

'Christmas Carol'

Characters - Ebenezer Scrooge, Bob Cratchit, Jacob Marley, Fezziwig, Fred, Ghost of Christmas Past, Present and Yet To Come, Tim, Martha Cratchit, Mrs Cratchit, Fan, Portly Gentlemen, Belle.

Themes of poverty, family, Christmas, charity, welfare, responsibility, reform, the supernatural, time and forgiveness i.e

Poverty: 'darkness is cheap', 'what right ... your poor', 'poor excuse'

Christmas: 'bah humbug', 'Merry Christmas – what's good about it?'

Welfare: 'any prisons any workhouses?', 'picking a man's pocket'

The Context of this novella, is highlighting readers' attention to the poor in Victorian England. It is social criticism; a recurring theme in Dickens' work. In the tale, he combines a description of the suffering with a celebration of the Christmas season. The character, Scrooge, opens his heart after being confronted by four spirits.

Language is very descriptive to give a flavour of all things Christmas. Dickens uses language to also present characters and scenes that are entertaining with a strong narrative voice that comments on the characters at the same time as telling their story. The narrator, though unnamed, has opinions about Scrooge and his tale. Narrator is 'standing in the spirit at (the reader's) elbow.'

Literary Style the form of a simplistic allegory. It is conversational in style. Dickens calls the Chapters - Staves, because each individual stave is a stand-alone story with its own distinctive flavour. When together, all five staves combine to form a harmonious Carol.

Plot Summary

Ebenezer Scrooge is a rich miser. He is completely stingy with his money, and exploits his staff. On Christmas Eve, he argues with his assistant about having Christmas off, sends Carol singers and Charity collectors away and shouts at his nephew. That night, Scrooge is in store for a rude 'awakening'. Firstly, visited by the ghost of his old business partner, Jacob Marley, he was then followed by three further ghosts (Ghosts of Christmas Past, Present and what is yet to come). He is shocked by the revelations.