



Themes

What are the main themes?

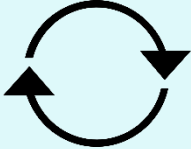
Christmas Spirit



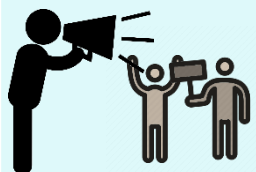
Poverty




Transformation




Politics



Generosity



Family



Author's Intent

Why did Dickens write the novella?

To challenge middle class perceptions of poverty in order to achieve social reform.

To bring about an end of the exploitation of the working classes to create a more empathetic society.

To highlight the importance of Christian morality and the supremacy of unitarian values.

To demonstrate how Victorian society has been corrupted by the fall out of the Industrial Revolution.

Characters in A Christmas Carol

Who are the main characters in 'A Christmas Carol'?

<p>Scrooge Stave 1 Avaricious Miserly Exploitative Ostentatious Parsimonious Ignorant</p>	<p>Scrooge Stave 5 Reformed Transformed Benevolent Jocund Remorseful Generous</p>	<p>Cratchits Impecunious Appreciatory Proletarian Moral Destitute Vulnerable</p>	<p>Jacob Marley Tortured Penitent Prophetic Capitalist Imploring Remorseful</p>	<p>Fezziwig Responsible Benevolent Generous Moral Jovial Benevolent</p>	<p>Fred Altruistic Optimistic Beneficent Determined Family-orientated Mouthpiece</p>
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Key Quotes

What are some useful quotations to know for A Christmas Carol?

<p>'Solitary as an oyster'</p> <p>Stave One</p>	<p>'Are there no prisons?'</p> <p>Stave One</p>	<p>'I will honour Christmas in my heart and try to keep it all the year'</p> <p>Stave Four</p>	<p>'I am as light as a feather. I am as happy as a schoolboy'</p> <p>Stave Five</p>
<p>'Hard and sharp as flint'</p> <p>Stave One</p>	<p>'Another idol has replaced me [...] a golden one'</p> <p>Stave Two</p>	<p>'These are the chains I forged in life'</p> <p>Stave One</p>	<p>'Most of all beware this boy, for on his brow I see that written which is Doom, unless the writing be erased'</p> <p>Stave Three</p>

Plot Summary

What happens in A Christmas Carol?

<p>STAVE 1 Scrooge is portrayed as a cold and covetous man who refuses to donate to charity, funds workhouses, and has a strained relationship with his family. He is later visited by Jacob Marley who warns him that if he does not change he will suffer a terrible fate.</p>	<p>STAVE 2 Scrooge is visited by the Ghost of Christmas Past and is reminded that he once valued family, he is shown Fezziwig's generosity, and is forced to relive his devastating breakup with Belle due to his growing greed. He begins to realise the errors of his ways.</p>	<p>STAVE 3 The Ghost of Christmas Present shows Scrooge the Christmases of the poor (including the Cratchit's) to emphasise that happiness is not linked to wealth. He is also warned that if society fails to change 'Ignorance' and 'Want' will consume mankind.</p>	<p>STAVE 4 The Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come shows Scrooge a harsh future where he dies without mourners, the Cratchits suffer the loss of Tiny Tim, and poverty is rife within the city. Scrooge begs for the chance to change this future.</p>	<p>STAVE 5 Scrooge wakes on Christmas Day to find that it is not too late to redeem himself. He does so by donating to the 'portly gentlemen', supporting the Cratchits with a turkey and a pay-rise for Bob, and spending Christmas with his nephew Fred.</p>
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Techniques

What techniques does Dickens use?

Similes
In Stave One Dickens uses similes to create a harsh impression of Scrooge which is contrasted in Stave Five.

Antithesis
Contrasts are used repeatedly in the novella – particularly through characters such as Fezziwig and Scrooge.

Symbolism
Dickens uses many symbols including the Ghost of Christmas Present's empty scabbard (peace) to the turkey (generosity) to help him criticise society.

Cold Imagery
In Stave One Dickens uses cold imagery to reflect Scrooge's miserly and avaricious nature.

Context

What was going on in society at the time?

Dickens' father had debts he could not pay and his family were imprisoned. Dickens was forced to leave school and work in a blacking factory.

Those who could not afford to pay their bill and debts were sent to debtor's prisons or workhouses to live in poor, unsanitary conditions.

The cities had become hugely overpopulated during the Industrial Revolution which meant living conditions for the poor declined.

There was no universal healthcare (NHS) at this time and if you got ill and could not work, your whole family was at risk of death.