

# Meet Israel Horovitz

(b. 1939)

## Author of **A CHRISTMAS CAROL:** SCROOGE AND MARLEY

Israel Horovitz was born in Wakefield, Massachusetts. As a teenager, he did not like books by Charles Dickens. As he got older, however, he came to appreciate Dickens's style and stories. Now, Horovitz refers to Dickens as "a masterful storyteller." He imagines that if Dickens were alive today, the Englishman would be "our greatest television writer, or perhaps screenwriter."

**Thoughts About *A Christmas Carol*** As Horovitz adapted Dickens's novel into a play, he thought about which character was his favorite. The answer may surprise you: It is Scrooge, who reminds Horovitz of his own father.

### **DID YOU KNOW?**

Horovitz is the author of more than fifty plays and screenplays. He is also an actor.

### **BACKGROUND FOR THE PLAY**

#### **Economic and Social Change**

*A Christmas Carol* is set in England during the nineteenth century, a time of rapid industrial growth. In this booming economy, the wealthy lived in luxury, but the poor and the working class suffered. Charles Dickens's novel, from which this drama was adapted, shows sympathy for the situation of the poor and suggests a way it might be changed.



# A CHRISTMAS CAROL:

SCROOGE AND MARLEY



ISRAEL HOROVITZ  
from *A CHRISTMAS CAROL*  
by CHARLES DICKENS

**JACOB MARLEY**, a specter  
**EBENEZER SCROOGE**, not yet dead,  
which is to say still alive  
**BOB CRATCHIT**, Scrooge's clerk  
**FRED**, Scrooge's nephew  
**THIN DO-GOODER**  
**PORTLY DO-GOODER**  
**SPECTERS (VARIOUS)**, carrying money-  
boxes  
**THE GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PAST**  
**FOUR JOCUND TRAVELERS**  
**A BAND OF SINGERS**  
**A BAND OF DANCERS**  
**LITTLE BOY SCROOGE**  
**YOUNG MAN SCROOGE**  
**FAN**, Scrooge's little sister  
**THE SCHOOLMASTER**  
**SCHOOLMATES**  
**FEZZIWIG**, a fine and fair employer  
**DICK**, young Scrooge's co-worker  
**YOUNG SCROOGE**  
**A FIDDLER**  
**MORE DANCERS**  
**SCROOGE'S LOST LOVE**

**SCROOGE'S LOST LOVE'S DAUGHTER**  
**SCROOGE'S LOST LOVE'S HUSBAND**  
**THE GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PRESENT**  
**SOME BAKERS**  
**MRS. CRATCHIT**, Bob Cratchit's wife  
**BELINDA CRATCHIT**, a daughter  
**MARTHA CRATCHIT**, another daughter  
**PETER CRATCHIT**, a son  
**TINY TIM CRATCHIT**, another son  
**SCROOGE'S NIECE**, Fred's wife  
**THE GHOST OF CHRISTMAS FUTURE**, a  
mute Phantom  
**THREE MEN OF BUSINESS**  
**DRUNKS, SCOUNDRELS, WOMEN OF THE**  
**STREETS**  
**A CHARWOMAN**  
**MRS. DILBER**  
**JOE**, an old second-hand goods dealer  
**A CORPSE**, very like Scrooge  
**AN INDEBTED FAMILY**  
**ADAM**, a young boy  
**A POULTERER**  
**A GENTLEWOMAN**  
**SOME MORE MEN OF BUSINESS**

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## ACT 1

**THE PLACE OF THE PLAY** Various locations in and around the City of London, including Scrooge's Chambers and Offices; the Cratchit Home; Fred's Home; Scrooge's School; Fezziwig's Offices; Old Joe's Hide-a-Way.

**THE TIME OF THE PLAY** The entire action of the play takes place on Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, and the morning after Christmas, 1843.

### SCENE 1

*[Ghostly music in auditorium. A single spotlight on JACOB MARLEY, D.C. He is ancient; awful, dead-eyed. He speaks straight out to auditorium.]*

**MARLEY.** *[Cackle-voiced]* My name is Jacob Marley and I am dead. *[He laughs.]* Oh, no, there's no doubt that I am dead. The register of my burial was signed by the clergyman, the clerk, the undertaker . . . and by my chief mourner . . . Ebenezer Scrooge . . . *[Pause; remembers]* I am dead as a doornail.

*[A spotlight fades up, Stage Right, on SCROOGE, in his countinghouse,<sup>1</sup> counting. Lettering on the window behind SCROOGE reads: "SCROOGE AND MARLEY, LTD." The spotlight is tight on SCROOGE's head and shoulders. We shall not yet see into the offices and setting. Ghostly music continues, under. MARLEY looks across at SCROOGE; pitifully. After a moment's pause]* I present him to you: Ebenezer Scrooge . . . England's most tightfisted hand at the grindstone, Scrooge! a squeezing, wrenching, grasping, scraping, clutching, covetous, old sinner! secret, and self-contained, and solitary as an oyster. The cold within him freezes his old features, nips his pointed nose, shrivels his cheek, stiffens his gait; makes his eyes red, his thin lips blue; and speaks out shrewdly in his grating voice. Look at him. Look at him . . .

*[SCROOGE counts and mumbles.]*

**SCROOGE.** They owe me money and I will collect. I will have

1. **countinghouse** office for keeping financial records and writing business letters.

#### Purpose for Reading

Based on the images, title, and other information you can quickly preview, what is your purpose for reading this play?

#### ✓ Reading Check

Where and when does this drama take place?



### Dialogue

What do these lines reveal about Marley's character?

### Vocabulary

**implored** (im plôrd') v. begged

them jailed, if I have to. They owe me money and I will collect what is due me.

[MARLEY moves towards SCROOGE; two steps. The spotlight stays with him.]

**MARLEY.** [Disgusted] He and I were partners for I don't know how many years. Scrooge was my sole executor, my sole administrator, my sole assign, my sole residuary legatee,<sup>2</sup> my sole friend and my sole mourner. But Scrooge was not so cut up by the sad event of my death, but that he was an excellent man of business on the very day of my funeral, and solemnized<sup>3</sup> it with an undoubted bargain. [Pauses again in disgust] He never painted out my name from the window. There it stands, on the window and above the warehouse door: Scrooge and Marley. Sometimes people new to our business call him Scrooge and sometimes they call him Marley. He answers to both names. It's all the same to him. And it's cheaper than painting in a new sign, isn't it? [Pauses; moves closer to SCROOGE] Nobody has ever stopped him in the street to say, with gladsome looks, "My dear Scrooge, how are you? When will you come to see me?" No beggars implored him to bestow a trifle, no children ever ask him what it is o'clock, no man or woman now, or ever in his life, not once, inquire the way to such and such a place. [MARLEY stands next to SCROOGE now. They share, so it seems, a spotlight.] But what does Scrooge care of any of this? It is the very thing he likes! To edge his way along the crowded paths of life, warning all human sympathy to keep its distance.

[A ghostly bell rings in the distance. MARLEY moves away from SCROOGE, now, heading D. again. As he does, he "takes" the light: SCROOGE has disappeared into the black void beyond. MARLEY walks D.C., talking directly to the audience. Pauses]

The bell tolls and I must take my leave. You must stay a while with Scrooge and watch him play out his scrooge

2. **my sole executor** (eg zek' yōō tēr), **my sole administrator**, **my sole assign** (e sin'), **my sole residuary legatee** (ri zij' ōō er' ē leg' e tē') legal terms giving one person responsibility to carry out the wishes of another who has died.
3. **solemnized** (sāl' em nīzd') v. honored or remembered. Marley is being sarcastic.



life. It is now the story: the once-upon-a-time. Scrooge is busy in his counting house. Where else? Christmas eve and Scrooge is busy in his counting-house. It is cold, bleak, biting weather outside: foggy withal: and, if you listen closely, you can hear the people in the court go wheezing up and down, beating their hands upon their breasts, and stamping their feet upon the pavement stones to warm them . . .

[The clocks outside strike three.]

Only three! and quite dark outside already: it has not been light all day this day.

[This ghostly bell rings in the distance again. MARLEY looks about him. Music in. MARLEY flies away.]

## SCENE 2

[N.B. MARLEY's comings and goings should, from time to time, induce the explosion of the odd flash-pot. I.H.]

[Christmas music in, sung by a live chorus, full. At conclusion of song, sound fades under and into the distance. Lights up in set: offices of Scrooge and Marley, Ltd. SCROOGE sits at his desk, at work. Near him is a tiny fire. His door is open and in his line of vision, we see SCROOGE'S clerk, BOB CRATCHIT, who sits in a dismal tank of a cubicle, copying letters. Near CRATCHIT is a fire so tiny as to barely cast a light: perhaps it is one pitifully glowing coal? CRATCHIT rubs his hands together, puts on a white comforter<sup>4</sup> and tries to heat his hands around his candle. SCROOGE'S NEPHEW enters, unseen.]

**SCROOGE.** What are you doing, Cratchit? Acting cold, are you? Next, you'll be asking to replenish your coal from my coal-box, won't you? Well, save your breath, Cratchit! Unless you're prepared to find employ elsewhere!

