

Analysis of a christmas carol essay sample

[Literature](#), [Russian Literature](#)



We have been analysing the classic story, Christmas carol from Charles Dickens, which involves the personality transformation of the main character, Ebenezer Scrooge. This novel was first published in 1843 and set in Victorian London. This story had a variety of different genres within the book. Some believe the story is a ghost story, thriller or a social document London at that time. Within Victoria Britain, 1830-1899 there was no laws that controlled employment and employees. Men, Women and children were worked to their maximum capacity due to the absence of legal constraints normally expected of government.

Charles Dickens attempts to portray a negative image of employers within the story, through Scrooge and his attitude towards his employees. One of the main themes of this story is for employers to increase generosity to support the life of the poor and employees and in doing so help to decrease poverty throughout the world. This is shown through Bob Cratchit's life and families health that correlates to the generosity of Scrooge. The bilateral relationship between employer and employee is far from apparent in the beginning of the novel with Scrooge pushing Cratchit hard at work for a meagre wage.

Dickens continues with this theme of social justice throughout and attempts to demonstrate that Christmas is a time for giving and sharing. Fred illustrates this when he comments that Christmas is the 'only time when ... men and women seem by one consent to open their shut-up hearts freely'. Scrooge's personality is revealed at the start of the story. He is presented, as a hard and mean spirited character, 'Hard and sharp as flint.' Dickens uses

this simile to compare Scrooge to stone, hard, uncompassionate and unmoving.

This makes Scrooge sound cold and fierce due to the adjective sharp.

Dickens also portrays Scrooge as a lonely character, ' Solitary as an oyster. '

Dickens uses this simile to compare Scrooge to an oyster, which is independent and lonely in its shell. This indicates that Scrooge is a lonely character and extremely self-reliant, or at this early stage Dickens may have also tried to subtly allude to the pearl of conscience that flourishes at the end of the story. Dickens also uses repetition in his description of Scrooge. ' No warmth, No wind...

No beggars. ' The deliberate repetition emphasises the concept that Scrooge is not only a lonely character but also a character with no apparent compassion for others shown by his treatment for the beggars. A negative atmosphere is created in the readers mind due to the phrases above and a main theme of lacking social justice is seen in his uncharitable nature. Cratchit was treated with unnecessary disrespect from Scrooge in the beginning of the story. ' Let me hear another sound from you... and you'll keep your Christmas by losing your situation.

This shows the disrespect from Scrooge towards his own worker and he believes he doesn't deserve paid time off. Scrooge has disrespect for three important characters: Bob Cratchit, his nephew and the charity workers. Scrooge treats the nephew awfully. His lack of respect is shared on page 36 and 37. ' Let me leave it alone then. ' This implies that Scrooge is impatient and doesn't have any feelings or emotions towards his family. When the

Charity asks Scrooge to donate money he dismisses the idea classing the poor as ‘surplus population’.

Scrooge’s ‘tight-fisted’ ways are clearly being demonstrated by Dickens to seriously affect others, such as beggars and more directly the Cratchit family. Marley’s ghost visits Scrooge to assist him in making the transformation and to tell him to resist from following the same path as himself due to the punishments he is now receiving. Marley says, ‘I wear the chain I forged in life.’ This quote emphasises that Marley suffers due to his awful actions whilst he was alive. Jacob Marley created a ‘Chain’ on bad deeds which he ‘Forged in life.’ Jacob Marley’s Character and personality was similar to the present Scrooge.

The powerful imagery of the chain, which was ‘forged in life’, shows the unbreakable nature of what occurs before death and the chain symbolises this. On page 49, Marley shows his regret of his actions. Marley says ‘Why did I walk through crowds of fellow beings with me eyes turned down and never raise them to that blessed star which led the Wise Men to a poor abode. Were there no poor homes which its light would have conducted me!’ This suggests Marley regrets that he didn’t help the poor whilst he was alive but is still bound by his chains.

Scrooge’s initial reaction to Marley’s ghost was portrayed in page 45. Scrooge says to Marley ‘There’s more of gravy than of grave about you, whatever you are!’ This quote implies that Scrooge thinks he feels sick and this ghost is just a hallucination due to what he had eaten earlier. When Marley’s ghost leaves, Scrooge is anxious about the information Marley’s

ghost provided. Scrooge is apprehensive about the ghost and is uncertain in believing it. The Ghost of Christmas Past visits and shows him at School, Fezziwig's party and with Belle. Scrooge sees a ' Lonely boy reading near a feeble fire.

This quote shows the loneliness Scrooge experienced whilst he was at school due to no nurturing parents and unloyal friends. Scrooge was shown what his old employer, Fezziwig, was like at Christmas. There were dances and parties and fun for all the workers. ' He has the power to render us happy or unhappy, to make our service light or burdensome, a pleasure or a toil. ' This quotation indicates to the reader that Fezziwig has the power to render a happy or sad Christmas. Taking this concept further Scrooge may realise that he is like Fezziwig in this way.

