Vocabulary Study: *A Christmas Carol* by Charles Dickens

Teacher Overview

Grade 8

Lesson Introduction/Overview

Vocabulary words, definitions, derivatives, and quotations

An alphabetical list of the ten words in each section is given at the beginning. Not all words have appeared on an SAT exam, but all are appropriate for vocabulary study in a Pre-AP course. The words and quotations from the novel are presented in the order in which they occur in the plot. As much as possible, words are listed in the form in which they actually appear in the novel. If a definition is not available for that exact form, the closest form is defined and the derivative is listed. Other common derivatives are listed as well. British spellings have been changed to standard American spellings.

Complete List of Words

A complete list of words is provided in alphabetical order.

Fill-in-the-Blank Activity

The sentences in this activity are specific to each chapter and tied to the order of events in the novel. The activity is meant to aid instruction and understanding of the work, as well as provide a check for vocabulary comprehension. Often answers are derivations of the words, adding a higher level of thinking to the lesson. Note that words with British spellings, such as *colour* or *favourite*, have been changed to American spellings.

Multiple Choice Exam

The students are tested on 25 of the words, challenging them to study all 50 to be ready for the test. As in the Fill-in-the-Blank activity, the answer may be one of the derivatives of the original word. Encourage students to pay attention to parts of speech and positive or negative words as they narrow down their answer choices.

Writing Activities

These essay prompts are geared toward upper middle to lower high school writers, designed to complement the vocabulary word study, and intended to be used at the end of the study of *A Christmas Carol*. Either assignment can be a 40-minute timed in-class writing or a take-home assignment. The quality of the essays will improve if students are guided in brainstorming and organizing their ideas ahead of time, and if they are given a suggested outline to follow. (You may want to spend one 30 to 45 minute period studying the prompt and brainstorming/outlining together, and the next 30 to 45 minute period having students write the essay individually.) Remember that sample student essays and rubrics for similar types of essays can be found on the protected NMSI website.

Persuasive/Analytical Essay: Key Characters

The enjoyable aspect of this essay for students will be finding a creative approach to the question. Encourage students to consider every character, including the Spirits, Jacob Marley, and even the dead future Scrooge and his robbers. Really any main character can
be argued for effectively, as long as students link the character to a key life-lesson for Scrooge and his overall epiphany. You will want to help them tie their pair or trio of characters to an overall pattern—for instance, a lesson from the past and the future; a positive and a negative example; a regret, a hope, and a fear; etc.

One possible connection would be to have students also create a poster symbolizing their characters and their influence on Scrooge, using pictures, symbols, and/or key quotes to help graphically represent their essays. For teachers with technology capabilities, another option would be for students to create interactive web pages to do this. Sound effects or music could be added to help illustrate the characters and their influences on Scrooge. Yet another option would be to invite student groups to gather evidence for, and verbally present (using as many persuasive techniques as possible) their “case” for one character’s influence on Scrooge and the theme of the novel, having a class vote for the grand winner and prizes for the best evidence, best use of persuasive techniques, best speaking style, most original approach, etc.

Analytical Essay
Note that this essay could actually be written early on in the study of the novel, or saved for the end when students carry more insight into the assignment. To help students write this essay, make sure they each have a copy of the passage. Have them annotate the passage for negative diction, highlighting a few key words, and then listing them and brainstorming the feelings or impressions the words give. Do the same thing for figurative language, labeling the device (simile, metaphor, personification), describing the image it creates, and connecting to feelings. Note that many of the details, or pieces of information, come at the end of the excerpt. As you annotate together, help students infer how these words, comparisons, and details are strongly critical, and also how their exaggeration and casual language help communicate the light-hearted, playful, amused attitude of the narrator. You may want to have students first focus on the critical tone, and then on the amused tone, and help them use dialectical journals to set up paragraphs on each.

A strong follow-up activity to this excerpt would be the description of Scrooge at the beginning of Stave Five—again focusing on diction, comparisons, and informal style to pick up on the joyful, exuberant, celebratory tone of the narrator, and discussing the transformation in Scrooge as well as the overall theme of the book. This is also a natural place to teach the power of a truly dynamic character in a novel.

Another natural follow-up would be to invite students to create their own description of a character or pair of characters (one positive, one negative, or the same one after his or her own transformation), using creative diction, details, and comparisons to playfully exaggerate both situations.

Materials and Resources:
• Copies of lesson for each student
• Copies of Charles Dickens’s novel, A Christmas Carol
Teaching Suggestions

Comprehending Positive, Negative, and Neutral Words
It may aid students’ comprehension to label words in each set as positive (such as benevolence or veneration), negative (such as dismal or fettered), and neutral (such as flint or procure), and to encourage them to put these words to use in their discussion and writing (for example, “Use at least three positive vocabulary words to describe…”).

