



Oh! But he was a tight-fisted hand at the grindstone, Scrooge! a squeezing, wrenching, grasping, scraping, clutching, covetous old sinner.



Scrooge had a small fire, but the clerks was so very much smaller...



'every idiot who goes about with Merry Christmas on his lips should be boiled in his own pudding and buried with a stake of holly through his heart'.



[Christmas] is when men and women open up their shut up hearts freely and think of the people below them



Are there no prisons? And the union workhouses?



If they would rather die, they had better do it and decrease the surplus population.



I wear the chain I forged in life.



Business? Mankind was my business!



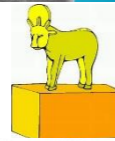
What! Would you so soon put out the, with worldly hands the light I give?



Scrooge was better than his word. He did it all, and infinitely more; and to Tiny Tim, who DID NOT die, he was a second father.



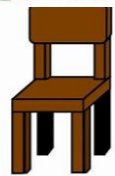
He has the power to render us happy or unhappy; to make our service light or burdensome; a pleasure or a toil.



Another idol has displaced me.... Gain engrosses you.



Come in, and know me better, man.



I see a vacant seat, in the poor chimney corner, and a crutch without an owner.



Will you decide what men shall live, what men shall die?



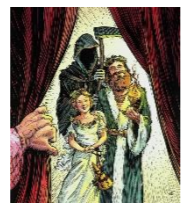
There is nothing in the world so irresistibly contagious as good humour and laughter.



I know your purpose is to do me good, and... I hope to live to be a better man.



He frightened every one away from him when he was alive, to profit us when he was dead! Ha! Ha! Ha!



I will live in the past, present and the future! The spirits of all three shall strive within me.

Context Notes: Charles Dickens and the Victorian Era (1843)

- Charles Dickens was born into a middle class family. His father was imprisoned for debt (owing money) and so Charles Dickens had to give up his education and work in a factory at a young age. This helped him gain empathy for the poor and their living and working conditions. Many of his novels are about society and trying to make life better for the poor.
- The population grew rapidly in the 1800s: 1 million to 6 million.
- Due to the industrial revolution, many people moved to London for work and had to live in cheap, overcrowded housing which led to hunger, disease and crime. Children suffered the most as they were used by factory owners to work in poor conditions for long hours.
- In 1798 Thomas Malthus wrote that population would always grow faster than food supplies which meant poor people would always die. On the contrary, Dickens believed that there was enough food to go around if the rich helped the poor.
- The Poor Law was designed to stop poor people from being lazy; it meant that people without a job had to go to a workhouse to receive food and shelter. However, the workhouses were purposefully made to be horrible, to force the poor to get jobs. Families would have to live in workhouses but would be separated and all made to work menial and physically difficult jobs. Dickens believed that it was the rich who had a responsibility to help the poor and that they should not have to work and live in such awful conditions.
- At the start of the 19th Century (1800s) Christmas was hardly celebrated at all but by the end of the 19th Century it has become the most important celebration of the year, largely to due to the popularity of A Christmas Carol.
- Christmas also became more secular which meant that it was not connected with religion as much; it became a time of togetherness and being charitable, values that Dickens was trying to promote in his novella.
- Many of the middle and upper classes were Christians. Being a Christian meant going to church every Sunday (Sabbatarianism), avoiding alcohol and practicing sexual restraint.
- He was an anti-Sabbatarian because it meant that working class people were not able to enjoy their one day off because everything was shut. As they did not have ovens at home, they could not even get a hot meal because the baker would be at church too!
- Dickens believed that being a good Christian actually meant helping people who were less fortunate than you.
- 'Gothic' stories were quite popular at the time and usually took place at night, with ghosts and foggy/ dark scenery.

