**‘A Christmas Carol’**

By Charles Dickens

[](https://www.google.co.uk/imgres?imgurl=http://www.springshoeanimation.com/_Media/image-21_med.png&imgrefurl=http://www.springshoeanimation.com/sketchbook/&docid=i3jX4lDMGsEXlM&tbnid=KEv1FaUFk6Lq-M:&vet=12ahUKEwjpqf-1hsDbAhUJAsAKHdmSBC44yAEQMyhMMEx6BAgBEE4..i&w=525&h=297&bih=584&biw=1024&q=a%20christmas%20carol%20images&ved=2ahUKEwjpqf-1hsDbAhUJAsAKHdmSBC44yAEQMyhMMEx6BAgBEE4&iact=mrc&uact=8)

Revision Booklet

(2018-19)

**Useful Online Resources and Activities**

* [](https://www.google.co.uk/imgres?imgurl=https://images.fineartamerica.com/images/artworkimages/mediumlarge/1/silhouette-illustration-from-a-christmas-carol-by-charles-dickens-english-school.jpg&imgrefurl=https://fineartamerica.com/featured/silhouette-illustration-from-a-christmas-carol-by-charles-dickens-english-school.html&docid=-KPjkLEY-fhS0M&tbnid=Lz0QEsxFweUzjM:&vet=10ahUKEwjSntKsxerbAhXEOcAKHQ6uDgcQMwjWAShVMFU..i&w=900&h=416&bih=584&biw=1024&q=charles%20dickens%20a%20christmas%20carol%20original%20illustrations&ved=0ahUKEwjSntKsxerbAhXEOcAKHQ6uDgcQMwjWAShVMFU&iact=mrc&uact=8)[*https://etc.usf.edu/lit2go/pdf/passage/2824/a-christmas-carol-002-stave-i.pdf*](https://etc.usf.edu/lit2go/pdf/passage/2824/a-christmas-carol-002-stave-i.pdf)
* *https://www.bbc.com/education/topics/zcs8qty*
* *Revision RAP Song* [*https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=upPNlQ7ry8*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=upPNlQ7ry8)

*Full Novella*

* *www.fullbooks.com/A-Christmas-Carol.html*

**Assessment Objectives**

**(Eduqas GCSE Literature Component 2, Section B**

In the exam you will be assessed according to the following objectives:

AO1

* Read, understand and respond to texts. Students should be able to:
* Maintain a critical style and develop an informed personal response
* Use textual references, including quotations, to support and illustrate interpretations.

AO2

* Analyse the language, form and structure used by a writer to create meanings and effects, using relevant subject terminology where appropriate.

AO3

* Show understanding of the relationships between texts and the contexts in which they were written.

