

**A CHRISTMAS CAROL:
BITESIZE ACADEMIC READING**

CLARIFYING VOCABULARY

refrained – Stop oneself from doing something

colossal – Extremely large or great

vitality – The state of being strong and active; energy

exhilaration – A feeling of excitement, happiness or elation

relapse – Worsen after a period of improvement

moroseness – Ill-tempered and feeling gloomy

vindictiveness – Having or showing a strong or unreasoning desire for revenge

1. What are the similarities and differences between Dickens' family and the families presented in *A Christmas Carol*?

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Dickens' daughter, Kate Perugini, who had destroyed a memoir of her father that she had written, because it gave 'only half the truth' told Miss Gladys Storey, the author of *Dickens and Daughter*, that the spell which "Dickens had been able to cast on his daughters was so strong that, after he and their mother had separated, they had **refrained** from going to see her, though he never spoke to them about it, because they knew that he did not like it, and would even take music lessons in a house just opposite the one where she was living without daring to pay her a call. 'I loved my father', said Mrs. Perugini, 'better than any man in the world in a different way of course... I loved him for his faults.' And she added, as she rose and walked to the door: 'my father was a wicked man, a very wicked man.' But from the memoirs of his other daughter Mamie, who also adored her father and seems to have viewed him uncritically, we hear of his **colossal** Christmas parties, of the **vitality**, the imaginative **exhilaration**, which swept all the guests along. It is Scrooge bursting in on the Cratchits. Shall we ask what Scrooge would actually be like if we were to follow him beyond the frame of the story? Unquestionably he would **relapse** when the merriment was over, if not while it was still going on, into **moroseness**, **vindictiveness**, suspicion. He would, that is to say, reveal himself as the victim of a manic-depressive cycle, and a very uncomfortable person.

**'HE WOULD RELAPSE
WHEN THE
MERRIMENT WAS
OVER'**



2. What, according to Mamie, was Dickens' view of Christmas?

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3. What does the article mean when it says 'It is Scrooge bursting in on the Cratchits'?

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5. What are YOUR thoughts? Do you think Scrooge's change is believable?

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4. According to the article, is Scrooge's change believable? Why? Why not?

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