Writer's Methods in a NOVEL

- Similes** – Dickens uses similes at the start to describe Scrooge: 'as solitary as an Oyster.'
- Foreshadowing** – Dickens creates tension by foreshadowing the appearance of Marley in the door knocker.
- Allegory** – Dickens uses the characters of Ignorance and Want to symbolise society's problems and the effect it has on children in poverty
- The Staves** – the chapters are called staves which are the lines that music is written on, relating to the 'carol' that Dickens' is telling. Each stave focuses on a specific aspect of Scrooge's transformation. Also, to 'stave' as a verb means to pierce, which shows Scrooge's miserly and cruel exterior slowly be 'pierced' with regret.
- Circular structure** -The story comes full circle by ending where it begun in order to highlight Scrooge's transformation. Dickens shows us how he has changed by showing him interact with everyone he met in Stave One.
- The senses** – at many points in the text, Dickens focuses on senses to show the spirit of Christmas.
- Symbolism** – Fire symbolises the Christmas Spirit and is linked to characters like Fred, while ice is symbolic of Scrooge's selfishness. The spirits' appearances are also very symbolic such as the holly representing Christianity.
- Juxtaposition** – the contrast of Scrooge and Tiny Tim's deaths

- Supernatural:** Dickens uses the spirits to drive the plot adding a sense of mystery and surprise.
- Transformation:** The whole plot drives Scrooge's transformation from a bitter old miser, to a generous, joyful man.
- Redemption:** Scrooge eventually fulfils Marley's wish that he redeems himself before it is too late, so that he can help the poor like Tiny Tim.
- Ignorance:** not only are the rich like Scrooge ignorant of the struggles of the poor, it is also the children who are ignorant as they are in need of education.
- Christmas Spirit:** described by Fred as a time when people 'open their shut-up hearts freely'. It ultimately transforms Scrooge when he promises to 'honour Christmas' and 'try to keep it all the year'.
- Time:** Dickens use time to explore how Scrooge has become the way he has and to show him how to change his ways.
- Family:** Dickens shows through Fred, Belle and the Cratchit family how important family is.
- Isolation:** Scrooge is presented negatively as 'solitary as an oyster' to highlight the importance of spending time with those you love like Fred does.
- Social responsibility:** Dickens' ultimate purpose is to get wealthy people to understand that they need to share responsibility for the poor by supporting them.
- Home:** Scrooge's huge empty house juxtaposes with the Cratchit's small loving home.

A Christmas Carol KNOWLEDGE ORGANISER



Scene-by-Scene Summary – Alongside key quotations from each scene.