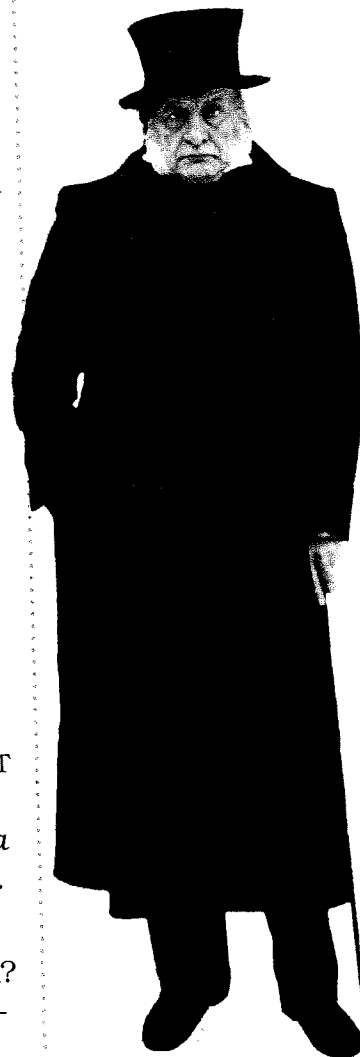
**NEPHEW.** [Cheerfully; surprising SCROOGE] A merry Christmas to you, Uncle! God save you!

**SCROOGE.** Bah! Humbug!<sup>5</sup>

4. **comforter** (kum' fer ter) *n.* long, woolen scarf.

5. **Humbug** (hum' bug') *interj.* nonsense.

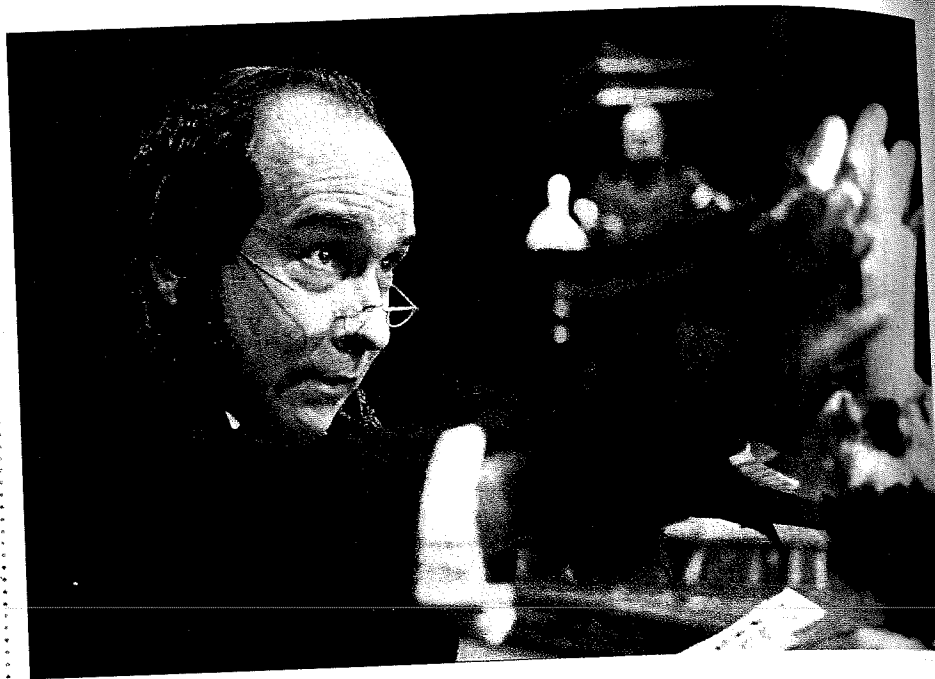
▼ **Critical Viewing**  
How does this portrayal of Scrooge by actor George C. Scott compare with the image you picture as you read? [Compare and Contrast]



**Reading Check**

What was Marley's relationship to Scrooge?

► **Critical Viewing**  
Bob Cratchit heats his hands over a candle flame in his office. What does this action tell you about the setting? [**Infer**]



**NEPHEW.** Christmas a “humbug,” Uncle? I’m sure you don’t mean that.

**SCROOGE.** I do! Merry Christmas? What right do you have to be merry? What reason have you to be merry? You’re poor enough!

**NEPHEW.** Come, then. What right have you to be dismal? What reason have you to be morose? You’re rich enough.

**SCROOGE.** Bah! Humbug!

**NEPHEW.** Don’t be cross, Uncle.

**SCROOGE.** What else can I be? Eh? When I live in a world of fools such as this? Merry Christmas? What’s Christmas-time to you but a time of paying bills without any money; a time for finding yourself a year older, but not an hour richer. 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. He should!

**NEPHEW.** Uncle!

**SCROOGE.** Nephew! You keep Christmas in your own way and let me keep it in mine.

**Vocabulary**  
**morose** (mə rōs’) *adj.*  
gloomy; ill-tempered

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**NEPHEW.** Keep it! But you don't keep it, Uncle.

**SCROOGE.** Let me leave it alone, then. Much good it has ever done you!

**NEPHEW.** There are many things from which I have derived good, by which I have not profited, I daresay. Christmas among the rest. But I am sure that I always thought of Christmas time, when it has come round—as a good time: the only time I know of, when men and women seem to open their shut-up hearts freely, and to think of people below them as if they really were fellow-passengers to the grave, and not another race of creatures bound on other journeys. And therefore, Uncle, though it has never put a scrap of gold or silver in my pocket, I believe that it has done me good, and that it will do me good; and I say, God bless it!

[The CLERK in the tank applauds, looks at the furious SCROOGE and pokes out his tiny fire, as if in exchange for the moment of impropriety. SCROOGE yells at him.]

**SCROOGE.** [To the clerk] Let me hear another sound from you and you'll keep your Christmas by losing your situation. [To the nephew] You're quite a powerful speaker, sir. I wonder you don't go into Parliament.<sup>6</sup>

**NEPHEW.** Don't be angry, Uncle. Come! Dine with us tomorrow.

**SCROOGE.** I'd rather see myself dead than see myself with your family!

**NEPHEW.** But, why? Why?

**SCROOGE.** Why did you get married?

**NEPHEW.** Because I fell in love.

**SCROOGE.** That, sir, is the only thing that you have said to me in your entire lifetime which is even more ridiculous than "Merry Christmas"! [Turns from NEPHEW] Good afternoon.

**NEPHEW.** Nay, Uncle, you never came to see me before I married either. Why give it as a reason for not coming now?

**SCROOGE.** Good afternoon, Nephew!

6. **Parliament** (pär' le ment) national legislative body of Great Britain, in some ways like the United States Congress.

### Dialogue

How does this exchange between Scrooge and his nephew show the contrast between the two characters?

### ✓ Reading Check

What invitation does Scrooge's nephew offer?

### Dialogue

What can you infer about the nephew's character from his words to Cratchit?

**NEPHEW.** I want nothing from you; I ask nothing of you; why cannot we be friends?

**SCROOGE.** Good afternoon!

**NEPHEW.** I am sorry with all my heart, to find you so resolute. But I have made the trial in homage to Christmas, and I'll keep my Christmas humor to the last. So A Merry Christmas, Uncle!

**SCROOGE.** Good afternoon!

**NEPHEW.** And A Happy New Year!

**SCROOGE.** Good afternoon!

**NEPHEW.** [*He stands facing SCROOGE.*] Uncle, you are the most . . . [*Pauses*] No, I shan't. My Christmas humor is intact . . . [*Pause*] God bless you, Uncle . . . [*NEPHEW turns and starts for the door; he stops at CRATCHIT'S cage.*] Merry Christmas, Bob Cratchit . . .

**CRATCHIT.** Merry Christmas to you sir, and a very, very happy New Year . . .

**SCROOGE.** [*Calling across to them*] Oh, fine, a perfection, just fine . . . to see the perfect pair of you: husbands, with wives and children to support . . . my clerk there earning fifteen shillings a week . . . and the perfect pair of you, talking about a Merry Christmas! [*Pauses*] I'll retire to Bedlam!<sup>7</sup>

**NEPHEW.** [*To CRATCHIT*] He's impossible!

**CRATCHIT.** Oh, mind him not, sir. He's getting on in years, and he's alone. He's noticed your visit. I'll wager your visit has warmed him.

**NEPHEW.** Him? Uncle Ebenezer Scrooge? Warmed? You are a better Christian than I am, sir.

**CRATCHIT.** [*Opening the door for NEPHEW; two DO-GOODERS will enter, as NEPHEW exits*] Good day to you, sir, and God bless.

**NEPHEW.** God bless . . . [*One man who enters is portly, the other is thin. Both are pleasant.*]

**CRATCHIT.** Can I help you, gentlemen?

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7. **Bedlam** (bed' lem) hospital in London for the mentally ill.



**THIN MAN.** [Carrying papers and books; looks around CRATCHIT to SCROOGE] Scrooge and Marley's, I believe. Have I the pleasure of addressing Mr. Scrooge, or Mr. Marley?