Words in Christmas Carol: Playful Comparisons
Charles Dickens gives the reader plenty of help trying to imagine the varied characters, places, foods, and locations he describes. This short work is a rich text. On almost every page, a simile, metaphor, personification, or allusion leaps out at the reader, sometimes in rapid succession. Dickens is a witty wordsmith, and students will miss a good deal of his humor if they overlook his clever wordplay. You may want to help your class create a list of everyone’s favorite five to ten comparisons (one or two per stave), asking individuals to 1) write the line(s) containing the comparison, 2) identify the type of comparison being made (see the LTF Literary Terms Guide for a review of types), 3) identify what two things are being compared, 4) illustrate the comparison, 5) label the comparison as being “positive,” “neutral,” or “negative,” and 6) comment in a sentence on the feeling or message of the comparison. (You will need to help them think out loud on that last part to develop their ideas.)

Words in Christmas Carol: Detailed descriptions
Notice the abundant details Dickens uses to describe each ghost, each main character, and even many of the foods being sold or consumed. In certain passages, Dickens spends a whole page describing a character or place. As the story progresses, you will want to study a few of these descriptive passages, using printed copies for focused annotation. Start with a short list of elements, such as significant words, sensory details, and comparisons, and then help students draw conclusions first about the place or character and then about the author’s tone. Make sure you give them at least one gloomy passage to contrast with a cheerful one. This sort of an annotation project can be spread out over several days, or limited to just one or two elements with a tighter focus. See LTF Peeling Back the Layers and Annotation lessons for ideas.
### Alphabetical Listing of Words

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Stave</th>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Answer keys for the sentence completion and multiple choice quizzes for this lesson are not included in open source materials. As the teacher of record, you may obtain copies of these answer keys by sending a message from your school email address to the NMSI help desk at HelpDesk@nms.org. Include your name, course taught, the name of your school, and your city and state.**
Vocabulary Study

*A Christmas Carol* by Charles Dickens

_words are given in alphabetical order at the top of each section, then in the order in which they appear in the text. As much as possible, words are listed in the form in which they actually appear in the novel. Words with British spellings have been changed to the American spelling. If a complete definition is not available for a word in its textual form, the closest form is listed and defined, and the original is listed as a derivative. Other common derivatives are listed as well._

**List 1**

**Stave One**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>cordial</td>
<td>n. having a pleasant or kind attitude; affectionate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dismal</td>
<td>adj. causing gloom or dejection; gloomy; dreary; cheerless; melancholy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>flint</td>
<td>n. a piece of hard stone, a form of silica resembling chalcedony but more opaque, less pure, and less lustrous, especially as used for striking fire; something very hard or unyielding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>legatee</td>
<td>n. a person to whom a legacy is bequeathed after death; heir</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. **legatee** (leg-uh-tee) *n.* a person to whom a legacy is bequeathed after death; heir

   derivatives: legacy

   “Scrooge was his sole executor, his sole administrator, his sole assign, his sole residuary _legatee_, his sole friend and sole mourner.”

2. **flint** (flint) *n.* a piece of hard stone, a form of silica resembling chalcedony but more opaque, less pure, and less lustrous, especially as used for striking fire; something very hard or unyielding

   derivatives: flint-like

   “Hard and sharp as _flint_, from which no steel had ever struck out generous fire; secret, and self-contained, and solitary as an oyster.”

3. **dismal** (diz-muhl) *adj.* causing gloom or dejection; gloomy; dreary; cheerless; melancholy

   derivatives: dismally, dismalness

   “The door of Scrooge’s counting-house was open that he might keep his eye upon his clerk, who in a _dismal_ little cell beyond, a sort of tank, was copying letters.”
4. **ruddy** (*ruhd*-ee) *adj.* of or having a fresh, healthy red color: *a ruddy complexion*; red or reddish

   derivatives: ruddily, ruddiness

   “He had so heated himself with rapid walking in the fog and frost, this nephew of Scrooge’s, that he was all in a glow; his face was **ruddy** and handsome; his eyes sparkled, and his breath smoked again.”

5. **veneration** (*ven-uh-rey*-shuhn) *n.* a feeling of awe, respect, etc.; reverence

   derivatives: venerate, venerative

   “‘But I am sure I have always thought of Christmas time, when it has come round—apart from the **veneration** due to its sacred name and origin, if anything belonging to it can be apart from that—as a good time: a kind, forgiving, charitable, pleasant time….’”

6. **cordial** (*kawr*-juhl) *adj.* courteous and gracious; friendly; warm

   derivatives: cordially, cordiality

   “[His nephew] stopped at the outer door to bestow the greetings of the season on the clerk, who, cold as he was, was warmer than Scrooge; for he returned them **cordially**.”

7. **surplus** (*sur-pluhs*) *adj.* being in excess of what is required; extra

   derivatives: surplussed, surplussing

   “‘If they would rather die,’ said Scrooge, ‘they had better do it, and decrease the **surplus** population.’”

