

Jay Franke & David Herro Present

JACOB MARLEY'S CHRISTMAS CAROL 45

By **Tom Mula** | Directed by **Mark Clements**



Corporate
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**WELLS
FARGO**

DECEMBER 2020

Executive Producers

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TEACHER'S GUIDE

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This Teacher's Guide is designed to be used in the classroom along with Milwaukee Rep's PlayGuide for *Jacob Marley's Christmas Carol*. These are some suggested activities for your classroom. The PlayGuide is available online at

www.MilwaukeeRep.com/ChristmasCarol

Topics for Teaching and Learning

1. Story Theater
2. Adaptation of Literary Tropes/Themes
3. Character Perspectives



Discussion Questions

1. What does it mean to have "Christmas spirit?" How does one with "Christmas spirit" behave towards others? Can someone who doesn't celebrate Christmas exhibit "Christmas spirit?"
2. Do you have regrets in your life? If you could go back and change those things, would you? Why or why not?
3. What does one gain from helping others, especially those who have less than that person has?
4. Are there times it is unwise or difficult to be generous? When? Why or why not?
5. What does family mean to you? Is your family just the people you are related to or is it a bigger group? Are there actions for which you could not forgive your family members?



Story Theater Scenes

Jacob Marley's Christmas Carol uses a unique performance style known as story theater. Read the article in the PlayGuide that highlights the story theater style. Once students have an understanding of the style, have students write a short scene to share that uses the theatrical devices that the style encompasses such as narration, characters speaking in third person as they tell the story, and simple technical elements. Students may work in groups to create and perform the scenes, either in person or utilizing video technology.

Exploring Winter Holidays

Christmas is by far not the only holiday celebrated in the winter months in communities around the world. Break students into groups and assign each group a winter holiday other than Christmas to research and learn about. After students have completed their research, each group should create an interactive activity for the class as part of a larger informational presentation of their assigned holiday. Interactive activities could be a craft, learning a traditional song, playing a game, eating food, or celebrating another element of the holiday. Have students share their findings and their interactive activities with the class in a holiday showcase. If time allows, these activities could even be shared with a larger audience within your school. Some holidays to consider: Kwanzaa, Chanukkah, Diwali, Solstice, Chinese New Year, Bodhi Day, etc.

Adapting a Familiar Trope

The concept of the three ghosts sharing a protagonist's life events in order to help them change their ways has become a popular trope in literature and pop culture. *Christmas Carol* is perhaps its most famous and original appearance in a plot, but it has been used in many books, films, plays, and television shows since.

Have students create a short story or theatrical scenes in which they use the "three ghosts" trope with a different character in a different context. Encourage students to utilize characters or people with which their peers might be familiar and to think about the character's circumstances, setting, and lifestyle to inform their narrative choices.



"Keeping Christmas" and Kindnesses

The greatest lesson that Marley and Scrooge learn in *Jacob Marley's Christmas Carol* is the importance of caring for and helping others. Have students create an individual or group kindness project to implement in your school, their homes, or their communities. Students should have a concrete plan for implementation, including what assistance they may need, costs associated with the project, timeline, etc. Once students have created an approved plan, then have them implement it! Have students document their projects and the outcomes and share them with the class in a celebration of kindness. As the teacher, you know best what resources are available to your students; you can keep the projects simple and quick or make them a long-term, whole class collaboration. Some easy ideas to get ideas flowing: a post-it encouragement campaign around school, fundraising for a cause, planting flowers in their neighborhood, daily class shout-outs, reading encouraging picture books to younger students, and many more wonderful ideas your students will have.

Social Issues in Victorian England



The original story and play of *A Christmas Carol* highlights some of the social issues that influenced life in England during the Victorian era, but there are many more that are worth exploring to better understand the historical period of the play. Have students read the article in the PlayGuide about social issues during the era and do some additional exploration on their own. You may have students do research individually, in pairs, or in groups. Some social conditions you may assign students to research: health and hygiene, industrialization, urbanization, working conditions in factories, child labor, housing, workhouses and social services, education, and stratification of social classes.

After researching their particular social issue, have students create a character who is experiencing hardship related to that condition. Students should then write a letter in first person from the perspective of the character, using details and information they have learned to make the letter more realistic. You can then have students share the letters in character, either in person or in recorded videos that could be compiled into a longer piece.

New Perspectives on Classic Tales

In *Jacob Marley's Christmas Carol*, the classic Christmas story of Scrooge's change of heart shifts focus to Jacob Marley, Scrooge's deceased business partner. By shifting the narrative to Marley's perspective, the playwright gives audiences a new viewpoint on a familiar story. Have students choose a classic story they are familiar with, perhaps a fairy tale, folk tale, or fable. Students should retell the story from the perspective of another character, keeping in mind the mindset and experiences of their new protagonist. Students may share these stories in written form or through a performance live or on video.



If you utilize any of the activities above, please share them with us at Milwaukee Rep! We would love to see your students' work. Email Auburn Matson at amatson@milwaukee-rep.com with any work samples you would love for us to see.

STANDARDS

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.9-10.3

Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.9-10.4

Present information, findings, and supporting evidence clearly, concisely, and logically such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization, development, substance, and style are appropriate to purpose, audience, and task.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.9-10.5

Make strategic use of digital media (e.g., textual, graphical, audio, visual, and interactive elements) in presentations to enhance understanding of findings, reasoning, and evidence and to add interest.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.9-10.6

Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate. (See grades 9-10 Language standards 1 and 3 here for specific expectations.)

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.9-10.3

Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.9-10.6

Use technology, including the Internet, to produce, publish, and update individual or shared writing products, taking advantage of technology's capacity to link to other information and to display information flexibly and dynamically.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.9-10.7

Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question) or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.9-10.9

Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.9-10.10

By the end of grade 9, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, in the grades 9-10 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.

TP.Cr.16.h: Characterization Create vivid, complex and well rounded characters that authentically represent the text with defined action.

TP.Cr.18.h: Text/Script Devise an original or adapt an existing work that incorporates dramatic structure.

TP.Cr.20.h: Collaboration Collaborate as a creative team with specified roles to make artistic, interpretive choices in a devised or scripted work.

TD.P.19.h: Public Presentation Execute a production element in a classroom or public performance.

WI SEL 18.9-10: Learners will be able to formulate group goals and work through an agreed upon plan.



MILWAUKEE REP EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

The Education Department offers backstage tours, pre- and post-show workshops and classroom residencies.

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