

## **The Character of Bob Cratchit - Transcript**

**Scrooge:** 'Make up the fires'

'...and buy another coal-scuttle before you dot another i, Bob Cratchit!'

**Presenter:** These are the lines spoken by a festive Scrooge at the end of A Christmas Carol to his humble clerk, Bob Cratchit.

The author, Charles Dickens, uses Bob as a counterpoint to Scrooge.

In other words he's a contrast in personality and social standing.

Bob himself doesn't change, but his character is used to motivate change in the old miser...

See, Bob didn't always know such warmth.

Toward the start of the novel Dickens describes how the clerk's fire was ever so much smaller than Scrooge's.

Bob is so cold that he tries 'to warm himself at the candle', rather than risk asking Scrooge for heat - a sign of his obedience toward his master and an example of the character being used to highlight Scrooge's miserly qualities.

Dickens portrays Bob Cratchit's working life as dull and repetitive - like those of most Victorian clerks - and he is shown as downtrodden and underpaid - linking to the theme of Social Injustice.

Despite these conditions, he is still hard working and a true family man - as we see at his Christmas meal where

**Narrator:** 'the Cratchits were happy, grateful, pleased with one another.'

**Presenter:** When the Ghost of Christmas Present whisks Scrooge off to watch the Cratchits' Christmas Dinner, he sees how family can bring a different type of wealth - one that money can't buy.

Bob even generously raises a toast to his boss - in spite of how Scrooge treats him - for making their humble meal possible.

The Ghost of Christmas Yet To Come shows a darker vision for Bob - grieving the loss of his son, Tiny Tim.

**Bob Cratchit:** 'My little, little child!'

**Narrator:** cried Bob.

**Bob Cratchit:** 'My little child!'

**Presenter:** The author uses repetition to draw sympathy for this sensitive man.

Ultimately Bob's circumstances shift when the aftermath of the ghosts' visits see Scrooge increase his pay and, of course, call to 'make up the fires', much to Bob's delight.

Charles Dickens's own father was a clerk, like Bob Cratchit and many appear throughout his novels.

What do you think the author is suggesting about the working class through the character of Bob Cratchit?