**SCROOGE.** Mr. Marley has been dead these seven years. He died seven years ago this very night.

**PORTLY MAN.** We have no doubt his liberality<sup>8</sup> is well represented by his surviving partner . . . [Offers his calling card]

**SCROOGE.** [Handing back the card; unlooked at] . . . Good afternoon.

**THIN MAN.** This will take but a moment, sir . . .

**PORTLY MAN.** At this festive season of the year, Mr. Scrooge, it is more than usually desirable that we should make some slight provision for the poor and destitute who suffer greatly at the present time. Many thousands are in want of common necessities; hundreds of thousands are in want of common comforts, sir.

**SCROOGE.** Are there no prisons?

**PORTLY MAN.** Plenty of prisons.

**SCROOGE.** And aren't the Union workhouses still in operation?

**THIN MAN.** They are. Still. I wish that I could say that they are not.

**SCROOGE.** The Treadmill<sup>9</sup> and the Poor Law<sup>10</sup> are in full vigor, then?

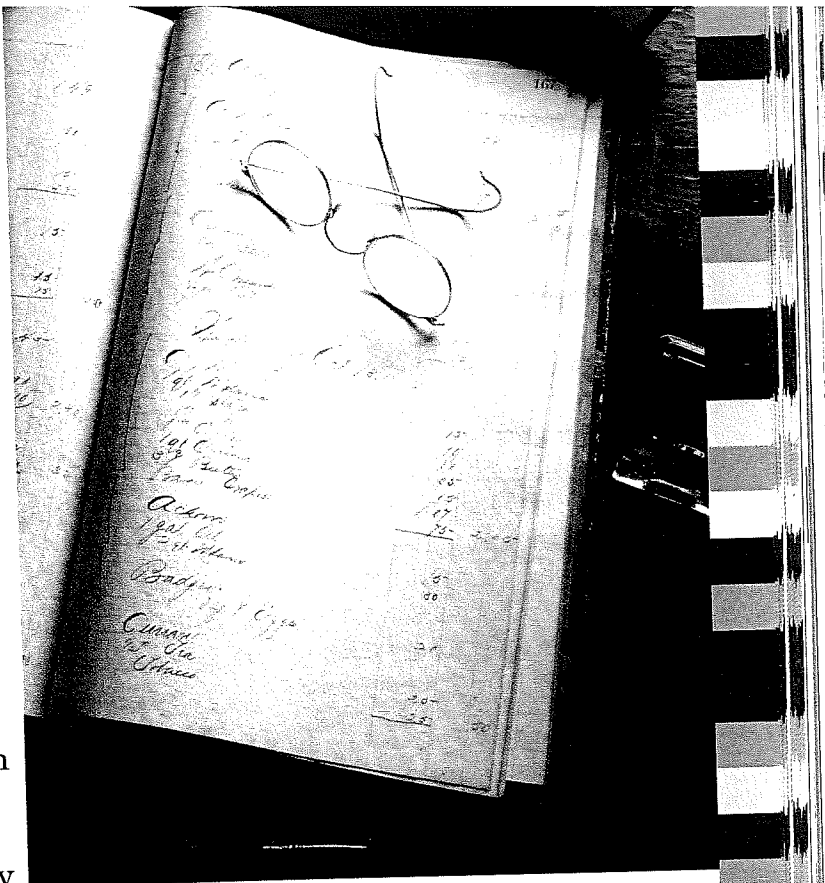
**THIN MAN.** Both very busy, sir.

**SCROOGE.** Ohhh, I see. I was afraid, from what you said at

8. **liberality** (lib' er al' i tē) generosity.

9. **the Treadmill** (tred' mil') kind of mill wheel turned by the weight of people treading steps arranged around it; this device was used to punish prisoners.

10. **the Poor Law** the original 16<sup>th</sup>-century Poor Laws called for overseers of the poor in each neighborhood to provide relief for the needy. The New Poor Law of 1834 made the workhouses in which the poor sometimes lived and worked extremely hard and unattractive.



#### Vocabulary

**destitute** (des' tē tōt')  
n. people living in complete poverty

#### ✓ Reading Check

Who do the thin man and the portly man want to help?

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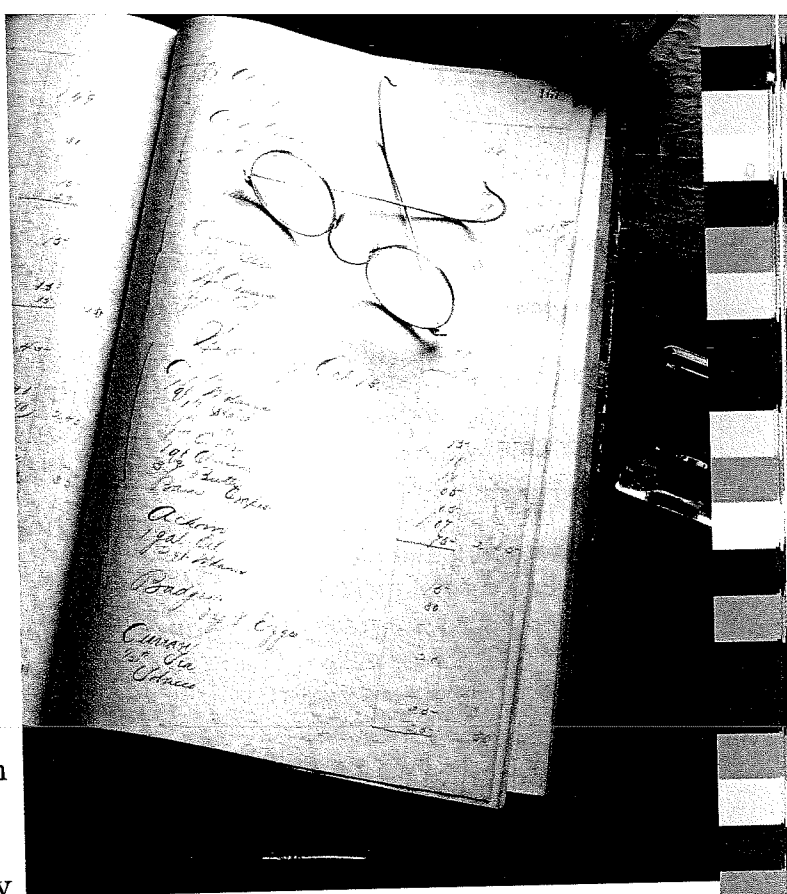
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### Vocabulary

**destitute** (des' te tōōt')

*n.* people living in complete poverty



Who do the thin man and the portly man want to help?



## LITERATURE IN CONTEXT

### Social Studies Connection

#### Union Workhouses

In Victorian England, many people who were poverty-stricken, orphaned, old, or sick lived in workhouses. On a typical day, workers woke at 5 A.M. and spent ten hours doing physical labor, such as crushing stones, sewing, cleaning, and milling corn. Bedtime was 8 P.M. There was not enough food to eat. Typically, breakfast was a piece of bread; dinner was a piece of bacon and a piece of bread or a potato; supper was a piece of bread and a piece of cheese.

#### Connect to the Literature

Why does Scrooge think the workhouses are adequate?



first, that something had occurred to stop them from their useful course. [*Pauses*] I'm glad to hear it.

**PORTLY MAN.** Under the impression that they scarcely furnish Christian cheer of mind or body to the multitude, a few of us are endeavoring to raise a fund to buy the Poor some meat and drink, and means of warmth. We choose this time, because it is a time, of all others, when Want is keenly felt, and Abundance rejoices. [*Pen in hand; as well as notepad*] What shall I put you down for, sir?

**SCROOGE.** Nothing!

**PORTLY MAN.** You wish to be left anonymous?

**SCROOGE.** I wish to be left alone! [*Pauses; turns away; turns back to them*] Since you ask me what I wish, gentlemen, that is my answer. I help to support the establishments that I have mentioned: they cost enough: and those who are badly off must go there.

**THIN MAN.** Many can't go there; and many would rather die.

**SCROOGE.** If they would rather die, they had better do it, and decrease the surplus population. Besides—excuse me—I don't know that.

**THIN MAN.** But you might know it!

**SCROOGE.** It's not my business. It's enough for a man to understand his own business, and not to interfere with other people's. Mine occupies me constantly. Good afternoon, gentlemen!  
[*SCROOGE turns his back on the gentlemen and returns to his desk.*]

**PORTLY MAN.** But, sir, Mr. Scrooge . . . think of the poor.

**SCROOGE.** [*Turns suddenly to them. Pauses*] Take your leave of my offices, sirs, while I am still smiling.

[*The THIN MAN looks at the PORTLY MAN. They are undone. They shrug. They move to the door. CRATCHIT hops up to open it for them.*]

**THIN MAN.** Good day, sir . . . [To CRATCHIT] A merry Christmas to you, sir . . .

**CRATCHIT.** Yes. A Merry Christmas to both of you . . .

**PORTLY MAN.** Merry Christmas . . .

[CRATCHIT *silently squeezes something into the hand of the*  
THIN MAN.]

