



A Christmas Carol - Top 21 Quotations



Quotation	Who?	When?	Methods + Analysis
Solitary as an oyster	Narrator about Scrooge	Stave 1	Adjective 'solitary' - Scrooge is misanthropic and isolated; his isolation symbolises Dickens' view that the Victorian middle class isolated themselves from the rest of society Simile - as an oyster - like an oyster, Scrooge has a hard exterior. Oysters have pearls inside - precious jewels - Scrooge has goodness hidden inside him and needs to be 'cracked' open
The cold within him froze his old features	Narrator about Scrooge	Stave 1	Semantic field of the cold - At the start, Dickens highlights Scrooge's coldness, symbolic of his cruelty and lack of generosity. Dickens suggests that Scrooge needs to be 'warmed up' through his interactions with the ghosts
Christmas is.. The only time when men and women seem to open up their shut-up hearts freely	Fred	Stave 1	Metaphor of opening up the heart - Fred's vision of Christmas reflects Dickens' own vision and agenda of Christmas. This is the central message of the novel - generosity, kindness and charity is the true meaning of Christmas
I wear the chains I forged in life	Marley	Stave 2	Symbol of chains - the chains are reflective of Marley's sins of greed and selfishness that he committed in life. They weigh him down and are a burden to him, preventing him from being free in the afterlife
I can't afford to make idle people merry	Scrooge	Stave 1	Adjective 'idle' - Scrooge's view that the poor are lazy is symbolic of the prejudiced views of the rich that Dickens deeply despised Language of money - Scrooge's language always centres around money, symbolising his greed, and the greed of the Victorian rich
Very small fire... one coal Vs Make up the fire, Bob!	The narrator Scrooge	Stave 1 Stave 5	Motif of fire - throughout the text, fire symbolises happiness and generosity. At the start of the novella, Scrooge's lack of warmth and unwillingness to provide Bob Cratchit with a fire symbolises his meanness At the end, Scrooge's reference to fire reveals his changed heart and new found generosity
If they would rather die, they had better do it, and decrease the surplus population	Scrooge	Stave 1	Malthusian language - The philosopher Thomas Malthus believed that the poor were 'surplus population' and their deaths were a natural part of the cycle of life. Many Victorian rich were influenced by this and believed it to be true. Dickens despised this view, and uses Scrooge to symbolise his hatred of the rich's ignorant views
Clear bright jet of light	Ghost of Christmas Past	Stave 2	light imagery - shows how this ghost is a guide, bringing enlightenment / revelation to Scrooge to change his path. Suggests heaven, happiness, salvation
Another idol has displaced me... a golden one	Belle	Stave 2	Metaphor idol - an idol is an object that people worship - in the bible this was seen as blasphemy and going against God. Here, the adjective golden refers to Scrooge's greed - he worships money and this is what has corrupted him
I have come to bring you home, home, home! OR Father is so much kinder..	Fan	Stave 2	Repetition of home - reveals the family love that Scrooge once knew; despite his harsh and cold exterior, his original self had the capacity for love and family. His loss of family was due to his corruption by greed and money Exclamatory sentence - reveals Fan's joy and love, and symbolises the power and joy of family

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He has the power to render us happy or unhappy	Fezziwig	Steve 2	Powerful noun 'power' - message to the reader that the rich have the power to change the lives of many. It costs them little but they can make a big difference.
Jolly giant	Ghost of Christmas present	Stave 3	Ghost represents plenty and everything the rich readers have. Dressed like father Christmas and holly in crown references Jesus. 'Jolly' suggests he is here to show Scrooge joy, happiness, goodness in everything around him
Small atom of a bone	Cratchits	Stave 3	Noun 'atom' -suggests how small the meal was, shows poverty, lack of wealth, Yes the Cratchits are happy and grateful
Threadbare clothes	Cratchits	Stave 3	Adjective 'threadbare' -empahsises their poverty. They cannot afford new clothes, these are worn, old, damaged, broken. They have no 'best clothes' even for Christmas day
I feel sorry for him	Fred	Stave 3	Emotive language - Fred's family and friends are shown on Christmas day making fun of Scrooge but then Fred shows the spirit of Christmas, compassion, love, care towards Scrooge
Scrooge sees Tiny Tim - ghost repeats 'decrease the surplus population' - in response Scrooge 'hung his head' to hear the words repeated back	Scrooge Repeated by Ghost of Christmas Present	Stave 1 Repeated in Stave 3	Repeated phrase - the repetition of this phrase in Stave 3 is used for ironic effect, making Scrooge realise his ignorance and cruelty 'hung his head' shows change in Scrooge and how he is softening. Suggest guilt, shame, remorse. Scrooge realises poor are not just surplus but are real people like Tiny Tim.
God bless us, every one!	Tiny Tim	Stave 3	Religious language - Tim is symbolic of poor children in the Victorian era who, despite their innocence and vulnerability, were victims of the corruption and ignorance of the rich. The fact that Tim speaks in this way reveals him to be a Christ-like figure - he is an innocent sacrifice
Yellow, meagre, ragged, scowling, wolfish	Narrator, describing Ignorance and Want	Stave 3	Listing of adjectives; semantic field of poverty - the hyperbolic description of Ignorance and Want, who are symbolic of the poor children in society, emphasizes the suffering of the poor Animalistic language wolfish - the animalistic reference to the children emphasizes how the poor are almost dehumanized by the rich
Deep black garments OR Its mysterious presence	Ghost of Christmas yet to come	Stave 4	Adjective 'mysterious' and 'black' suggest this ghost represents evil, fear, death, warning, pain
Fog and darkness thickened End - no fog, no mist, clear, bright		Stave 1 & Stave 5	Pathetic fallacy - weather is used to reflect the character of Scrooge. At the start he is cold hearted and so the weather is negative. Fog - can show his blindness to problems At the end, the fog and mist has cleared and it is now clear and bright weather. Reflects the change in Scrooge and how 'good' he has now become
I am as light as a feather... I am as merry as a school boy,	Scrooge	Stave 5	Similes - repetition of similes references Scrooge's joy References to childhood - at the end, Scrooge is painted in a childlike manner, revealing how he has almost been reborn. He is used by Dickens as a role model to make clear to the reader that anyone can change and have a second chance at life "light" - Scrooge is no longer burdened by his sins, and is free to live a life of happiness
He became as good a friend, as good a master, and as good a man, as the good old city knew, or any other good old city	Narrator describing Scrooge	Stave 5	Repetition of 'good' - reveals Scrooge's total and permanent transformation. Scrooge becomes an allegorical symbol of change for the Victorian reader, revealing that, just as he can become 'good', so can they Any other good old city - the story is revealed to be universal and about anyone, any place - Scrooge is revealed to be an allegory and role model for the rich to live by