**[](https://www.stpetersudbury.co.uk/event/christmas-carol-candlelight-anthony-roberts/)**

**Charles Dickens - Biography**

* Dickens was born in England on February 7, 1812 to John and Elizabeth Dickens.
* He was the second of eight children.
* His father was a clerk in the Navy Pay Office.
* As a child, Dickens' health was frail and his education was random.
* Despite being a kind and loving man, John Dickens was financially irresponsible and with a large family to provide for, found it very easy to rack up large debts.
* His father was finally arrested and sent to a debtor’s prison. Shortly afterwards, and probably as a result of being unable to provide for herself and her eight children, Elizabeth Dickens moved the rest of the family into prison with her husband, John.
* Charles, however, did not join the rest of the family and was sent to live with a family friend, where, at 12 years old, he was sent out to work.
* He joined other child labourers at a blacking factory (where shoe polish was made), sticking labels onto bottles for 10 hours a day.
* This job made a lasting impression on Dickens; the conditions and pay were poor and the employers cruel.
* Charles did not immediately leave the factory, at his mother’s request, and this only served to heighten his disregard for the poor working and living conditions that the working classes had to endure.
* But when he rejoined his family in London, dark days awaited him. His father was in debt, and so the Dickens family resided with him in Marshalsea Prison.
* When John Dickens’ grandmother died and left him a sum of money, John was able to pay off his debts and was released from prison.
* When eventually Charles returned to school, he attended The Wellington House Academy, which he described as being haphazard, full of poor discipline, brutality, desultory teaching and a run-down atmosphere.
* Despite this, Charles did well at school, becoming a law clerk and then a court reporter, which taught him a great deal about the bureaucracy and shortcomings of the English legal system.
* Dickens wrote actively while acting in private theatricals as well as touring and performing readings of his works
* Dickens’ first novel, The Pickwick Papers, was published in monthly instalments in 1836, when Dickens was still only 25 years old.
* Oliver Twist, Nickolas Nickleby, The Old Curiosity Shop and Barnaby Rudge were all published in monthly instalments between 1837 and 1841.
* Dickens had a large family with his wife, Catherine Hogarth, and he became a wealthy man through his writing It is widely believed that Dickens had a long standing affair with an actress named Ellen Ternan, who was with him for the last 13 years of his life.
* A Christmas Carol, one of Dickens’ most famous and well loved works, was published in 1843, reportedly under rushed circumstances in order to meet the financial demands of his wife’s fifth pregnancy.
* Dickens travelled a great deal, visiting America twice, Switzerland and Italy and wrote a great many novels on top of those mentioned above: David Copperfield, Bleak House, Hard Times, A Tale of Two Cities and Great Expectations being the most well known.
* Ebenezer Scrooge and other Dickens figures have become well known in literature.
* In 1858, Dickens left his wife Catherine, although they did not divorce: it was still unheard of for someone as famous as he was.
* In 1865, Dickens had a slight stroke that left his legs useless, but even this break in his health did not deter him from his active lifestyle of travel and work.
* Eventually he was stricken with apoplexy and died.
* On his death, Dickens settled an annuity (an annual sum of money) on Ternan, meaning she was financially secure for the rest of her life.
* Dickens was buried in Westminster Abbey.

**TASK: Complete the following Gap-Fill Exercise:**

Dickens was born in England on February 7, \_\_\_\_\_\_ to his parents who were called \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Dickens. His parents had \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ children and his father was a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ in the Navy Pay Office. His father ended up becoming financially \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and he was eventually sent to a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ prison. Charles was sent to live with a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ friend and at the age of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ he was sent out to work. He joined a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ factory and he never forgot the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ working and living conditions. When his father’s \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ died, he was fortunately left with some \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and as a result, he was able to pay off his \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and was released from prison. Charles returned to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and attended \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

Dickens had two jobs after he left school: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ . Dickens first novel was called \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and was published in monthly \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ in \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ when Dickens was \_\_\_\_\_\_ years old. His novels included : \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ , \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. Dickens was married to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and he had a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ family. He also had an affair with an \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ called Ellen Ternan. Dickens most famous novel was \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_and it was published in \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. Dickens left his wife in \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ . He had a stroke in \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and eventually he died in \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and was buried in \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

1812 John Elizabeth eight Clerk Debt Financially irresponsible Debtor’s prison

Family friend 12 years old blacking factory Poor grandmother money Debts School The Wellington House Academy Law clerk Court Reporter The Pickwick Papers Instalments 1836 Oliver Twist Nicholas Nickleby The Old Curiosity Shop Catherine Hogarth large family A Christmas Carol 1843 1858 1865

Westminster Abbey

**Law clerk Elizabeth Oliver Twist Large 1858 Westminster Abbey instalments 1836 The Wellington House Academy 25 years old irresponsible 12 years old Family friend 1812 blacking factory 1865 Debtor’s prison grandmother Court Reporter money school poor 1843 John Catherine Hogarth eight Clerk ‘A Christmas Carol’ Actress ‘Nicholas Nickleby’ ‘The Old Curiosity Shop’ debts ‘The Pickwick Papers’**

**Victorian England - Historical Context**

***[](https://www.google.co.uk/imgres?imgurl=https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/9/9c/Queen_Victoria_1887.jpg/220px-Queen_Victoria_1887.jpg&imgrefurl=https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Victorian_era&docid=c00IYsBwqXUTKM&tbnid=dSB0VYznNh-6jM:&vet=10ahUKEwiRgePNvOrbAhXIDsAKHbRlD10QMwiTAigYMBg..i&w=220&h=299&bih=584&biw=1024&q=Victorian%20England&ved=0ahUKEwiRgePNvOrbAhXIDsAKHbRlD10QMwiTAigYMBg&iact=mrc&uact=8)The Victorian era of British history was the period of Queen Victoria's reign from 20 June 1837 until her death, on 22 January 1901.***

