

### Stave III: Analyze the Impact of Setting

Identify and describe the setting in Stave III:

Stave III is set in various homes at the Christmas holiday. Dickens includes details throughout the text that reflect the spirit and traditions of the holiday. For example, “

Character	How does the setting impact the character?	How does the setting reveal the character's values?
Scrooge	<p>Scrooge is captivated by Tiny Tim at the Cratchit's Christmas party:</p> <p>Scrooge experiences joy and happiness as he observes Fred's party: "Uncle Scrooge had imperceptibly become so gay and light of heart, that he would have pledged the unconscious company in return, and thanked them in an inaudible speech, if the Ghost had given him time. But the whole scene passed off in the breath of the last word spoken by his nephew; and he and the Spirit were again upon their travels."</p>	<p>The Christmas setting at Stave III helps reveal that Scrooge's values are changing.</p> <p>The text evidence in the left-hand column shows that he feels compassion for Tiny Tim and realizes the joy that can come by connecting with others as he leaves Fred's party.</p> <p>By seeing how others experience Christmas, Scrooge begins to realize what he has missed because of his obsession with wealth at all costs.</p>
Bob Cratchit/ his family	<p>The Cratchit family prepares for a feast and family celebration:</p> <p>"Such a bustle ensued that you might have thought a goose the rarest of all birds; a feathered phenomenon, to which a black swan was a matter of course – and in truth it was something very like it in that house. Mrs Cratchit made the gravy (ready beforehand in a little saucepan) hissing hot; Master Peter mashed the potatoes with incredible vigour; Miss Belinda sweetened up the apple-sauce; Martha dusted the hot plates; Bob took Tiny Tim beside him in a tiny corner at the</p>	<p>The Christmas setting and evidence in the left-hand column demonstrates that the Cratchit's value family, togetherness, and counting their blessings/ appreciating what they have. Although they are poor and face challenges with Tiny Tim's health, they exude happiness and love as they enjoy the holiday as a family.</p>

	<p>table; the two young Cratchits set chairs for everybody, not forgetting themselves, and mounting guard upon their posts, crammed spoons into their mouths, lest they should shriek for goose before their turn came to be helped. At last the dishes were set on, and grace was said. It was succeeded by a breathless pause, as Mrs Cratchit, looking slowly all along the carving-knife, prepared to plunge it in the breast; but when she did, and when the long expected gush of stuffing issued forth, one murmur of delight arose all round the board, and even Tiny Tim, excited by the two young Cratchits, beat on the table with the handle of his knife, and feebly cried Hurrah!”</p> <p>“At last the dinner was all done, the cloth was cleared, the hearth swept, and the fire made up. The compound in the jug being tasted, and considered perfect, apples and oranges were put upon the table, and a shovel-full of chestnuts on the fire. Then all the Cratchit family drew round the hearth, in what Bob Cratchit called a circle, meaning half a one; and at Bob Cratchit’s elbow stood the family display of glass. Two tumblers, and a custard-cup without a handle. These held the hot stuff from the jug, however, as well as golden goblets would have done; and Bob served it out with beaming looks, while the chestnuts on the fire sputtered and cracked noisily. Then Bob proposed:</p> <p>“A Merry Christmas to us all, my dears. God bless us.” Which all the family re-echoed.</p> <p>“God bless us every one!” said Tiny Tim, the last of all.”</p>	
Fred	<p>Fred gathers friends to his home for a holiday party to celebrate:</p> <p>“After tea they had some music. For they were a musical family, and knew what they were about, when they sung a Glee or Catch, I can assure you: especially Topper, who could growl away in the bass like a good one, and never swell the large veins in his forehead, or get red in the face over it. Scrooge’s niece played well upon the harp; and</p>	<p>The Christmas setting and evidence in the left-hand column demonstrate that Fred values friendship, community, and generosity. He holds a party for his friends in which they eat, drink, and engage in playing games and laughing while they celebrate the holiday.</p>

