

Charles Dickens: A Christmas Carol

Christmas is coming - and with it *A Christmas Carol*, Charles Dickens's famous Christmas story. Reading it or seeing it in the theatre has almost become a Christmas tradition. If you want to know more about Dickens, his life and his work, and particularly about the plot and characters of his *Christmas Carol*, accompany us on our journey through the net. The questions below will be your guideline.



Here we go! First open the Charles Dickens webpage <http://www.fidnet.com/~dap1955/dickens> and click on 'Dickens Fast Facts' in the menu bar on the left. Here you will find the information you need to answer the first five questions.

1. When and where was Charles Dickens born?

2. When did Charles Dickens die and where is he buried?

3. Who did he marry on April 2, 1836?

4. How many children did he and his wife have?

5. *A Christmas Carol*, published in 1843, is one of Dickens's Christmas books. What are the titles of the other ones?

Now to the Christmas Carol itself. Look at the menu bar on the left and click on 'The Novels'. At the beginning of the page you will find the titles of Dickens's major books. Click on 'Christmas Carol' and look for the answers to the following questions.

6. Who financed the publication of *A Christmas Carol* and why?



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7. Why did he sell the book at 5 shillings each?

8. How is Ebenezer Scrooge characterized in the description of the 'Mini Plot'?

9. What does Ebenezer Scrooge think of Christmas?

10. What is the name of Scrooge's former partner?

11. In which shape does Marley, who died seven Christmas Eves ago, visit Scrooge that Christmas Eve?

12. What does Marley tell Scrooge?

To find out more about the three spirits click on 'Characters' in the menu bar on the left. The new page starts with the alphabet. For the information you need click on the first letter of the character you are looking for.

13. What does the first spirit, the Ghost of Christmas Past, show Scrooge?

14. What does the second spirit, the Ghost of Christmas Present, show Scrooge?

15. What does the third spirit, the Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come or the Ghost of Christmas Future, show Scrooge?

Back to the 'Mini Plot' on the former page 'Christmas Carol'.

16. After the visit of the three spirits Scrooge decides to change his life. With whom does he finally celebrate Christmas?

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17. To whom does he send a turkey on Christmas morning?

18. How much does Bon Cratchit earn before Scrooge raises his salary?

19. Who is Tiny Tim?

Finally, have a look at the woodcuts and coloured etchings, the beautiful illustrations of the *Christmas Carol*, which you can see on this page, too. And here is our final question:

20. Who illustrated the original edition of *A Christmas Carol*?

And now we have arrived at the end of our Christmas journey.
We hope you enjoyed it.





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Solution

1. Charles Dickens was born on Friday February 7, 1812 in 1, Mile End Terrace, Landport, Portsmouth, England.
2. Charles Dickens died on Thursday June 9, 1870 and he is buried in the Poet's Corner in Westminster Abbey in London.
3. He married Catherine Hogarth.
4. They had ten children.
5. *The Chimes* (1844), *The Cricket on the Heath* (1845), *The Battle of Life* (1846), and *The Haunted Man and the Ghost's Bargain* (1848).
6. Charles Dickens financed the publication himself because he had problems with his publishers.
7. Because he wanted that everyone would be able to afford it.
8. As a 'penny-pinching miser in the first degree'.
9. He thinks that Christmas is 'a time for finding yourself a year older, and not an hour richer'.
10. Jacob Marley.
11. As a ghost.
12. He tells him that he will be visited by three spirits.
13. The Ghost of Christmas Past shows Scrooge his lonely and difficult childhood and his gradual decline into his life as a miser.
14. The Ghost of Christmas Present shows Scrooge the joy of Christmas both at the poor household of the Cratchits and at the house of his nephew Fred.
15. The Ghost of Christmas Future shows Scrooge the death of Tiny Tim leading to the reformation of Scrooge's way of life. (By the way, Tiny Tim does not die in the end because Scrooge takes care of the Cratchit family.)
16. With his nephew Fred.
17. To Bob Cratchit, his clerk.
18. 15 shillings a week.
19. Bob Cratchit's crippled son.
20. John Leech.