



A Christmas Carol Study Guide

This study guide was prepared by Charlotte Morris, M. Ed., for Fantasy Playhouse Children's Theater's production of *A Christmas Carol*, a classic by Charles Dickens, adapted for the stage by Elaine Hubbard, original music and arrangements by Mary Ann Bishop, and original lyrics by Elaine Hubbard, performed December 2015. The study guide is available on our website: www.fantasyplayhouse.com. A bibliography is provided at the end.

GENERAL INFORMATION

In this musical retelling of a classic novel by Charles Dickens, you will travel with Scrooge as he visits his past, present, and future on Christmas Eve. This production has become a family tradition for many in the Tennessee Valley for the past 26 years.

BACKGROUND ON CHARLES DICKENS (1812-1870)

Born in Portsmouth, England on February 7, 1812, Charles Dickens had a grim start in life that would continue throughout his childhood. Dickens's father, a navy clerk, went to prison in 1824 for unpaid debts. At the age of twelve, Dickens had to drop out of school and go to work in a factory to support his family. Many of his childhood adversities are echoed throughout his literary works, especially *A Christmas Carol*. Because Dickens knew the impact of the written word, he made each of his novels available to all classes of society through serial publishing, which is publishing only parts or installments of a larger work. *A Christmas Carol*, in its entirety, was published on December 19, 1843. Although, profits were low due to the fact that Dickens chose to make the novel affordable to all classes, its popularity grew and has become one of his most known novels, to date. . Many people attribute Dickens and *A Christmas Carol*, to the spirit of Christmas that is celebrated today.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON A CHRISTMAS CAROL

This "little carol" of a story was written by Charles Dickens in just six weeks and released in time for Christmas. The story is loosely based on a character from the novel, *The Pickwick Papers* by Dickens. In it, Gabriel Grubb, a character from *The Story of the Goblins Who Stole a Sexton*, is kidnapped by goblins and persuaded to change his deplorable and grim ways. In *A Christmas Carol*, Ebenezer Scrooge, the protagonist, is a miserly businessman who has no sentiment for charity and those less fortunate. In fact, he begrudgingly gives his employee, Bob Cratchit, the day off to celebrate Christmas with his family. Bob knows the importance of family, especially given the circumstances of his youngest son, Tiny Tim, who needs the aid of braces and a crutch to walk. Tiny Tim symbolizes the purity of heart which is in stark contrast to Scrooge's greedy nature. Throughout the story, Scrooge will be challenged by three ghosts, or spirits, to change his cold-hearted ways before it is too late. The timing of the release of *A Christmas Carol* could not have been better, because it reflected the decline of the holiday celebration and depicted the nature of child labor conditions. *A Christmas Carol* has played a significant role in the way we celebrate the holiday today.

VERY IMPORTANT INFO TO REMEMBER DURING THE PERFORMANCE

How you can help yourself and others get the most out of a LIVE theatre experience:

- *When you enter the lobby, please wait to be seated.
- *Use the handrails when going up and down the stairs in the theatre.
- *Please be quiet or silent when the lights go down.
- *During the performance, please be safe and stay seated.
- *The actors love to hear laughter when they do or say something funny, but please, no talking or whispering during the performance unless you are helping the actors.
- *Remember... no gum, eating or drinking in the theatre.
- *No cameras, laser pointers or recording devices may be used during a performance.
- *Please turn off all cell phones and beepers (this goes for your teachers, too!)
- *Actors love to hear applause! Show your appreciation by clapping at the end of the play.
- *After the performance is over, please remain seated until your school is dismissed.

STUDY GUIDE

ELA Common Core Learning/ALCOS Standards addressed:

