

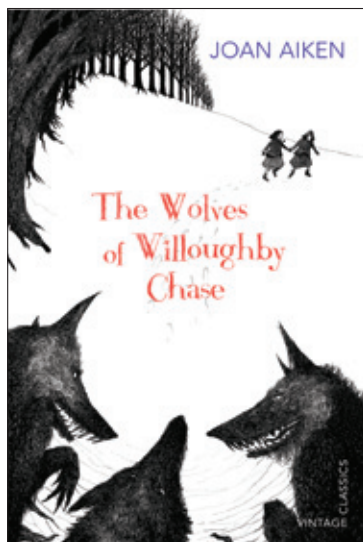
VINTAGE *Children's* CLASSICS

# Christmas

## ACTIVITY PACK

### Contents

In this pack are activities on the following books:



VINTAGE CHILDREN'S CLASSICS

[www.worldofstories.co.uk](http://www.worldofstories.co.uk)

## ABOUT THIS PACK

This Christmas-themed activity pack has been created by Vintage Classics around some of their favourite Children's Classics. Our list of books has been created with the help of children your age and will be a mixture of old classics and newer favourites. If you've read one and enjoyed it and are not sure what to read next our exciting new website might be able to help you. Try it out here:

[www.worldofstories.co.uk](http://www.worldofstories.co.uk)

## IN THIS PACK ARE A NUMBER OF ACTIVITIES TO HELP YOU EXPLORE THE BOOKS:

- Test your knowledge and impress your friends
  - Share your own opinions
  - Inspire your own art and writing
- Discover new facts and have more things to think about
  - Inspire your next reading choice

But most importantly we want you to enjoy them and have fun. Whether you've read some or none of the books there are activities in this pack that everyone can take part in. All you need is pens and pencils, a sharp brain and a keen eye!

(for the adults)

The pack contains a variety of activities for each book. Some activities are short and fun and take about 5 to 10 minutes while others are more detailed and will take a little longer. The activities have been designed to suit a wide range of reading abilities and can be undertaken by all children regardless of whether they have read the books before. Should you need further information on the books or activities in this pack please email [vintageclassics@randomhouse.co.uk](mailto:vintageclassics@randomhouse.co.uk) and for more activity ideas you can also check our website [www.worldofstories.co.uk](http://www.worldofstories.co.uk)

VINTAGE CHILDREN'S CLASSICS

[www.worldofstories.co.uk](http://www.worldofstories.co.uk)

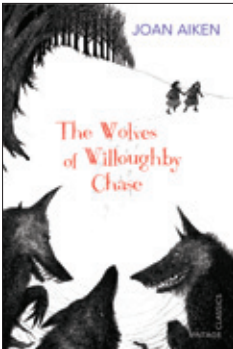




## A Christmas Carol CHARLES DICKENS

**'Bah! Humbug!'**

Mr Scrooge is a squeezing, wrenching, grasping, scraping, clutching, miserable old man. Nobody stops him in the street to say a cheery hello; nobody would dare ask him for a favour. And I hope you'd never be so foolish as to wish him a 'Merry Christmas'! Scrooge doesn't believe in Christmas, charity, kindness - or ghosts. But one cold Christmas Eve, Scrooge receives some unusual visitors who show him just how very mistaken he's been...



## The Wolves of Willoughby Chase JOAN AIKEN

**Can you go a little faster? Can you run?**

Long ago, at a time in history that never happened, England was overrun with wolves. But as Bonnie and her cousin Sylvia discover, real danger often lies closer to home. Their new governess, Miss Slighcarp, doesn't seem at all nice. She shuts Bonnie in a cupboard, fires the faithful servants and sends the cousins far away from Willoughby Chase to a place they will never be found. Can Bonnie and Sylvia outwit the wicked Miss Slighcarp and her network of criminals, forgers and snitches?



## Winter Holiday ARTHUR RANSOME

**'You know what it's like. Dark at teatime and sleeping indoors: nothing ever happens in the winter holidays.'**

Or so Nancy thinks. Then the lake ices over completely and the Swallows and Amazons, along with Dick and Dorothea - 'the D's' - plan a race to find the North Pole. How will they reach it if they can't sail? By sledges of course! But when a blizzard blows up and there is a mix up about signals, the D's disappear into the Arctic night. Disaster looms. Can the Swallows and Amazons save their friends?