**THIN MAN.** What's this?

**CRATCHIT.** Shhhh . . .

[CRATCHIT *opens the door; wind and snow whistle into the room.*]

**THIN MAN.** Thank you, sir, thank you.

[CRATCHIT *closes the door and returns to his workplace. SCROOGE is at his own counting table. He talks to CRATCHIT without looking up.*]

**SCROOGE.** It's less of a time of year for being merry, and more a time of year for being loony . . . if you ask me.

**CRATCHIT.** Well, I don't know, sir . . . [The clock's bell strikes six o'clock.]  
Well, there it is, eh, six?

**SCROOGE.** Saved by six bells, are you?

**CRATCHIT.** I must be going home . . . [He snuffs out his candle and puts on his hat.] I hope you have a . . . very very lovely day tomorrow, sir . . .

**SCROOGE.** Hmmm. Oh, you'll be wanting the whole day tomorrow, I suppose?

**CRATCHIT.** If quite convenient, sir.

**SCROOGE.** It's not convenient, and it's not fair. If I was to stop half-a-crown for it, you'd think yourself ill-used, I'll be bound?

[CRATCHIT *smiles faintly.*]

**CRATCHIT.** I don't know, sir . . .

**SCROOGE.** And yet, you don't think me ill-used when I pay a day's wages for no work . . .

▼ **Critical Viewing**  
Compare this actor's portrayal of Cratchit with the one on page 744. Which looks more like your idea of Cratchit? Explain. [**Compare and Contrast**]



✓ **Reading Check**

How does Scrooge feel about Christmas?

► **Critical Viewing**  
Describe the tone of voice that each actor might use to play the scene pictured here. **[Speculate]**

**CRATCHIT.** It's only but once a year . . .

**SCROOGE.** A poor excuse for picking a man's pocket every 25th of December! But I suppose you must have the whole day. Be here all the earlier the next morning!

**CRATCHIT.** Oh, I will, sir. I will. I promise you. And, sir . . .

**SCROOGE.** Don't say it, Cratchit.

**CRATCHIT.** But let me wish you a . . .

**SCROOGE.** Don't say it, Cratchit. I warn you . . .

**CRATCHIT.** Sir!

**SCROOGE.** Cratchit!

[CRATCHIT *opens the door.*]

**CRATCHIT.** All right, then, sir . . . well . . . [Suddenly] Merry Christmas, Mr. Scrooge!

[And he runs out the door, shutting same behind him. SCROOGE moves to his desk; gathering his coat, hat, etc. A BOY appears at his window. . . .]

**BOY.** [Singing] "Away in a manger . . ."

[SCROOGE seizes his ruler and whacks at the image of the BOY outside. The BOY leaves.]

**SCROOGE.** Bah! Humbug! Christmas! Bah! Humbug! [He shuts out the light.]

*A note on the crossover, following Scene 2:*

[SCROOGE will walk alone to his rooms from his offices. As he makes a long slow cross of the stage, the scenery should change. Christmas music will be heard, various people will cross by SCROOGE, often smiling happily.

*There will be occasional pleasant greetings tossed at him.*

*SCROOGE, in contrast to all, will grump and mumble. He will snap at passing boys, as might a horrid old hound.*

*In short, SCROOGE'S sounds and movements will define him in contrast from all other people who cross the stage: he is the misanthrope,<sup>11</sup> the malcontent, the miser. He is SCROOGE.*

11. **misanthrope** (mis' ən thrōp') *n.* person who hates or distrusts everyone.





*This statement of SCROOGE'S character, by contrast to all other characters, should seem comical to the audience.*

*During SCROOGE'S crossover to his rooms, snow should begin to fall. All passers-by will hold their faces to the sky, smiling, allowing snow to shower them lightly. SCROOGE, by contrast, will bat at the flakes with his walking-stick, as might an insomniac swat at a sleep-stopping, middle-of-the-night swarm of mosquitoes. He will comment on the blackness of the night, and, finally, reach his rooms and his encounter with the magical specter:<sup>12</sup> MARLEY, his eternal mate.]*

12. specter (spek' ter) n. ghost.

### Dialogue

What do you learn about Scrooge through his words as he shuts out the light and through the description of him as he walks home?

### ✓ Reading Check

Why is Cratchit taking a day off?

## Vocabulary

**void** (void) *n.* emptiness

### Purpose for Reading

Preview Scene 3. If your purpose were to find out what happens next to Scrooge, what details would you look for in the scene?

**SCROOGE.** No light at all . . . no moon . . . that is what is at the center of a Christmas Eve: dead black: void . . .

[SCROOGE puts his key in the door's keyhole. He has reached his rooms now. The door knocker changes and is now MARLEY'S face. A musical sound; quickly; ghostly. MARLEY'S image is not at all angry, but looks at SCROOGE as did the old MARLEY look at SCROOGE. The hair is curiously stirred; eyes wide open, dead: absent of focus. SCROOGE stares wordlessly here. The face, before his very eyes, does deliquesce.<sup>13</sup> It is a knocker again. SCROOGE opens the door and checks the back of same, probably for MARLEY'S pigtail. Seeing nothing but screws and nuts, SCROOGE refuses the memory.]

Pooh, pooh!

[The sound of the door closing resounds throughout the house as thunder. Every room echoes the sound. SCROOGE fastens the door and walks across the hall to the stairs, trimming his candle as he goes; and then he goes slowly up the staircase. He checks each room: sitting room, bedrooms, slumber room. He looks under the sofa, under the table: nobody there. He fixes his evening gruel on the hob,<sup>14</sup> changes his jacket. SCROOGE sits near the tiny low-flamed fire, sipping his gruel. There are various pictures on the walls: all of them now show likenesses of MARLEY. SCROOGE blinks his eyes.]

Bah! Humbug!

[SCROOGE walks in a circle about the room. The pictures change back into their natural images. He sits down at the table in front of the fire. A bell hangs overhead. It begins to ring, of its own accord. Slowly, surely, begins the ringing of every bell in the house. They continue ringing for nearly half a minute. SCROOGE is stunned by the phenomenon. The bells cease their ringing all at once. Deep below SCROOGE, in the basement of the house, there is the sound of clanking, of some enormous chain being dragged across the floors; and now up the stairs. We hear doors flying open.]

13. **deliquesce** (del' i kwes') *v.* melt away.

14. **gruel** (grōō' əl) **on the hob** (häb) thin broth warming on a ledge at the back or side of the fireplace.



Bah still! Humbug still! This is not happening! I won't believe it!

[MARLEY'S GHOST enters the room. He is horrible to look at: pig-tail, vest, suit as usual, but he drags an enormous chain now, to which is fastened cash-boxes, keys, padlocks, ledgers, deeds, and heavy purses fashioned of steel. He is transparent. MARLEY stands opposite the stricken SCROOGE.]

How now! What do you want of me?

**MARLEY.** Much!

**SCROOGE.** Who are you?

**MARLEY.** Ask me who I was.

**SCROOGE.** Who were you then?

**MARLEY.** In life, I was your business partner: Jacob Marley.

**SCROOGE.** I see . . . can you sit down?

**MARLEY.** I can.

**SCROOGE.** Do it then.

**MARLEY.** I shall. [MARLEY sits opposite SCROOGE, in the chair across the table, at the front of the fireplace.] You don't believe in me.

**SCROOGE.** I don't.

**MARLEY.** Why do you doubt your senses?

**SCROOGE.** Because every little thing affects them. A slight disorder of the stomach makes them cheat. You may be an undigested bit of beef, a blot of mustard, a crumb of cheese, a fragment of an underdone potato. There's more of gravy than of grave about you, whatever you are!

[There is a silence between them. SCROOGE is made nervous by it. He picks up a toothpick.]

Humbug! I tell you: humbug!

[MARLEY opens his mouth and screams a ghostly, fearful scream. The scream echoes about each room of the house. Bats fly, cats screech, lightning flashes. SCROOGE stands and walks backwards against the wall. MARLEY stands and screams again. This time, he takes his head and lifts it

### Dialogue

Based on this dialogue, what is Scrooge's attitude toward Marley's Ghost?



What does Scrooge see in the door knocker?



**Purpose for Reading**  
What purpose for reading might Scrooge's question suggest to readers?

**Vocabulary**  
**conveyed** (kən vād') v.  
made known; expressed

*from his shoulders. His head continues to scream. MARLEY'S face again appears on every picture in the room: all screaming. SCROOGE, on his knees before MARLEY.]*

Mercy! Dreadful apparition,<sup>15</sup> mercy! Why, O! why do you trouble me so?

**MARLEY.** Man of the worldly mind, do you believe in me, or not?

**SCROOGE.** I do. I must. But why do spirits such as you walk the earth? And why do they come to me?

**MARLEY.** It is required of every man that the spirit within him should walk abroad among his fellow-men, and travel far and wide; and if that spirit goes not forth in life, it is condemned to do so after death. [MARLEY screams again; a tragic scream; from his ghostly bones.] I wear the chain I forged in life. I made it link by link, and yard by yard. Is its pattern strange to you? Or would you know, you, Scrooge, the weight and length of the strong coil you bear yourself? It was full as heavy and long as this, seven Christmas Eves ago. You have labored on it, since. It is a ponderous chain.