RL5.1, RL6.1, RL 7.1, RL8.1, RL 9.1, RL 10.1, RL 11.1

RL5.2, RL6.2, RL 7.2, RL 8.2, RL 9.2, RL 10.2, RL 11.2

RL 5.3, RL 6.3, RL 7.3, RL 8.3, RL 9.3, RL 10.3, RL 11.3

RL 5.4, RL 6.4, RL 7.4, RL 8.4, RL 9.4, RL 10.4, RL 11.4

RL 7.5, RL 8.5, RL 9.5, RL 10.5, RL 11.5

RL 7.7, RL 8.7

MATERIALS

- Copy of [A Christmas Carol](http://www.ibiblio.org/ebooks/Dickens/Carol/Dickens_Carol.pdf). Online version at: http://www.ibiblio.org/ebooks/Dickens/Carol/Dickens_Carol.pdf
- Butcher paper for brainstorm activity or access to Padlet® (<https://padlet.com/>) to create and utilize a digital Brainstorm Thinking Map.
- CANVAS or Edmodo access
- Money Quote chart (see Option 3), access to iPads and ClassFlow® (<https://classflow.com/classflow/>)
- Vocabulary for each Stave (see DURING Activities, Option 1), access to Educreation® or NearPod®

- Vocabulary in Context graphic organizer (see DURING Activities, Option 2) and access to Padlet® (<https://padlet.com/>)
- Frayer Model graphic organizer and access to Prezi®, Keynote®, Microsoft Word®, or Apple Pages®

BEFORE ACTIVITIES

Option 1: Brainstorm: For what do you use money? How important is it? Brainstorm things for which money is used. List reasons and ways in which money is important. List reasons and ways in which money is not important or not needed. Use post-it notes (or slips of paper and scotch tape) or have students write on a large Brainstorm Thinking Map. **DIGITAL DEVICE**

Alternative: Utilize Padlet® for a digital Brainstorm Thinking Map.



Option 2: Group discussion about the importance of money in everyday life: Do you think money is more important now than in the past? Why or why not? What part does social media play, if any, in how you see money? **DIGITAL DEVICE Alternative:** Use CANVAS® or Edmodo® to utilize an online discussion/feed. Guidelines: Students must respond thoroughly to all question prompts. Students must then reply to two other classmates' responses, using school appropriate and encouraging language. Replies must be productive and engage conversation. For example: "I agree" or "good job" is insufficient. "I agree with _____, because _____" is satisfactory.

Option 3: Students pick up a graphic organizer and read phrases associated with money. With a partner, students decide the true meaning of the phrase and if the phrase supports the idea that money is important or does not support the idea that money is important. Come up with your own "Money phrase!" Group discussion.

DIGITAL DEVICE Alternative: Use iPads to access ClassFlow® (<https://classflow.com/classflow/>). Students may write on the chart/s using the iPads and submit their work to the class interactive whiteboard for a group discussion.

DURING ACTIVITIES

Vocabulary Development

What Do Famous Money Quotes Really Mean?



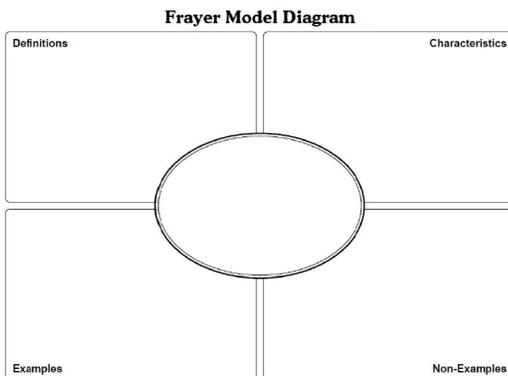
Money Saying:	What it Means:	Does the phrase support that money IS important or NOT important?
"Money makes the world go round."		
"Show me the money!"		
"Time is money."		
"Money can't buy you happiness."		
"Do you think I am made of money?"		
"This money is burning a hole in my pocket!"		
"Rolling in the dough!"		
"Filthy rich!"		
My saying: _____ _____		

stave	covetous	apprehensiv	grave	relents
carol	miser	e	melancholy	jovial
cordially	benevolenc	timid	bereft	amends
dismal	e	credulity	encompas	earnest
penance	avarice	demeanor	s	illustrious
procure	endeavor	forfeit	inclined	malady
surplus	fluctuate	opulence	odious	loitered
reverence	solitary	penitence	repress	strive
	reclamation	predicament	scrutinize	

Option 1: Introduce vocabulary words by showing the word and definition. Then display a photograph that depicts a discussion starter to be used with the word. For example: The word "dismal" is in Stave One. (See the definition, photo, and discussion starter below.) Finally, have students relate the vocabulary word to their life in a Think/Pair/Share activity.

