

PLOT		CHARACTERS		LANGUAGE & STRUCTURE DEVICES		THEMES	
Preface	Charles Dickens explains to his readers that he wants to introduce an entertaining idea to them. He over-uses the semantic field of the supernatural to establish the subject matter of the novella and to show us that it's not intended to be frightening. He calls the novella a 'Ghostly little book' and refers to his 'Ghost of an idea'. Dickens wants his ideas to 'haunt' the 'house' of the reader – the house in this case is not just the reader's home, but also their body and mind. Dickens wants the reader to accept and embrace the ideas in this book and not just dismiss them when they finish reading it.	Ebenezer Scrooge	A selfish business man who transforms into a charitable philanthropist.	Allegory	A story which can be interpreted to reveal a hidden meaning, typically a moral or political one.	Greed	
	1	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.	Jacob Marley	Scrooge's dead partner who returns as a ghost to warn scrooge to change his ways.	Novella	A novella is longer than a short story, but not as long as a traditional novel.	Free will
			Bob Cratchit	Scrooge's clerk who doesn't have much money. He loves his family and is shown to be happy and morally upright.	Stave	A set of five parallel lines on any one or between any adjacent two of which a note is written to indicate its pitch.	Poverty
	2	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.	Tiny Tim	Bob's ill son whose story plays a part in inspiring Scrooge's transformation.	Omniscient narrator	A narrator that sees everything, including what a character is thinking and feeling.	Class
The ghost of Christmas Past			A strange combination of young and old, wearing white robes and looking like a candle.	Gothic genre	A genre (type of story) that incorporates elements of the gothic e.g. frightening incidents, supernatural occurrences, unexpected sequences of events...	Isolation	
3	He wakes and the Ghost of Christmas Past takes Scrooge into the past. Invisible to those he watches, Scrooge revisits his childhood school days, his apprenticeship with a jolly merchant named Fezziwig, and his engagement to Belle, who leaves Scrooge as he loves money too much to love another human being. Scrooge sheds tears of regret before being returned to his bed.	The ghost of Christmas Present	A portly, jovial gentleman surrounded by a warm glow. He brings joy on the most needy townfolk.	Foreboding	A feeling that something bad will happen.	Transformation	
		The ghost of Christmas yet to come	A robed and hooded spirit who confronts Scrooge with his own tombstone.	Mirroring	When a character, for example, resembles another character.	Family	
4	The Ghost of Christmas Present shows Scrooge Christmas as it will happen that year. Scrooge watches the Cratchit family eat a tiny meal in their little home. He sees Bob Cratchit's crippled son, Tiny Tim, whose kindness and humility warm Scrooge's heart. The spectre shows Scrooge his nephew's Christmas party. Scrooge asks the spirit to stay until the very end. Toward the end of the day the ghost shows Scrooge two starved children, Ignorance and Want. He vanishes as Scrooge notices a dark, hooded figure coming.			Dramatic Irony	Where the reader knows something that a character(s) are not aware of.	Guilt	
				Cliff-hanger	A dramatic and exciting ending to an episode of a serial, leaving the audience in suspense and anxious not to miss the next episode.	Generosity	
5	The Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come takes Scrooge through a sequence of scenes linked to an unnamed man's death. Scrooge, is keen to learn the lesson. He begs to know the name of the dead man. He finds himself in a churchyard with the spirit pointing to a grave. Scrooge looks at the headstone and is shocked to read his own name. He is desperate to change his fate and promises to change his ways. He suddenly finds himself safely tucked in his bed.			Circular structure	The reader reaches a sense of closure when the piece finds its way back to the beginning of the narrative.	Redemption	
				Foil	Something or someone with opposite characteristics to the subject, used to balance them out and even to draw attention to their feelings.	Social Responsibility	
6	Scrooge rushes out onto the street hoping to share his newfound Christmas spirit. He sends a turkey to the Cratchit house and goes to Fred's party, As the years go by, he continues to celebrate Christmas with all his heart. He treats Tiny Tim as if he were his own child, gives gifts for the poor and is kind, generous and warm.			Motif	An image that is repeated throughout a text showing the dominance of an idea.	Justice	
						Supernatural	
						Morality	

HISTORICAL CONTEXT
1824 – Dickens' father is sent to jail for debt and Dickens has to give up his education until his father inherits some money and he goes to a private school
Dickens was put to work in a warehouse, pasting labels on bottles. He had experience of poverty.
Dickens became a writer of fiction and journalism, reporting on court cases and working for radical newspapers on his disillusionment with politics and the class system.
1832 – The Great Reform Bill gave many middle class property owners the right to vote for the first time. Large sections of the middle classes, the working classes and women still didn't have the right to vote.
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.
September 1843 – Dickens visits a "Ragged School."
December 1843 Dickens writes A Christmas Carol focusing on how many of society's ills can be blamed on greed for money and status.