8. **fetter** (*fet*-er) *v.* confined or restrained by chains or shackles placed upon the feet, either literally or figuratively

   derivatives: fetters, fettered, fetterer, fetterless

   “‘You are **fettered,**’ said Scrooge, trembling. ‘Tell me why?’
   ‘I wear the chain I forged in life,’ replied the Ghost. ‘I made it link by link….”’
9. **penance** (pen-uhns) *n.* a punishment for one’s sins, either voluntary or as required by spiritual authorities in order to gain absolution; sentence

 derivatives: penitent, penitence, repent, repentance, penalty

 “I have sat invisible beside you many and many a day…. That is no light part of my **penance,**’ pursued the Ghost.”

10. **procure** (proh-kyoor) *v.* to obtain or get by care, effort, or the use of special means

 derivatives: procuring, procurement

 “I am here to-night to warn you, that you have yet a chance and hope of escaping my fate. A chance and hope of my **procuring,** Ebenezer.”
1. **endeavor** (en-dev-er) *v.* to attempt; try
   
   derivatives: endeavoring, endeavors
   
   “He was **endeavoring** to pierce the darkness with his ferret eyes, when the chimes of a neighboring church struck the four quarters.”

2. **fluctuate** (fluhk-choo-yet) *v.* to change continually; shift back and forth; vary irregularly
   
   derivatives: fluctuating, fluctuation, flux
   
   “For as its belt sparkled and glittered now in one part and now in another, and what was light one instant, at another time was dark, so the figure itself **fluctuated** in its distinctness: being now a thing with one arm, now with one leg, now with twenty legs, now a pair of legs without a head, now a head without a body….”

3. **reclamation** (rek-luh-mey-shuhn) *n.* recovery of a person to a preferable manner of living or set of principles or ideas; restoration
   
   derivatives: reclaim, reclaimable
   
   “[Scrooge] then made bold to inquire what business brought [the Spirit] there. ‘Your welfare!’ said the Ghost…. ‘Your **reclamation**, then. Take heed!’”

4. **fervor** (fur-ver) *n.* great warmth and earnestness of feeling
   
   derivatives: fervent, fervently
   
   “‘You recollect the way?’ inquired the Spirit. ‘Remember it!’ cried Scrooge with **fervor**— ‘I could walk it blindfold.’”
5. **solitary** (sol-i-ter-e) *adj.* alone; without companions; unattended

   derivatives: solitarily, solitude, solitaire

   “‘The school is not quite deserted,’ said the Ghost. ‘A solitary child, neglected by his friends, is left there still.’”

6. **despondent** (dih-spon-duhn) *adj.* feeling or showing profound hopelessness, dejection, discouragement, or gloom

   derivatives: despondently, despondence

   “Not a latent echo in the house, not a squeak and scuffle from the mice behind the paneling, not a drip from the half-thawed water-spout in the dull yard behind, not a sigh among the leafless boughs of one despondent poplar, not the idle swinging of an empty store-house door, no, not a clicking in the fire, but fell upon Scrooge with a softening influence, and gave a freer passage to his tears.”

7. **avarice** (av-er-is) *n.* insatiable greed for riches; inordinate, miserly desire to gain and hoard wealth

   derivatives: avaricious, avariciously

   “His face had not the harsh and rigid lines of later years; but it had begun to wear the signs and care of avarice. There was an eager, greedy, restless motion in the eye…."

8. **idol** (ahyd-l) *n.* any person or thing regarded with blind admiration, adoration, or devotion

   derivatives: idolize, idolatry, idolatrous

   “Another idol has displaced me; and if it can cheer and comfort you in time to come, as I would have tried to do, I have no just cause to grieve.’’

9. **benevolence** (buh-nev-uh-luhns) *n.* desire to do good to others; goodwill; charitableness

   derivatives: benevolent

   “He rubbed his hands; adjusted his capacious waistcoat; laughed all over himself, from his shoes to his organ of benevolence; and called out in a comfortable, oily, rich, fat, jovial voice: ‘You, ho, there! Ebenezer! Dick!’”
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>10. <strong>haggard</strong> (hag-erd) <em>adj.</em> having a gaunt, wasted, or exhausted appearance, as from prolonged suffering, exertion, or anxiety; worn</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>derivatives: haggardly, haggardness</td>
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<tr>
<td>“And now Scrooge looked on more attentively than ever, when the master of the house, having his daughter leaning fondly on him, sat down with her and her mother at his own fireside; and when he thought that such another creature, quite as graceful and full of promise, might have called him father, and been a spring-time in the <strong>haggard</strong> winter of his life, his sight grew very dim indeed.”</td>
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</table>
List 3
Stave Three

apprehensive
artful
bade
credulity
demeanor

forfeit
humor
opulence
penitence
predicament

1. **apprehensive** (ap-ri-hen-siv) *adj.* uneasy or fearful about something that might happen
derivatives: apprehensively, apprehension

“All this time, he lay upon his bed, the very core and center of a blaze of ruddy light, which streamed upon it when the clock proclaimed the hour; and which being only light, was more alarming than a dozen ghosts, as he was powerless to make out what it meant, or would be at; and was sometimes **apprehensive** that he might be at that moment an interesting case of spontaneous combustion….”