## Little Women LOUISA MAY ALCOTT

**'Rich or poor, we will keep together and be happy in one another'**

Christmas won't be the same this year for Meg, Jo, Beth and Amy, as their father is away fighting in the Civil War, and the family has fallen on hard times. But though they may be poor, life for the four March sisters is rich with colour, as they play games, put on wild theatricals, make new friends, argue, grapple with their vices, learn from their mistakes, nurse each other through sickness and disappointments, and get into all sorts of trouble.



## A Little Princess FRANCES HODGSON BURNETT

**Without her beloved father and miles from home, it is very hard for Sara Crewe to like her new life at boarding school.**

Luckily Sara is always dreaming up wonderful things and her power of telling stories wins her lots of friends. When a letter arrives that brings disastrous news, the wicked headmistress Miss Minchin forces Sara to become a servant. Her lovely clothes and toys are taken away from her. She must work from dawn until midnight. How will Sara cope with her new found poverty? Can her imagination help her overcome this horrible situation?

**VINTAGE CHILDREN'S CLASSICS**

[www.worldofstories.co.uk](http://www.worldofstories.co.uk)

# A CHRISTMAS CAROL



## Charles Dickens – the inventor of Christmas?

*A Christmas Carol* is Dickens' most popular book, and Scrooge's catchphrase 'Bah! Humbug!' is the most well known quotation from all of Dickens' novels. Even Scrooge's name has become another word for stinginess. You can tell from the story how much Dickens truly loved Christmas. On Christmas Eve, he would encourage his whole household – servants and family – to take part in plays and games that he made up himself, along with feasting and presents. Dickens wrote many stories and essays about Christmastime, which he published in special Christmas editions of his magazines, alongside similarly themed stories by other writers of the time. He encouraged his readers to be aware of the charitable opportunities of the season, and to 'open their shut-up hearts freely' to those in need. In the end, Dickens became so associated with Christmas that when he died, a little girl was heard to ask, 'Dickens dead? Then will Father Christmas die too?'

It might seem like Dickens invented Christmas, but in fact the festivities and traditions that we all enjoy today were drawn together over many years from the customs of many different times and places. For instance, while most people today eat a roast turkey for their Christmas dinner, we see from *A Christmas Carol* that this was quite a luxury in Victorian times. Instead, most people ate goose, beef or venison, followed or even accompanied, by a plum pudding.

This was a mixture of fruit, flour and suet, which was usually wrapped in cloth and then steamed in the oven – hence the smell 'like a washing day' when Mrs Cratchit displays her 'speckled cannon ball' of a pudding!

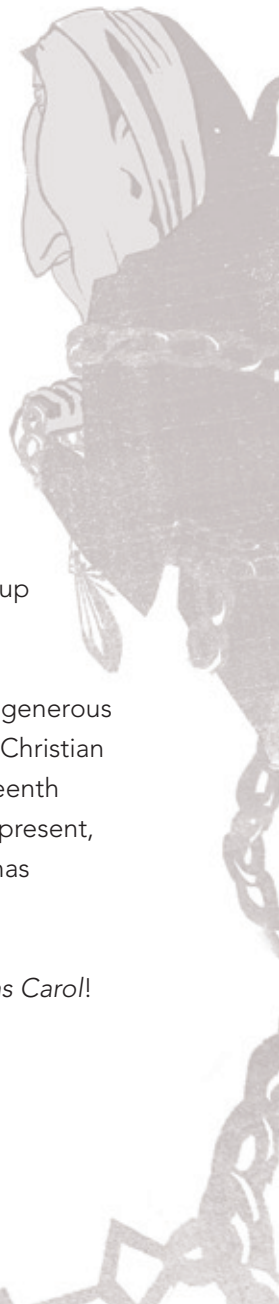
Houses were decorated with holly and other greenery, but the Christmas tree didn't arrive in Britain until the late eighteenth century. It is said that Queen Victoria's husband brought the idea from his native Germany, but the Hanoverian royal family (Victoria's ancestors) were the first to put up Christmas trees, which were decorated with nuts, fruits and paper decorations.