*[Terrified that a chain will appear about his body, SCROOGE spins and waves the unwanted chain away. None, of course, appears. Sees MARLEY watching him dance about the room. MARLEY watches SCROOGE; silently.]*

**SCROOGE.** Jacob. Old Jacob Marley, tell me more. Speak comfort to me, Jacob . . .

**MARLEY.** I have none to give. Comfort comes from other regions, Ebenezer Scrooge, and is conveyed by other ministers, to other kinds of men. A very little more, is all that is permitted to me. I cannot rest, I cannot stay, I cannot linger anywhere . . . [He moans again.] my spirit never walked beyond our countinghouse—mark me!—in life my spirit never roved beyond the narrow limits of our moneychanging hole; and weary journeys lie before me!

**SCROOGE.** But you were always a good man of business, Jacob.

**MARLEY.** [Screams word "business"; a flash-pot explodes with him.] BUSINESS!!! Mankind was my business. The

15. apparition (ap' e rish' en) n. ghost.

common welfare was my business; charity, mercy, forbearance, benevolence, were, all, my business. [SCROOGE is quaking.] Hear me, Ebenezer Scrooge! My time is nearly gone.

**SCROOGE.** I will, but don't be hard upon me. And don't be flowery, Jacob! Pray!

**MARLEY.** How is it that I appear before you in a shape that you can see, I may not tell. I have sat invisible beside you many and many a day. That is no light part of my penance. 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.

**SCROOGE.** You were always a good friend to me. Thank'ee!

**MARLEY.** You will be haunted by Three Spirits.

**SCROOGE.** Would that be the chance and hope you mentioned, Jacob?

**MARLEY.** It is.

**SCROOGE.** I think I'd rather not.

**MARLEY.** Without their visits, you cannot hope to shun the path I tread. Expect the first one tomorrow, when the bell tolls one.

**SCROOGE.** Couldn't I take 'em all at once, and get it over, Jacob?

**MARLEY.** Expect the second on the next night at the same hour. The third upon the next night when the last stroke of twelve has ceased to vibrate. Look to see me no more. Others may, but you may not. And look that, for your own sake, you remember what has passed between us!



▲ **Critical Viewing**

How do the actors' gestures and positions reinforce the emotion of the scene? **[Connect]**

✓ **Reading Check**

Why does Marley visit Scrooge?

### Purpose for Reading

What questions do you have about what will happen to Scrooge? Read on to answer your questions.

MARLEY places his head back upon his shoulders. He approaches the window and beckons to SCROOGE to watch. Outside the window, specters fly by, carrying money-boxes and chains. They make a confused sound of lamentation. MARLEY, after listening a moment, joins into their mournful dirge. He leans to the window and floats out into the bleak, dark night. He is gone.]

SCROOGE. [Rushing to the window] Jacob! No, Jacob! Don't leave me! I'm frightened! [He sees that MARLEY has gone. He looks outside. He pulls the shutter closed, so that the scene is blocked from his view. All sound stops. After a pause, he re-opens the shutter and all is quiet, as it should be on Christmas Eve. Carolers carol out of doors, in the distance. SCROOGE closes the shutter and walks down the stairs. He examines the door by which MARLEY first entered.] No one here at all! Did I imagine all that? Humbug! [He looks about the room.] I did imagine it. It only happened in my foulest dream-mind, didn't it? An undigested bit of . . . [Thunder and lightning in the room; suddenly] Sorry! Sorry!

[There is silence again. The lights fade out.]

## SCENE 4

[Christmas music, choral, "Hark the Herald Angels Sing," sung by an onstage choir of children, spotlighted, D.C. Above, SCROOGE in his bed, dead to the world, asleep, in his darkened room. It should appear that the choir is singing somewhere outside of the house, of course, and a use of scrim<sup>16</sup> is thus suggested. When the singing is ended, the choir should fade out of view and MARLEY should fade into view, in their place.]

MARLEY. [Directly to audience] From this point forth . . . I shall be quite visible to you, but invisible to him. [Smiles] He will feel my presence, nevertheless, for, unless my senses fail me completely, we are—you and I—witness to the changing of a miser: that one, my partner in life, in business, and in eternity: that one: Scrooge. [Moves to staircase, below SCROOGE] See him now. He endeavors to pierce the

16. scrim (skrim) *n.* see-through fabric used to create special effects in the theater.



darkness with his ferret eyes.<sup>17</sup> [To audience] See him, now. He listens for the hour.

[The bells toll. SCROOGE is awakened and quakes as the hour approaches one o'clock, but the bells stop their sound at the hour of twelve.]

**SCROOGE.** [Astonished] Midnight! Why this isn't possible. It was past two when I went to bed. An icicle must have gotten into the clock's works! I couldn't have slept through the whole day and far into another night. It isn't possible that anything has happened to the sun, and this is twelve at noon! [He runs to window; unshutters same; it is night.] Night, still. Quiet, normal for the season, cold. It is certainly not noon. I cannot in any way afford to lose my days. Securities come due, promissory notes,<sup>18</sup> interest on investments: these are things that happen in the daylight! [He returns to his bed.] Was this a dream?

[MARLEY appears in his room. He speaks to the audience.]

**MARLEY.** You see? He does not, with faith, believe in me fully, even still! Whatever will it take to turn the faith of a miser from money to men?

**SCROOGE.** Another quarter and it'll be one and Marley's ghostly friends will come. [Pauses; listens] Where's the chime for one? [Ding, dong] A quarter past [Repeats] Half-past! [Repeats] A quarter to it! But where's the heavy bell of the hour one? This is a game in which I lose my senses! Perhaps, if I allowed myself another short doze . . .

**MARLEY.** . . . Doze, Ebenezer, doze.

[A heavy bell thuds its one ring; dull and definitely one o'clock. There is a flash of light. SCROOGE sits up, in a sudden. A hand draws back the curtains by his bed. He sees it.]

**SCROOGE.** A hand! Who owns it! Hello!

[Ghostly music again, but of a new nature to the play. A strange figure stands before SCROOGE—like a child, yet at the same time like an old man: white hair, but unwrinkled skin, long, muscular arms, but delicate legs and feet. Wears

17. **ferret eyes** a ferret is a small, weasel-like animal used for hunting rabbits; this expression means to stare continuously, the way a ferret hunts.

18. **promissory** (pram' i sôr' ə) **notes** written promises to pay someone a certain sum of money.

## Dialogue

What important information in Marley's opening speech will influence the rest of the play?



## Spiral Review

**Conflict** How do details about the setting work together to increase the tension?



Why is Scrooge confused when he wakes up?

*white tunic; lustrous belt cinches waist. Branch of fresh green holly in its hand, but has its dress trimmed with fresh summer flowers. Clear jets of light spring from the crown of its head. Holds cap in hand. The Spirit is called PAST.]*

Are you the Spirit, sir, whose coming was foretold to me?

**PAST.** I am.

**MARLEY.** Does he take this to be a vision of his green grocer?

**SCROOGE.** Who, and what are you?

**PAST.** I am the Ghost of Christmas Past.

**SCROOGE.** Long past?

**PAST.** Your past.

**SCROOGE.** May I ask, please, sir, what business you have here with me?

**PAST.** Your welfare.

**SCROOGE.** Not to sound ungrateful, sir, and really, please do understand that I am plenty obliged for your concern, but, really, kind spirit, it would have done all the better for my welfare to have been left alone altogether, to have slept peacefully through this night.

**PAST.** Your reclamation, then. Take heed!

**SCROOGE.** My what?

**PAST.** [*Motioning to SCROOGE and taking his arm*] Rise! Fly with me! [*He leads SCROOGE to the window.*]

**SCROOGE.** [*Panicked*] Fly, but I am a mortal and cannot fly!

**PAST.** [*Pointing to his heart*] Bear but a touch of my hand here and you shall be upheld in more than this!

[*SCROOGE touches the spirit's heart and the lights dissolve into sparkly flickers. Lovely crystals of music are heard. The scene dissolves into another. Christmas music again*]

### Dialogue

Based on this dialogue, how has Scrooge been affected by what has happened to him so far?

## SCENE 5

[SCROOGE and the GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PAST walk together across an open stage. In the background, we see a field that is open; covered by a soft, downy snow: a country road.]

**SCROOGE.** Good Heaven! I was bred in this place. I was a boy here!

[SCROOGE freezes, staring at the field beyond. MARLEY'S ghost appears beside him; takes SCROOGE'S face in his hands, and turns his face to the audience.]

**MARLEY.** You see this Scrooge: stricken by feeling. Conscious of a thousand odors floating in the air, each one connected with a thousand thoughts, and hopes, and joys, and care long, long forgotten. [Pause] This one—this Scrooge—before your very eyes, returns to life, among the living. [To audience, sternly] You'd best pay your most careful attention. I would suggest rapt.<sup>19</sup>

[There is a small flash and puff of smoke and MARLEY is gone again.]