DIGITAL DEVICE Alternative: Create the lesson on Educreation® (The free version is an interactive white board that lets teachers upload photographs, charts, and recorded voiceovers) or NearPod® and have students write their answers to the discussion

Option 3: Frayer Model. Students complete a Frayer Model graphic organizer for either each word or give students the *choice* to complete a Frayer Model for 5 out of the 10 vocabulary words for each Stave. Have students display their work around the room.



DIGITAL DEVICE Alternative: Students may create a Prezi® or Keynote® that contains the following categories or they may create a web using Microsoft Word® or Apple Pages®.

Analyzing the Text Activities

Annotation: Students make *text to self* connections. Groups of students have discussions about the connections. Have a couple of groups share. For the second read, students annotate for *text to text* and *text to world* connections. Teacher may need to model this first. Finally, students annotate for vocabulary words that have been introduced and any that are unfamiliar. Students will place a + or a – notating if the connotation of the word based on the context. **DIGITAL DEVICE Alternative:** Students utilize the annotation tools on Adobe® (sticky notes, highlighter, etc.)

Carousel Activity: Place *assertions* (or claims/points) on butcher paper taped around the classroom. Student groups will have 2 and a half minutes per station to find textual evidence to support the assertion.

Assertion one: Scrooge is a greedy person.

Assertion two: Scrooge shows concern for another person.

Assertion three: The theme of A Christmas Carol is greed versus charity.

Assertion four: Scrooge represents the theme of greed. Scrooge represents the theme of charity.

Assertion five: For Bob Cratchit, Christmas means being thankful for what one has, such as family, friends, and health

DIGITAL DEVICE Alternative: Create a Padlet® wall for each *assertion*. Assign groups of students to different “walls” so there is not a “traffic jam” on each wall. Give students

the same time limit. Students may copy and paste the “evidence” from the online/pdf text. However, they must cite the page number.

THEMATIC Chart: Using the “I DO, WE DO, YOU ALL DO, YOU DO” model, complete the following THEMATIC chart for each stave. Review the types of conflicts and have a thematic idea word list available as a reference.

Name _____ Date _____ Period _____

THEME Chart
Greed/Generosity in A Christmas Carol

Use the graphic organizer to analyze how the conflicts in the story reflect Scrooge’s struggle with Greed versus Generosity.

Conflict: a tension or struggle between forces

There are 6 major conflicts in literature:

1. Man (human) in conflict with nature
2. Man (human) in conflict with one another
3. Man (human) in conflict with self
4. Man (human) in conflict with society
5. Man (human) in conflict with faith
6. Two opposing forces in conflict such as good versus evil

Thematic statement: During _____ (insert the major event), _____ (name the character) is in conflict with _____ (use chart above for conflict type), demonstrating the idea _____

Major Event	Describe the Conflict and Identify the Type	Big Idea/Thematic Statement (Use the sentence frame if needed)
Stave 1:		
Stave 2:		
Stave 3:		

See page 16!

One-Pagers

Students create a One-Pager that represents Scrooge’s past, present or future. Let the students *choose* which period of time they want to analyze.

DIGITAL DEVICE Alternative: Students use Microsoft Word® or Apple Pages®. to create a One-Pager.

A Christmas Carol One-Pager

Past Present or Future One-Pager

See page 17!

1. In the center of the page, draw an object that symbolizes the **theme** for the time period you selected. (5pts)
2. Write or cut out five key words (must contain two vocabulary words) that are pertinent to the *plot*, a *character*, or the *setting* during this time period. (5 pts)
3. Along three sides of the paper, write examples of or draw representations of figurative language found in the text during your selected time period. (5pts)
4. At the TOP of the page, identify the following for your selected time period in the story: (5pts)
 - ✓ The main conflict
 - ✓ The protagonist
 - ✓ The antagonist
5. At the bottom of the page, write ONE quote of dialogue (internal - thoughts or external- speech) from the text that either propels the action of the story or reveals something about a character in the story. (5 pts)
6. Look at the images, key words, and quotes. On the back of your paper **EXPLAIN** what your evidence *means* and what it reveals about the plot and characters during the time period you selected. What inferences can you make based on evidence from the text? **Write five to eight sentences on the back of your paper.** (10 pts)

Nonfiction Connections

Download The Curse of the Factory System by John Fielden.