Father Christmas has various different origins: St. Nicholas or 'Sinterklaas', the saint famous for his generous gifts to the poor, the god Odin from Norse mythology, who rode a flying horse, and an allegory of Christian custom created in opposition to the Puritan government who tried to ban Christmas in the seventeenth century. In those times he was always depicted wearing a green cloak, like the Ghost of Christmas present, and legend has it that his coat only turned red very recently, as a result of Coca Cola's Christmas advertising campaigns!

In any case, nowadays, Christmas wouldn't be Christmas without Dickens and *A Christmas Carol*!

VINTAGE CHILDREN'S CLASSICS

[www.worldofstories.co.uk](http://www.worldofstories.co.uk)



# A CHRISTMAS CAROL



## Play some Victorian games this Christmas!

At Fred's Christmas dinner they play all sorts of games that are just as fun to play today as they were in Dickens' time – try them out with friends or family this Christmas holiday.

### Blind Man's Buff

1. Make sure all precariously placed breakables or precious vases are moved safely out of the way.
2. Blindfold one player – check they can't see through their blindfold! Then spin them round a few times so they don't know which way they are facing.
3. All the other players should move away from the blindfolded player, and move round the room. Each should run up and touch the blindfolded player, and run away again to give them a chance to catch them. The blindfolded player can move round too.
4. Once someone is caught, the blindfolded player has to identify them using touch alone.
5. If the blindfolded player guesses who they have caught, that person is blindfolded and the game begins again.
6. No pinching, hair-pulling, or pushing allowed!

VINTAGE CHILDREN'S CLASSICS

[www.worldofstories.co.uk](http://www.worldofstories.co.uk)



# A CHRISTMAS CAROL



## 'I love my love with an A'

Scrooge's enchanting niece is particularly good at this game, which can be played with any number of people.

1. Write each letter of the alphabet onto separate pieces of paper. Each player takes a letter of the alphabet, starting with 'A' of course, and supplies adjectives or nouns beginning with that letter to complete the following statements:

**I love my love with an A because he/she is** (flattering adjective beginning with A).

**I hate my love with an A because he/she is** (unfavourable adjective beginning with A).

**He/she dines on** (food or drink beginning with A);

**he/she lives in** (town or country beginning with A)

and **his/her name is** (name beginning with A).

2. The next player repeats the statements, using the letter B, and on you go. The game is more fun if you try and use unexpected, unusual or funny words to fill in the gaps.

VINTAGE CHILDREN'S CLASSICS

[www.worldofstories.co.uk](http://www.worldofstories.co.uk)

# A CHRISTMAS CAROL



## Wordsearch



Scrooge  
Humbug  
Tiny Tim  
Marley  
Ghost

Fezziwig  
Goose  
Phantom  
Miser  
Merry Christmas

VINTAGE CHILDREN'S CLASSICS

[www.worldofstories.co.uk](http://www.worldofstories.co.uk)



# A CHRISTMAS CAROL



## Wordsearch - answers



Scrooge  
Humbug  
Tiny Tim  
Marley  
Ghost

Fezziwig  
Goose  
Phantom  
Miser  
Merry Christmas

VINTAGE CHILDREN'S CLASSICS

[www.worldofstories.co.uk](http://www.worldofstories.co.uk)





# A CHRISTMAS CAROL



## Write Your Own Ghost Story

'It was with great astonishment, and with a strange, inexplicable dread, that as he looked, he saw this bell begin to swing. It swung so softly in the outset that it scarcely made a sound; but soon it rang out loudly, and so did every bell in the house...

The cellar-door flew open with a booming sound, and then he heard the noise much louder, on the floors below; then coming up the stairs; then coming straight towards his door.'

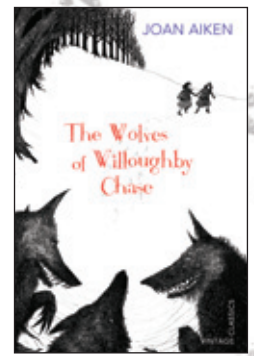
Christmas Eve is a good time for telling ghost stories. Why not try writing your own by taking tips from the master storyteller himself?