**PAST.** Your lip is trembling, Mr. Scrooge. And what is that upon your cheek?

**SCROOGE.** Upon my cheek? Nothing . . . a blemish on the skin from the eating of overmuch grease . . . nothing . . . [Suddenly] Kind Spirit of Christmas Past, lead me where you will, but quickly! To be stagnant in this place is, for me, unbearable!

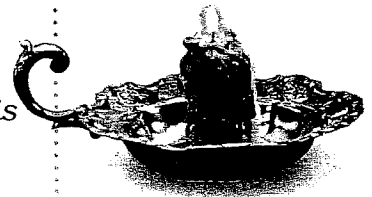
**PAST.** You recollect the way?

**SCROOGE.** Remember it! I would know it blindfolded! My bridge, my church, my winding river! [Staggers about, trying to see it all at once. He weeps again.]

**PAST.** These are but shadows of things that have been. They have no consciousness of us.

[Four jocund travelers enter, singing a Christmas song in four-part harmony—"God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen."]

**SCROOGE.** Listen! I know these men! I know them! I remember the beauty of their song!



Who appears to Scrooge during Scene 4?

19. rapt (rapt) *adj.* giving complete attention; totally carried away by something.



**PAST.** But, why do you remember it so happily? It is Merry Christmas that they say to one another! What is Merry Christmas to you, Mr. Scrooge? Out upon Merry Christmas, right? What good has Merry Christmas ever done you, Mr. Scrooge? . . .

**SCROOGE.** *[After a long pause]* None. No good. None . . .  
*[He bows his head.]*

**PAST.** Look, you, sir, a school ahead. The schoolroom is not quite deserted. A solitary child, neglected by his friends, is left there still.

*[SCROOGE falls to the ground; sobbing as he sees, and we see, a small boy, the young SCROOGE, sitting and weeping, bravely, alone at his desk: alone in a vast space, a void.]*

**SCROOGE.** I cannot look on him!

**PAST.** You must, Mr. Scrooge, you must.

**SCROOGE.** It's me. *[Pauses; weeps]* Poor boy. He lived inside his head . . . alone . . . *[Pauses; weeps]* poor boy. *[Pauses; stops his weeping]* I wish . . . *[Dries his eyes on his cuff]* ah! it's too late!

**PAST.** What is the matter?

**SCROOGE.** There was a boy singing a Christmas Carol outside my door last night. I should like to have given him something: that's all.

**PAST.** *[Smiles; waves his hand to SCROOGE]* Come. Let us see another Christmas.

*[Lights out on little boy. A flash of light. A puff of smoke. Lights up on older boy]*

**SCROOGE.** Look! Me, again! Older now! *[Realizes]* Oh, yes . . . still alone.

*[The boy—a slightly older SCROOGE —sits alone in a chair, reading. The door to the room opens and a young girl enters. She is much, much younger than this slightly older SCROOGE. She is, say, six, and he is, say, twelve. Elder SCROOGE and the GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PAST stand watching the scene, unseen.]*

**FAN.** Dear, dear brother, I have come to bring you home.

### Dialogue

How do these lines reveal that a change is taking place in Scrooge?

**BOY.** Home, little Fan?

**FAN.** Yes! Home, for good and all! Father is so much kinder than he ever used to be, and home's like heaven! He spoke so gently to me one dear night when I was going to bed that I was not afraid to ask him once more if you might come home; and he said "yes" . . . you should; and sent me in a coach to bring you. And you're to be a man and are never to come back here, but first, we're to be together all the Christmas long, and have the merriest time in the world.

**BOY.** You are quite a woman, little Fan!

*[Laughing; she drags at boy, causing him to stumble to the door with her. Suddenly we hear a mean and terrible voice in the hallway, Off. It is the SCHOOLMASTER.]*

**SCHOOLMASTER.** Bring down Master Scrooge's travel box at once! He is to travel!

**FAN.** Who is that, Ebenezer?

**BOY.** O! Quiet, Fan. It is the Schoolmaster, himself!

*[The door bursts open and into the room bursts with it the SCHOOLMASTER.]*

**SCHOOLMASTER.** Master Scrooge?

**BOY.** Oh, Schoolmaster. I'd like you to meet my little sister, Fan, sir . . .

*[Two boys struggle on with SCROOGE'S trunk.]*

**FAN.** Pleased, sir . . . *[She curtsies.]*

**SCHOOLMASTER.** You are to travel, Master Scrooge.

**SCROOGE.** Yes, sir. I know sir . . .

*[All start to exit, but FAN grabs the coattail of the mean old SCHOOLMASTER.]*

**BOY.** Fan!

**SCHOOLMASTER.** What's this?

**FAN.** Pardon, sir, but I believe that you've forgotten to say your goodbye to my brother, Ebenezer, who stands still now

### Purpose for Reading

What questions do you have about Scrooge's family? Read on to see if they are answered.



### ✓ Reading Check

Where is Scrooge when his sister arrives to take him home?

awaiting it . . . [*She smiles, curtsies, lowers her eyes.*]  
pardon, sir.

**SCHOOLMASTER.** [*Amazed*] I . . . uh . . . harumph . . . uhh . . .  
well, then . . . [*Outstretches hand*] Goodbye, Scrooge.

**BOY.** Uh, well, goodbye, Schoolmaster . . .

[*Lights fade out on all but BOY looking at FAN; and SCROOGE and PAST looking at them.*]

**SCROOGE.** Oh, my dear, dear little sister, Fan . . . how I  
loved her.

**PAST.** Always a delicate creature, whom a breath might have  
withered, but she had a large heart . . .

**SCROOGE.** So she had.

**PAST.** She died a woman, and had, as I think, children.

**SCROOGE.** One child.

**PAST.** True. Your nephew.

**SCROOGE.** Yes.

**PAST.** Fine, then. We move on, Mr. Scrooge. That warehouse,  
there? Do you know it?

**SCROOGE.** Know it? Wasn't I apprenticed<sup>20</sup> there?

**PAST.** We'll have a look.

[*They enter the warehouse. The lights crossfade with them,  
coming up on an old man in Welsh wig: FEZZIWIG.*]

**SCROOGE.** Why, it's old Fezziwig! Bless his heart; it's Fezziwig,  
alive again!

[*FEZZIWIG sits behind a large, high desk, counting. He lays  
down his pen; looks at the clock: seven bells sound.*]

Quittin' time . . .

**FEZZIWIG.** Quittin' time . . . [*He takes off his waistcoat and  
laughs; calls off*] Yo ho, Ebenezer! Dick!

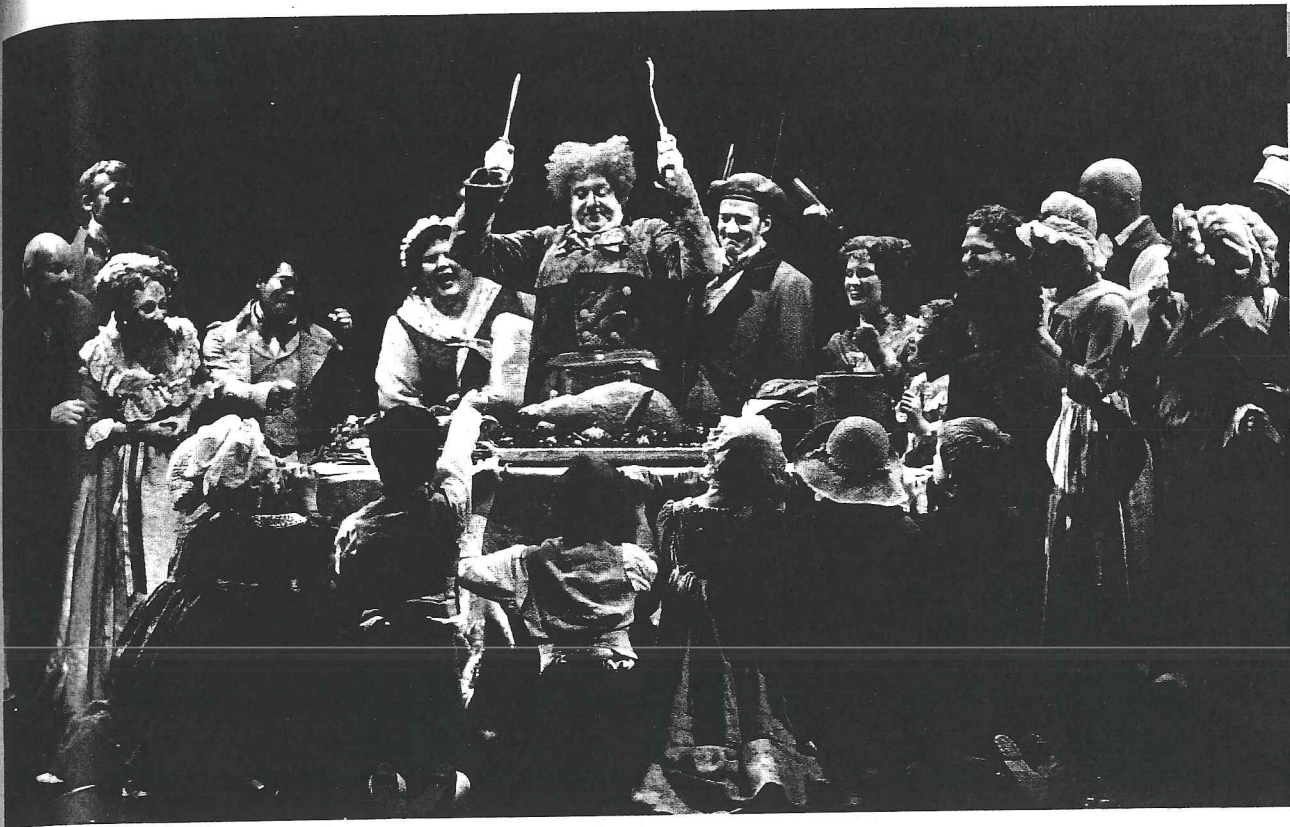
[*DICK WILKINS and EBENEZER SCROOGE—a young man ver-  
sion—enter the room. DICK and EBENEZER are FEZZIWIG'S ap-  
prentices.*]

20. **apprenticed** (ə pren' tist) v. receiving instruction in a trade as well as food and housing or wages in return for work.