<https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=inu.30000041573936>

Quickwrite: What do you think the following quote from The Curse of the Factory System means? Do you think it applies to us today and if so, how?

“... We have nothing to fear from foreign competition. It is the greatest humbug that Englishmen were ever made to believe in; but from competition amongst ourselves we have

everything to fear; and if we do not restrain ourselves in time, or the legislature do not restrain us, we shall very soon destroy ourselves ...”

Discussion: What effect does the **setting**, the Industrial Revolution (in Great Britain), have on the characters in A Christmas Carol? How would it be different if the **setting** was modern day?

Connect the past with the present:

Search for or view articles online about child labor around the world and factory conditions of today:

http://teacher.scholastic.com/scholasticnews/indepth/child_labor/child_labor/index.asp?article=help

<http://commoncore.scholastic.com/sites/default/files/JS-090213-ClothingCosts-NEW.pdf>

[http://browndigital.bpc.com/publication/?i=265634&p=4#{\"page\":8,\"issue_id\":265634}](http://browndigital.bpc.com/publication/?i=265634&p=4#{\)

Activity: Students check the tags on their clothes to see in which country the garment was made.

DEBATE: Do you think Americans would rather the cost of clothing increase to promote better wages for factory workers around the world or do you think Americans want to be able to continue to purchase clothing at a low cost? Use three pieces of evidence from the articles to support your position.

AFTER ACTIVITIES

COMPARE and **CONTRAST** the original text with the stage version. Use a Venn diagram to help students organize their thoughts.

COMPARE and **CONTRAST** the drama to the actual circumstances in England during the 1840’s and 50’s. Do you think the drama downplays the reality of England society? Why or Why not? Why might a playwright downplay or exaggerate reality?

DEBATES: This is a great precursor to argumentative essay writing.

- Which of the three ghosts had the biggest impact on Scrooge and the story? How do you know?
- Can money buy happiness? Take a position: Money can buy happiness or money cannot buy happiness. Use evidence from the play, as well as,

Name _____ Date _____ Pd _____

Read the following **ASSERTION**. Do you agree or disagree with the statement? List 3 reasons one might agree or disagree with the assertion. Place a star next to the column that represents your position the best. Use **EVIDENCE** from the text to support 2 of your reasons.

Assertion: *Money can buy happiness.*

Defend the statement (agree)	Challenge the statement (disagree)
Reasons: 1. 2. 3.	Reasons: 1. 2. 3.

See page 18!

nonfiction resources to defend your position and challenge another's position.

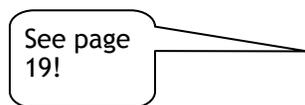
WRITING: Students write an argumentative essay. Introduce or review elements (counter argument, concessions, call to action, anecdotes, examples, etc...) needed in an argumentative essay. Log onto <https://www.discoveractaspire.org/pdf/>

Name _____ Date _____ Pd _____

Your ASSERTION or POINT:	
1. _____ _____ _____ _____ pg _____	1. _____ _____ _____ _____
2. _____ _____ _____ _____ pg _____	2. _____ _____ _____ _____
3. _____ _____ _____ _____ pg _____	3. _____ _____ _____ _____

[2014_exemplar_actaspire_writing.pdf](#) for rubrics that align with State testing.

Use the following graphic organizer to help students get started.



MATH ACTIVITIES

5th grade

Use a pair of perpendicular number lines, called axes, to define a coordinate system with the intersection of the lines (the origin) arranged to coincide with the 0 on each line and a given point in the plane located by using an ordered pair of numbers, called its coordinates. Understand that the first number indicates how far to travel from the origin in the direction of one axis, and the second number indicates how far to travel in the direction of the second axis, with the convention that the names of the two axes and the coordinates correspond (e.g., x-axis and x-coordinate, y-axis and y-coordinate). [5-G1]

- Example: See " **Simulation** " example for 6th grade.
- Example: Using a function table, students will figure out how much their business can make in x number of days if they make \$2.00 a day (or randomly assign a numeric value to each team/company.) **2x=y**. How much will they theoretically make in 4 days? 6 days?

