

# A Christmas Dream Comes True

An adaptation of *A Christmas Dream, and How It Came to Be True*

by Louisa May Alcott

Also known as *"Dickens' A Christmas Carol for children"*



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## A girl tired of Christmas

### Preview Questions

1. How do children normally feel about Christmas?
2. Do you think Christmas can be boring?

"I'm so tired of Christmas! I wish it didn't exist!" said a sad-looking little girl, as she sat watching her mother arrange a pile of gifts two days before they were to be given.

"Why, Effie, what a terrible thing to say! You are as bad as old Scrooge; and I'm afraid something will happen to you, as it did to him, if you don't care about Christmas," answered her mother, almost dropping the silver bag she was filling with delicious sweets.

"Who was Scrooge? What happened to him?" asked Effie, with sudden interest in her bored face, as she chose the sourest lemon drop she could find; for nothing sweet suited her just then.

"He was one of Dickens' best characters, and you can read this wonderful story some day. He hated Christmas until a strange dream showed him how amazing and beautiful it was, and this made a better man of him."

"I shall read it; for I like dreams, and have many strange ones myself. But they don't stop me being tired of Christmas," said Effie, searching unhappily among the sweets for something worth eating.

"But why are you tired of what should be the happiest time of the year?" asked her mother, anxiously.

"Perhaps I wouldn't be if it was different, for once. But it is always the same, and there's no surprise in that. I always find lots of goodies in my stocking. I don't like some of them, and I soon get tired of those I do like. We always have a great dinner, and I eat too much, and then I feel ill the next day. Then there is always a Christmas tree somewhere, with a doll on top, or a stupid old Santa Claus, and children dancing and screaming over sweets and toys that break, and shiny things that are of no use. Really, mum, I've had so many Christmases that were all the same, so I think I can't cope with another one." And Effie laid herself flat on the sofa, as if just the idea of Christmas alone, was too much for her.



### Review Questions

1. Why is Effie likely to read about Scrooge?
2. Why doesn't Effie like Christmas?

# *Workbook*

- ❖ *Glossary*
- ❖ *Vocabulary Building Exercises*
- ❖ *Reading Comprehension Questions*

