

A Christmas Carol – Super Six

Character	Overview/development	Quote 1	Quote 2	Quote 3	Quote 4	Context and message
Ebenezer Scrooge	Begins as exaggerated example of worst of humanity - almost caricature. Represents how isolation & obsession with tangible riches causes misery for oneself & others. Only character develops through novel. Journey from miserly & misanthropic to compassionate & selfless. Dickens implies none of us are beyond redemption.	‘Grasping, clutching old sinner’ S1 Repetition of verbs related to hands suggests Scrooge’s desire to keep money physically close. Reinforces miserly & selfish personality. Noun ‘sinner’ indicates Dickens’ belief that behaviour is unchristian. Dickens criticising Victorian society & treatment of poor.	‘Misanthropic ice’ S1 Describing weather - reflects Scrooge’s personality. Adjective ‘misanthropic’ also describes Scrooge at start. ‘Ice’ suggests Scrooge metaphorically ‘frozen’ - unable to feel emotion or empathy. As story continues, we see him thaw. At end, weather reflects his change - bright & sunny.	‘Are there no prisons? Are there no workhouses?’ S1, S3 Noun ‘prisons’ suggests Scrooge’s view that poor are no better than criminals. ‘Workhouses’ reflects Dickens’ view that Victorian rich didn’t understand the indignity caused by Poor Law.	‘as merry as a schoolboy, as light as a feather!’ S5 ‘Light’ suggests he feels unburdened by sin or sadness. ‘Merry as a schoolboy’ indicates happiness that charity can bring. ‘Schoolboy’ implies new Scrooge is innocent, like child – contrast to ‘sinner’ in Stave 1.	Dickens uses Scrooge - as vehicle to illustrate redemption is possible for us all, no matter how great our past sins. - to teach middle class Victorian readership importance of charity & benevolence, in response to the prevalent harsh attitudes towards poor.
Fred	Scrooge’s nephew; the son of his dead sister Fan. Exists as foil to Scrooge. Opposite in almost every way -makes Scrooge’s faults more apparent. Generous, selfless & kind. Strong believer in importance of charity, especially at Christmas. Represents importance of family.	‘Fred’s face was in a glow; his eyes sparkled.’ S1 Contrast to Scrooge’s wintery description. Fred depicted as warm - noun ‘glow’ & verb ‘sparkled’ imply kind, welcoming & affectionate. Fire imagery represents survival – suggesting people like Fred help others to survive.	‘Christmas is a kind, forgiving, charitable, pleasant time...’ S1 Fred’s & Dickens’ view on Christmas. List adjectives emphasises good that Dickens believes Christmas represents. Fred believes it is time to forgive & help others – ironic as what he is currently trying to do for Scrooge.	‘give him the same chance every year, whether he likes it or not.’ S3 Conveys persistent & forgiving nature. Noun ‘chance’ suggests he believes not pestering Scrooge but offering him opportunity to improve own life, despite Scrooge’s unpleasantness.	‘Extraordinary kindness from Mr Scrooge’s nephew...’ S3 Way Fred treats others – huge contrast to Scrooge. Adjective ‘extraordinary’ implies this behaviour unusual. Dickens criticising usual treatment of poor in society.	Dickens uses Fred - example of how charitable attitude & love of Christmas leads to personal happiness & spiritual reward. - to convey Dickens’ attitudes on importance of family & forgiveness.
Bob Cratchit & family	Scrooge’s clerk - badly paid & poorly treated. Shows reader how badly Scrooge mistreats those in his power. Represents the poor in the novella. Family are large, loving and spiritual. Presented as example of ideal family. Also represents the importance of forgiveness, love & religion – all things Scrooge lacks at the start.	‘Dressed out but poorly in a twice turned gown, but brave in ribbons’ S3 Description of Mrs C. ‘Poorly’ dressed, suggesting lack of funds. ‘Twice turned’ – re-hemmed gown implies have to scrape by. Adjective ‘brave’ suggests Dickens’ approval of Mrs C’s attempt to present herself well. Despite poverty has pride & dignity – argues against commonly held view of poor as shameless.	‘[Tiny Tim] hoped people saw him because he was a cripple and [they could] remember who it was who made lame beggars walk and blind men see.’ S3 Depicts TT’s strong sense of religious piety – reference to Jesus. Adjective ‘blind’ may refer to Scrooge who closes eyes to reality of poverty. TT, more than anyone, who finally makes Scrooge ‘see’.	‘Bob’s voice was tremulous when he told them this.’ S3 Bob discusses hope of TT getting ‘stronger’. Adjective ‘tremulous’ suggests voice is trembling & holding back tears. Implies he is lying to keep family’s spirits up - maybe even to himself. Selfless man protecting his family. Shows depth of love for his son.	‘He broke down at once. He couldn’t help it.’ S4 Bob after TT’s death. Verb “broke down” emphasises effect - destroyed him. Again shows extent of love for his family, countering Victorian view of poor as less than human. Reader empathises with poor. Contrast to Scrooge’s unmourned death.	Dickens uses Bob & family to criticise common Victorian viewpoint of the poor as feckless & idle. Gives Cratchits positive characteristics (piety, determination, kindness, selflessness, industriousness) to highlight that Poor Law demonises working classes.
