



# Poetry Recitation & Copywork

## Poetry Selections

This session features various Christmas poetry. We've included four poetry selections for your kids and teens to read, listen to, memorize, and recite. They are:

- A Christmas Carol (poem) by Charles Dickens
- Advent by Christina Rossetti
- Santa Lucia
- A Visit from St. Nicholas by Clement Clarke Moore

For copywork, we have included Zaner-Bloser style handwriting sheets for primary, elementary, and cursive, as well as college ruled for older students. The poems we have chosen are:

- Advent
- Santa Lucia
- A Visit from St. Nicholas

*“I will honour Christmas in my heart, and try to keep it all the year. I will live in the Past, the Present, and the Future. The Spirits of all Three shall strive within me. I will not shut out the lessons that they teach.”*

~ Charles Dickens



# Charles Dickens

February 7, 1812 – June 9, 1870

Charles Dickens is arguably one of the most iconic writers in literary history. He is best known for works such as *A Christmas Carol*, *David Copperfield*, *Oliver Twist*, *Great Expectations*, and more.

Born on February 7, 1812 in Portsmouth, England, Charles was the second of eight children born to John and Elizabeth Dickens. His father worked as a clerk for the Navy Pay Office, but struggled to make ends meet and was eventually put in prison for debt. When he was only 12 years old, Charles was forced to leave school and work in a boot-blackening factory to support his family.

This traumatic event left a lasting impression on the young Dickens and shaped his outlook on life. He became an advocate for social change and

began to write about poor people, hoping to stop the exploitation of children and speaking out against poverty. *Oliver Twist* and *David Copperfield* both show the struggles of orphans and how hard it is to live in such a world.

Despite a difficult upbringing, Dickens was an avid reader and continued to pursue his passion for books by becoming a journalist at the age of twenty-one. It wasn't until he published *The Pickwick Papers* in 1836 that Dickens gained both fame and financial stability.

Christmas was very important to Dickens, as he believed the spirit of Christmas went along with the spirit of generosity. And so throughout his career, he wrote some of the most beloved Christmas stories, such as *A Christmas Carol*, *The Christmas Song*, *The Chimes*, and *The Cricket on the Hearth*.

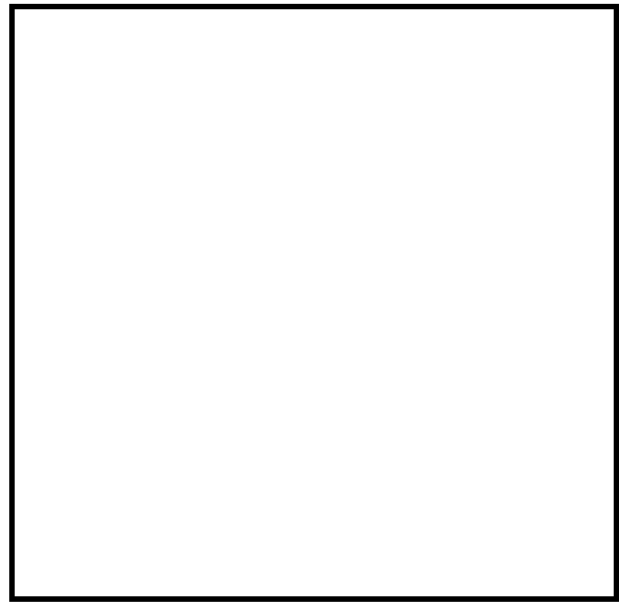
He died June 9, 1870 at the age of 58, but Charles Dickens remains an icon for generations to come as one of the greatest influences of modern literature and an advocate for social change and reform. His works have been adapted into countless movies, television shows, audio books, and more over the years, and they continue to touch the hearts of readers around the world.

# Author Study

Author: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Place of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_



**3 Facts About the Author:**

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**Best Known Stories by the Author**

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# A Christmas Carol

by Charles Dickens

I care not for Spring; on his fickle wing  
Let the blossoms and buds be borne:  
He woos them amain with his treacherous rain,  
And he scatters them ere the morn.  
An inconstant elf, he knows not himself,  
Or his own changing mind an hour,  
He'll smile in your face, and, with wry grimace,  
He'll wither your youngest flower.

Let the summer sun to his bright home run,  
He shall never be sought by me;  
When he's dimmed by a cloud I can laugh aloud,  
And care not how sulky he be;  
For his darling child is the madness wild  
That sports in fierce fever's train;  
And when love is too strong, it don't last long,  
As many have found to their pain.

A mild harvest night, by the tranquil light  
Of the modest and gentle moon,  
Has a far sweeter sheen for me, I ween,  
Than the broad and unblushing noon,  
But every leaf awakens my grief,  
As it lieth beneath the tree;  
So let Autumn air be never so fair,  
It by no means agrees with me.

But my song I troll out, for Christmas stout,  
The hearty, the true, and the bold;  
A bumper I drain, and with might and main  
Give three cheers for this Christmas old.  
We'll usher him in with a merry din  
That shall gladden his joyous heart,  
And we'll keep him up while there's bite or sup,  
And in fellowship good, we'll part.

In his fine honest pride, he scorns to hide  
One jot of his hard-weather scars;  
They're no disgrace, for there's much the same trace  
On the cheeks of our bravest tars.  
Then again I sing 'till the roof doth ring,  
And it echoes from wall to wall—  
To the stout old wight, fair welcome to-night,  
As the King of the Seasons all!