Then graph the coordinates and draw a line to show the slope.
Begin discussing positive versus negative slope.

6th grade

Understand the absolute value of a rational number as its distance from 0 on the number line; interpret absolute value as magnitude for a positive or negative quantity in a realworld situation. [6-NS7c]

- Example: For an account balance of -30 dollars, write $|-30| = 30$ to describe the size of the debt in dollars.

d. Distinguish comparisons of absolute value from statements about order. [6-NS7d]

- Example: Recognize that an account balance less than -30 dollars represents a debt greater than 30 dollars.

Summarize numerical data sets in relation to their context, such as by: [6-SP5] a. Reporting the number of observations. [6-SP5a] b. Describing the nature of the attribute under investigation, including how it was measured and its units of measurement. [6-SP5b]

- Example: Track Scrooge's business income/profit and predict outcomes.
- Example: Students create their own business and randomly draw weekly/daily income totals and expenses to track their company's progress. Make predictions based on observation of trends. This could be a great "**Simulation!**" The teacher could create economic "gains" based on student participation and on task behaviors. Students could earn points/income to "buy" a "take-over" or an economic "obstruction" to give to other teams or students. Other students must have points/income in order to stop the "take-over" or have investors to help them from the hostile take-over! Let your imagination run with this one!

7th grade

Find probabilities of compound events using organized lists, tables, tree diagrams, and simulation. [7-SP8]

c. Design and use a simulation to generate frequencies for compound events. [7-SP8c]

- Example: See **Simulation** example above.
- Example: Use data from **Simulation**, which has "random" digits assigned, to approximate the answer to the question: If only 10% of most companies have a gain/profit within the first year, what is the probability that 2 student companies will make a profit within the first year?"

8th grade

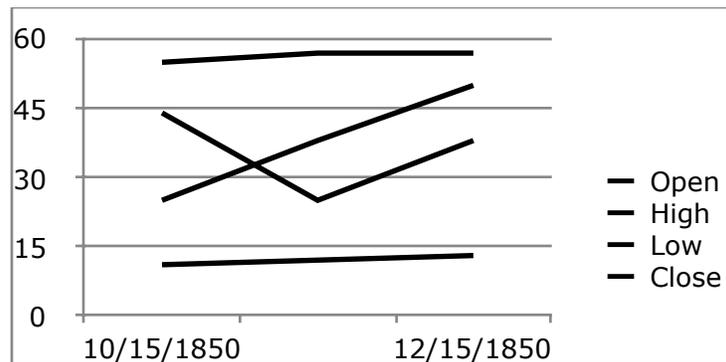
27. Use the equation of a linear model to solve problems in the context of bivariate measurement data, interpreting the slope and intercept. [8-SP3]

28. Understand that patterns of association can also be seen in bivariate categorical data by displaying frequencies and relative frequencies in a two-way table. Construct and interpret a two-way table summarizing data on two categorical variables collected from the same subjects. Use relative frequencies calculated for rows or columns to describe possible association between the two variables. [8-SP4]

Algebra I

Use formulas or equations of functions to calculate outcomes of exponential growth or decay.

Example: Solve problems involving compound interest, for Scrooge's business or student **Simulation** companies.



SOCIAL STUDIES ACTIVITIES

TIMELINE: Create a timeline for the Industrial Revolution

COMPARE and **CONTRAST** the American Industrial Revolution with that of Great Britain

A suggested website for educational materials on the American Industrial Revolution is http://www.loc.gov/teachers/classroommaterials/primarysourcesets/industrial-revolution/pdf/teacher_guide.pdf

A suggested website for educational materials on Great Britain's Industrial Revolution is

<http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/education/sessions-and-resources/?time-period=empire-and-industry/>

COMPARE and **CONTRAST** the political impact of the emergence of an industrial working class in Europe and in the United States.

RESEARCH inventions created during the Industrial Revolution. Write an *expository* essay describing the invention and explaining how it impacted commerce and economic factors, as well as political and geographical ones.

SOCRATIC SEMINAR: Why is it important to study the Industrial Revolution? What do we learn about today's society from the study of the Industrial Revolution?