His actions at work may directly affect the Cratchit family financially and in general happiness. Scrooge here may realise further that his ' tight-fisted' ways affect others as well. He is also shown his first love, a girl called Belle. He is seen breaking of their engagement and she tells Scrooge ' Another Idol has displaced me. ' This shows that by the time Scrooge was running his own business he already loved money more than people. Scrooge was reminded of the past to demonstrate the happiness and ecstasy he experienced when he was younger and not a businessman.

The good times Scrooge experienced suggests he was an optimist and valued life to the full. However, Scrooge's personality begins to change for the worse. This is revealed when Scrooge shouts ' Remove me! I cannot bear it. ' In Scrooge's anguish he experiences desperation and feels

uncomfortable, as he witnesses an evil image being portrayed by himself within the Ghost Of Christmas Past. The Ghost of Christmas Past had a significant impact on Scrooge, it helped to commence his personality transformation as illustrated in the quotation ' I learnt a lesson which is working now.

The ghostly vision troubled Scrooge and changed his outlook on life he felt he could learn from this spirit. The Cratchit's have a simple and meagre Christmas. ' At Bob Cratchit's elbow stood the family display of glass, two tumblers and a custard cup without a handle. ' The spirit hopes that he will learn from seeing the hard life the family endured which was a direct result of Scrooge's actions. Scrooge enquires anxiously to the spectre of Christmas Present regarding Tiny Tim's welfare, ' Spirit said Scrooge with an interest he had never felt before, tell me if Tiny Tim will live? Uncharacteristically, Scrooge shows flashes of emotion for this ailing boy.

The vision of Tiny Tim's suffering was powerful enough to stir dormant emotions of concern and reveal a compassionate side that so far Scrooge had not revealed. The manner of his enquiries shows feelings of guilt, accountability and regret for the meagre amount of salary Bob Cratchit receives. Scrooge starts to accept an element of responsibility of the poor state of Tiny Tim and is keen to find out if matters can be reversed, without doubt a change for the better.

At the end of the visit from this ghost, Dickens deepens the suspense and tension with the imminent arrival of the final spirit. Scrooge is left sitting alone seemingly waiting for the final spirit, nowhere to go, no money to

count, just alone with his thoughts and ever eager to learn of the future.

Dickens aim is to slowly drip-feed the reader's tension before the final vision.

By the time Scrooge sees the future spirit he is very eager to learn more. '

Lead on! Lead! The night is waning fast and it is precious time to me, I know.

Lead on Spirit! ' The unique experience has consumed Scrooge, he presses

the spirit to show him more. His urgency builds between the dread of what

his miserly actions have resulted in and the vain hope that things might not

be so bad. The truth of the vision is nearly too much for him to witness.

Scrooge is shown the solitary body of a dead man. ' Spirit, this is a fearful

place in leaving it, I shall not leave its lesson, trust me. Let us go! ' The spirit

reveals that he is not remembered fondly by anyone.

All despise this grumpy miserly old man, no mourners lament over his

memory. The vision moves to an eerie graveyard and a solitary gravestone,

Scrooge's grave! Scrooge asks the spirit to erase his name from the

headstone but the spirit does not comply and seems unmoved. Possibly

demonstrating the inevitable passage of time and that all people are ' fellow

passengers to the grave'. Or more likely I feel, that he witnesses that he has

died, unloved, un-liked and unwanted. He hankers for the times before he

worshiped money and dedicated himself to business and work.

However, there is hope, this vision is the outcome if he chooses not to

change. If he changes he is saved and for this opportunity he is truly

thankful. The chapter ends with Scrooge's promise, ' I will honour Christmas

in my heart, and try to keep it all the year. I will live in the past, the present

and the future. The spirits of all three shall strive within one. I will not shut

out the lessons that they teach. Oh, tell me I may sponge away the writing on this stone! ' His transformation has begun, Scrooge is sincere and truly wants to change for the better.

Morning dawns and the sprits are gone, Scrooge is elated and transformed, he has been given his second chance and he intends to keep his promises. To illustrate Scrooges mood Dickens once again uses a catalogue of similes, ' I am light as a feather, I am as happy as an angel, I am as merry as a schoolboy and I am as giddy as a drunken man. ' More happy scenes unfold, Scrooge ' Patted children on the head, and questioned beggars. ' Following the visit from the ghost Scrooge has a new found enthusiasm towards children and beggars, (once referred to as population surplus) as one of his many measures of reform.

Scrooge behaves differently towards Bob and offers him financial help and an increase in salary. ' I'll raise your salary, and endeavour to assist your struggling family. ' Scrooge demonstrates the help he is willing to give towards his family to evade poverty and death, which is imminent without his help. Other motives lie behind the immediate generosity offered to the community and his employees. The giving of gifts is good therapy for old Scrooge however he is looking longer term and longs for loyal friendship to take him to the end of his days.

The three ghosts showed how he had his priorities wrong and by following his promises he intended to turn this situation around. When he had done so he hoped that he would be remembered as a generous and helpful person, in extreme contrast to the sad, lonely and miserable character described at the

beginning of the novel. The backdrop of Christmas is highlighted in the final paragraphs where the Cratchit family invite Scrooge to join them for Christmas dinner. Peace, harmony and goodwill to all men.