

CHARACTERS Marley's Ghost and the Ghost of Christmas Past

What do we learn about Marley's Ghost?

- Marley was Scrooge's now-dead **business partner**. His ghost first appears as a face in Scrooge's **doorknocker**.
- It shows Scrooge how he will be **punished** after his death if he does not change.
- It explains that it now knows that **caring** for other people is more important than **making money**.



What do we learn about the Ghost of Christmas Past?

- The Ghost appears in **different forms** – an old man, a young child and also a candle-shaped **light**.
- It shows Scrooge **happy memories** that he has forgotten, such as his love for his sister Fan, his employer Fezziwig and his former fiancée Belle.
- It also shows Scrooge his first signs of **greed** as a young man, to show him how the past affects the present.

Q Three key questions

1. What is Marley's punishment for being greedy when he was alive?
2. How does the Ghost of Christmas Past shine a light on Scrooge's background, literally and metaphorically?
3. What lesson is the Ghost trying to teach Scrooge?

Answers

1. Marley is punished for his greed by dragging heavy chains and cash-boxes behind him for eternity.
2. The Ghost of Christmas Past looks at times like a candle-shaped light. It shows Scrooge his school, his first job and his former sweetheart, Belle.
3. The Ghost wants Scrooge to understand how past events still have significance in the present.

Learn

Now learn these key quotations to enhance your skills.

1. Marley's punishment: **'No rest, no peace. Incessant torture of remorse.'**
2. Marley's Ghost's chains: **'I wear the chain I forged in life.'**
3. The Ghost of Christmas Past: **'like a child: yet not so like a child as like an old man'.**

Think

How could you use one of the quotations above to complete this paragraph?

Dickens conveys Marley's misery by *describing his punishment*

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How does Dickens present money and avarice?

- Scrooge's office is a **'counting-house'** and his **business lends money**. **Avarice** is his **main motivation** at the start of the novel.
- We are told that Scrooge **saved money** when he organised Marley's funeral.
- Belle is the first person to notice how **avarice has changed Scrooge**.
- Jacob Marley is visibly **punished** for his avarice by having to **drag his cash-boxes** on chains for eternity.
- The charity collectors gather **cash donations** to help the poor.
- Scrooge notes it is impossible **'to add and count up'** Fezziwig's **kindness**, although he **spends** just **'three or four pounds'** on the Christmas party.
- Scrooge's **first generous actions** are to buy a turkey, pay for a horse and carriage and tip the boy who delivers it.



Q Three key questions

1. How do money and avarice affect Scrooge's behaviour?
2. What proof does Marley's Ghost show of the dangers of avarice?
3. How is money used to help others in *A Christmas Carol*?

Answers

1. Scrooge scrimps on Marley's funeral and ruins his relationship with Belle because money is more important to him.
2. Marley's Ghost is condemned to drag heavy cash-boxes and purses around with him for eternity.
- 3a. Fezziwig spends a little money to bring a lot of happiness to his employees at the Christmas party.
- 3b. The charity workers collect money to help the poor.
- 3c. Scrooge buys the Cratchits a turkey and tips the boy who fetches it.

Learn

Now learn these key quotations to enhance your skills.

1. Marley's Ghost's chain symbolises his avarice: **'cash-boxes, keys, padlocks, ledgers, deeds, and heavy purses wrought in steel'**.
2. Youthful Scrooge is changed by avarice: **'had begun to wear the signs of care and avarice'**.
3. Scrooge says society believes avarice is wrong: **'nothing it professes to condemn with such severity as the pursuit of wealth!'**

Think

How could you use one of the quotations above to complete this paragraph?

Dickens uses powerful imagery to describe Marley's Ghost