A CHRISTMAS CAROL · YEAR 10 · LESSON 8

Stave 2: Belle

Lost love, choice, opportunity and regret

- Analyse Belle’s role in the novella
- Explain the theme of choice and regret
- Link Belle to Scrooge’s transformation

AO1 · AO2 · AO3

STARTER · 5 MINUTES · RETRIEVAL

Quick-fire recall

1. What does Fezziwig call his young workers?
2. What is a foil?
3. Which word shows Fezziwig’s generosity: “snug” or “scanty”?
4. Who is Scrooge’s clerk?
5. What does Scrooge say about Fezziwig’s power?

Type each answer in the chat on “send”, or write them in your book. Score out of 5.

CHECK YOUR ANSWERS

Did you get them?

1. What does Fezziwig call his young workers? **“my boys” / “my lads”**
2. What is a foil? **A character who contrasts with another**
3. Which word shows Fezziwig’s generosity: “snug” or “scanty”? **“snug” (warm, comfortable)**
4. Who is Scrooge’s clerk? **Bob Cratchit**
5. What does Scrooge say about Fezziwig’s power? **It lies in “words and looks”**

Tally your score. Anything missed becomes a revision target.

THE BIG QUESTION

How does Dickens use Belle to show what Scrooge has lost?

Aim

Analyse Belle’s role in the novella

Aim

Explain the theme of choice and regret

Aim

Link Belle to Scrooge’s transformation

Success: I can support a clear argument with short quotations, analyse word choices and link to context.

CRAFT

Belle and the idea of choice

Belle

Scrooge’s fiancée. She is gentle, honest and moral.

The idol

Scrooge now worships money. “Another idol has displaced me; a golden one.”

Gain

Capitalised “Gain” makes greed a **personified** force.

Regret

Scrooge begs the Ghost to “show me no more”. He sees what his choices cost.

EXTRACT · STAVE 2 · PART 1 OF 5

Belle ends the engagement

For again Scrooge saw himself. He was older now; a man in the prime of life. His face had not the harsh and rigid lines of later years; but it had begun to wear the signs of care and avarice. There was an eager, greedy, restless motion in the eye, which showed the passion that had taken root, and where the shadow of the growing tree would fall.

He was not alone, but sat by the side of a fair young girl in a mourning-dress: in whose eyes there were tears, which sparkled in the light that shone out of the Ghost of Christmas Past.

“It matters little,” she said, softly. “To you, very little. Another idol has displaced me; and if it can cheer and comfort you in time to come, as I would have tried to do, I have no just cause to grieve.”

“What Idol has displaced you?” he rejoined.

“A golden one.”

“This is the even-handed dealing of the world!” he said. “There is nothing on which it is so hard as poverty; and there is nothing it professes to condemn with such severity as the pursuit of wealth!”

EXTRACT · STAVE 2 · PART 2 OF 5

Belle ends the engagement

“You fear the world too much,” she answered, gently. “All your other hopes have merged into the hope of being beyond the chance of its sordid reproach. I have seen your nobler aspirations fall off one by one, until the master-passion, Gain, engrosses you. Have I not?”

“What then?” he retorted. “Even if I have grown so much wiser, what then? I am not changed towards you.”

She shook her head.

“Am I?”

“Our contract is an old one. It was made when we were both poor and content to be so, until, in good season, we could improve our worldly fortune by our patient industry. You are changed. When it was made, you were another man.”

“I was a boy,” he said impatiently.

“Your own feeling tells you that you were not what you are,” she returned. “I am. That which promised happiness when we were one in heart, is fraught with misery now that we are two. How often and how keenly I have thought of this, I will not say. It is enough that I have thought of it, and can release you.”

“Have I ever sought release?”

EXTRACT · STAVE 2 · PART 3 OF 5

Belle ends the engagement

“In words. No. Never.”

“In what, then?”

“In a changed nature; in an altered spirit; in another atmosphere of life; another Hope as its great end. In everything that made my love of any worth or value in your sight. If this had never been between us,” said the girl, looking mildly, but with steadiness, upon him; “tell me, would you seek me out and try to win me now? Ah, no!”

He seemed to yield to the justice of this supposition, in spite of himself. But he said with a struggle, “You think not.”

EXTRACT · STAVE 2 · PART 4 OF 5

Belle ends the engagement

“I would gladly think otherwise if I could,” she answered, “Heaven knows! When I have learned a Truth like this, I know how strong and irresistible it must be. But if you were free to-day, to-morrow, yesterday, can even I believe that you would choose a dowerless girl—you who, in your very confidence with her, weigh everything by Gain: or, choosing her, if for a moment you were false enough to your one guiding principle to do so, do I not know that your repentance and regret would surely follow? I do; and I release you. With a full heart, for the love of him you once were.”

He was about to speak; but with her head turned from him, she resumed.

“You may—the memory of what is past half makes me hope you will—have pain in this. A very, very brief time, and you will dismiss the recollection of it, gladly, as an unprofitable dream, from which it happened well that you awoke. May you be happy in the life you have chosen!”

She left him, and they parted.

EXTRACT · STAVE 2 · PART 5 OF 5

Belle ends the engagement

“Spirit!” said Scrooge, “show me no more! Conduct me home. Why do you delight to torture me?”

TASK 1 · ANNOTATE

Read again and annotate

1. Highlight how Scrooge’s **face** has changed.
2. What is the effect of “**Another idol… a golden one**”?
3. Find where Belle uses **capital letters**. Why?
4. Underline Scrooge’s “**I was a boy**”. How does he try to defend himself?
5. Find evidence that Scrooge is **hurt** by the memory.

Post your best quotation and one word of analysis in the chat.

TASK 2 · ZOOM IN

Key quotation

> “Another idol has displaced me; and if it can cheer and comfort you in time to come, as I would have tried to do, I have no just cause to grieve.”
>
> Stave 2 · Belle

1. **Word:** what does “idol” suggest about greed?
2. **Structure:** how does the semicolon create a pause?
3. **Tone:** is Belle angry, sad or dignified? Use the text.
4. **Message:** what is Dickens saying about money and happiness?

TASK 3 · MODEL

Model: Belle and regret

Point	Belle shows what Scrooge sacrificed when he chose wealth over love.
Evidence	She says, “Another idol has displaced me; a golden one.”
Analysis	The metaphor of an idol turns money into something worshipped, suggesting Scrooge’s devotion has become almost religious. The adjective “golden” also hints that his love is now cold and metallic.
Reader / writer	We see his choice as a tragic mistake, not just a flaw.
Link	His cry of “show me no more” shows regret beginning.

TASK 4 · WRITE (12 MINUTES)

Write: Belle’s role

Write **one paragraph** exploring Belle’s role in Stave 2. Include one quotation from Belle and one from Scrooge.

Check yourself, then paste your paragraph into the chat

- Point about her purpose
- Two quotations
- One word analysed
- Effect on the reader
- Link to redemption

TASK 5 · WHOLE NOVEL · ONE LINKING SENTENCE FOR EACH

Link it to the rest of the novella

“Spirit!” said Scrooge, “show me no more! Conduct me home.”
Stave 2 · he cannot bear it

“Mankind was my business.”
Stave 1 · Marley sees where he went wrong

“I am not the man I was.”
Stave 4 · the transformation begins

“I will honour Christmas in my heart”
Stave 4 · the choice to change

EXIT TICKET

3-2-1

1. **3** things Belle tells us about Scrooge
2. **2** words that show regret
3. **1** reason Belle is important to the theme of choice

Type your 3-2-1 in the chat.