

# Alliance Theatre

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## Institute

### *A Christmas Carol* Post-Show Lesson Plan & Resources

<i>What makes A Christmas Carol a timeless story?</i>	
<b>GSE – Theater</b>	<p><b>TA6.PR.1 Act by communicating and sustaining roles in formal and informal environments.</b></p> <p>a. Demonstrate effective verbal and non-verbal communication skills (e.g. rate, pitch, volume, inflection, posture, facial expression, physical movement).</p> <p><b>TAHSFT.CR.2 Develop scripts through theatrical techniques.</b></p> <p>d. Create and perform scenes for audiences.</p>
<b>GSE – English Language Arts</b>	<p><b>7.T.T.1 Narrative Techniques</b> Analyze and apply narrative techniques.</p> <p>a. Analyze how narrative techniques are used across the text to develop plot, characters, and setting. (I)</p> <p>b. Analyze the use of plot structures, conflict, and narrative devices (e.g., flashback, foreshadowing) within a text. (I)</p> <p>c. Compare and contrast how themes are developed and expressed in texts through characters, events, and plot structure. (I)</p> <p><b>10.T.T.1 Narrative Techniques</b> Evaluate and apply narrative techniques to enhance text’s appeal to audiences or achieve specific purposes.</p> <p>c. Analyze and evaluate how a text’s theme has social relevance and is developed across a text, comparing passages within and across texts, providing both reasoning and supportive textual evidence. (I)</p> <p>d. Analyze how literary works draw on themes, event patterns, or character types from different time periods. (I)</p>
<b>Student Objective</b>	Students will utilize creative writing and drama strategies from the Alliance Theatre's Collision Project model to create an original work of theater that draws inspiration from timeless themes

	pulled from David H. Bell’s adaptation of Charles Dickens’ <i>A Christmas Carol</i> .
<b>Space Set Up</b>	Open space for students to move & work in small groups
<b>Materials</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resource: People to People Discussion Prompts</li> <li>• Resource: Haiku How-To</li> <li>• Craft paper/flip chart and markers or white board/smart board for Brain Dump</li> <li>• Index cards or scraps of paper/journals (haiku writing and journal reflection)</li> <li>• Writing utensils</li> </ul>
<b>Agenda</b>	<p><b>Welcome &amp; Introduction (5 minutes)</b>  <b>Directions:</b> If significant time has passed, re-introduce <i>A Christmas Carol</i> (option to utilize Synopsis on pages 6-7 of the Study Guide) and let students know that they will have the opportunity to engage in an interactive post-show lesson to unpack their engagement with the show.</p> <p><b>Warm Up: People to People (10 minutes)</b>  <b>Directions:</b>  Direct students to silently move around the space (remind them to be mindful not to bump, push, or move in circles).</p> <p>Call out the prompt, “People to People”. Students should then find someone close to them to stand next to. Now, provide a prompt or question for the pairs to discuss (<b>see: Resource – People to People Discussion Prompts</b>).</p> <p>Prompt the students to start silently moving through the space again.  Call out the next prompt: “Toe to toe”. Students should find a partner to touch toes with. Provide another discussion prompt.  Prompt the students to start silently moving through the space again.  Call out the next prompt: “Elbow to elbow”. Students should find a partner to touch elbows with. Provide another discussion prompt.  Continue this for as many rounds as you choose, using various ways to connect (“back to back”, “knee to knee”, “fist to fist”, etc.)</p> <p><b>Post-Show Discussion (10 minutes)</b>  <b>Directions:</b> The facilitator will guide students through (3) scaffolded Pre-Show Discussion prompts, landing on the essential question:</p>

1. What **themes** from *A Christmas Carol* resonated with us?
  - What issues did Dickens choose to highlight in this story?
2. How can we recognize these themes in the context of our modern world? (these might include: redemption and transformation, social injustices, the human capacity for change, the importance of social responsibility and compassion, family and community, etc.)
3. What makes *A Christmas Carol* a timeless story?
  - How does the specific setting of Victorian London contribute to the story?
  - How can we recognize our modern world in the world of *A Christmas Carol*? What parallels can we draw between our modern era and the Victorian Era/Industrial Revolution?
  - What themes from the play feel timeless, and why?