Take a look at the extract above and think how Dickens creates tension and a feeling of unease. How is he using sound? And how does he pace his description? Think about what happens when you only half-describe an unusual event. How will the reader feel?

VINTAGE CHILDREN'S CLASSICS

[www.worldofstories.co.uk](http://www.worldofstories.co.uk)





# The Wolves of Willoughby Chase

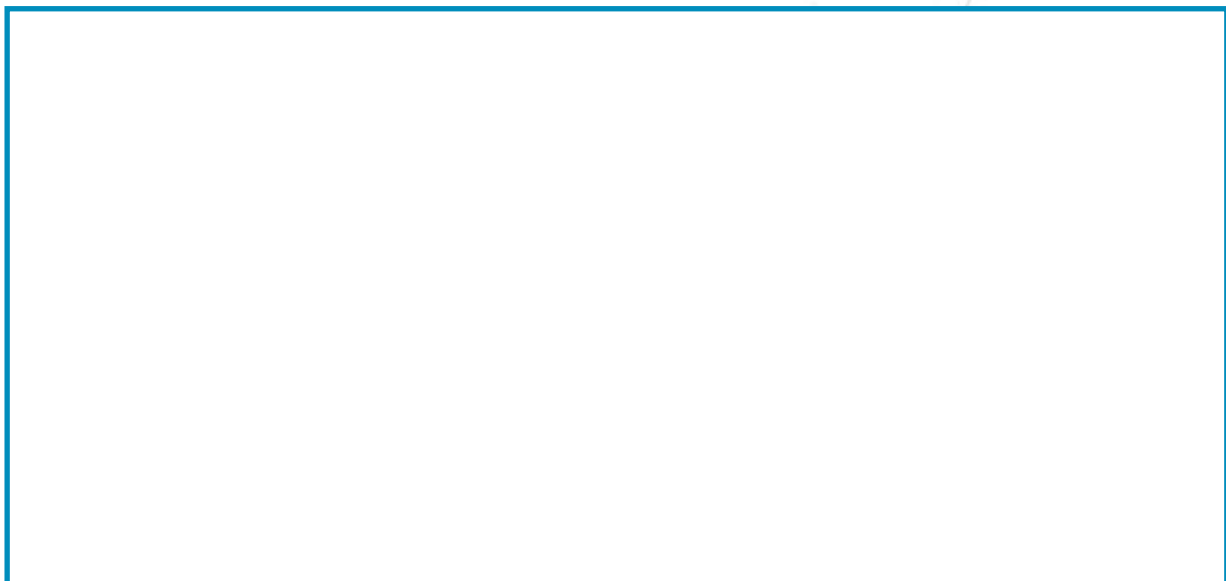
**Christmas isn't really Christmas without lots of snow...**

Why not read this atmospheric opening from *The Wolves of Willoughby Chase* and draw the scene in the space below. Try cutting it out and sticking onto a piece of folded card to make a Christmas card. You could add silver glitter to the snow to make it sparkle.

'It was dusk – winter dusk. Snow lay white and shining over the pleated hills, and icicles hung from the forest trees. Snow lay piled on the dark road across the Willoughby Wold...



Snow lay thick too, upon the roof of Willoughby Chase, the great house that stood on an open eminence in the heart of the wold. But for all that, the Chase looked an inviting home – a warm and welcoming stronghold. Its rosy herring-bone brick was bright and well-cared-for, its numerous turrets and battlements stood sharp against the sky, and the crenellated balconies, corniced with snow, each held a golden square of window. The house was all alight within...'



**VINTAGE CHILDREN'S CLASSICS**


[www.worldofstories.co.uk](http://www.worldofstories.co.uk)




# WINTER HOLIDAY




## What inspired Arthur Ransome to write *Winter Holiday*?



*Winter Holiday* is set in January and February and follows on from the events of *Swallowdale*. It is packed with wintery pursuits: skating, sledging and ice sailing, to name but a few. Ransome took inspiration for the book from the Great Frost of 1895 when he was at school in Windermere in the Lake District. That year the lake froze particularly hard and the eleven-year-old Ransome spent lots of time skating with his friends. The ice was a busy place and the boys were constantly dodging ice yachts, brass bands and once even a coach and horses!