2. **predicament** (pri-dik-uh-muhnt) *n.* an unpleasantly difficult, perplexing, or dangerous situation
derivatives: predicamental

“… for it is always the person not in the **predicament** who knows what ought to have been done in it, and would unquestionably have done it too….”

3. **bid** (bid) *v.* to command; order; direct
derivatives: bade

“The moment Scrooge’s hand was on the lock, a strange voice called him by his name, and **bade** him enter.”

4. **demeanor** (dih-mee-ner) *n.* the way a person behaves toward others; conduct; behavior; deportment

“Its dark brown curls were long and free: free as its genial face, its sparkling eye, its open hand, its cheery voice, its unconstrained **demeanor**, and its joyful air.”
5. **opulence** *(op-yuh-luhns)* *n.* wealth, riches, or affluence; abundance, as of resources or goods; plenty

derivatives: opulent

“There were great round, pot-bellied baskets of chestnuts, shaped like the waistcoats of jolly old gentlemen, lolling at the doors, and tumbling out into the street in their apoplectic opulence.”

6. **humor** *(hyoo-mer)* *n.* mental disposition or temperament; a temporary mood or frame of mind

derivatives: good-humored, bad humor

“And it was a very uncommon kind of torch, for once or twice when there were angry words between some dinner-carriers who had jostled each other, he shed a few drops of water on them from it, and their good humor was restored directly.”

7. **penitence** *(pen-i-tuhns)* *n.* the state of being penitent; regret for one’s wrongdoing or sinning; contrition; repentance

derivatives: penitent, penitently

“Scrooge hung his head to hear his own words quoted by the spirit, and was overcome with penitence and grief.”

8. **artful** *(ahrt-fuhl)* *adj.* slyly crafty or cunning; deceitful; tricky

derivatives: artfully, artfulness

“Here, again, were shadows on the window-blind of guests assembling; and there a group of handsome girls, all hooded and fur-booted, and all chattering at once, tripped lightly off to some near neighbor’s house; where, woe upon the single man who saw them enter—artful witches: well they knew it—in a glow!”

9. **forfeit** *(fawr-fit)* *n.* an article deposited in a game because of a mistake and redeemable by a fine or penalty; or a game in which such articles are taken from the players

derivatives: forfeits, forfeited, forfeiture

“After a while they played at forfeits; for it is good to be children sometimes, and never better than at Christmas, when its mighty Founder was a child himself.”
10. **credulity** (kruh-doo-li-tee, -dyoo-) *adj.* willingness to believe or trust too readily, especially without proper or adequate evidence; gullibility

derivatives: credulous, credible, incredulous, incredible

“The way [Topper] went after that plump sister in the lace tucker, was an outrage on the **credulity** of human nature.”
**Vocabulary Study: “A Christmas Carol”**

**List 4**  
Stave Four

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<th>alter</th>
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<td>repress</td>
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<td>entreaty</td>
<td>scrutinize</td>
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<tr>
<td>inclined</td>
<td>successor</td>
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1. **incline** (in-klahyn) v. to bow, nod, or bend (the head, body, etc.)

   derivatives: inclination, half-inclined, uninclined

   “‘Is that so, Spirit?’ The upper portion of the garment was contracted for an instant in its folds, as if the Spirit had **inclined** its head. That was the only answer he received.”

2. **scrutinize** (skroot-n-ahyz) v. to examine in detail with careful or critical attention

   derivatives: scrutiny, scrutinizing

   “Secrets that few would like to **scrutinize** were bred and hidden in mountains of unseemly rags, masses of corrupted fat, and sepulchres of bones.”

3. **plunder** (pluhn-der) n. anything taken wrongfully, as by robbery, theft, or fraud

   derivatives: plunderer, plundered, plunderous

   “…[T]he man in faded black…produced his **plunder**. It was not extensive. A seal or two, a pencil-case, a pair of sleeve-buttons, and a brooch of no great value, were all.”

4. **bereft** (bih-reft) adj. deprived, usually by death

   derivatives: bereave, bereaved, bereavement

   “A pale light, rising in the outer air, fell straight upon the bed; and on it, plundered and **bereft**, unwatched, unwept, uncared for, was the body of this man.”
5. **odious (oh-dee-uhs) adj.** hateful; detestable; highly offensive; repugnant; disgusting

   derivatives: odium, odiously, odiousness

   “Oh cold, cold, rigid, dreadful Death, set up thine altar here, and dress it with such terrors as thou hast at thy command: for this is thy dominion! But of the loved, revered, and honored head, thou canst not turn one hair to thy dread purposes, or make one feature **odious**.”

6. **repress (ri-pres) v.** to keep under control, check, or suppress (desires, feelings, actions, tears, etc.)

   derivatives: repression, repressive

   “She hurried to the door, and met her husband; a man whose face was careworn and depressed, though he was young. There was a remarkable expression in it now; a kind of serious delight of which he felt ashamed, and which he struggled to **repress**.”

7. **creditor (kred-i-ter) n.** a person or firm to whom money is due (as opposed to debtor)

   derivatives: credit

   “‘To whom will our debt be transferred?’
   ‘I don't know. But before that time we shall be ready with the money; and even though we were not, it would be a bad fortune indeed to find so merciless a **creditor** in his **successor**.’”