<p>It is a foggy Christmas Eve, and Scrooge is working in his counting house. He refuses to buy another lump of coal to heat Bob Cratchit's (his clerk's) office. Scrooge's cheerful nephew, Fred, enters, inviting Scrooge to Christmas party, but he declines. After he leaves, two gentlemen enter, asking if Scrooge is willing to make a charitable donation to the poor. Scrooge again declines. He begrudgingly gives Bob Cratchit the day off. Scrooge follows his usual routine on the way home. At home, he sees the ghost of his old business partner (Jacob Marley) in the knocker. Marley is in chains as punishment for his selfishness and greed when living. He says that he seeks to save Scrooge from the same fate, and hence Scrooge will be visited by 3 ghosts over the next 3 nights.</p>	<p><i>"Marley was dead: to begin with. There is no doubt whatever about that. The register of his burial was signed by the clergyman, the clerk, the undertaker, and the chief mourner. Scrooge signed it."</i></p> 
<p>Scrooge is confused to wake at midnight, as it was after 2am when he went to sleep. At one o'clock, Scrooge is visited by a strange child-like figure that emanates wisdom – The Ghost of Christmas Past. The spirit touches Scrooge's heart, granting the power to fly. The ghost takes Scrooge back to where he was raised – Scrooge is touched by memories of his childhood. He sees himself as a schoolboy spending Christmas alone, being visited by his sister, being at a party held by Scrooge's old boss Fezziwig, and with his old partner Belle, who is breaking off their engagement on account of his greed. He sees Belle in a more modern time, with her husband, discussing how Scrooge is now 'quite alone in the world.' Scrooge is upset by the visions, and begs with the ghost to take him back home. Scrooge finds himself back in his bedroom, where he once again falls asleep almost instantly.</p>	<p><i>"But the strangest thing about it was, that from the crown of its head there sprang a bright clear jet of light, by which all this was visible; and which was doubtless the occasion of its using, in its duller moments, a great extinguisher for a cap, which it now held under its arm."</i></p> 
<p>The bell strikes one, and Scrooge is awake once more. At fifteen minutes past one, he wanders into the next room, where he finds the Ghost of Christmas Present waiting for him. He is a majestic jolly giant, and sits atop of a mountain of food. The spirit takes Scrooge to the bustling streets on Christmas morning, where passers-by joyfully greet each other. The spirit then takes Scrooge to the home of Bob Cratchit, where the family savour the Christmas that they can afford. Their visibly-ill son, Tiny Tim, is cheering despite his ailments. Scrooge begs to know whether he will survive. They also visit Fred's Christmas party, which Scrooge enjoys (though no one can see him). Eventually, Scrooge is brought to a vast expanse, where two sickly children, 'Want' and 'Ignorance' emerge. When Scrooge asks if there is anything that can be done, the spirit mocks his prior selfishness.</p>	<p><i>"Its dark brown curls were long and free; free as its genial face, its sparkling eye, its open hand, its cheery voice, its unconstrained demeanour, and its joyful air."</i></p> 
<p>Scrooge is approached by a hooded phantom. The spirit is silent, and Scrooge is terrified by him. Scrooge pleads with him to provide his next lesson. The ghost takes him to the stock exchange, where men discuss the accounts of a rich man, a dingy pawn shop, where the rich man's stolen goods are being sold, and the Cratchit household, where the family struggles with the death of Tiny Tim. Scrooge is then taken to a freshly dug grave in a graveyard. The gravestone reveals that it is his own grave. Appalled, Scrooge begs with the spirit to give him another chance to show that he has learnt his lesson. The phantom begins to tremble and disappears, and once again Scrooge finds himself in the relative safety of his own bed.</p>	<p><i>I fear you more than any spectre I have seen. But as I know your purpose is to do me good, and as I hope to live to be another man from what I was, I am prepared to bear you company, and do it with a thankful heart"</i></p> 
<p>Scrooge realises that he has been returned to Christmas morning, and is utterly overjoyed. He pays the first boy that he meets a huge sum to deliver a great big turkey to Bob Cratchit's household. He bumps into the gentlemen collecting for charity, apologises for his prior behaviour, and promises to donate lots of money to the poor. He attends Fred's party and is so happy and kind that the other guests can barely believe his behaviour. The next morning, he pretends to scold Bob Cratchit for arriving late, before promising to give him a large raise and to care for his family. As time passes by, he stays true to his word – he helps the Cratchits and becomes like a second father to Tiny Tim, who does not die. Scrooge brings Christmas cheer to every day, and shrugs off the doubts that others have about his changed behaviour. The narrator concludes by suggesting that Scrooge's changed attitude and behaviour should be shared by everyone.</p>	<p><i>"He had no further intercourse with Spirits, but lived upon the Total Abstinence Principle, ever afterwards; and it was always said of him, that he knew how to keep Christmas well, if any man alive possessed the knowledge.... God bless us all, every one!"</i></p> 

Main Characters – Consider what Dickens intended through his characterisation of each of the below...

Ebenezer Scrooge – Scrooge is the lead protagonist of the novella. He is a miserly owner of a counting house (what would now be called an accountant's office). Initially greedy, selfish and cold, Scrooge hates Christmas and lacks any form of Christmas spirit. He experiences a moral and psychological transformation through his visits from the Ghosts of Christmas Past, Present and Yet to Come.