**Chapter 1**

**pile** *n* many things lying one on top of another

**drop** *v* let or make sth fall to the ground

**fill** *v* cause to become full

**sour** *adj* having a strong taste like lemon or vinegar

**anxiously** *adv* in a worried way

**goodies** *n* sth pleasing to eat, like candies

**cope with** be able to deal with, manage

**lay someone flat** hit or push someone so they fall to the ground

**Chapter 2**

**despair** *n* loss of hope

**suit** *v* to make/be right for sb or sth

**anxious** *adj* full of worry, fear of danger

**spoiled** *adj* (especially for a child) not being a nice person because you have been given everything you want

**regardless of** without thinking about sth else, not being affected by

**thoughtful** *adj* showing careful consideration or attention

**miserable** *adj* unhappy, uncomfortable

**splash** *v* make wet

**cloak** *n* a sleeveless outdoor piece of clothing that hangs loosely from the shoulders

**beggar** *n* a person (usually homeless) who lives by asking for money or food

**shawl** *n* a piece of clothing worn by women over the shoulders or head, or wrapped round a baby

**paddle** *v* move through the water in a boat using paddles

**stick of candy** *n* a stick of hard candy with a curve at one end, usually with red and white stripes

**Chapter 3**

**pudding** *n* something sweet that we eat after a meal

**twinkle** *v* shine with little areas of light

**silk** *adj* a strong material that feels soft when you touch it, often used to make expensive clothes

**fur** *n* the short, fine, soft hair of certain animals, such as cats or dogs

**slippers** *n* comfortable shoes that are worn indoors

**curl** *n* sth in the shape of a spiral or coil, especially a lock of hair

**brush** *v* to make your hair neat and tidy by using a brush

**lace** *n* a kind of material with lots of small holes in it

**jumble** *n* an untidy collection or pile of things

**elves (elf)** *n* supernatural creatures with magical powers

**curious** *adj* wanting to know or learn sth

**make up my mind** decide

**freeze** *v* turn into ice as a result of extreme cold

**icicles** *n* hanging pieces of ice formed by the freezing of dripping water

**give oneself up** allow oneself to be taken over by an emotion or situation

**snowflake** *n* one small piece of snow

**Chapter 4**

**statue** *n* a carved figure of a person or animal, especially one that is life-size or larger

**roam** *v* move about, travel with no real reason, especially over a wide area

**afar** *adv* a long way from here

**tempting** *adj* appealing to or attracting someone, even if wrong or not a good idea

**cheer** *n* joy, happiness

**chime** *n* a sound made by bells

**crown** *n* something worn on the head by a king or queen

**holly** *n* a plant, often with prickly, dark green leaves, small with white flowers and red berries

**Chapter 5**

**berry** *n* a small round juicy fruit without a stone in the middle of it

**glow** *v* have a warm colour or light coming from sth

**gather** *v* come together, to meet in one place

**wave** *n* water in the sea that comes onto the land

**hood** *n* a covering for the head and neck with an opening for the face

**depressing** *adj* causing you to feel unhappy, worried or disappointed

**wonder** *n* a strong feeling of surprise at something special or unexpected

**merrily** *adv* happily

**garland** *n* a ring of flowers, leaves or other material, often put on a door as a decoration

**go out** leave, depart

**Chapter 6**

**sew** *v* to join things together using a needle and cotton

**poverty** *n* the state of having little or no money, food, etc.

**record** *n* a report, list or collection of known facts about someone's past actions or achievements

**deserve** *v* to get or receive sth because you have worked for it in some way

**joy** *n* happiness

**contentment** *n* satisfaction

**respect** *n* a feeling towards someone that you think is a good or clever person

**patience** *n* the ability to control ones feelings in spite of difficulty or pain, without complaining

**saint** *n* a person of great holiness, formally recognized by the Christian Church

**point** *v* to aim or direct at/to/upon sth

**do up** fasten

**shadow** *n* a slight suggestion, hint

**sleigh** *n* a wooden object that you sit on to move across snow

**jingle** *v* to make clinking or tinkling sounds, like the sounds of a small bell

**Chapter 7**

**cook** *n* a person who cooks

**tin** *adj* made or consisting of thin metal

**march** *v* to walk with regular steps like a soldier, or with determination

**carriage** *n* a wheeled vehicle for carrying people, such as one pulled by horses

**china** *n* a material made from baked clay; porcelain used to make cups or plates

Chapters 1-7

Exercise A

Complete the sentences by choosing the correct answer A, B or C.

1. Mike ..... the cup and it broke into lots of pieces.  
A. filled      B. splashed      C. dropped
2. The chocolate cake was very ..... but I stopped myself from eating too much of it.  
A. tempting      B. thoughtful      C. curious
3. The children were so naughty that after an hour I lost my ..... and sent them to their rooms.  
A. patience      B. despair      C. wonder
4. I could hear the soldiers ..... down the road before I saw them.  
A. shaking      B. marching      C. jingling
5. It was lovely to sit in front of the fire as it ..... in the dark room.  
A. jingled      B. roamed      C. glowed

Exercise B

Complete the sentences below by using the correct form of the words in the box. There are two extra words that you do not need to use.

fur	brush	freeze	wave
deserve	disturb	poverty	respect

1. I have a lot of ..... for my boss because he works hard and is good to everyone in the office.
2. You work so hard that you ..... to get more money.
3. My dog's ..... was very dirty after we had been for a walk in the woods.
4. Please don't ..... me because I am watching a really good film on TV.
5. He used to live a terrible life of ..... until he got a job in the factory.
6. It was so cold that the water on the ground had .....

Exercise C

Complete the sentences using the correct form of the word given in CAPITALS at the end of each sentence.

1. They waited ..... for news of their lost dog. (ANXIOUS)
2. This bad weather every day is really ..... (DEPRESS)
3. She looked at her beautiful new home with a feeling of ..... (CONTENT)
4. Paul felt very ..... after being sick for a whole week. (MISERY)

Chapters 8-15

Exercise A

Complete the sentences by choosing the correct answer A, B or C.

