The episodes of christmas as highlighted in "a christmas carol”

Like Christmas morning itself – when each present represents a discrete mystery, separate from the last – the Christmas Carol is divided into a set of episodes. The book's chapters are episodic, with the duration of each spirit a single episode. Within each chapter, there a number of discrete scenes that can be considered separately, and called episodes. While the division into episodes becomes predictable, the way Scrooge and the ghost physically move between these intra-chapter episodes is not predictable. One example of such movement occurs when the present spirit and Scrooge travel from the miner's village to a lighthouse over a " frightful range of rocks" and " a dismal reef of sunken rocks, some league or so from shore" on their way to the lighthouse (56). In this case the movement is very prominent; both we and Scrooge are aware of the movement. In each chapter the prominence of this inter-episode movement is consistent within the chapter, but different than in other chapters.

The most fundamental difference is between the prominence of the inter-episode movement in the future on one hand, and the present and past on the other. In the past, Scrooge and the spirit " left the high-road, by a well remembered lane, and soon approached a mansion of dull red brick" (29). As when he is moving toward the lighthouse, in the present, Scrooge is explicitly aware of the movement he is making. Scrooge experiences not only the episodes but also the movement between episodes as discrete events. In the future, Scrooge's awareness of the time between episodes disappears. When, in the future, they move from Scrooge's bedroom to the city center, " they scarcely seemed to enter the city; for the city seemed to spring up about them" (66). Later in the chapter Scrooge " recoiled in terror,

for the scene had changed" without any signal (72). Like the future spirit itself, movement in the future cannot be seen or heard. The past, however, is predictably different than the present; it is separated from the present by its excess of travel. The episodes are not as discrete, and the transportation, the movement itself seems to take prominence: the entire chapter seems to be spent wandering.

The physical difference in the way Dickens portrays these times allows us to create models through which we can consider the three times. Now, neither the future nor the past is ever experienced in physical form as it is in this novel – it is always an element of our imagination – so it might seem silly to consider this story as a useful model for differentiating these three times. But the physicality that Dickens gives these times allows us to see past and future as something other than the abstract intellectual concepts they usually are. The models might be described as follows: The future extends out over a flat plain in front of us, with isolated events sticking out. Our view is level with the plain so we cannot actually see the ground between events, but we can see discrete pillars that are events. The distance and course between events is disconcertingly out of view. Looking at the past, on the other hand, is like viewing a wall map of time: the distances and directions between events is clear, but no events stand out – the view is two dimensional. The present thus emerges as the only three dimensional, interactive time (like virtual reality versus Gameboy, it is the obvious choice (yet some still choose Gameboy?)). And it is on the present that Scrooge is able to interact with the time. When the present spirit appears ready to move on Scrooge's nephew and his family are just beginning another game.

Scrooge pleads, " one half hour, Spirit, only one!" While the spirit does not explicitly answer, Scrooge is allowed to watch the new game " called Yes and No" (61). Scrooge has agency. In both the past and future Scrooge makes similar appeals to alter the apparent course of movement, but is denied.