

# *English Literature: A Christmas Carol*



WordIT

### Philanthropy

**Meaning:** (n.) The act of supporting the well-being of others, usually by giving money to good causes or charities.

**Origins of the word:** Early 17<sup>th</sup> century. Derives from the Greek, *philein* ('to love') and *anthropos* ('human being').

**In context:** Scrooge did not believe in philanthropy.

**Challenge:** Write a list of philanthropic acts in *A Christmas Carol*. Consider the acts done by Scrooge. At what point in the novel does he start to believe in the good of philanthropy?

### Class

**Meaning:** (n.) The grouping of society into different 'classes', often based on wealth and jobs – e.g. upper, middle and working class.

**Origins of the word:** Derives from the Latin word *classis*, referring to the dividing of people into groups or kind.

**In context:** Scrooge is of a higher class than the Cratchit family.

**Challenge:** Discuss with a partner the impact class has on the characters' lives. Note down the disadvantages of being lower-class in Victorian society.

### Redemption

**Meaning:** (n.) The process of being saved from evil or sin.

**Origins of the word:** Derives from the Latin word *redimere*, meaning 'to buy back'.

**In context:** *A Christmas Carol* is about Scrooge's redemption.

**Challenge:** Make a list of the events that you think lead up to Scrooge's redemption. At what point in the text do you think Scrooge has reached redemption? How do his actions show this?

### Empathy

**Meaning:** (n.) The ability to understand or share the experience and feelings of another person.

**Origins of the word:** Derives from the Greek words *em-* ('in') and *pathos* ('feeling').

**In context:** Scrooge lacks empathy for his employee, Bob.

**Challenge:** Note down the things that Scrooge says and does in Stave One which show that he lacks empathy. Look at Stave Three. Note down any examples you can find where other characters demonstrate empathy.

### Inequality

**Meaning:** (n.) The state of things being not equal or fair.

**Origins of the word:** Early 15<sup>th</sup> century. Derives from the Old French *inequalité*, meaning 'difference in rank or dignity'.

**In context:** In Victorian society, there was great inequality between the classes.

**Challenge:** Consider what you know about Victorian society. Write a list of all of the inequalities that you know existed.

## *A Christmas Carol*

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