In 1929, whilst Ransome was living near Windermere and mulling over the idea of writing *Swallows and Amazons*, the lake froze hard again. Freezing conditions and the fun they bring were probably still in his mind when he sat down to write *Winter Holiday* in 1933. Nowadays these intense freezes seem to be a thing of the past due to global warming.



Another major influence on *Winter Holiday* is the true story of Fridtjof Nansen's quest to reach the North Pole. Nansen was a Norwegian explorer who attempted to become the first man to get to the pole by sail boat and dog sled.



VINTAGE CHILDREN'S CLASSICS

[www.worldofstories.co.uk](http://www.worldofstories.co.uk)

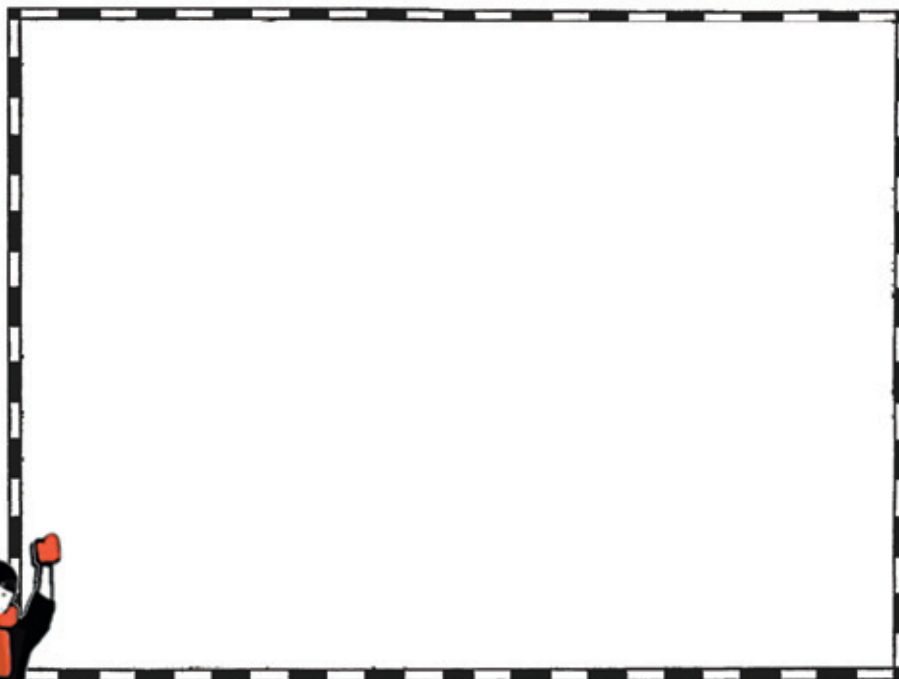
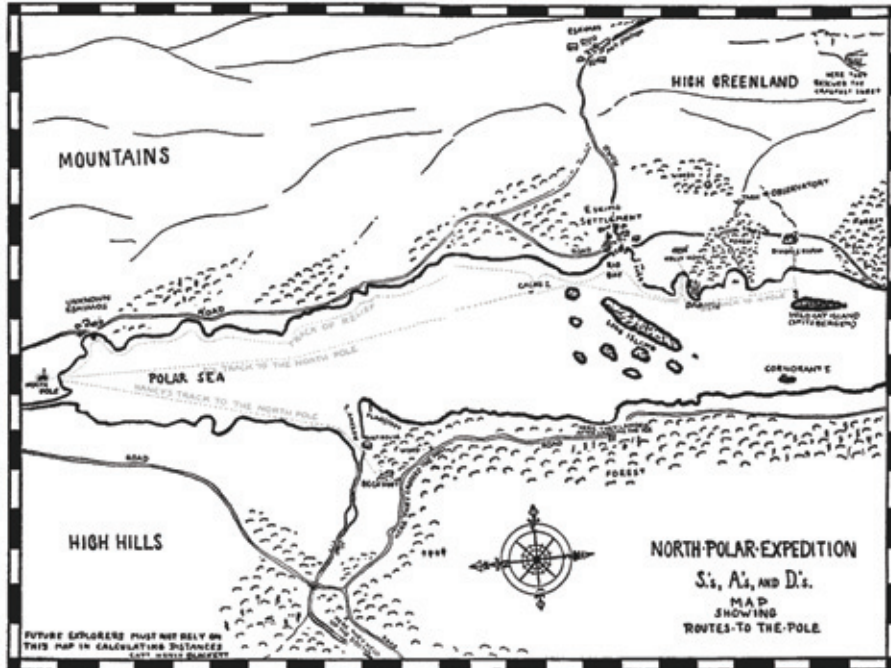