Ghost of Christmas Past	Shows Scrooge his memories of previous Christmases. Represents memory, knowledge & impact past events can have on shaping our characters. Kind but firm with Scrooge. Forces him to face truth of life & confront memories he would rather forget.	‘ [from his head] there sprung a bright, clear jet of light.’ S2 Appearance designed to help enlighten people, bringing knowledge to those who need it. ‘Light’ symbolises knowledge, understanding & hope. Reader realises Ghost is Scrooge’s hope for better future.	‘The voice was soft and gentle.’ S2 Kind to Scrooge - ‘gentle’ voice. Suggests Spirits do not wish harm but instead to help him. However, spirit has ‘strong grip’ - suggests that, like teacher, spirit must be firm in order to help him understand.	‘And he sobbed.’ S2 Ghost’s effect on Scrooge – verb “sobbed” shows Scrooge beginning to feel emotion again, albeit compassion for himself at this stage. Contrast to emotionless Scrooge at beginning & ‘sobbed violently’ at end.	‘I should like to say a word or two to my clerk just now.’ S2 Scrooge beginning to feel regret after spirit has shown his previous employer Fezziwig. ‘A word or two’ reflects new understanding that even 1 or 2 kind words can make difference to happiness of others.	Dickens uses this spirit to encourage readers to examine own pasts and confront painful memories in order to learn and develop. Suggests that although this is painful, self-examination is the only path to redemption.

Ghost of Christmas Present	Shows Scrooge Christmas Day in the present and introduces Scrooge to Ignorance and Want. Represents the Christmas Spirit and the importance of togetherness and charity. Jocular, generous and friendly – can become stern when needs to make an important point.	‘antique scabbard; but no sword was in it, ancient sheath was eaten up with rust.’ S3 Scabbard –container for sword worn on waist. Missing sword suggests no need for weapons during Christmas as time of peace. Adjective ‘antique’ & noun ‘rust’ indicate scabbard not been used for long time.	‘To a poor one most.’ S3 Ghost explains why sprinkles his ‘incense’ on meals of people, especially poor. The incense symbolises the Christmas Spirit. Dickens suggesting that poor are most deserving of enjoyment & happiness. Criticises common view of working classes as undeserving.	‘People do deeds of selfishness in our names. Charge their doings on themselves and not us.’ S3 Dickens criticises the Church who use spirituality as excuse to mistreat others. Dickens accuses Church of ‘selfishness’ and dishonesty – they cause misery for the working classes.	‘They are Man’s. This boy is Ignorance. This girl is Want. Beware them both.’ S3 Main causes of poverty (lack of education & basic necessities) personified as 2 children. Imperative ‘beware’ suggests urgency ghost’s warning - if poor aren’t helped, society will suffer more.	Dickens uses ghost to promote idea that our actions have immediate consequences – Scrooge sees impact of behaviour in real time. Spirit also a vehicle for Dickens’ political views about causes and effects of poverty.
Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come	Shows Scrooge the events of a future Christmas after his own death. Represents the concept of Death, along with the idea of time running out. Exists to impress on Scrooge the importance of redeeming himself before it is too late. Silent and frightening – mysterious.	‘Scrooge bent down upon his knees, for the spirit seemed to scatter gloom and mystery.’ S4 Frightening figure inspires real respect in Scrooge - verb ‘bent’ he is bowing. Represents future - unknowable & hard to see hence ‘gloom’ & ‘mystery’. Noun ‘gloom’ connotations of sadness, hint that Scrooge’s future is not a happy one.	‘I fear you but hope to live to be another man, I come with a thankful heart.’ S4 Effect spirit has on Scrooge contrasts to dismissive attitude towards earlier spirits. Triplet of verbs ‘fear’, ‘hope’, and adjective ‘thankful’ shows journey to redemption, from fear to hope for better life and finally gratitude for this chance.	‘On the bed, unwatched, unwept, uncared for, was the body of this man.’ S4 Spirit shows Scrooge his own dead body. Repetition of the prefix ‘un’ in the triplet ‘unwatched, unwept, uncared for’ emphasises the true misery of Scrooge’s future.	‘I will live in the Past, Present and Future. I say it on my knee’ S4 Scrooge says to convince spirit that he has learned lesson. By referring to all 3, Dickens shows that we need to consider past, present & future when trying to improve ourselves. Ghost disappears when Scrooge says this - no longer needed now he has been redeemed.	Used to convey idea that we leave legacy in the world. After our deaths too late to change this. Dickens promotes idea our behaviour towards others decides our future. As Scrooge treats others poorly, he dies alone & is mistreated after death.