### Dialogue

What surprising aspect of Scrooge's character does this scene reveal?





**SCROOGE.** Dick Wilkins, to be sure! My fellow-'prentice! Bless my soul, yes. There he is. He was very much attached to me, was Dick. Poor Dick! Dear, dear!

**FEZZIWIG.** Yo ho, my boys. No more work tonight. Christmas Eve, Dick. Christmas, Ebenezer!  
*[They stand at attention in front of FEZZIWIG; laughing]*  
Hilli-ho! Clear away, and let's have lots of room here! Hilli-ho, Dick! Chirrup, Ebenezer!  
*[The young men clear the room, sweep the floor, straighten the pictures, trim the lamps, etc. The space is clear now. A fiddler enters, fiddling.]*  
Hi-ho, Matthew! Fiddle away . . . where are my daughters?

*[The fiddler plays. Three young daughters of FEZZIWIG enter followed by six young male suitors. They are dancing to the music. All employees come in: workers, clerks, housemaids, cousins, the baker, etc. All dance. Full number wanted here. Throughout the dance, food is brought into the feast. It is "eaten" in dance, by the dancers. EBENEZER dances with all three of the daughters, as does DICK. They compete for the*

▲ **Critical Viewing**  
Based on this photograph, what kind of a man is Fezziwig? **[Infer]**

 **Reading Check**  
Who is Fezziwig?

**Vocabulary**  
**gratitude** (grat' i tōōd')  
*n.* thankful appreciation

**Dialogue**  
What does this dialogue  
reveal about Scrooge's  
feelings for Fezziwig?

daughters, happily, in the dance. FEZZIWIG dances with his daughters. FEZZIWIG dances with DICK and EBENEZER. The music changes: MRS. FEZZIWIG enters. She lovingly scolds her husband. They dance. She dances with EBENEZER, lifting him and throwing him about. She is enormously fat. When the dance is ended, they all dance off, floating away, as does the music. SCROOGE and the GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PAST stand alone now. The music is gone.]

**PAST.** It was a small matter, that Fezziwig made those silly folks so full of gratitude.

**SCROOGE.** Small!

**PAST.** Shhh!

[Lights up on DICK and EBENEZER]

**DICK.** We are blessed, Ebenezer, truly, to have such a master as Mr. Fezziwig!

**YOUNG SCROOGE.** He is the best, best, the very and absolute best! If ever I own a firm of my own, I shall treat my apprentices with the same dignity and the same grace. We have learned a wonderful lesson from the master, Dick!

**DICK.** Ah, that's a fact, Ebenezer. That's a fact!

**PAST.** Was it not a small matter, really? He spent but a few pounds<sup>21</sup> of his mortal money on your small party. Three or four pounds, perhaps. Is that so much that he deserves such praise as you and Dick so lavish now?

**SCROOGE.** It isn't that! It isn't that, Spirit. Fezziwig had the power to make us happy or unhappy; to make our service light or burdensome; a pleasure or a toil. The happiness he gave is quite as great as if it cost him a fortune.

**PAST.** What is the matter?

**SCROOGE.** Nothing particular.

**PAST.** Something, I think.

**SCROOGE.** No, no. I should like to be able to say a word or two to my clerk just now! That's all!

21. pounds (poundz) *n.* money used in Great Britain at the time of the story.

[EBENEZER enters the room and shuts down all the lamps. He stretches and yawns. The GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PAST turns to SCROOGE all of a sudden.]

**PAST.** My time grows short! Quick!

[In a flash of light, EBENEZER is gone, and in his place stands an OLDER SCROOGE, this one a man in the prime of his life. Beside him stands a young woman in a mourning dress. She is crying. She speaks to the man, with hostility.]

**WOMAN.** It matters little . . . to you, very little. Another idol has displaced me.

**MAN.** What idol has displaced you?

**WOMAN.** A golden one.

**MAN.** This is an even-handed dealing of the world. There is nothing on which it is so hard as poverty; and there is nothing it professes to condemn with such severity as the pursuit of wealth!

**WOMAN.** You fear the world too much. Have I not seen your nobler aspirations fall off one by one, until the master-passion, Gain, engrosses you? Have I not?

**SCROOGE.** No!

**MAN.** What then? Even if I have grown so much wiser, what then? Have I changed towards you?

**WOMAN.** No . . .

**MAN.** Am I?

**WOMAN.** Our contract is an old one. It was made when we were both poor and content to be so. You are changed. When it was made, you were another man.

**MAN.** I was not another man: I was a boy.

**WOMAN.** Your own feeling tells you that you were not what you are. I am. That which promised happiness when we were one in heart is fraught with misery now that we are two . . .

#### Dialogue

What personal change in Scrooge does this dialogue show?

#### ✓ Reading Check

What does the woman tell Scrooge about himself?



**SCROOGE.** No!

**WOMAN.** How often and how keenly I have thought of this, I will not say. It is enough that I have thought of it, and can release you . . .

**SCROOGE.** [*Quietly*] Don't release me, madame . . .

**MAN.** Have I ever sought release?

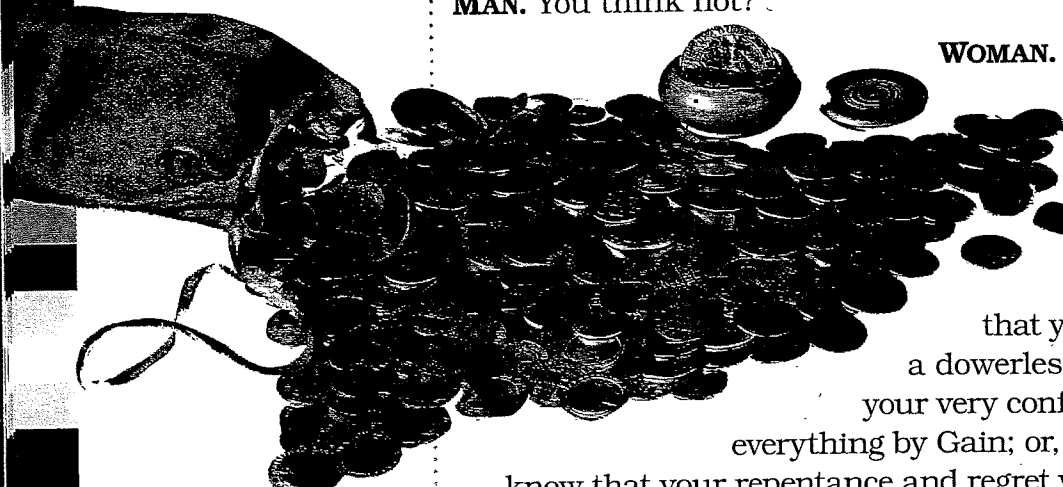
**WOMAN.** In words. No. Never.

**MAN.** In what then?

**WOMAN.** In a changed nature; in an altered spirit. In everything that made my love of any worth or value in your sight. If this has never been between us, tell me, would you seek me out and try to win me now? Ah, no!

**SCROOGE.** Ah, yes!

**MAN.** You think not?

A black and white illustration of a hand holding a large pile of coins. The coins are piled high, with some scattered around. A small jar or container is visible at the top of the pile. The hand is shown from the side, holding the pile.

**WOMAN.** I would gladly think otherwise if I could, heaven knows! But if you were free today, tomorrow, yesterday, can even I believe that you would choose a dowerless girl<sup>22</sup>—you who in your very confidence with her weigh everything by Gain; or, choosing her, do I not

know that your repentance and regret would surely follow? I do; and I release you. With a full heart, for the love of him you once were.