# WINTER HOLIDAY



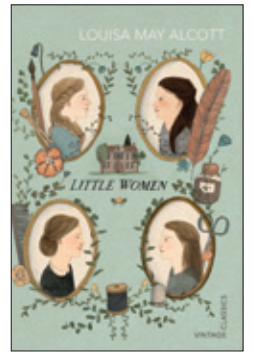
Imagine you are a polar explorer and design your own map based on the image here.



VINTAGE CHILDREN'S CLASSICS

[www.worldofstories.co.uk](http://www.worldofstories.co.uk)

# LITTLE WOMEN

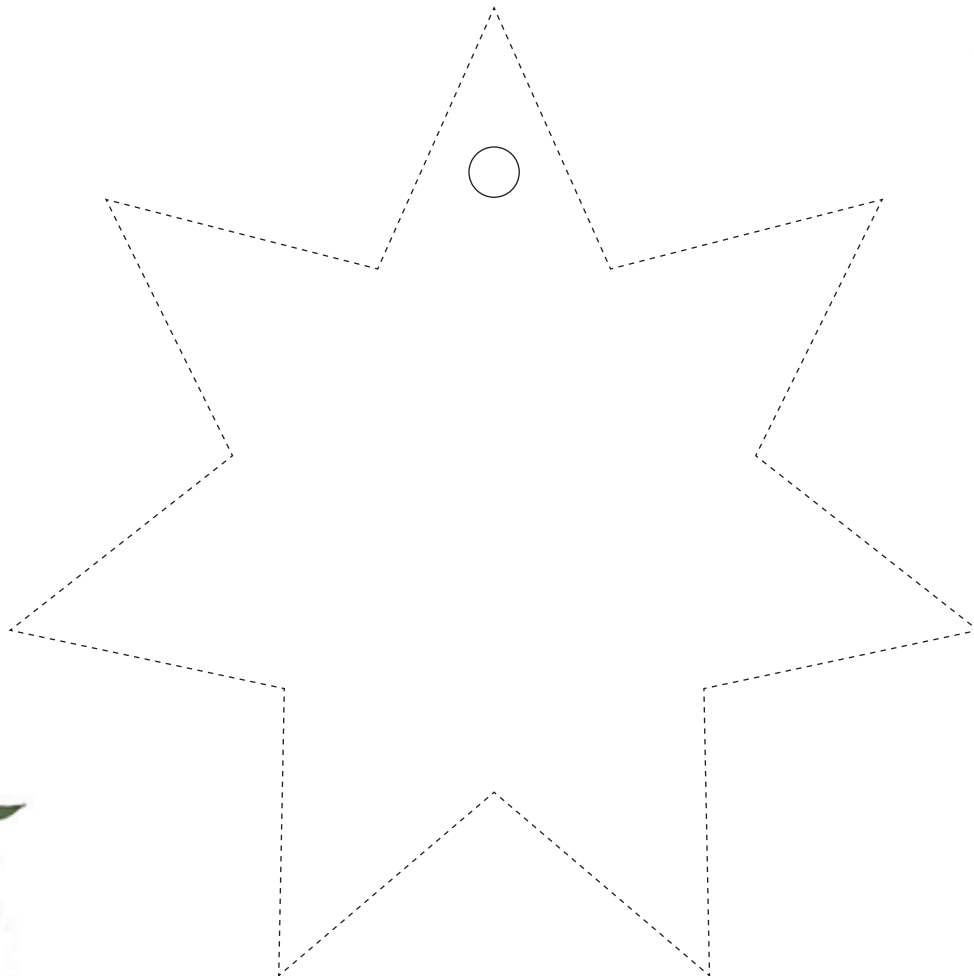


## A Christmas Gift

**'Christmas won't be Christmas without any presents.'** The opening chapters of *Little Women* tells of the March girls' frugal Christmas while their father is away at war. The sisters may not have very much, but are kind enough to donate their Christmas breakfast to a family who needs it more than them.

