

Teacher Sheet 4.4

Marley's Ghost implies that his chains were made by unscrupulous business practices that he decided to commit. To Dickens, these included being frugal with expenses and trying to make the largest profit possible. The present tense verb, "wear" implies that his actions had a permanent consequence: he is forced to wear this chain in the afterlife to remind him of his neglect of others and to encourage the redemption that he has undergone.

The repetition of the personal pronouns, "I" and "my", reflect the warning that Marley's Ghost is giving to Scrooge; he is warning Scrooge to change and act differently from him through highlighting how they are different, separate beings. The use of the direct address at the end of the second sentence is therefore more influential and persuasive because it separates these two men, who behaved

"I wear the chain I forged in life... I made it link by link, and yard by yard; I girded it on of my own free will, and of my own free will I wore it. Is its pattern strange to you?"

Dickens' repetition of the monosyllables, "free will" both encourages our protagonist and ourselves to become aware of the fact that the choice of what we value in life has endless, permanent ramifications, but also, it creates a tone of resentment and regret on Marley's Ghost's part when considering its simplicity; Marley's Ghost is now aware of his continued foolishness in life because making moral choices can be simple.

Dickens' repetitive use of nouns when he describes how Marley constructed the details of the chain give us an impression of the escalation of his mistreatment of others. What may have begun as trivial or minor acts of cruelty developed into habitual, more serious forms of callousness and thus, the punishment he now faces is more severe, but is also monotonous and ongoing.

Dickens increases the intensity of verbs as Marley's Ghost describes how he initially "made" and then "girded" this chain. "Girded" is a particularly apt verb since it means to tighten or restrain, so one realises that, as time went on, Marley unknowingly escalated the degree of punishment he would face after life. This punishment is required for Marley so that he can transform, and Marley's Ghost is encouraging Scrooge to realise the error of his ways so that he can make this transformation now.