

KEY WORDS

Parsimonious, miser, archetypal villain, frugal, ostracised, avaricious, apathetic, merciless, misanthropic, cold

Scrooge Stave 1

OSTRACISED (ISOLATED) FROM SOCIETY

- The **conceit** (extended- metaphor) of the relentless cold holds **parallels** to Scrooge's distant and cold attitude
- He willingly takes strolls in **"easterly winds"**- **he yearns for isolation** and misery as he favours going out in the bitter cold, rather than interact with the community.
- The use of weather is **exacerbated** as **"the cold within him froze his old features"**, reinforcing his **internal apathy and detachment** is so **omnipotent**, it alters his physical appearance.

- His internal cold-heartedness has created a **"frosty rime"** on his head- every inch of Scrooge's being, external and internal, **is tainted** by his distant attitude and want to be ostracised by society.
- Scrooge is presented as **successful in his ostracization** of himself as even elements of nature, typically uncontrollable, he has managed to intercept as even **"external heat and cold had little influence"** on him.
- He is **repulsed** by human interaction and affection as he warns **"all human sympathy to keep its distance"**. As warn connotes to alert, this is used by Dickens as ironic as Scrooge's **misanthropic and apathetic nature** will imminently cause him to be alerted by the reality of his ways.

COMPARISON

In Stave 1, Dickens introduces Fred as a **foil** (contrasting character) to Scrooge to **exemplify his undesirable nature**. Fred's positive ambience is reinforced by a **semantic field of light** as Fred is **'all in glow'** and had **'sparkling'** eyes. This is the antithesis to Scrooge's pessimistic presentation to which he flourishes in the darkness as it is **'cheap'**.

EMBLEM (SYMBOL) OF VICTORIAN UPPER CLASS

- Dickens creates Scrooge as an **archetypal villain** (someone who is seen as evil, typically self- centred and power hungry) in the context of an **impoverished** (poor) society.
- He aims to critique, from the offset, that **social injustice is synonymous** (linked to) with **avariciousness** (greed) from the upper classes.
- The **asyndetic listing** (a list that uses commas rather than the word 'and') of **"squeezing, wrenching, grasping, scraping, clutching, covetous old sinner"** highlights his **frugality**.
- The use of **7 negative adjectives** mirrors how there are **7 deadly sins**- these are called **cardinal sins** and were seen in the bible as the root of all evil.
- As the **foundations of Victorian morality was religion**, the parallels between Scrooge and the sins are used by Dickens to highlight how the rich, symbolised by Scrooge, are more sinful than the poor. At the time, laws such as the 1834 poor law (see context) were put in place to combat the 'laziness' of the poor.
- Dickens is **inverting** this idea that the poor are sinners, instead highlights the rich are more immoral.
- 'squeezing'** and **'wrenching'** connote a struggle, this reinforcing how Scrooge struggles to **assimilate** (blend) into society. Alternatively, this is a criticism that Scrooge does not endure any struggles, yet creates struggle for the poor.
- Interestingly, Scrooge recognises that poverty causes misery as he questions Fred **"What reason do you have to be merry? You're poor enough."** However, he continues to live in a **state of ignorance**, most significantly through neglecting others, without offering to **alleviate this misery of poverty**.
- Scrooge's reaction to the charity men serves as a **microcosm** (a person/ idea representing a bigger group of people and ideas) for the upper classes relationship with the rest of society
- Scrooge questions why he is **morally obliged** to give, this giving the Victorian reader an insight to the reason they lived in a **destitute** society- the rich don't believe it is their duty to give
- His **Malthusian views** (see context) are prevalent when he questions **"Are there no prisons?...And the union workhouses?"**. Scrooge is unable to see the poor with any humanity, instead sees them as mere numbers contributing to the **"surplus population"**.

Do not say that Scrooge just hates Christmas (you're right he does!) but explain that because he is an emblem of the upper class, his selfishness and reluctance to give at Christmas, causes his hatred for it. This shows you're able to link Scrooge to the wider context of who he represents, hitting A03 (relationship between text and context)



THE SETTING

- The weather is a **motif** (recurring symbol) throughout the novella, typically changing alongside Scrooge
- Dickens uses **pathetic fallacy** (when the weather reflects the mood) by describing the setting as having **"fog and darkness thickened"** to resemble the bleakness of the protagonist (main character) Scrooge
- Contextually, **the fog in London from 1873- 1879 killed hundreds of people**. Dickens may be alluding to how, just as the weather has the ability to destroy lives, the rich possess this same power. This is heightened through the conceit of the bitter weather we mentioned above
- Dickens **personifies** (giving something non-human, human features) the weather as it is **"piercing, searching, biting cold"**. The power of the nature may be an **allusion** to the forthcoming supernatural powers to come.

TOPIC SENTENCES

Scrooge is presented as successful in his ostracization from society. Dickens uses the conceit of the relentless cold to illuminate how Scrooge's internal apathy and yearning for isolation is so omnipotent, it even has an impact on his physical appearance.

Dickens uses his allegorical novel to make Scrooge an emblem of the miser upper class. He constructs Scrooge as a scathing microcosm of the frugal rich to emphasise his political message- the social injustice prevalent in Victorian society is synonymous with the avariciousness of the upper classes.

