

Christmas Eve

Answer the following questions carefully and be prepared to share your ideas with others in your class.

1. When Arthur starts his narrative, what time of year is it and what time of day is it?
2. What is the weather like?
3. Describe the inside of the house.
4. At this point in the story, how do you think Arthur is feeling?
5. Summarise Arthur's history.
6. Describe how Arthur came to buy Monk's Piece. Why do you think this detail is included?
7. From the comments that Arthur makes, what do his feelings towards Mr Bentley appear to be?
8. Summarise Arthur's descriptions of his step-children. Why are they depicted in such detail when they do not feature in the rest of the story?
9. Why do you think Arthur describes the drawing room in such detail? What impression do you get of it?
10. Make a list of the ghost story elements that Esme's children use in their stories; why do you think Hill has Arthur repeat the list?
11. Overall, what sort of impression do you get of Arthur from this first chapter?
12. What hints are there here that Arthur is about to narrate a ghost story which has overshadowed the rest of his life?