Theme	Linked characters	Quote 1	Quote 2	Quote 3	Quote 4	Context/Message
Loneliness and Isolation	Scrooge Fred, Bob (opposite – examples of those who are not isolated) Scrooge is isolated at the beginning through his own choice. He is not necessarily lonely, as this suggests he is made unhappy by his solitude, which he is not.	‘As solitary as an oyster.’ S1 Simile conveys how difficult Scrooge is to reach. Oysters grow shells for protection - hints at pain in past which Scrooge may be reacting to by keeping others away. Oysters contain pearls, hints Scrooge has hidden beauty inside him.	‘Misanthropic ice’ S1 Adjective ‘misanthropic’ means hatred of humanity. Reinforces impression of Scrooge as someone who keeps everyone at bay, rather than just a few individuals. The reader is fully aware that Scrooge is completely alone, as a result.	‘On bed, unwatched, unwept, uncared for, was body of man.’ S4 Repetition of prefix ‘un’ in triplet emphasises bleak future for those who live a solitary life – no-one will be there to take care of them or mourn them at their death.	‘He hadn’t dreamed that any walk could give him so much happiness.’ S5 Enjoys walk due to cheery conversations with other people. Suggests when person connects with others, they can feel ‘happiness’ even on everyday events like simple walk.	Dickens suggests isolation causes people become hard-hearted & money provides no protection. His lonely death emphasizes importance of making connections with others, including poor.
Redemption	Scrooge Jacob Marley All three of the spirits	‘I wear the chain I forged in life. Mankind was my business.’ S1 Marley’s ghost to Scrooge. Dickens suggests this is fate of those who don’t achieve redemption. Suggests we will be punished after death for our misdeeds. Noun ‘chain’ indicates this is inescapable.	‘He had been sobbing violently in his conflict with the spirit.’ S5 Scrooge takes final step towards redemption. In Stave 2, Scrooge ‘sobbed’. Dickens repeats verb but adds adverb ‘violently’ to imply Scrooge is further along in process.	‘I will live in the Past, Present and Future. I say it on my knees.’ S5 Moment of redemption. Triplet conveys Dickens’ belief examination of all three is needed for redemption. ‘On my knees’ shows Scrooge humbling himself - contrast to arrogance in Stave 1.	‘to Tiny Tim, who did not die, he was a second Father.’ S5 Noun ‘father’ implies Scrooge not only reconnected with own relatives but also gained new family. TT’s survival shows impact of person attempting to redeem themselves. Conveys Dickens’ message that never too late to make difference	Dickens’ message that anyone can achieve redemption by showing Scrooge (most extreme example) achieving it. Presented as painful but necessary, demands complete examination of self. Great benefits.
Attitudes to the poor	The Cratchit family Ignorance and Want Ghost of Christmas Present	‘decrease the surplus population.’ S1 Scrooge’s cold view of the poor dying at the start. Adjective ‘surplus’ - business terminology implies Scrooge’s dehumanises poor. Criticism of Victorian employers’ view of working class only as source of profit.	‘a poor excuse to pick a man’s pocket.’ S1 Scrooge’s view of Christmas is purely financial. Metaphor reinforces Scrooge’s view of poor as criminals, and strengthens reader’s impression of him as miserly.	‘A golden idol...’ S2 Belle accuses Scrooge of replacing her with this. Implies Scrooge’s love of money has taken on the status of a religion and has replaced the Christian values of charity and helping the less fortunate.	‘God bless us, everyone!’ S5 By having poverty stricken child (TT) say this, Dickens reminds reader poor are pious & god-fearing. Noun ‘everyone’ reminder that God does not differentiate between rich & poor.	Dickens believes society has duty to help poor. Criticises the Poor Law & Victorian view of poor as criminal, amoral, lazy or profligate. Promotes idea poor deserve help & dignity.