A Christmas Carol

by Charles Dickens

Setting - The time and place of a story
Example: It was December 24th, 1843, on a snowy Christmas eve in Victorian London.

Personification - Giving human characteristics to non-human things
Example: The knife and fork looked on happily as father began to carve the turkey.

Foreshadowing - Hinting at things to come
Example: Scrooge wished he could rid himself of the sick feeling in his gut that told him something terrible was going to happen.

A Quick Review

Overview -- Ebenezer Scrooge, a tight-fisted and bitter man, is visited by three spirits to bring about his redemption before his death. He learns to love his fellow man after being shown the love and generosity that symbolizes Christmas.

Introduction by Charles Dickens

It's hard to imagine a Christmas season without the story of old Scrooge, Bah Humbug! and "God bless us, every one." At the time this story was written (1843), the generous spirit of Christmas charity didn't exist in England. Many people did not believe in generosity to the poor. Instead, they believed the poor somehow brought poverty upon themselves.
In a clever play on words, Dickens divides the book into five “staves” instead of chapters.

**Stave** is a musical term, in keeping with the title, *A Christmas Carol*—which, of course, is a song.

The character of the Grinch is based on the protagonist of “A Christmas Carol”—Scrooge. As we read the novel, note similarities in the two main characters and the plot of both the book and the play.

“A Christmas Carol” is unusual because Scrooge, the protagonist (usually the good guy), is a very BAD guy. The antagonist (usually the bad guy) is the good guy.

Remember that the antagonist is the person who causes the conflict for the protagonist. They are not always good guys or bad guys.

Jacob Marley, Scrooge’s partner has been dead, seven years to the day that our story begins.

The first scene unfolds in the cold, cheerless office of Scrooge’s counting house.

As his faithful clerk Bob Cratchit toils, Scrooge is visited by his nephew and invited to Christmas dinner the next day. Scrooge declares that those who celebrate Christmas should be boiled in their own pudding and dismisses him.

Two men who come seeking donations for the poor are dismissed with Scrooge’s wish that the poor would die and “decrease the surplus population.”

Jacob Marley’s visit is dismissed as “more gravy than grave” by Scrooge, but it ends up setting the stage for the three ghosts. As you read, think about which ghost’s message most resembles that of Jacob Marley’s?
A Christmas Carol

- Pay careful attention to the three ghosts. Each message has a specific effect on Scrooge.
  - What does the ghost of Christmas past remind Scrooge of?
  - Whose generous heart touches Scrooge in the present?
  - What does Scrooge's future hold if he continues to be greedy and self-absorbed?

Personification

- Dickens portrays **Ignorance** and **Want** as two frail, ghastly children.
  - **Ignorance** = Scrooge refusing to acknowledge that there are poor people. He doesn’t see it, so it doesn’t care.
  - **Want** = Scrooge’s greed

Literary Elements and Devices for “A Christmas Carol”

- **Characterization**:
  - The process by which the writer reveals the personality of a character. Characterization is revealed through **direct characterization** and **indirect characterization**.

Literary Elements and Devices for “A Christmas Carol”

- **Direct Characterization** tells the audience what the personality of the character is.
  - Example: “The patient boy and quiet girl were both well-mannered and did not disobey their mother.”
  - Explanation: The author is directly telling the audience the personality of these two children. The boy is “patient” and the girl is “quiet.”

- **Indirect Characterization** shows things that reveal the personality of a character.
  - There are five different methods of indirect characterization: speech, thoughts, effect on others, actions, looks (STEAL)
Literary Elements and Devices for "A Christmas Carol"

- **Setting:**
  - The general locale, historical time, and social circumstances in which the action of a fictional or dramatic work occurs; the setting of an episode or scene within a work is the particular physical location in which it takes place.

- **Theme:**
  - The message about life that comes out of a story. Theme can either be stated or unstated in a story.

- **Symbolism:**
  - Something concrete that stands for something abstract. A symbol may be a person, place, thing, or action. It may stand for an idea, belief, feeling, or attitude. A symbol keeps its own meaning while also standing for something else.

- **Imagery:**
  - Words or phrases that appeal to the senses and conjure up mental images. Imagery helps the reader imagine the sights, sounds, smells, tastes, and feelings associated with a character's or author's experiences. Imagery appears extensively in setting, character description, and nature poetry.

- **Flashback:**
  - An interruption in a story to tell about events that happened earlier. Flashbacks can appear as character memories or dreams, or in dialogue or narration. Flashbacks provided background information that clarifies current actions in the story.

- **Foreshadowing:**
  - The use of clues early in a story to give hints about events that will happen later.
**Literary Elements and Devices for “A Christmas Carol”**

- **Dynamic character:** Character changes, grows or learns something by the end of the story.
- **Static character:** Character experiences no major change in the story.

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**Let’s review some elements Of figurative language!**

You’ll see these when you read *A Christmas Carol!*

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**Figurative Language**

- **Personification**
- **Metaphor**
- **Alliteration**
- **Imagery**
- **Simile**
- **Onomatopoeia**

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**I am hungry as a horse.**

**You run like a rabbit.**

**She is happy as a clam.**

**He is sneaky as a snake.**

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**Simile:** a way of describing something by comparing it with something else using “like” or “as”

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**Metaphor:** A way of describing something by comparing it to something else
The girl was a fish in the water.

The clown was a feather floating away.

The flowers danced in the wind.

The friendly gates welcomed us.

The Earth coughed and choked in all of the pollution.

Stan the strong surfer saved several swimmers on Saturday.

Tiny Tommy Thomson takes toy trucks to Timmy’s on Tuesday.

**Personification**

To compare something that is not human as if it had human characteristics

**Alliteration:**

Repetition of the first consonant

**Onomatopoeia:**

Words that are sounds
Yeeeee Ahhhhhhhh

Swish swish swish

Chug chug chug!!

Gluupp Gluppp Gluppp

Using words that appeal to the five senses

Get started!

- **Vocabulary packet**
  - Use as you read!

- **Stave I comprehension quiz** on Monday, Dec. 7th!

- **Stave I questions packet**
  - Due: Monday, Dec. 7th!
  - Read and work on questions!

**Imagery:**

We studied this one before! Remember?