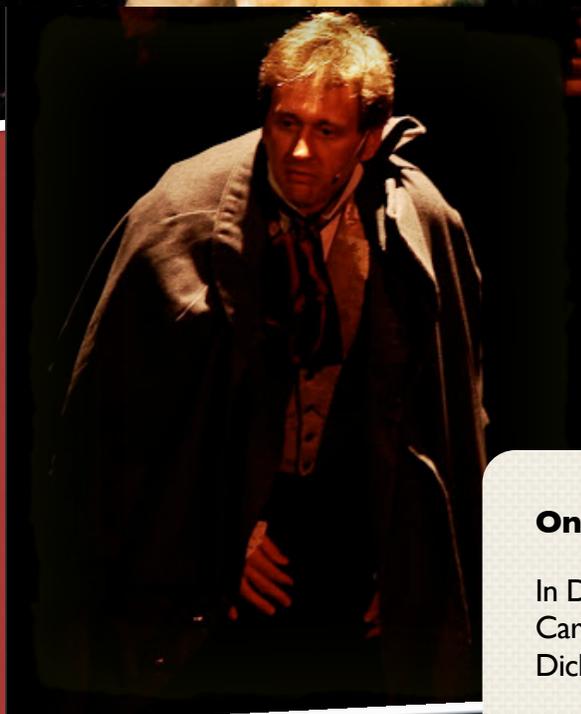
Takes Scrooge to witness the Cratchit family Christmas dinner where they toast the founder of the feast.



THE GHOST OF CHRISTMAS YET TO COME

Shows Scrooge the possibility of his own neglected grave. Scrooge wakes up transformed, delighted to find that it's not too late to change for a better future.

THE NIGHT BEFORE CHRISTMAS CAROL



One Actor, Many Roles

In Dr. Elliot Engel's "The Night Before Christmas Carol", David zum Brunnen portrays Tiny Tim, Charles Dickens, Scrooge, Marley and the Old Hag.



Dickens' Works

[Sketches by Boz](#) (1836)

[Pickwick Papers](#) (1836-37)

[Oliver Twist](#) (1837-39)

[Nicholas Nickleby](#) (1838-39)

[The Old Curiosity Shop](#) (1840-41)

[Barnaby Rudge](#) (1841)

[Martin Chuzzlewit](#) (1843-44)

[Dombey and Son](#) (1846-48)

[David Copperfield](#) (1849-50)

[Bleak House](#) (1852-53)

[Hard Times](#) (1854)

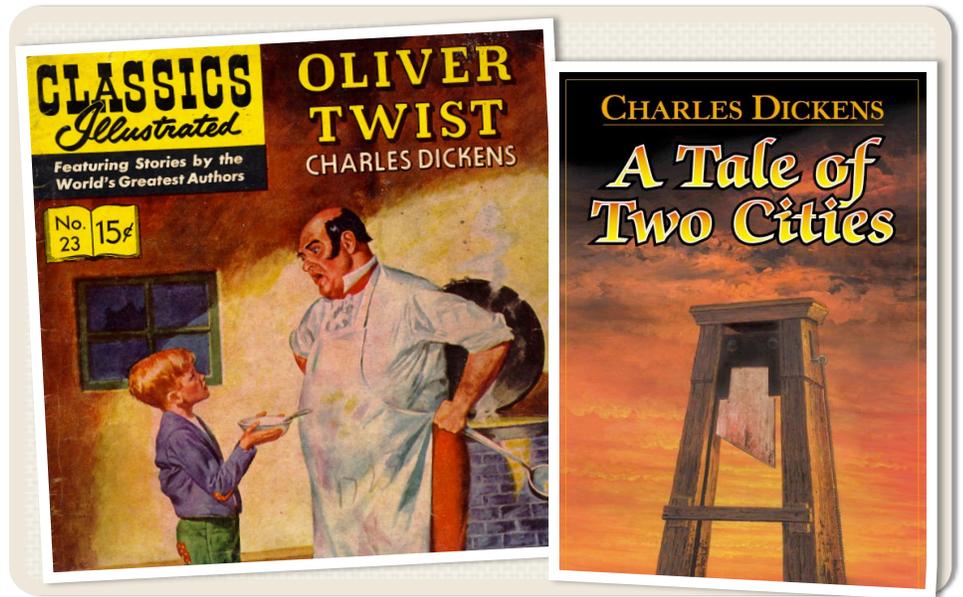
[Little Dorrit](#) (1855-57)

[A Tale of Two Cities](#) (1859)

[Great Expectations](#) (1860-61)

[Our Mutual Friend](#) (1864-65)

[The Mystery of Edwin Drood](#) -
unfinished (1870)



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Dickens' novels have been made into stage plays and movies. Today there are many versions of "A Christmas Carol" based on the original, including "The Muppet Christmas Carol" and "Scrooged".