

Fred

Key Words - Fred

- Magnanimous
- Strong moral compass
- Epitome of moral pious citizen
- Benchmark for Scrooge's rebirth
- Optimistic (positive)
- Jovial
- Foil to Scrooge (character used to highlight the contrasting traits of the main character)
- Paragon (perfect example) of virtue

Dickens' intentions

- Dickens portrays Fred as a foil to Scrooge, contrasting their attitudes in Stave 1. Fred's character serves as a **benchmark for Scrooge's moral rebirth**, enabling readers to gauge the depth of his positive transformation in relation to Fred's **inherent morality**.
- Dickens purposefully **refrains from vilifying Fred**, using him as a representation of upper-class individuals **capable of morality and compassion**. Thus, Dickens suggests that morality is **not limited to social class**, but rather inherent within individuals. However, for those upper-class members who fail to exhibit traits akin to Fred's, Dickens implies that it is necessary to undergo a **spiritual and moral rebirth**.

“All in a glow; his face was ruddy and handsome; his eyes sparkled” (stave 1)

Link to main key themes:

- **Selfishness/materialism**
- **Kindness/family**
- **Regret/redemption**

Analysis

- **Motif of light:** Dickens employs a **motif** (recurring symbol or theme) of light, embodied by characters like Belle, the Ghost of Christmas Past, and even Fred. Light often signifies **hope and enlightenment** in the novella.
- Fred, with his "glowing" and "sparkling" characteristics, embodies this motif and becomes a **beacon (guidance) of hope for Scrooge's redemption**. Unlike the ghosts who directly confront Scrooge's past, Fred's **magnanimous** (generous) and compassionate nature offers a gentler path – a hopeful example Scrooge might choose to emulate.
- **Foil to Scrooge:** Fred serves as a **foil** (character used to accentuate the traits of the main character) to Scrooge, highlighting his misanthropic (dislike others) and **miserly (stingy)** tendencies. The motif of light stands in stark contrast to the **darkness and cold depicted** around Scrooge in Stave 1, evident through phrases like "darkness is cheap" and "frosty rime."
- This **juxtaposition** between the characters' contrasting natures serves to emphasise Scrooge's remarkable transformation by Stave 5. Fred's character serves as a **benchmark for Scrooge's moral rebirth, allowing the reader to measure the extent of his positive change**.

“His offences carry their own punishment, and I have nothing to say against him.”

Link to main key themes:

- **Selfishness/ materialism**
- **Kindness/family**
- **Religion**
- **Regret/redemption**

Analysis

- **Biblical allusions:** Fred's use of the word "*punishment*" suggests a deeper understanding of morality. He recognises that **Scrooge's immoralities** are not his to judge, but rather a matter for a higher power.
- This aligns Fred with a **sense of divine order**, further solidifying his portrayal as a **paragon** (perfect example) **of virtue and the epitome** (perfect example) **of a moral pious** (religious) **citizen**. By refusing to condemn Scrooge and leaving space for **divine justice**, Fred embodies benevolence, compassion, and a **strong moral compass**.
- **Embodiment of forgiveness:** Fred embodies the **virtue of compassion** towards his uncle, despite Scrooge's evident **misanthropy** (dislike for others) and **parsimony** (selfishness), consequently embodying the theme of forgiveness.
- Dickens purposefully **refrains from vilifying Fred**, using him as a representation of upper-class individuals **capable of morality and compassion**. Thus, Dickens suggests that morality is **not limited to social class**, but rather inherent within individuals. However, for those upper-class members who fail to exhibit traits akin to Fred's, Dickens implies that it is necessary to undergo a **spiritual and moral rebirth**.