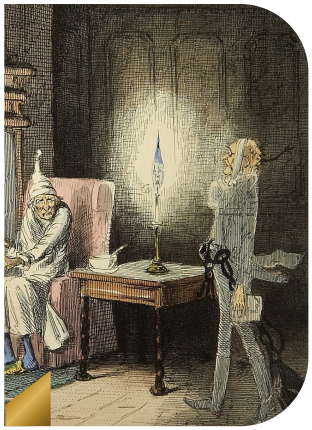
English, year 7 to upper secondary
About 20 minutes

The Tricky
Christmas Crossword

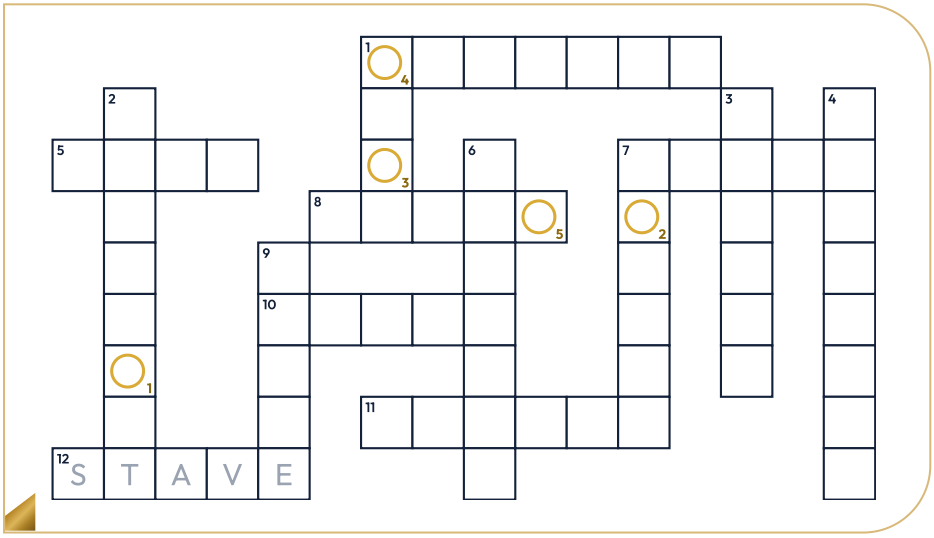
A ghost in chains, a mouse that does not stir and a nose like a cherry. Have you read closely?



John Leech, Marley's Ghost, 1843.

Name _____ Class _____

Read the clue. **Write** the word in the squares that start at the same number, one letter in each square. The word **STAVE** is already there as an example. All the answers come from *A Visit from St. Nicholas* and *A Christmas Carol*.



The solution word

Write the letter in circle 1 in box 1, and so on. It is the first word of the last line of one of the texts. Which one?

1 2 3

4 5

Across

1 Mrs Cratchit carries it in like a speckled cannon-ball, blazing with brandy.

5 Scrooge's cheerful nephew, who invites him to Christmas dinner.

7 On the night before Christmas, not even one of these was stirring in the house.

8 When he laughed, his little round belly shook like a bowlful of this.

10 The number of tiny reindeer that pull the miniature sleigh.

11 His cheeks were like roses, and his nose was like this small red fruit.

12 Dickens did not call the five parts of his book chapters. He called each one a … **Example**

Down

1 St. Nicholas holds the stump of one in his teeth. Its smoke circles his head like a wreath.

2 Bob, Scrooge's clerk, who earns only fifteen shillings a week.

3 Scrooge's word for Christmas. It means nonsense.

4 Young Scrooge was apprenticed to this cheerful old man, who threw a Christmas dance.

6 In the 1844 version of the poem, this reindeer is named last, right after Donder.

7 Scrooge's business partner, who died seven years ago on Christmas Eve.

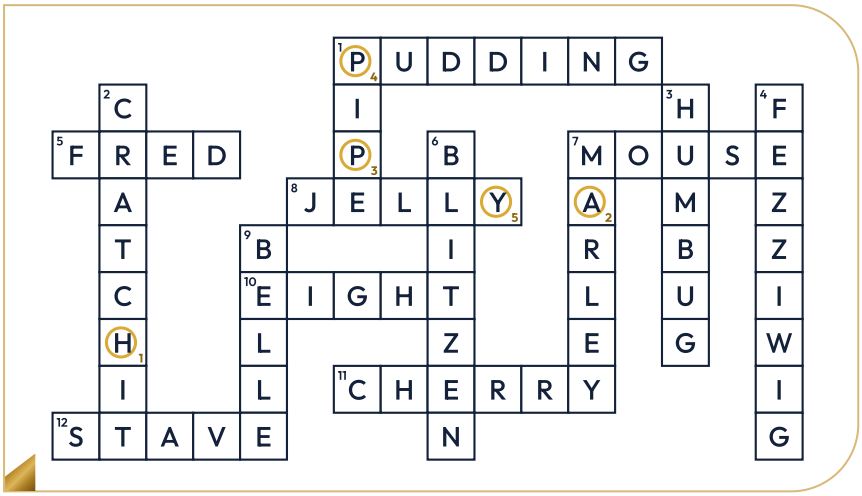
9 The young woman who once loved Scrooge. Later she has a husband and children of her own.

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Answers

The Tricky Christmas Crossword

Print page 1 for the students. The crossword works best after the class has read A Christmas Carol or the text sheet about Scrooge in this Christmas pack, and A Visit from St. Nicholas, which is short enough to read aloud first.



Across

1 Pudding
A Christmas Carol, Stave 3

5 Fred
A Christmas Carol, Stave 1 and 3

7 Mouse
A Visit from St. Nicholas

8 Jelly
A Visit from St. Nicholas

10 Eight
A Visit from St. Nicholas

11 Cherry
A Visit from St. Nicholas

12 Stave
A Christmas Carol

Down

1 Pipe
A Visit from St. Nicholas

2 Cratchit
A Christmas Carol, Stave 1 and 3

3 Humbug
A Christmas Carol, Stave 1

4 Fezziwig
A Christmas Carol, Stave 2

6 Blitzen
A Visit from St. Nicholas

7 Marley
A Christmas Carol, Stave 1

9 Belle
A Christmas Carol, Stave 2

The solution word

Happy

The poem ends: "Happy Christmas to all, and to all a good night."

Talk about it afterwards

Both texts shaped how Christmas is celebrated today. The poem helped give Santa his sleigh, his eight reindeer and his way down the chimney. Dickens made Christmas a time for family, food and giving. Which of these ideas do the students recognise?

A stave is a verse of a song. Why might Dickens have called his Christmas story a carol, and its parts staves?

Good to know: the poem was first printed without a name in 1823. Moore said it was his in 1844, but some people still argue that Henry Livingston wrote it. The reindeer names have been spelled in different ways, from Dunder and Blixem to Donner and Blitzen.

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