

Charles Dickens' A Christmas Carol 1843

Characters		Themes		Context	
Ebenezer Scrooge	Miserable and cold-hearted owner of a London counting-house.	Compassion & Forgiveness	Scrooge has those who pity him (Belle, Bob, Fred) and those who dismiss him as he does them (business people, his servants, pawn shop owner).	Dickens' Childhood	His dad got into debt and sent to debtors' prison. Dickens mother and 7 children moved into prison with Charles living alone and working with child labourers.
Jacob Marley	When alive, Scrooge's equally greedy partner. Died 7 years before story. Returns as a ghost to warn Scrooge. Marley hopes to save his old partner from a similar fate.	Isolation	Scrooge isolated himself rather than being forced into that state.	Dickens' Intentions	Criticism of the Victorian Era's class system and how the upper and middle classes treated the lower, with Scrooge representing the higher classes and the Cratchits the lower. There was a huge divide between the rich and the poor as well as a significant difference of how they were treated.
Bob Cratchit	Scrooge's clerk, a kind, mild but poor man with a large family. Treated harshly by Scrooge but remains humble and dedicated employee.	Transformation	From a young lonely boy to an old bitter man- he changes back the boy he one was.	Disabled Children	Many of Dickens children died. This is reflective of Tiny Tim. Additionally, many children and disabled children in this era and were very judged and looked down upon.
Tiny Tim	Bob's young son, disabled from birth. Dickens uses to explain England's poor but also to create sympathy from higher classes.	Choices	Life depends on the choices you make- Scrooge chooses to isolate himself like he also chooses to support the Cratchits.	Key Terminology	
Ghost of Xmas Past	First spirit to visit Scrooge. Child-like with a glowing head. Shows Scrooge Christmas of past.	Family	Inspirational characters belong to large families or groupings such as Bob, Belle and Fezziwig. Reincorporated into family at the end with the Cratchits and Fred.	Prolepsis	A term used to explain a flashforward in a literature text.
Ghost of Xmas Present	Second spirit to visit Scrooge, a giant in a green robe. Lifespan is restricted to Christmas day and shows Scrooge the present Christmas celebrations.	Memory & the Past	Guided from his past to enable him to redeem himself. He understands the memories that are most relevant to the problems he faces in the present.	Analepsis	A term used to explain a flashback in a literature text.
Ghost of Xmas Yet to Come	Third spirit to visit Scrooge, a silent phantom in a hooded black robe. Shows Scrooge his lonely death.	Guilt & Blame	Has no remorse or guilt until the Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come. He gradually (after some time) begins to feel shame for what he has done and changes.	Bildungsroman	A literature term to explain a character growing up or going through some sort of formation or transformation.
Fred Fezziwig	Fred's nephew- genial man who loves Christmas. Invites Scrooge to every annual Christmas party, every year Scrooge refuses to go. Jolly- Scrooge's boss when Scrooge was an apprentice. Renowned for his wonderful Christmas parties.	Supernatural	Supernatural elements such as the 3 ghosts, Marley's ghost and Scrooge flying out the window. Also, the idea of being transported to the past and future.	Stave	Referred to as chapters in a text. Could be related to an idea of music.
Belle	Beautiful woman who Scrooge loved but Belle broke off the engagement after Scrooge became obsessed with money. Later married another man.			Novella	Term used for a short novel or long short story.
Key Quotes					
Peter Cratchit	Bob's eldest son.	Decrease the surplus population	A perception many of the rich had on the poor. The idea that Victorian England/ UK was over-populated.	A golden one.	The love of gold or money has replaced Scrooge's love for Belle so she breaks off the engagement.
Martha Cratchit	Bob's eldest daughter.	I wear the chain I forged in life.	The links of the chain connect to the things Marley felt most important such as wealth, money and profit. The idea that choice effects you beyond the grave so ensure that you make the correct ones.	His wealth is of no use to him.	Scrooge is just hurting himself and forcing himself into isolation. Even though the Cratchits could do with the money, they have love and a sense of family whereas Scrooge does not, giving the idea that they are better off than him.
Fan	Scrooge's sister and Fred's mum. Visited him at school.	As hard and sharp as flint.	A simile to describe Scrooge's miserable and harsh personality.	The boy is Ignorance. The girl is Want.	Represent society's abandonment of the poor and the consequences of that abandonment. Can link to Scrooge's abandonment too.
Mrs Cratchit	Bob's wife- kind and loving woman.	I am as merry as a schoolboy.	The end of the novella- where Scrooge feels the Christmas joy and is happy that he is helping others.	I will honour this Christmas in my heart.	Shows that Scrooge has changed and he has learnt from his experiences with the ghosts and his mistakes.
Charity Workers	Tries to give money to the poor- Scrooge is rude to them and kicks them out the counting house.	The cold within him froze all his old features.	The idea that it isn't the weather affecting Scrooge but Scrooge is actually that cold inside.	A Merry Christmas Bob, I'll raise your salary.	A final realisation that he can help the Cratchits, support them and help them- putting his wealth to good use.
Plot		Solitary as an oyster.	Simile to describe how lonely and isolated Scrooge is.	God Bless us Everyone.	Presents Tiny Tim's innocence, pureness and unselfish spirit. A lesson to teach everyone else to be grateful.
Stave 1	It's Christmas Eve in London. Scrooge refuses to pay for extra coal to heat the Counting House. Two charity workers come in to spread Christmas Spirit and Scrooge kicks them out. Fred then invites Scrooge to spend Christmas with him and Scrooge refuses. Scrooge begrudgingly gives Bob Christmas Day off. Scrooge walks home and is visited by Marley's ghost who warns him about his fate- that he will end up like Marley. Scrooge then goes to sleep.				
Stave 2	Scrooge awakes at midnight and is visited by the first of 3 spirits. Scrooge returns to his school days where he is a lonely boy, He grows older and then Fan picks Scrooge up from school. We go forward to Fezziwig's party where Scrooge was an apprentice and attended a Christmas Party. Lastly, we see Belle break off their engagement. He then sees Belle has moved on and has a family and husband of her own.				
Stave 3	The second of the three spirits then visits Scrooge when the clock strikes 1. Scrooge touches the robe of the second spirit and he sees the city on Christmas morning. He then sees the Cratchit's Christmas- they have hardly anything and at Fred's, all the guests mock Scrooge. He then sees many other gathering of other people and he then sees a pair of starving children named Ignorance and Want. The spirit disappears as the clock strikes and Scrooge sees a hooded phantom coming towards him.				
Stave 4	The phantom approaches Scrooge and does not talk to him. Scrooge is terrified and pleads with the phantom. He sees businessmen discussing a dead man, as well as a pawnshop where people are selling a dead man's possessions. The Cratchits are struggling to cope with the death of Tiny Tim. He then sees the grave with his name on the headstone.				
Stave 5	Scrooge is grateful for a second chance of his life and sings the praises of Marley. He pays the first boy to deliver a huge turkey to the Cratchits; apologises to the charity workers and donates money attends Fred's Christmas party.				