8. **successor (suhk-ses-er) n.** a person who takes the place of another in an office, position, or the like

   derivatives: succeed

   “‘But before that time we shall be ready with the money; and even though we were not, it would be a bad fortune indeed to find so merciless a creditor in his **successor**. We may sleep to-night with light hearts, Caroline!’”

9. **alter (awl-ter) adj.** to change; become different or modified

   derivatives: altered, alteration, unaltered

   “‘Good Spirit,’ [Scrooge] pursued, as down upon the ground he fell before it: 'Your nature intercedes for me, and pities me. Assure me that I yet may change these shadows you have shown me, by an **altered life**?’”
10. **entreaty** (en-tree-tee) *n.* earnest request or petition; supplication

   derivatives: entreat, entreaties

   “In his agony, he caught the spectral hand. It sought to free itself, but he was strong in his **entreaty**, and detained it.”
List 5  
Stave Five

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vocabulary Study</th>
<th>&quot;A Christmas Carol&quot;</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Copyright © 2013 National Math + Science Initiative. This work is made available under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivs 3.0 United States license, <a href="http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/3.0/us/deed.en_US">http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/3.0/us/deed.en_US</a>.</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| List 5  
Stave Five |
| amends | illustrious |
| blithe | loitered |
| dispelled | malady |
| earnest | outset |
| giddy | strive |

1. amends (uh-mendz) n. reparation or compensation for a loss, damage, or injury of any kind; recompense  
   derivatives: amendable, amendment  
   “Best and happiest of all, the Time before him was his own, to make **amends** in!”

2. strive (strahyv) v. to exert oneself vigorously; try hard  
   derivatives: strived, striving  
   “‘I will live in the Past, the Present, and the Future!’ Scrooge repeated, as he scrambled out of bed. ‘The Spirits of all Three shall **strive** within me.’”

3. dispel (dih-spel) v. to drive off in various directions; disperse  
   derivatives: dispelled, dispelling  
   “‘They are not torn down,’ cried Scrooge, folding one of his bed-curtains in his arms, ‘they are not torn down, rings and all. They are here—I am here—the shadows of the things that would have been, may be **dispelled**. They will be. I know they will!’”

4. giddy (gid-ee) adj. frivolous and lighthearted; impulsive; flighty  
   derivatives: giddying, giddier, giddiest  
   “‘I am as light as a feather, I am as happy as an angel, I am as merry as a schoolboy. I am as **giddy** as a drunken man.’”
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th><strong>Vocabulary Study</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 5. | **illustrious** *(ih-luhs-tree-uh-s)* *adj.* glorious, as deeds or works  
   derivatives: illustriousness, illustriously  
   “Really, for a man who had been out of practice for so many years, it was a splendid laugh, a most **illustrious** laugh. The father of a long, long line of brilliant laughs!” |
| 6. | **loiter** *(loi-ter)* *v.* to linger aimlessly or as if aimless in or about a place.  
   derivatives: loitered, loiterer  
   “‘What's to-day?’ cried Scrooge, calling downward to a boy in Sunday clothes, who perhaps had **loitered** in to look about him.” |
| 7. | **earnest** *(ur-nist)* *adj.* serious in intention, purpose, or effort; sincerely zealous  
   derivatives: earnestly, earnestness  
   “‘No, no,’ said Scrooge, ‘I am in **earnest**. Go and buy [the turkey], and tell them to bring it here, that I may give them the direction where to take it.” |
| 8. | **blithe** *(blahy-eth)* *adj.* joyous, merry, or gay in disposition; glad; cheerful  
   derivatives: blithely  
   “He looked so irresistibly pleasant,… that three or four good-humored fellows said, ‘Good morning, sir! A merry Christmas to you!’ And Scrooge said often afterwards, that of all the **blithe** sounds he had ever heard, those were the blithest in his ears.” |
| 9. | **outset** *(out-set)* *n.* the beginning or start  
   “Some people laughed to see the alteration in him, but he let them laugh, and little heeded them; for he was wise enough to know that nothing ever happened on this globe, for good, at which some people did not have their fill of laughter in the **outset**….” |
| 10. | **malady** *(mal-uh-dee)* *n.* any disorder or disease of the body, especially one that is chronic or deep-seated; any undesirable or disordered condition  
   “…and knowing that such as these would be blind anyway, he thought it quite as well that they should wrinkle up their eyes in grins, as have the **malady** in less attractive forms.” |
Fill-in-the-Blank Activity

*A Christmas Carol*

Using the vocabulary words listed below, fill in the blanks with suitable word choices. Each word or its derivative is used only once. The answers may or may not be used in the same plot context as in the original quotations; they do correspond to the characters and events in the novel.

List 1

**Stave One: Marley’s Ghost**

- cordial
- dismal
- fetter
- flint
- legatee
- penance
- procure
- ruddy
- surplus
- veneration

1. Scrooge was the only _________ of his partner, Jacob Marley, which tells us that Marley, like Scrooge, had no other family or friends he cared about very much.