The Cratchits – Bob Cratchit is Scrooge's kind, mild-mannered clerk, who is treated terribly by his employer. He is a very poor man, with a large family, including Tiny Tim. Tiny Tim is a young boy who has been born with physical disabilities that his family are too poor to have treated. Despite these hardships, the family are cheery and determined to enjoy the few positives that they can get from life.

Quote: "It's enough for a man to understand his own business"

Quote: "I am sure we shall none of us forget poor Tiny Tim"

Jacob Marley and Fred – Joseph Marley is Scrooge's late business partner, and Fred is Scrooge's nephew. They represent the two extremes of Christmas spirit. Joseph Marley symbolises the limitations of a life-lived focused on greed and selfishness, whilst Fred's life appears fulfilled through his perpetual joy, kindness and interactions with others. After his death, Joseph Marley has been condemned to wander the world as a miserable ghost.

The Ghost of Christmas Past – This is the first spirit to visit Scrooge. He is a curious child-like figure that has an illuminated head, symbolising how shining a light on memories from the past can be used to illuminate one's thoughts and behaviours in the future. The Ghost of Christmas Past takes Scrooge to a number of places from his childhood and early adulthood, including his old school, hometown, and the scene of his engagement being broken off.

Quote: "you have yet a chance and hope of escaping my fate."

Quote: "Strange to have forgotten it for so many years!"

The Ghost of Christmas Present – The Ghost of Christmas Present is the second of the three ghosts to visit Scrooge. He is a majestic jolly giant, who is dressed in a green robe. His lifespan is restricted to Christmas Day, and he has 'over 1800 brothers', representative of the other Christmas Days that were once in the present. He escorts Scrooge on a tour of how his contemporaries spend Christmas day, to force him to contemplate his own solitary existence. He also shows him the need to consider 'Want' and 'Ignorance.'

The Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come – The Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come is the third and final spirit to visit Scrooge. He is a silent phantom that is clad in robes (he rather resembles common characterisations of 'Death'). He presents Scrooge with an ominous view of his own death: the only people who his death remotely affects are those he owes money to (who are relieved), those who can make money from him (such as those dealing with his estate) and those who he could have saved (Tiny Tim).

Old Major Quote: "Come in! and know me better, man!"

Quote: "The Spirit answered not, but pointed onward with its hand."

Stave? Why does Dickens use this term to identify the 5 chapters in A Christmas Carol?

A Stave can be a NOUN

1. a set of five parallel lines on any one or between any adjacent two of which a note is written to indicate its pitch.
2. a verse or stanza of a poem.

OR to stave can be a VERB

1. to break something by forcing it inwards or piercing it roughly.
2. avert or delay something bad or dangerous.

Themes – A theme is an idea or message that runs throughout a text.

Greed and Selfishness – Characters such as Scrooge represent the selfish middle classes, who sought to amass, rather than share their wealth. Jacob Marley demonstrates the burden that such a selfish life will inevitably bring. Through these characters and the events of the novel, Dickens criticises how wealth had become associated with the root of happiness, at the expense of close relationships and goodwill.

Divisions – Divisions are evident throughout the novel, as those with power and money seek simply to exert and recycle their advantages over those without (rather than aiding them). The book shines a light on the plight faced by poor families such as the Cratchits, which demonises the negative attitudes towards the poor held by the rich.

Transformation – Physical transformations are evident throughout *A Christmas Carol*, as objects, settings, and characters appear and vanish under the manipulation of the ghosts. Spiritual transformations take place too, as the reader witnesses a lonely boy's transformation into an embittered old man, and the efforts made to transform his character to reconnect with those around him.

Time – Time is stretched by the ghosts – the events that Scrooge experiences appear to have taken days, and yet all takes place in the space of one night. A race against time is also taking place, as the spirits work to prevent Scrooge (and in turn, Tiny Tim) from experiencing their fateful demise. The reader is taught to value the time that we have, and use it to spread happiness to others.

