

A Christmas Carol (2009)

About the film

A Christmas Carol (2009) is an animated retelling of Charles Dickens' classic tale. It features Jim Carrey multiple roles, and other British actors including Colin Firth and Gary Oldman. The filmmakers used a process called motion capture to create the film, a technique that the director Zemeckis used in his previous films *The Polar Express* (2004) and *Beowulf* (2007). It is Disney's third film retelling of *A Christmas Carol*, following 1983's *Mickey's Christmas Carol* (1983) and *The Muppet Christmas Carol* (1992).

The film is a relatively faithful adaptation of the story, with an emphasis on the supernatural and psychological. Scrooge's encounters with the ghosts are long sequences and there is some focus on him being scared, taunted, and in danger.



The BBFC Age Rating

Many adaptations of the original novella on film and television have BBFC U ratings. However, we rated this version of *A Christmas Carol* PG. PG stands for parental guidance. Anyone can watch a PG film, but it's different from a U rating because children under around aged-8 (for example those in Key Stage 1), might find the film upsetting and some parents may think some of the content is unsuitable for younger children.

PG films are often suitable for year 4, 5 and 6 age groups. Given how closely this film follows the original source material it may also be useful for working with older groups studying the text in Key Stage 3 or for GCSE.

PG films can be more complicated or intense than U films, but we still focus on avoiding content and tone that may make young children feel particularly anxious – for example, we pay particular attention to scenes and issues that tap into real life worries. So, while PG films might include tough ideas and stories – for example those featuring things like discrimination, they would not suggest such behaviour is acceptable.

The film is a step up from the earlier films, with mild threat, scary scenes and some mild language.

More information about the PG category, and the classification issues which you may find in a PG film, is available on our website bbfc.co.uk, our Parents Guide to Age Ratings and our children's website cbbfc.co.uk



BBFC Ratings Info for *A Christmas Carol* (2009)

We provide information to accompany all our classification decisions. We gave *A Christmas Carol* a PG for mild threat.

There are scenes of prolonged threat to the main character Scrooge. A ghost looms over him menacingly, his lower jaw almost appearing to fall off as he lets out a miserable wail.

There is infrequent use of mild bad language ('bugger', 'arse').

Some questions you could explore with your class:

- 1. Who would you say is the key audience for *A Christmas Carol*? Did you enjoy it?**
- 2. *A Christmas Carol* is an adaptation of a Charles Dickens novella from the Victorian Era. Can you tell the film is based on a book? How? What signs are there that tell you it is set in the past?**
- 3. *A Christmas Carol* is a PG. Do you agree with that age rating? What do you think the key classification issues are in this film? What should teachers, parents and older brothers and sisters be aware of when showing younger children this film?**
- 4. There is some swearing in the film. Does the language in this version have an impact on the rating? If so, how?**
- 5. There are some scary scenes in the film. How do the filmmakers make sure viewers are unlikely to be too scared?**
- 6. What is the effect of the filmmaking animation style – does it add to the realism and intensity? Could you tell it was based on the movements of real performers?**
- 7. What social issues does the film raise? Does it tell us anything about issues in our own society today?**
- 8. What would you say are the most important themes in the film? Does the film seem to be telling us what Charles Dickens thinks about poverty, charity, caring for people, being kind and generous?**
- 9. How do you feel about the character of Scrooge? What do you learn about him? Do you feel sorry for him?**
- 10. How does it affect the film that the main actor – Jim Carrey – voices several of the characters including the ghosts? Does it affect your understanding of the character Scrooge? Could you tell?**
- 11. What type of film would you say this is? A comedy? An animation? A drama? A mixture?**
- 12. Have you seen any other films or TV series, or read any books, based on the same Charles Dickens story? How does this compare?**