2. Ironically, Scrooge is described as being as hard and sharp as _________, although he is too stingy to provide enough coal for Bob Cratchit to stay warm.

3. Despite his nephew’s _________ greetings and friendly invitation to his home for Christmas dinner, Scrooge is clearly scornful toward Christmas and all who celebrate it.

4. Scrooge’s nephew is depicted as “_________ and handsome,” having an inner and outer warmth that contrasts with Scrooge’s inner and outer coldness.

5. Scrooge displays a tight-fisted attitude when he refuses to contribute a single cent to a charitable organization, calling poor and needy people “_________,” or unneeded and unimportant.

6. Scrooge seems to have no _________ for the Christmas story or traditions: not only does he refuse to listen to a caroler’s song, but he threatens to hit the boy with a ruler.

7. The first clue Scrooge is given that he is about to have a supernatural adventure is the transformation of his door-knocker from its regular shape to the _________ face of his former partner, Jacob Marley.
8. When Marley’s ghost appears, Scrooge notices that he is _________ by a long chain of key, locks, cashboxes, purses, and accounting books.

9. Marley’s ghost informs Scrooge that a large part of his __________ for his failure to attend to his true “business” in life has been to sit unseen close to Scrooge on many occasions.

10. Somehow, Marley has __________ a special opportunity for Scrooge to avoid the same future as his own through visits from three different spirits on three subsequent nights.
List 2
Stave Two: The First of the Three Spirits

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>avarice</th>
<th>fluctuate</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>benevolence</td>
<td>haggard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>despondent</td>
<td>idol</td>
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<tr>
<td>endeavor</td>
<td>reclamation</td>
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<tr>
<td>fervor</td>
<td>solitary</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

1. After his visitation by Marley’s Ghost, Scrooge __________ to understand how, although he fell asleep at two a.m. the previous night, the time is now midnight.

2. The Spirit of Christmas Past who visits Scrooge has a strange feature: its light __________ like the lights on a Christmas tree, causing various parts of its body to glow and shimmer while other parts remain shadowed.

3. Scrooge views his former home town with strong emotion, becoming more and more __________ in his words and reactions as he visits familiar locations and people.

4. As Scrooge gazes at himself as a __________ young boy, alone at boarding school during the Christmas holiday, he notices with delight that some of his favorite childhood characters come to life and appear outside the window.

5. We learn that Scrooge’s young sister, Fan, who lovingly __________ Scrooge from his dismal boarding school and brings him home for the holidays, is the late mother of Scrooge’s nephew Fred.

6. Fezziwig, Scrooge’s master, is warm, jovial, and __________ toward his apprentices, in contrast to Scrooge, who is cold, gloomy, and hard-hearted.

7. The fiddler at Fezziwig’s local Christmas party is the __________ provider of all the music for the evening, yet seems to enjoy the challenge.

8. Scrooge changes from being a lonely, imaginative boy to a hard-working, cheerful older boy, and then to an __________, driven young man.

9. Scrooge’s girlfriend breaks up with him, implying that Scrooge __________ wealth and success much more than he prizes her love.
10. The last scene that the Spirit of Christmas Past shows to Scrooge helps him realize that his own future may be cold and __________ without the warmth and caring of others.
**List 3**  
**Stave Three: The Second of the Three Spirits**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>apprehensive</th>
<th>forfeit</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>artful</td>
<td>humor</td>
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<tr>
<td>bade</td>
<td>opulence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>credulity</td>
<td>penitence</td>
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<tr>
<td>demeanor</td>
<td>predicament</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

1. Scrooge awakes in his bed and waits for the second spirit to appear; the longer he waits past one o’clock, the more _________ he becomes.

2. Scrooge obeys immediately when the Ghost of Christmas Present _________ him to touch his robe, having learned the hard way from his first experience traveling with the Ghost of Christmas Past.

3. Dickens goes into great detail about the colorful throne of the Ghost of Christmas Present, and into even more detail describing the _________ richness of tasty foods being sold for celebrations.

4. The excitement, pleasure, and affection at the Cratchit family home contrast poignantly with the sad _________ of Tiny Tim, who cannot walk without his crutch and may die in less than a year.

5. Scrooge is _________ when he asks about Tiny Tim’s future and the spirit quotes back to him his own words about decreasing the surplus population.

6. The Ghost of Christmas Present visits people near a mine, in a lighthouse, and on a ship out at sea to show Scrooge that, even there, people treat one another with more gentleness and good _________ at Christmas time.

7. The bachelor, Topper, uses several _________ strategies to get closer to the object of his affection, Scrooge’s niece’s plump sister in an attractive dress.

8. Scrooge seems to enjoy the games he sees at his nephew Fred’s house, including “Blindman’s Bluff,” “___________,” “Yes and No,” and “How, Where, and When,” even getting involved to the point of shouting out answers, although no one in the room can hear or see him.
9. Both the Cratchit family and Fred’s friends seem to enjoy playing games where they take advantage of someone’s ________ in order to play a harmless trick.

