

Context and Stave 1 - Knowledge Organiser

The novella was published in 1843 and was Dickens' political diatribe against the treatment of the poor in Victorian society.

Historical Context:

1834 – Poor Law Amendment Act – Led to a cut in aid given to paupers to help them stay in their own homes. Workhouses were created which poor people would have to live and work in, if they were unable to pay for their own housing.

December 1840 and February 1843 – Children's Employment Commission reports.

December 1843 - Dickens writes A Christmas Carol focusing on how many of society's ills can be blamed on greed for money and status.

Plot summary:

- Ebenezer Scrooge is at work in his counting house. Despite the Christmas Eve cold, he refuses to spend money on coals for the fire. Scrooge's turns down his nephew, Fred's, invitation to his Christmas party and the request of two men who want money for charity.
- Scrooge is visited by the ghost of his dead partner, Jacob Marley, who tells Scrooge that, due to his greedy life, he has to wander the Earth wearing heavy chains. Marley tries to stop Scrooge from doing the same. He tells Scrooge that three spirits will visit him during the next three nights. Scrooge falls asleep.

Key Themes:

- Importance of family
- Isolation
- Compassion and forgiveness
- The Power of Christmas

Key Characters:

Ebenezer Scrooge – A selfish business man who transforms from miserly misanthropy to benevolence.

Fred – Scrooge's nephew whose party invitation he declines.

Jacob Marley – Scrooge's dead partner who returns as a ghost to warn Scrooge to change his ways.

Bob Cratchitt – Scrooge's clerk who doesn't have much money. He loves his family and is shown to be happy and morally upright.

Quotes:

"hard and sharp as flint" - Scrooge

"solitary as an oyster" - Scrooge

"No wind blew that was bitterer than he" - Scrooge

"tried to warm himself at the candle" – Bob Cratchitt

"he was all in a glow" - Fred

"I believe that it has done me good" - Fred

"If they had rather die...they had better do it, and decrease the surplus population" - Scrooge

'I wear the chain I forged in life" – Marley

Key Terms:

political diatribe – verbal attack on political situation

allegory – a story with a moral meaning

zeitgeist – spirit of the time

miser – earns lots of money but spends none

misanthropist – hates humanity

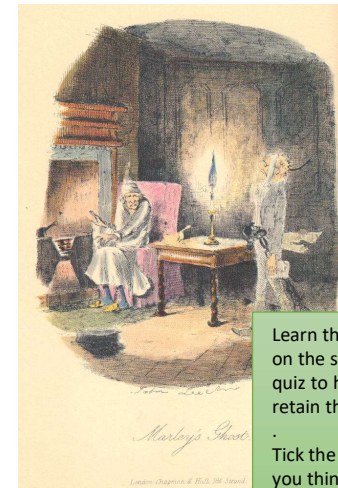
redemption – being saved

benevolence - kindness

antithesis - opposite

condescending – looking down on

quasi-religious – seems religious but isn't



Learn the information on the sheet – self quiz to help you retain the knowledge

Tick the boxes when you think your knowledge is secure.