Bibliography and References

This Study Guide was prepared by Fantasy Playhouse Children's Theater using following sources:

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<http://www.biography.com/people/charles-dickens-9274087#early-writing>

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https://www.discoveractaspire.org/pdf/2014_exemplar_actaspire_writing.pdf

http://teacher.scholastic.com/scholasticnews/indepth/child_labor/child_labor/index.asp?article=help

<http://www.victorianweb.org/authors/dickens/xmas/pold1.html>

Display on an overhead (Elmo) or reproduce on butcher/poster paper.

Name _____ Date _____
_____ Pd _____

Stave One

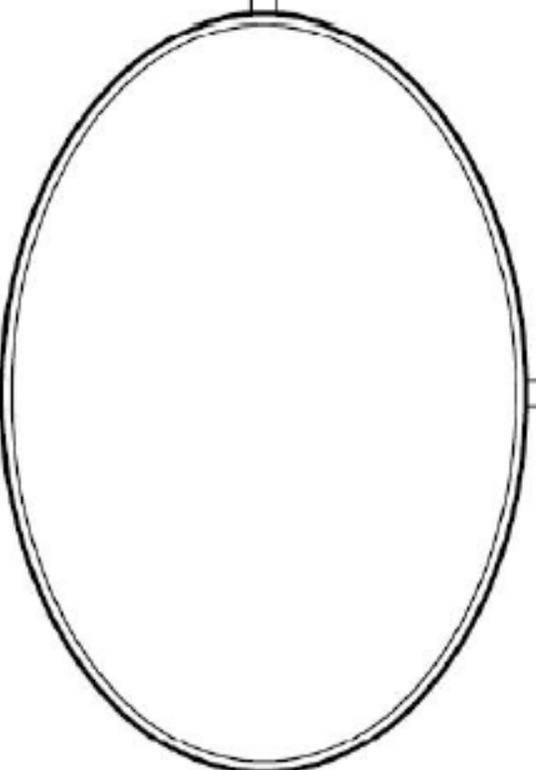
Read the following sentences. Use context clues to decide what you think the underlined vocabulary word means. Then check your work using a dictionary or an online dictionary.

+ or - Connotation	Sentence containing vocabulary word	What I think the underline word means.	The actual definition of the word
	The owner of one scant young nose, gnawed and mumbled by the hungry cold as bones are gnawed by dogs, stooped down at Scrooge’s keyhole to regale him with a Christmas carol : but at the first sound of “God bless you, merry gentleman! May nothing you dismay!”		
	Marley’s face. It was not in impenetrable shadow as the other objects in the yard were, but had a dismal light about it, like a bad lobster in a dark cellar.		
	His nephew left the room without an angry word, notwithstanding. He 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 .		
	“That is no light part of my penance ,” pursued the Ghost. “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.”		
	“...If he be like to die, he had better do it, and decrease the surplus population.”		
	“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;...”		
	Stave One (Hint: It <i>breaks</i> up each section of the <i>carol</i> !)		

Frayer Model Diagram

Definitions

Characteristics



Examples

Non-Examples

Name _____ Date _____ Period _____

THEME Chart Greed/Generosity in A Christmas Carol

Use the graphic organizer to analyze how the conflicts in the story reflect Scrooge's struggle with Greed versus Generosity.

Conflict: a tension or struggle between forces

There are 6 major conflicts in literature:

1. Man (human) in conflict with nature
2. Man (human) in conflict with one another
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Thematic statement: During _____ (insert the major event), _____ (name the character) is in conflict with _____ (use chart above for conflict type), demonstrating the idea _____ (name the character) is in _____.

Major Event	Describe the Conflict and Identify the Type	Big Idea/Thematic Statement (Use the sentence frame if needed.)
Slave 1:		
Slave 2:		
Slave 3:		

Past Present or Future One-Pager

1. In the center of the page, draw an object that symbolizes the **theme** for the time period you selected. (5pts)
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Assertion: *Money can buy happiness.*

Defend the statement (agree):	Challenge the statement (disagree)
Reasons:	Reasons:
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.

Name _____ Date _____ Pd _____

Your ASSERTION or POINT:

Your EVIDENCE or EXAMPLES:

1. _____

_____ pg _____

2. _____

_____ pg _____

3. _____

_____ pg _____

Your COMMENTARY or EXPLANATIONS:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

