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Analysis Essay

### A Christmas Carol

*A Christmas Carol* by Charles Dickens is one of the most memorable and widely known Christmas story ever to be written. Charles Dickens was a writer in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and it wasn't until his book called *A Christmas Carol* was published that he became worldly known. Dickens began to write the book "October 1843 and finished his last page just six weeks after and with the first run of 6,000 copies, the books were sold out by Christmas Eve" ("*Charles Dickens's Christmas*"). Even though Charles Dickens was not the first author to write about the Christmas season in literature, he managed to create one of the bestselling novels of the time. He did so by writing about his own personal and humiliating experiences as a child in the grim and poor decades of the 1820's and 1830's. This can even be seen in the first three chapters alone.

Getting his point across that this book that he had written was like no other and would exceed the population's expectations would be difficult in a time of poverty and would be challenging for any writer, but for Charles Dickens it was simple.

I have endeavoured [sic] in this Ghostly little book, to raise the Ghost of an Idea, which shall not put my readers out of humour [sic] with themselves, with each other, with the season, or with me. May it haunt their houses pleasantly, and no one wish to lay it. (Dickens 1)

*A Christmas Carol* is a story that tells you to be thankful for all that you have been given and to make peace with your past and let it not define you in the end. Scrooge is forced to look back into his past and find out why he is the way he is. Like Scrooge, Dickens was born into a time of poverty. You can see that Dickens is trying to show you a glimpse into his childhood past. Dickens never got a chance to finish school when he was a child because he had to work to support his mother.

In this rags to riches story he gives you his insight of how the less fortunate is treated like dirty rotten scum and how the rich can do and treat others with no respect at all. This is where he came up with his heartless character named Scrooge. Scrooge is his definition of the rich society; a cheap, black hearted monster. In the beginning Scrooge is introduced as a bitter man: "a tight-fisted hand at the grindstone," and the image that Dickens describes to the reader is frightening and cold: "the cold within him froze his old features, nipped his pointed nose, shrivelled [sic] his cheek, stiffened his gait; made his eyes red, his thin lips blue; and spoke out shrewdly in his grating voice" (6).

Scrooge is anything but charitable which you can tell is something Dickens really wanted to point out on his character. Being in poverty you can go days with little to no food and staying warm in the winter is next to impossible when you don't have a home. Dickens gives you an example through Scrooge of just how hard survival was when it was cold out. "He carried his own low temperature always about with him; he iced his office in the dog-days; and didn't thaw it one degree at Christmas"(6).

When Scrooge walks home in London's deserted foggy streets, Dickens gives you the feeling of his character to be pathetic and all alone and kind of a ghostly feeling and suggests what is to come. "The fog and the frost hung about the black gateway of the house"

(15), it gives you that chill up your body as if the fog was signifying a gateway into the dark world in which Scrooge lived in.

“It also begins to make the audience feel for Scrooge they realise [sic] (even if he doesn't) that the path he walks so resolutely down will lead to his destruction- an example of dramatic irony” (Moncrieff).

It is actually said that Dickens based his character of Scrooge off of his father. “He both loved and demonized his father, and it was this psychological conflict that was responsible for the two radically different Scrooges in the tale” (Merriman). The one Scrooge was a cold, frightful and greedy old man and the other Scrooge was more of a happy, sociable man whose generosity and goodwill toward others at the end, made him look like a great person.

I chose this book because not only is it an extremely popular Christmas book but also because it has way more meaning and human emotion being shown throughout the book. It teaches you life lessons and morals, which I know can be forgotten from time to time. I think Charles Dickens did a great job at getting his point across to cherish your family, friends and all that is given to you.

Works Cited

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