	<p>played among other tunes a simple little air (a mere nothing: you might learn to whistle it in two minutes), which had been familiar to the child who fetched Scrooge from the boarding-school, as he had been reminded by the Ghost of Christmas Past. When this strain of music sounded, all the things that Ghost had shown him, came upon his mind; he softened more and more; and thought that if he could have listened to it often, years ago, he might have cultivated the kindnesses of life for his own happiness with his own hands, without resorting to the sexton's spade that buried Jacob Marley.</p> <p>But they didn't devote the whole evening to music. After a while they played at forfeits; for it is good to be children sometimes, and never better than at Christmas, when its mighty Founder was a child himself. Stop. There was first a game at blind-man's buff.</p> <p>It was a Game called Yes and No, where Scrooge's nephew had to think of something, and the rest must find out what; he only answering to their questions yes or no, as the case was.</p> <p>"He has given us plenty of merriment, I am sure," said Fred, "and it would be ungrateful not to drink his health. Here is a glass of mulled wine ready to our hand at the moment; and I say, " 'Uncle Scrooge!' "</p> <p>"Well! Uncle Scrooge!" they cried.</p> <p>"A Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to the old man, whatever he is," said Scrooge's nephew. "He wouldn't take it from me, but may he have it, nevertheless. Uncle Scrooge!"</p>	
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How does observing the different experiences and values of the other characters impact Scrooge?

By seeing the other characters, Scrooge begins to see that his life has become cold, lonely, and without meaning. Because the Christmas season is a time for families and friends to come together and celebrate, Scrooge is able to see

the strong bonds and relationships that other people hold with one another, and how these things bring them joy and comfort. Scrooge is an outside to these experiences - literally and figuratively - because he does not have any meaningful relationships in his life. While Scrooge is alone, he also begins to understand the consequences of his actions; he sees the way in which real people suffer as a result of his lack of compassion and caring.

Draft a short response to the question below; include at least two pieces of text evidence to support your response: How does the novel's setting during Christmas support Scrooge's development as a character?

*Sample response included below. This response is longer than what students will have time to write. Students should have at least one well-developed paragraph with two pieces of text-evidence, and introduction, and conclusion.*

In Stave III of *A Christmas Carol*, Scrooge visits Christmas celebrations at the Cratchit family's house and his nephew's house, which cause him to begin to realize that placing all of his value and focus on money has led to a life without meaningful connections with others.

At the beginning of the Stave, the Ghost of Christmas Present takes Scrooge to the Cratchit family's house, where he sees the family preparing for and then engaging in a feast to celebrate the holiday. At the end of their meal, the Cratchit family gathers around the hearth to share with one another and enjoy each other's company. Bob serves the cider "with beaming looks, while the chestnuts on the fire sputtered and cracked noisily. Then Bob proposed: 'A Merry Christmas to us all, my dears. God bless us.' Which all the family re-echoed. 'God bless us every one!' said Tiny Tim, the last of all." After watching the Cratchit family celebrate with such love and appreciation for one another despite their difficult circumstances, Scrooge is moved and asks the Ghost whether Tiny Tim will live. By seeing the family's bonds at Christmas, he realizes how important their connections to one another are and how devastating it would be for the family if Tiny Tim were to become sicker or die. The ghost responds by saying, "If he be like to die, he had better do it, and decrease the surplus population." Scrooge is overcome with grief because he had said these words to the men who collected for charity. His reaction shows that he has remorse for his previous actions, and that he has begun to understand the importance of helping those in need.

After visiting the Cratchit's, Scrooge then travels to Fred's house where he sees Fred's friends gathered to celebrate the holidays through sharing in food, drinks, dancing, and games. As Scrooge observes, he begins to enjoy the party. For example, as Fred's wife plays music, Scrooge reflects, "When this strain of music sounded, all the things that Ghost had shown him, came upon his mind; he softened more and more; and thought that if he could have listened to it often, years ago, he might have cultivated the kindnesses of life for his own happiness with his own hands, without resorting to the sexton's spade that buried Jacob Marley." This shows that Scrooge has begun to relax and enjoy the merriment, and that he is even considering how his life might be different had he cultivated kindness instead of focusing on making money. As they leave the party, the text states, "Uncle Scrooge had imperceptibly become so gay and light of heart, that he would have pledged the unconscious company in return, and thanked them in an inaudible speech, if the Ghost had given him time." This shows that Scrooge has begun to realize that enjoying the company of others and building meaningful relationships can bring more happiness than wealth and isolation.

By seeing the other characters experience Christmas so differently from his own experience, Scrooge begins to visually see and understand what his focus on wealth at all costs has truly cost him. He begins to understand that

because of his focus on making money and not caring for others, he has lost the opportunity to find joy and meaning from relationships with family and friends.