**SCROOGE.** Please, I . . . I . . .

**MAN.** Please, I . . . I . . .

**WOMAN.** Please. You may—the memory of what is past half makes me hope you will—have pain in this. A very, very brief time, and you will dismiss the memory of it, as an unprofitable dream, from which it happened well that you awoke. May you be happy in the life that you have chosen for yourself . . .

22. a dowerless (dou' er les) girl a girl without a dowry, the property or wealth a woman brought to her husband in marriage.

**SCROOGE.** No!

**WOMAN.** Yourself . . . alone . . .

**SCROOGE.** No!

**WOMAN.** Goodbye, Ebenezer . . .

**SCROOGE.** Don't let her go!

**MAN.** Goodbye.

**SCROOGE.** No!

*[She exits. SCROOGE goes to younger man: himself.]*  
You fool! Mindless loon! You fool!

**MAN.** *[To exited woman]* Fool. Mindless loon. Fool . . .

**SCROOGE.** Don't say that! Spirit, remove me from this place.

**PAST.** I have told you these were shadows of the things that have been. They are what they are. Do not blame me, Mr. Scrooge.

**SCROOGE.** Remove me! I cannot bear it!

*[The faces of all who appeared in this scene are now projected for a moment around the stage: enormous, flimsy, silent.]*  
Leave me! Take me back! Haunt me no longer!

*[There is a sudden flash of light: a flare. The GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PAST is gone. SCROOGE is, for the moment, alone onstage. His bed is turned down, across the stage. A small candle burns now in SCROOGE'S hand. There is a child's cap in his other hand. He slowly crosses the stage to his bed, to sleep. MARLEY appears behind SCROOGE, who continues his long, elderly cross to bed. MARLEY speaks directly to the audience.]*

**MARLEY.** Scrooge must sleep now. He must surrender to the irresistible drowsiness caused by the recognition of what was. *[Pauses]* The cap he carries is from ten lives past: his boyhood cap . . . donned atop a hopeful hairy head . . . askew, perhaps, or at a rakish angle. Doffed now in honor of regret.<sup>23</sup> Perhaps even too heavy to carry in his present state of weak remorse . . .

23. **donned . . . regret** To *don* and *doff* a hat means to put it on and take it off, *askew* means "crooked," and at a *rakish angle* means "having a dashing or jaunty look."

### Dialogue

What do you learn about Scrooge's past from the dialogue here?



### Reading Check

Why does the woman leave Scrooge?

### Purpose for Reading

How does this speech by Marley influence your purpose for reading Act 2?

[SCROOGE *drops the cap. He lies atop his bed. He sleeps. To audience*]

He sleeps. For him, there's even more trouble ahead.

[*Smiles*] For you? The play house tells me there's hot cider, as should be your anticipation for the specter Christmas Present and Future, for I promise you both. [*Smiles again*]

So, I pray you hurry back to your seats refreshed and ready for a miser—to turn his coat of gray into a blazen Christmas holly-red. [*A flash of lightning. A clap of thunder. Bats fly. Ghostly music. MARLEY is gone.*]

### Critical Thinking



Cite textual evidence to support your responses.

- © 1. **Key Ideas and Details** (a) What scenes from his past does Scrooge visit? (b) **Draw Conclusions:** How does each event contribute to his current attitude and personality?
- © 2. **Key Ideas and Details** (a) **Deduce:** What does Scrooge value in life? (b) **Draw Conclusions:** Do his values make Scrooge a happy man? Explain.
- © 3. **Key Ideas and Details** (a) **Connect:** What hints suggest to you that Scrooge may change for the better? (b) **Speculate:** In the future, how might Scrooge's interactions with others differ from his interactions in the present?
- © 4. **Integration of Knowledge and Ideas** (a) **Deduce:** What effects have Scrooge's past experiences had on the person he has become? (b) **Evaluate:** Based on Scrooge's past experiences, do you think he should be excused for his current attitude and behavior? Explain.
- © 5. **Integration of Knowledge and Ideas** How do the people in Scrooge's past reveal his own behavior to him? [*Connect to the Big Question: Do others see us more clearly than we see ourselves?*]





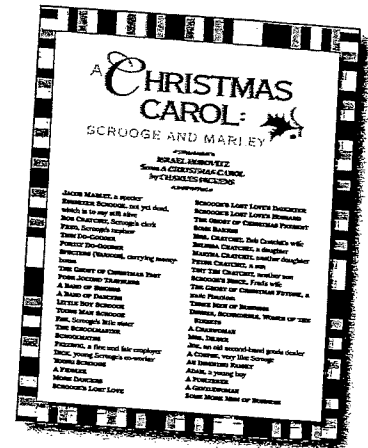
### Reading Skill: Purpose for Reading

1. What clues in the title helped you to preview the content of the play?
2. (a) What is your **purpose for reading** this play? (b) How might your purpose be different if you were reading a nonfiction play about life in the workhouses of Victorian England?

### Literary Analysis: Dialogue

- © 3. **Craft and Structure** Complete a chart like the one shown by identifying important examples of dialogue. (a) For each line of **dialogue** in the first column, use the second column to tell what it means. (b) In the third column, tell why this dialogue is important for advancing the action of the play or developing characters.

What Does It Say?	What Does It Mean?	Why Is It Important?



### Vocabulary

- © **Acquisition and Use** Rewrite the following sentences so that each includes a vocabulary word from the list on page 738 and retains the same basic meaning it has here.
1. Jack's gloomy expression showed that he had lost the game.
  2. Her sudden inheritance meant that she would no longer live among the poor.
  3. Ted's helpful gesture made me feel thankful.
  4. The party helped to ease the emptiness I was feeling.
  5. The grin on Dr. Jackson's face expressed his relief.
  6. We begged the guard not to close the gate.

**Word Study** Use the context of the sentences and what you know about the **Latin root -grat-** to explain your answer.

1. If a friend helped you out of a bind, would you feel *grateful*?
2. Would *congratulations* be in order if you failed an exam?

### Word Study

The **Latin root -grat-** means "thankful" or "pleasing."

**Apply It** Explain how the root **-grat-** contributes to the meanings of these words. Consult a dictionary if necessary.

gratuity  
ingrate  
gratis  
gratification

# Integrated Language Skills

## A Christmas Carol: Scrooge and Marley, Act 1

### Conventions: Interjections

An **interjection** is a part of speech that expresses a feeling, such as pain or excitement.

An interjection may be set off with a comma or an exclamation point. Interjections are used to add emphasis to your writing. When writing dialogue, use interjections to make the language sound more realistic.

**Pain:** Ouch! I hit my toe.

**Excitement:** Wow, Melissa can certainly run fast!

The chart lists some common interjections.

Wow	Whew	Well	Hey
Huh	Oh	Oops	Boy
Hmmm	Yikes	Yuck	Ugh

**Practice A** Identify the interjection in each sentence.

- Hey, it is snowing outside!
- Wow! Don't the carolers sound wonderful?
- Yikes! It is cold in here!
- Humph, I suppose you want to go home now!

© **Reading Application** Find at least two different interjections in *A Christmas Carol: Scrooge and Marley, Act 1*. For each, indicate the emotion it expresses.

**Practice B** Add an interjection and appropriate punctuation to help express emotion in each sentence.

- Who are you and what do you want?
- Go away and leave me alone.
- I do not want any more visitors.
- Take me away from here; this is too painful to watch.

© **Writing Application** Compare your responses with a partner, and, together, provide three interjections for each sentence above. Explain how the meaning and intensity of the sentence changes in each case.



## Writing

Ⓒ **Argument** Write a **letter** to Scrooge, telling him what he is missing in life by being cranky and negative with the people around him. Start your letter with a salutation, or greeting. Then, support the main points of your argument with clear reasons and evidence. Conclude with a closing and your signature.

- Present a balanced argument by carefully organizing the body of the letter. Fully support each claim with valid reasons and text evidence before moving on to the next one. Use transitional phrases like “another issue is . . .” or “in addition” to help unify the main argument—that there are many things Scrooge is missing.

- If you handwrite your letter, write legibly.

(For a model of a friendly-letter format, see p. R26.)

**Grammar Application** Check your writing to be sure your use of interjections is correct.

**Writing Workshop:** *Work in Progress*

**Prewriting for Research** For a multimedia report you may write, list four ideas in response to one of these general topics: locations around the world, nature and wildlife, or sports and athletes. Save this Ideas List in your writing portfolio.

## Research and Technology

Ⓒ **Build and Present Knowledge** Prepare **costume plans** for this play. With a small group, research the clothing worn during the Victorian period in England.

- Use the Internet and library resources to gather information, photos, sketches, and descriptions.
- Determine what types of clothing different characters would have worn, based on their social positions.
- Research what kinds of clothing people wore for different seasons. Find out about the fabrics and materials that were available during the time period.

Use the information you find to plan costumes for two different characters in *A Christmas Carol*. In your plan, show or describe the types of clothing, including the colors and fabrics. Include pictures or sketches with your descriptions.



L.7.1, L.7.2; W.7.1, W.7.1.a, W.7.1.b, W.7.1.c, W.7.7

[For the full wording of the standards, see page 736.]



Use this prewriting activity to prepare for the **Writing Workshop** on page 824.

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