Grinch

by Tina Tina

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"*How the Grinch Stole Christmas*" by Dr. Seuss

Student's Name

Institutional Affiliation

Instructor

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Abstract

"*How the Grinch Stole Christmas"* is a children's book by Dr. Seuss. The author intends to pass a moral lesson to his audience about love and harmony. He demonstrates the character of the Grinch as a person who hated Christmas and the Whos due to socio-economic problems he faced in his childhood. He never enjoyed Christmas like other children, felt neglected and rejected. The author chooses children to be his audience by writing an interesting narrative story with explicit demonstrations. The content revolves around the Grinch and his hatred for Christmas, after which he plans to steal it away. The reasons behind stealing Christmas are his frustrations, anger, and hatred, which makes the author give him the name "The Grinch."

Keywords: *Grinch, Christmas, Whos, Who-ville,*

"*How the Grinch Stole Christmas*" by Dr. Seuss

"*How the Grinch Stole Christmas*" is a narrative story written by Dr. Seuss. The story comprises illustrations for his audience (children) to better understand and get entertained. Dr. Seuss wrote this book in 1957, attempting to demonstrate the commercialization of Christmas through Grinch's character. The story is centered on the Grinch, a bitter creature who hated Christmas and wanted to end it by stealing gifts from the Whos' homes. Looking into his historical background, the Grinch feels neglected and chooses to live alone. From his childhood life, the Grinch could not afford the luxuries, other children, especially during Christmas like toys and feast on "Who-puddling and rare-roast beast." "The Grinch hated Christmas! He hated the entire Christmas season!" he could not celebrate it the same way as the Whos (Seuss, 1957). Hatred for Christmas is the main theme of this story.

The purpose of the "*How the Grinch Stole Christmas*" story is to entertain the audience and pass a moral lesson. Dr. Seuss uses pictures that act as illustrations to the audience. They demonstrate everything happening in the story, especially Grinch's character. It helps the audience see the Grinch's anguish and anger, seeing the entire Whoville town happily enjoying themselves during the Christmas season. Secondly, it serves as a moral lesson to the audience by conveying how best to relate with others. The Grinch was hurt due to socioeconomic issues, that made him not enjoy Christmas like other children (Pond, 2010). The story shows that, even if a person is hurt or dislikes what others do, he does not have the right to hurt them. However, he should try and fit in the society, considering those who show love and compassion. It is evident that wrong and wrong will never make a right and will never solve problems.

The audience of Dr. Seuss's story is mainly the children. The author describes the Grinch as a different person living alone. He makes the Grinch look green to differentiate him from the rest of the people in Whoville town. The author gives an entire demonstration of the Grinch's lonely life from his childhood to adulthood, living in hatred for Christmas and the Whos for celebrating the festival. At the beginning of the book, Grinch is seen to be unhappy and possessed with hatred for Christmas since the entire city of Whoville is full of happiness (Pond, 2010). People are receiving presents, gathering as a community to sing, and eat fantastic meals. He has an issue with his social life, making him live alone in a mountain above Whoville town. The unity among the Whos during the Christmas season angers him, and he wishes to avoid contact with the Whos. He feels like the Whos boost about Christmas and considers hated by the Whos. "It's because I'm green isn't it?" Being different makes him doubt whether the Whos recognize him as part of them.

The story's content is the Grinch's hatred for Christmas, making him consider ruining and stopping the Whos from celebrating. The Grinch is seen as an unhappy person living in the mountain alone with his dog friend in the entire book. Dr. Seuss gives The Grinch a name that describes his exact character. The Grinch is defined as a person who gets mad or unhappy when others celebrate and enjoy themselves. He is seen to be evil in this situation. He has not managed to avoid his hatred for Christmas despite other people loving this season. He decides to prevent Christmas from happening in Whoville and stop Who's happiness as he does not approve that Christmas brings happiness (Seuss, 2015). The Grinch cannot bear seeing the Whos happily celebrating the Christmas season. But, after attempting to steal away Christmas from the Whos by stealing their gifts and decorations, he realizes that it is not all about material things but inner happiness brought by love and forgiveness.

During the Christmas ceremony, Dr. Seuss sets a frustrating, sad, and enraged mood within the Grinch and excitement among the Whos. " But, Whatever the reason, his heart or his shoes he stood there on Christmas Eve, hating the Whos." This quote demonstrates Dr. Seuss of how the Grinch's anger and sad feeling seeing the Whos preparing to celebrate Christmas. Due to this anger and frustration, he works on his actions to ruin Christmas. He moves from home to home stealing gifts. He ensured that the celebrations would not continue since he thought the Christmas season was all about gifts and presents. Dr. Seuss states, "then, he slithered and slunk, with a smile most unpleasant, around the whole room and he took every present" (Seuss, 1957). According to Seuss, the Grinch is seen to have utmost satisfaction from stealing the gifts from Whos homes, thinking he has succeeded in stopping Christmas celebrations in Whoville.

Dr. Seuss uses a narrative writing style. He understood clearly that his audience was children and needed to write a narrative story to entertain them while passing a moral lesson. Why did the Grinch hate Christmas and the Whos? Why did he live alone in the lonely mountain? Why did the Grinch only steal presents? Why did he plan to sabotage the Christmas carols? These are among the questions the story answers by narrating the Grinch's life from childhood and how he developed the hatred for Christmas and Whos. It is evident from the socio-economic issues that put him unable to afford presents for himself. This "prevents" him from celebrating Christmas like other Whoville people. In the story, Dr. Seuss wrote, "Maybe Christmas… does not come from a store," which shows that the Grinch only cared much about presents (Pond, 2010). He thought presents made Christmas and that is all people considered to enjoy the ceremony. This shows that Grinch's materialistic ideals block him from seeing the true meaning of Christmas.

In writing "*How the Grinch stole Christmas,*" Dr. Seuss follows the narrative structure, which is the order where the narrative elements are presented to the audience. It comprises two things that are the plot and story elements. The plot of this story has different events happening in the entire book with the Grinch and Whos during the Christmas festival. Dr. Seuss is seen to show a difference in economic groups. He compares the Grinch and the Whos who have dominated the economic group in Whoville. They can have enough money to celebrate Christmas (Seuss, 2015). On the other hand, the Grinch portrays the lower class group without enough to celebrate. Therefore, turning to steal from the economically able persons and deprive their happiness. Also, this contributed to hatred among the economic classes, and to resolve this, the Grinch decides to steal from every single unit around Whoville. The story structure gives the story's purpose by demonstrating the Grinch's anger and hatred and his ill motive to stop Christmas.

In conclusion, Dr. Seuss has portrayed the theme of hatred the Grinch had for Christmas and the Whos. The author identifies his audience and the purpose of the book. He demonstrates the Grinch's jealousy and hatred for the Whoville people's happiness when celebrating Christmas in unity. The book's content revolves around the Grinch's hatred for Christmas, something he intends to stop from happening forever, only to realize that Christmas is not about gifts but love and unity. The author portrays the book as a narrative story starting with giving the Grinch a name with a definite description of his character as being a person who is unhappy because of others' happiness. A character that plots on stealing the Whos Christmas. The story serves as entertainment for children and, at the same time passing a unique lesson about hatred and sadness. Dr. Seuss shows the importance of managing such issues in a lovely manner without condemnation whatsoever.

References

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