1. There was nothing he could do to ..... the accident.  
A. bend      B. prevent      C. dare
2. He ..... as the cold wind hit his body.  
A. shivered      B. skipped      C. clapped
3. I'm very ..... for all the help you have given me this week.  
A. gentle      B. precious      C. grateful
4. Would you like a ..... over your legs to keep them warm?  
A. gown      B. blanket      C. wreath
5. There were ..... of light in the sky during the storm.  
A. flashes      B. laps      C. bunches
6. After working so hard for so long, I'm ..... to go on holiday with my friends.  
A. drunken      B. woolly      C. eager
7. The dog ..... loudly when the postman came to the house.  
A. barked      B. squeaked      C. bloomed

Exercise B

Complete the sentences below by using the correct form of the words in the box. There are two extra words that you do not need to use.

mansion	chimney	adventure	cause
cheer	long	rub	stare

1. Look, there is fire coming out of the ..... on top of the house!
2. I ..... the dirty window with my hand to try to see inside the room.
3. The famous actor has just bought a ..... in Los Angeles.
4. The children ..... with happiness when the teacher told them they had no homework to do that week.
5. The man was so tall that I couldn't stop ..... at him.
6. Does anyone know what the ..... of the accident was?

Exercise C

Complete the sentences using the correct form of the word given in CAPITALS at the end of each sentence.

1. Luckily the crowd was ..... so the police did not have to act. (PEACE)
2. Hold my hand ..... when we cross the busy road. (TIGHT)
3. Thank you for your ..... at such a difficult time. (KIND)
4. It's been a ..... day with all my friends here with me. (DELIGHT)
5. The children sat down ..... when their teacher walked into the room. (OBEY)
6. Because of his ..... he is getting very fat. (GREED)

## The original story

***A Christmas Dream Comes True*** is a short story, based on Louisa May Alcott's classic story ***A Christmas Dream, and How It Came to Be True*** and adapted by **Global ELT** for learners of English.

The story ***A Christmas Dream, and How It Came to Be True*** first appeared in *The Louisa May Alcott Reader: A Supplementary Reader for the Fourth Year of School* in 1908.

This short story has been characterised as “A Christmas Carol” for children. It is a charming Christmas tale for the young and young at heart. It is written by the author of “Little Women”.

In ***A Christmas Dream, and How It Came to Be True***, ten-year-old Effie lives a very comfortable life and she experiences Christmases filled with delicious treats and fantastic toys. However, one night she has a dream that forever changes the meaning of Christmas for her. Then, her mother arranges for her to meet a few underprivileged children and even organise a Christmas party for them. Effie is inspired to give them a Christmas they will never forget.

## The author

**Louisa May Alcott** was born on November 29, 1832, in Germantown, now part of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. She was the daughter of educator Amos Bronson Alcott and social worker Abby May and the second of four daughters. As a child, she preferred boys' games. The family moved to Boston in 1834, where Alcott's father established an experimental school with Ralph Waldo Emerson and Henry David Thoreau. Bronson Alcott's opinions on education and tough views on child-rearing, as well as his moments of mental instability shaped young Alcott's mind with a desire to achieve perfection.

Alcott's early education included lessons from the naturalist Henry Thoreau, who inspired her to write *Thoreau's Flute*. Most of the education she received though, came from her father who was strict. Poverty made it necessary for her to go to work at an early age as a teacher, seamstress, governess, domestic helper and writer. Her sisters also supported the family, by working, while their mother took on social work among the Irish immigrants. Due to all of these pressures, writing became a creative and emotional outlet for Alcott. Her first book was *Flower Fables* (1849), a selection of tales.

In 1847 she and her family served as station masters on the Underground Railroad, when they housed a fugitive slave for one week and had discussions with Frederick Douglass. She read and admired the “Declaration of Sentiments”, a book advocating for women's suffrage and became the first woman to register to vote in Concord, Massachusetts, in a school board election.

As an adult, Alcott was an abolitionist and a feminist. When the American Civil War broke out, she served as a nurse in the Union Hospital in Georgetown, DC, for six weeks in 1862–1863. She contracted typhoid and became deathly ill, though she eventually recovered. After her service as a nurse, her father wrote her a heartfelt poem titled “*To Louisa May Alcott. From her father*”. The poem describes how proud her father is of her for working as a nurse and helping injured soldiers as well as bringing cheer and love into their home. He ends the poem by telling her she's in his heart for being a selfless faithful daughter. This poem was featured in the book “*Louisa May Alcott: Her Life, Letters, and Journals*” (1889).