**Interactive Activity: Colliding with *A Christmas Carol* (20 minutes)**

**Directions (Step 1):** Introduce the concept of devised theatre.

Devised theatre is theatre created collaboratively with an ensemble without a pre-existing script. The collaborators choose a stimulus or anchor to “collide with” that inspires them as they create. As a group, we will work together to create mini performance pieces in response to *A Christmas Carol*, using the production as a stimulus to inspire our own creative work.

**Directions (Step 2):** Brain Dump

Together with your students, create a “brain dump” on craft paper/flip chart or whiteboard/smartboard of any words, phrases, or images from the play that resonated with us (these can be themes, characters, images, symbols, words or phrases, big ideas, especially those that feel timeless or “evergreen”). Record these on a flip chart or white board as students call them out. The goal is to fill the page with a wide variety of words/terms that stuck with us from the play.

**Directions (Step 3):** Compose Haiku

Introduce students to the poetic device Haiku (**see: Resource – Haiku How-To**)

Using scrap paper/index cards or journals, direct students to use the words/phrases/images from those compiled in our brain

dump to construct a haiku: a short poem consisting of 3 lines, in which the first line has 5 syllables, the second line has 7 syllables, and the 3rd line has 5 syllables.

Encourage students to try to include at least one word or phrase from the brain dump in each line of their haiku.

*\*Note for Instructor: let participants know that they will be sharing their haiku in the next step (so they can compose their haiku with the advanced heads up that it will/may be shared)*

*\*Option to play instrumental music during writing portion*

**Directions (Step 4):** Devising in Mini Ensembles

Students should form small groups (“mini ensembles”)

In groups, students will share their haikus aloud, one at a time.

Then, they should decide on an order for the haikus. How could they be strung together to tell a larger story?

Have students physically lay their haikus out in order on the ground (or on a wall) in front of them.

*\*Option to provide tape for students to tape their haiku together to form a longer “script”.*

Next, instruct ensembles to work collaboratively and creatively together to stage the haikus.

*Helpful Ideas:*

- You could create a tableau (frozen image) for each line, and connect the lines with movement.
- Or, you could assign gesture/movement to key words.
- You could create simple choreography.
- Your group could speak in unison, or assign words to different actors, or assign a narrator
- The writer of each haiku may act as director, directing themselves and their group members as to how to move/speak the haiku. Alternatively, the group may all collaborate on each haiku, without assigning one “director”.

**Sharing (10 minutes)**

**Directions:** Each group shares. If time, facilitate brief audience discussion and feedback using the framework:

“I liked... I wonder... I noticed.... I was curious about...”, etc.

	<p><b>Closure &amp; Reflection (5 minutes)</b></p> <p><b>Directions:</b> Invite students to reflect on the following prompt in a journal entry:</p> <p><u>Reflect:</u> <i>How was the experience of devising (brain dump, haiku, ensemble staging and sharing) for you? What was challenging? What was fun?</i></p>
Assessment	Formative: Student participation & engagement in Interactive Activity, Sharing, and Reflection

### Resource: "People to People" Discussion Prompts

Body parts to connect: People to people, toe to toe, elbow to elbow, back to back, knee to knee, fist to fist, etc.

- Does money influence your happiness? In what way?
- Can the choices we make today shape our future, or is our fate predetermined?
- Do you agree that every human being has the capacity to change?
- Is change possible alone, or does it require the help of a community?
- If this play were placed in a modern setting, would it have the same impact? Why or why not?
- What aspects of our society can we recognize in the Victorian Era, if any? How have we progressed? How have we remained the same?
- Why do you think Charles Dickens named the story *A Christmas Carol*? What is the significance of the title?

### Resource: Haiku How-To

A **haiku** is a short poem consisting of 3 lines, in which the first line has 5 syllables, the second line has 7 syllables, and the 3rd line has 5 syllables.

A **syllable** is a unit of pronunciation containing a single vowel sound. It's like a beat! You can clap or tap out syllables in a word.

For example, the word "carol" has 2 syllables: "ca-rol". The word "Ebenezer" has 4 syllables: "Eb-e-nee-zer".

#### **An example of a haiku is:**

*Change is possible (5 syllables)*

*If we're willing to listen (7 syllables)*

*And learn from mistakes (5 syllables)*