10. The compassionate ________ of the Ghost of Christmas Present, the cheerful benevolence of Fezziwig, and the contagious laughter of Fred provide strong positive examples for Scrooge to imitate.
List 4
Stave Four: The Last of the Spirits

alter          odious
bereft         plunder
creditor       repress
entreaty       scrutinize
inclined       successor

1. Although Scrooge implores it to speak, the Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come instead simply points, or silently _________ its head.

2. The different groups of businessmen on the street whom Scrooge overhears talking seem to either _________ their sadness about a man’s recent death or actually care about him very little.

3. As Scrooge watches and listens to others in the future, he keeps his eyes out for a glimpse of his future self in an _________ way of life.

4. The Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come leads Scrooge to a dark, _________ place where an old gentleman buys and sells a strange assortment of scrap metal, keys, rags, bones, and dead animal parts.

5. As the cleaning woman, the laundry woman, and the undertaker’s assistant unwrap their bundles to sell to Joe, the reader slowly realizes that each of them has _________ the last remaining possessions of a dead man.

6. Suddenly alone in the room with a dead body, Scrooge does not have the courage to _________ it further to learn who it was, not even by simply pulling back the blanket over its face.

7. Scrooge realizes that the one family in town affected by the unknown man’s death is a young couple now freed from the harsh _________ to whom they owed a difficult debt; their reaction is not sorrow but relief and happiness.

8. Scrooge learns that in the predicted future, the Cratchit family will be _________ of their beloved Tiny Tim; he sees Mr. Cratchit visit his son’s bed while Mrs. Cratchit and her daughters sew his burial cloth.
9. When he peeks into his old office in the future, Scrooge sees that he is no longer working there; another businessman has _________ him.

10. Scrooge’s visit from the third spirit concludes with Scrooge _________ the spirit to give him another chance, promising to honor Christmas in his heart and remember the lessons from the past, present, and future.
### List 5

**Stave Five: The End of It**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>amends</th>
<th>illustrious</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>blithe</td>
<td>loiter</td>
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<tr>
<td>dispel</td>
<td>malady</td>
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<tr>
<td>earnest</td>
<td>outset</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>giddy</td>
<td>strive</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

1. When Scrooge awakes after his last visitation and finds himself alive in his own home, he is so ________ with excitement, he can hardly speak or dress himself.

2. Scrooge’s ________ mood is evident in the way he rejoices in simple pleasures: the joyous sound of ringing church bells, the blue sky and bright sun, the cold morning air.

3. The first action Scrooge takes that reveals his new-found, ________ Christmas spirit is to hire a young man to buy the largest turkey in town and send it to the Cratchit home.

4. To make ________ for his life-long stinginess, Scrooge has a conversation with the “portly gentleman” who approached him at his office earlier, and offers such a generous donation for the poor that the man can hardly thank him enough.

5. Scrooge ________ the negative comments that might have been made about him at Fred’s house by showing up in person for Christmas dinner.

6. Scrooge ________ to be the first to arrive to his office the day after Christmas in order to catch his clerk arriving late and make his offer of a raise that much more unexpected.

7. Bob Cratchit is so shocked at Scrooge’s slap on the back and offer of a raise, that for a moment he wonders if Scrooge is suffering from a mental ________ and needs to be taken away in a straitjacket.

8. Scrooge tells Bob Cratchit not to ________ another moment, but to go and buy his own coal basket, allowing him for the first time the ability to stay warm at work.

9. Scrooge does not mind that some people laugh about his transformation at the ________; he is thankful for their sakes that their faces are wrinkled from laughter caused by mental blindness, not physical blindness.
10. Mr. Scrooge, who has always been infamous for his gloomy, self-centered personality, soon gains an _________ reputation for his ability to celebrate Christmas joyfully.
Multiple Choice Exam
“A Christmas Carol”

Answers are the vocabulary words from your list or any of the derivatives.

1. red or reddish
   a. veneration
   b. dismal
   c. ruddy
   d. bereft
   e. procuring

2. confine or restrain
   a. amend
   b. loiter
   c. strive
   d. idolize
   e. fetter

3. obtain or get
   a. procure
   b. endeavor
   c. repress
   d. succeed
   e. scrutinize

4. reverence
   a. fervor
   b. alteration
   c. odious
   d. veneration
   e. ruddiness

5. gloomy; dreary
   a. fluctuating
   b. artful
   c. dismal
   d. repress
   e. inclined

6. insatiable greed
   a. avarice
   b. idolization
   c. predicament
   d. demeaning
   e. unfettered

7. charitableness
   a. bereft
   b. creditor
   c. striving
   d. legacy
   e. benevolence

8. having a gaunt, wasted, worn appearance
   a. artful
   b. haggard
   c. penitent
   d. dismal
   e. ruddy

9. to attempt or try
   a. reclaim
   b. bade
   c. endeavor
   d. forfeit
   e. dispel

10. feeling strong dejection or gloom
    a. avarice
    b. reclamation
    c. solitary
    d. despondent
    e. haggard