Christmas is a time for giving, and making those you care about happy. Why not bring a smile to someone's face by making them this paper star to hang on their Christmas tree.

You can decorate it however you like and then cut it out. Remember to be careful with scissors and ask an adult if you need help.



VINTAGE CHILDREN'S CLASSICS

[www.worldofstories.co.uk](http://www.worldofstories.co.uk)

# A Little Princess



Sara Crewe suffers from cold and hunger during her wretched winter in the school's attic. When she finds a fourpenny piece she is kind enough to share her good fortune with a starving girl giving her the lion's share of the piping-hot currant buns she buys from the bakers, despite her own empty stomach.

Baking bread is wonderful but time-consuming – these biscuits are just as scrumptious and can hang on your tree as decorations as well!

## Recipe for Star Biscuit Decorations

### For the biscuits

- 300g plain flour  
(plus more for dusting)
- a pinch of salt
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 100g butter (soft)
- 100g soft dark brown sugar
- 2 large eggs (beaten)
- 4 tablespoons honey

### For the decoration

- 300g icing sugar
- silver balls

Line 2 baking sheets with baking parchment and put the oven on to 170°C/gas mark 3.

Beat together the butter and sugar until light and fluffy, then add the eggs and honey, stirring all the time. In a separate bowl mix together the flour, baking powder, cinnamon and salt, then mix everything together in one bowl.

Put your (clean) hands into the bowl and squidge the mixture together to form a ball, then wrap in clingfilm and put in the fridge for 20 minutes. This will make it easier to roll out.

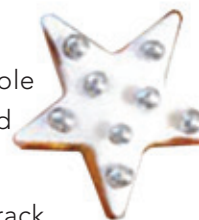
Once the mixture is chilled, dust a clean work surface with flour and using a rolling pin, roll out your mixture to about 5mm thick. Then carefully cut out your stars using a biscuit cutter. Place on the baking sheets. Keep going until all of the dough is used up.

If you want to put your stars on your tree, before you put into the oven on your baking sheets use a pen lid to press out a hole at the top of each biscuit (this is where you will need to thread the ribbon through later).

Cook for twenty minutes until lightly golden. Place on a wire rack and cool.

Make up the icing following the instructions on the packet and drizzle it onto the biscuits, then decorate with your silver balls.

When the icing is dry, thread short lengths of ribbon through the holes, tie the ends together and then hang on your tree.



VINTAGE CHILDREN'S CLASSICS

[www.worldofstories.co.uk](http://www.worldofstories.co.uk)

