

Differences between "a christmas carol novel" and "1951 film adaptation scrooge"

[Literature](#), [Novel](#)



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Throughout the 1951 adaptation *Scrooge*, and the novel by Charles Dickens on which it is based, *A Christmas Carol*, several themes such as the supernatural and poverty are explored through the character of Scrooge. However, the film version makes room for many new aspects of his personality through actions not described in the book and differences to the original text. This essay will explore how some of the film's choices to add or extend scenes impacts the viewer's perception of Scrooge. In the second stave Scrooge is visited by the first ghost, the Ghost of Christmas past. In the novel Dickens chooses to display four moments; the place where Scrooge grew up, the place in which he was an apprentice, people dancing happily during Christmas time and a husband telling his wife about seeing Scrooge sat alone.

Meanwhile in the movie, Scrooge's memory of his apprenticeship is much longer as he is seen working, changing job and buying up the company. This longer view of his past not only establishes more clearly that he was poor as he discusses his poverty with his fiancé and shows that he became rich by buying the company, but it also allows for dialogues which reveal more about Scrooge's past. For example, Scrooge states that "There is more in life than money" and he says that "Money isn't everything". This could be the director's choice as to balance for the lack of figurative language present in the description that allows the reader to gain remarks about Scrooge's character. The choice to show the same thought through two different ways at different times highlight how strongly he believed in this. The vision of Scrooge's past may have also been prolonged to show how his character

changed, going from poor to rich and obsessed about money and finally to humble and charitable again.

The film adaptation of the novel also shows his transition from poor to rich when he works as an apprentice; his employer affirms " Control the cashbox and you'll control the world," which Scrooge neither agrees nor denies. This proves significance as it is exactly what Scrooge displays through his actions in the present and it allows the viewer to see a possibility that his boss may have been an influence in making him greedy which the reader doesn't get in the book. Another important insight to Scrooge's past is when Scrooge expresses that he thinks that the world is going to be a cruel place. This is ironic as in the present Scrooge contributes to making the world unpleasant through his melancholy, anger and greed and the thought may have been added to show the change. Towards the end of the novel and the film adaptation, Scrooge is brought to his grave by the Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come, however in the film adaptation Scrooge lies down on grave in worry and fear, trying to comprehend whether what he sees is reality. This wasn't described in the book and may just have been the choice of the director as there are few other actions suitable for that moment. However, it adds to the change in Scrooge as he is taking the possible future very seriously and is devastated and scared of what could happen. Adding to this, Scrooge repeats " Tell me I'm not already dead" and " I'm not the man I was" several times to show that he fears the future and has changed through the visits from the ghost. This could have been to replace the descriptions of fearful facial expressions which were presented in the book.

In the end of the film adaptation Scrooge wakes up after talking in his sleep. This showed that he was just dreaming, meanwhile in the book the narrator points out that he sees his bedposts but it isn't explicit whether he woke up from a dream. However, the choice to make it a dream may still have been based on the narrative in the book which allows for open interpretation. In addition, the film had to present either that the ghosts were real or that it was a dream and the idea of him dreaming may have been easier to understand for the viewer. Another addition in the movie is the character of a maid. This creates contrast with Scrooge's previous self as the maid is paid and he tried to live as cheaply as possible, eating cheap food, using little light, etc. The maid's character is used to make the change in Scrooge more explicit as when he wakes up and she says it's Christmas Day he is overly enthusiastic and happy about it. This makes her shocked and she asks "Are you quite yourself sir?" to which he replies "I don't think so [...] I hope not" in a jovial tone which shows yet again that he doesn't want to be who he was before. The maid also screams as she is so confused by his actions and Scrooge points out that he is not mad and gives her money. This immediately allows the reader to see that he is not greedy anymore and feels sorry for the poor as he gives money after asking how much he pays her. Through writing, in the novel there is a gradual change through his interactions and dialogues with the ghost, however in the movie the addition there might have been the addition of the maid to allow for the opportunity of his actions to clearly demonstrate that he had changed and was cheerful and gleeful when he smiles for the first time in the movie.

In conclusion, the film prologues and adds several scenes to improve clarity and to give additional insights to Scrooge's life, such as his transition to richness, his despair when he sees his grave and the change to his merry behaviour in the end. This may have also been to balance for the descriptions of his behaviour, emotions and surroundings which reveal the details on Scrooge's change in the books.