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11. uneasy or fearful about something</td>
<td>16. deprived, usually by death</td>
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<tr>
<td>a. predicamental</td>
<td>a. inclined</td>
<td>b. malady</td>
<td>c. odious</td>
<td>d. bereft</td>
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<tr>
<td>b. benevolent</td>
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<tr>
<td>c. haggard</td>
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<td>d. fervent</td>
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<tr>
<td>e. apprehensive</td>
<td></td>
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<td>12. slyly crafty or cunning</td>
<td>17. to keep under control; hide</td>
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<tr>
<td>a. plundering</td>
<td>a. scrutinize</td>
<td>b. blithe</td>
<td>c. dispel</td>
<td>d. strive</td>
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<tr>
<td>b. artful</td>
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<td>c. striving</td>
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<tr>
<td>d. blithe</td>
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<tr>
<td>e. giddy</td>
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<tr>
<td>13. wealthy; abundant</td>
<td>18. detestable</td>
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<tr>
<td>a. opulent</td>
<td>a. plundering</td>
<td>b. odious</td>
<td>c. earnest</td>
<td>d. credulous</td>
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<tr>
<td>b. loitering</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>c. bereft</td>
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<tr>
<td>d. legatee</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>e. avaracious</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>14. to command; order</td>
<td>19. earnest request or petition</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. scrutinize</td>
<td>a. entreaty</td>
<td>b. reclamation</td>
<td>c. veneration</td>
<td>d. cordial</td>
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<tr>
<td>b. bid</td>
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<td>c. incline</td>
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<td>d. repress</td>
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<td>d. amend</td>
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<tr>
<td>15. regret for one’s wrongdoing</td>
<td>20. anything taken by robbery or fraud</td>
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<tr>
<td>a. malady</td>
<td>a. avarice</td>
<td>b. bereft</td>
<td>c. repression</td>
<td>d. malady</td>
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<tr>
<td>b. surplus</td>
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<tr>
<td>c. veneration</td>
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<tr>
<td>d. demeanor</td>
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<tr>
<td>e. penitence</td>
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<tr>
<td>21. joyous or merry</td>
<td>24. illness</td>
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<tr>
<td>a. dismal</td>
<td>a. entreaty</td>
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<td>b. altered</td>
<td>b. avarice</td>
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<td>c. cordial</td>
<td>c. malady</td>
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<td>d. blithe</td>
<td>d. fetter</td>
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<tr>
<td>e. earnest</td>
<td>e. predicament</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>22. serious; sincere</th>
<th>25. scattered in various directions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. outset</td>
<td>a. fluctuated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. scrutinized</td>
<td>b. forfeited</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. odious</td>
<td>c. plundered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. successor</td>
<td>d. dispelled</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. earnest</td>
<td>e. repressed</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>23. well-known</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. artful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. illustrious</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. surplus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. veneration</td>
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<tr>
<td>e. benevolent</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Writing Activities

Assignment 1
Significant Characters

Make a list of at least 10 important characters in the story, based on their interactions with Scrooge (or his viewing of them) and their final impact on his life. Then decide which two to three characters most influence Scrooge’s reformation and why.

In a well-organized essay, explain what insight Scrooge gains from the most influential two to three characters in the novel and how these insights connect to Scrooge’s overall transformation. Use at least five vocabulary words in your essay.
Assignment 2: Analytical Essay
A Christmas Carol, Stave One

Charles Dickens, the author of A Christmas Carol, takes his time painting a delightfully dark picture of Scrooge for the reader at the beginning of the story. Scrooge must undergo a powerful transformation, so the more of a villain he seems to be at the beginning, the more fascinating his experiences are to read about, and the more meaningful his complete change becomes at the end.

Read the following passage about Scrooge in his negative state. Then, in a well-organized essay, analyze how the diction, comparisons, and details create a sharply critical but amused tone.

“Oh! but he was a tight-fisted hand at the grindstone, Scrooge! a squeezing, wrenching, grasping, scraping, clutching, covetous old sinner! Hard and sharp as flint, from which no steel had ever struck out generous fire; secret, and self-contained, and solitary as an oyster. The cold within him froze his old features, nipped his pointed nose, shriveled his cheek, stiffened his gait; made his eyes red, his thin lips blue; and spoke out shrewdly in his grating voice. A frosty rime was on his head, and on his eyebrows, and his wiry chin. He carried his own low temperature always about with him; he iced his office in the dog-days; and didn’t thaw one degree at Christmas.

External heat and cold had little influence on Scrooge. No warmth could warm, nor wintry weather chill him. No wind that blew was bitterer than he, no falling snow was more intent upon its purpose, no pelting rain less open to entreaty. Foul weather didn’t know where to have him….

Nobody 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 asked him what it was o’clock, no man or woman ever once in all his life inquired the way to such and such a place, of Scrooge. Even the blindmen’s dogs appeared to know him; and when they saw him coming on, would tug their owners into doorways and up courts; and then would wag their tails as though they said, ‘no eye at all is better than an evil eye, dark master!’”