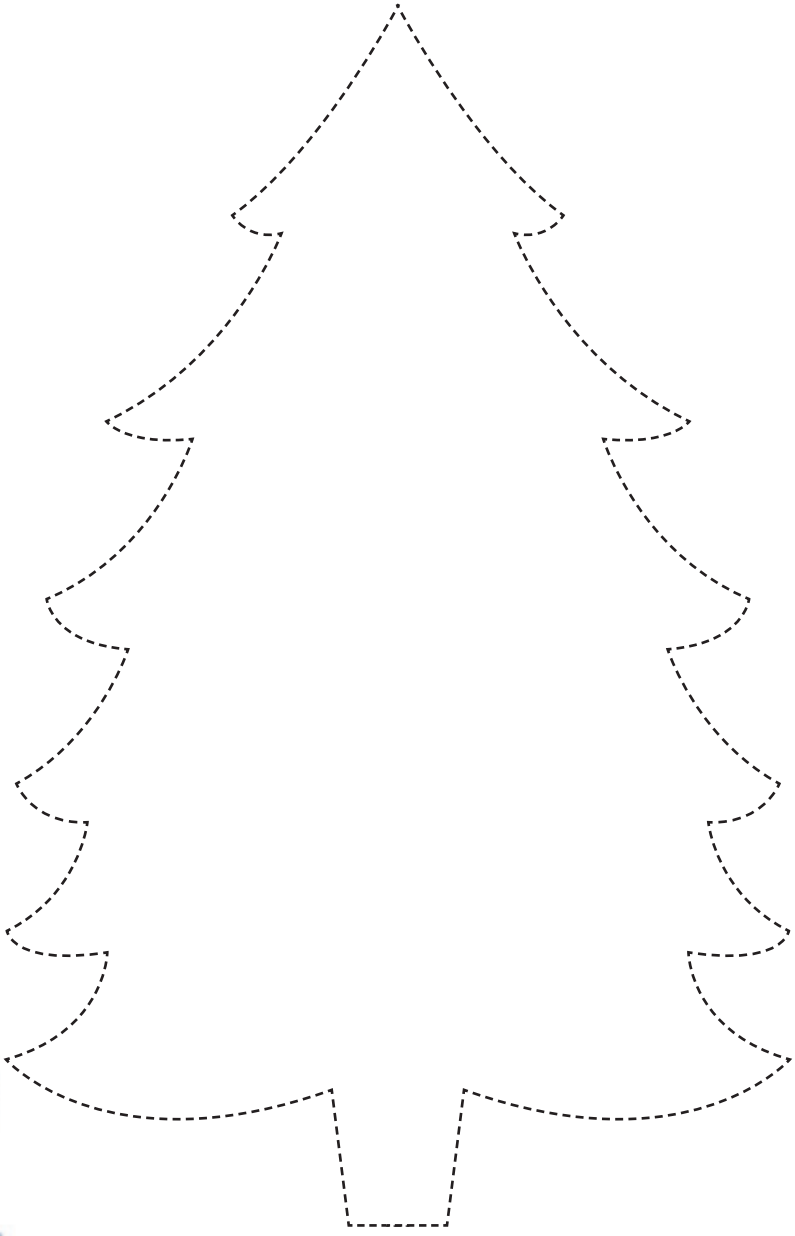




# A Little Princess

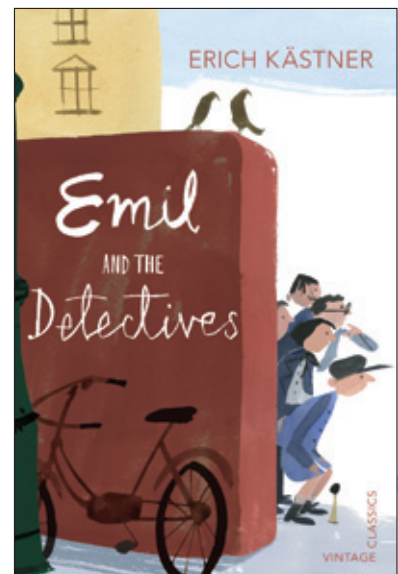
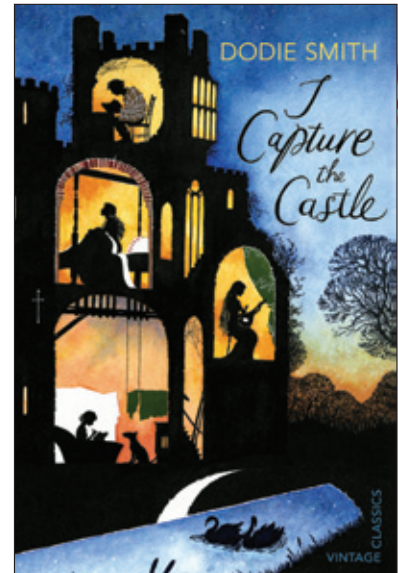
Sara Crewe keeps herself cheerful by telling wonderful stories shaped by her vivid imagination.

Imagine the most perfect Christmas tree and then decorate it here. You can cut it out and use it as a Christmas bookmark once you have done!



VINTAGE CHILDREN'S CLASSICS  
[www.worldofstories.co.uk](http://www.worldofstories.co.uk)

If you liked these books why not try...



VINTAGE CHILDREN'S CLASSICS

[www.worldofstories.co.uk](http://www.worldofstories.co.uk)



# World of Stories Website

Have more fun online

FIND EXCITING NEW BOOKS TO READ!

Explore the world of stories to discover hidden books and secret content, **play games** and **quizzes**, enter **competitions** to win free books, write your own **reviews** find out **facts** about your favourite books and authors

and lots more!



[www.worldofstories.co.uk](http://www.worldofstories.co.uk)