# Advent

by Christina Rossetti

This Advent moon shines cold and clear,  
These Advent nights are long;  
Our lamps have burned year after year,  
And still their flame is strong.  
"Watchman, what of the night?" we cry,  
Heart-sick with hope deferred:  
"No speaking signs are in the sky,"  
Is still the watchman's word.

The Porter watches at the gate,  
The servants watch within;  
The watch is long betimes and late,  
The prize is slow to win.  
"Watchman, what of the night?" but still  
His answer sounds the same:  
"No daybreak tops the utmost hill,  
Nor pale our lamps of flame."

One to another hear them speak,  
The patient virgins wise:  
"Surely He is not far to seek," -  
"All night we watch and rise."  
"The days are evil looking back,  
The coming days are dim;  
Yet count we not His promise slack,  
But watch and wait for Him."

One with another, soul with soul,  
They kindle fire from fire:  
"Friends watch us who have touched the goal."  
"They urge us, come up higher."  
"With them shall rest our waysore feet,  
With them is built our home,  
With Christ." "They sweet, but He most sweet,  
Sweeter than honeycomb."

There no more parting, no more pain,  
The distant ones brought near,  
The lost so long are found again,  
Long lost but longer dear:  
Eye hath not seen, ear hath not heard,  
Nor heart conceived that rest,  
With them our good things long deferred,  
With Jesus Christ our Best.

We weep because the night is long,  
We laugh, for day shall rise,  
We sing a slow contented song  
And knock at Paradise.  
Weeping we hold Him fast Who wept  
For us, -we hold Him fast;  
And will not let Him go except  
He bless us first or last.

Weeping we hold Him fast to-night;  
We will not let Him go  
Till daybreak smite our wearied sight,  
And summer smite the snow:  
Then figs shall bud, and dove with dove  
Shall soothe the livelong day;  
Then He shall say, "Arise, My love,  
My fair one, come away."

# Santa Lucia

(Old Swedish Song)

Night walks with a heavy step round yard and hearth,  
As the sun departs from earth, shadows are brooding.  
There in our dark house, walking with lit candles,  
Santa Lucia, Santa Lucia!

Night walks grand, yet silent, now hear its gentle wings,  
In every room so hushed, whispering like wings.  
Look, at our threshold stands, white-clad with light in her hair,  
Santa Lucia, Santa Lucia!

Darkness shall take flight soon, from earth's valleys.  
So she speaks wonderful words to us:  
A new day will rise again from the rosy sky  
Santa Lucia, Santa Lucia!

# A Visit from St. Nicholas

by Clement Clarke Moore

'Twas the night before Christmas, when all through the house  
Not a creature was stirring, not even a mouse;  
The stockings were hung by the chimney with care,  
In hopes that St. Nicholas soon would be there;  
The children were nestled all snug in their beds;  
While visions of sugar-plums danced in their heads;  
And mamma in her 'kerchief, and I in my cap,  
Had just settled our brains for a long winter's nap,  
When out on the lawn there arose such a clatter,  
I sprang from my bed to see what was the matter.  
Away to the window I flew like a flash,  
Tore open the shutters and threw up the sash.  
The moon on the breast of the new-fallen snow,  
Gave a lustre of midday to objects below,  
When what to my wondering eyes did appear,  
But a miniature sleigh and eight tiny rein-deer,  
With a little old driver so lively and quick,  
I knew in a moment he must be St. Nick.  
More rapid than eagles his coursers they came,  
And he whistled, and shouted, and called them by name:  
"Now, Dasher! now, Dancer! now Prancer and Vixen!  
On, Comet! on, Cupid! on, Donner and Blitzen!  
To the top of the porch! to the top of the wall!  
Now dash away! dash away! dash away all!"  
As leaves that before the wild hurricane fly,  
When they meet with an obstacle, mount to the sky;  
So up to the housetop the coursers they flew  
With the sleigh full of toys, and St. Nicholas too—

And then, in a twinkling, I heard on the roof  
The prancing and pawing of each little hoof.  
As I drew in my head, and was turning around,  
Down the chimney St. Nicholas came with a bound.  
He was dressed all in fur, from his head to his foot,  
And his clothes were all tarnished with ashes and soot;  
A bundle of toys he had flung on his back,  
And he looked like a pedler just opening his pack.  
His eyes—how they twinkled! his dimples, how merry!  
His cheeks were like roses, his nose like a cherry!  
His droll little mouth was drawn up like a bow,  
And the beard on his chin was as white as the snow;  
The stump of a pipe he held tight in his teeth,  
And the smoke, it encircled his head like a wreath;  
He had a broad face and a little round belly  
That shook when he laughed, like a bowl full of jelly.  
He was chubby and plump, a right jolly old elf,  
And I laughed when I saw him, in spite of myself;  
A wink of his eye and a twist of his head  
Soon gave me to know I had nothing to dread;  
He spoke not a word, but went straight to his work,  
And filled all the stockings; then turned with a jerk,  
And laying his finger aside of his nose,  
And giving a nod, up the chimney he rose;  
He sprang to his sleigh, to his team gave a whistle,  
And away they all flew like the down of a thistle.  
But I heard him exclaim, ere he drove out of sight—  
"Happy Christmas to all, and to all a good night!"

# Poetry Study

**Title:**

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**Type of Poem:**

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**Use the box to at right to draw a picture of what the poem brings to mind.**



**Write one thing you liked and did not like about the poem:**

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**Write three adjectives about the poem.**

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**Compose a few lines of your own poem inspired by this work**

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