* It was a long period of peace, prosperity and national self-confidence for Britain
* Queen Victoria inherited the throne at the age of 18 and ruled over Great Britain for 63 years and 7 months
* Her reign remains the longest running of ANY female monarch in history
* During the Victorian era, Britain changed enormously
* Victorian England was a time of dramatic population increase
* The population of England almost doubled from 16.8 million in 1851 to 30.5 million in 1901
* the British Empire was the largest in history and covered almost a quarter of the Earth's total land area

**[](https://www.google.co.uk/imgres?imgurl=http://cdn.lifedaily.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/Sewing-Machine-Elias-Howe.jpg&imgrefurl=http://www.lifedaily.com/top-20-victorian-inventions-that-changed-the-world/&docid=cce6GJ4DWDYM6M&tbnid=CzLXvhMVMLj-IM:&vet=12ahUKEwjLl7HqverbAhVmBcAKHRvuBQY4ZBAzKAQwBHoECAEQBQ..i&w=680&h=382&bih=584&biw=1024&q=Victorian%20England&ved=2ahUKEwjLl7HqverbAhVmBcAKHRvuBQY4ZBAzKAQwBHoECAEQBQ&iact=mrc&uact=8)**

**The Industrial Revolution**

* Victorian England was a time of great technological development
* During the Victorian era, Great Britain was building a huge Empire and was at the heart of the Industrial Revolution
* British trade was more efficient and competitive and other countries could simply not compete
* Britain became the workshop of the world
* The steam train was invented and machinery became used much more in factory production and commerce
* This left many people jobless, as machinery had replaced them. To look for work, people were forced to flock to the major cities, such as London and Birmingham. Demand for jobs was high, so pay was low
* London became the most advanced city in the world. It had the highest business output, the most rapidly growing population and ever expanding city walls
* However, despite the fact that London in itself was a world power, the actual city was in ruins
* The enormous amount of factory production meant that there was a constant black smog of smoke that hung over the city, poisoning the air. Buildings were grimy and streets were crowded and over populated
* There was no sanitary sewage system to cater for the massive influx of people thus, disease was rife
* There was great wealth and great poverty in England
* Businessmen took advantage of new technology (e.g. steam power) and cheap labour to make their fortune
* There was an improvement in communication. The new railways all allowed goods, raw materials and people to be moved about which rapidly facilitated trade and industry
* Other communication methods such as electric power, telegraph, and telephones, had a great impact on society
* Photography was also discovered in 1839 by Louis Daguerre in France and William Fox Talbot
* By 1889, hand-held cameras were available

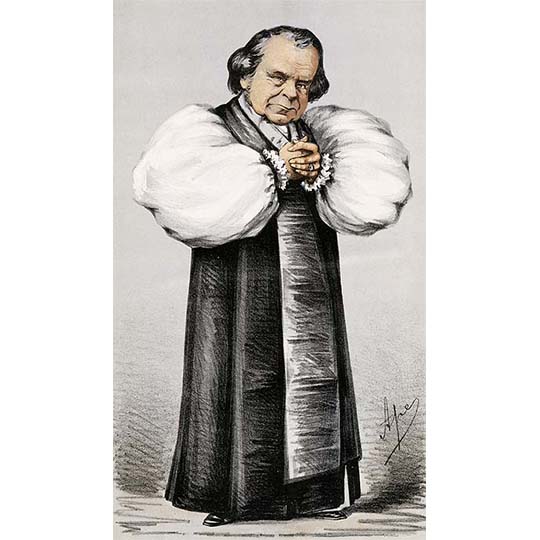
**[](https://www.google.co.uk/imgres?imgurl=http://www.florence-nightingale.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/1.jpg&imgrefurl=http://www.florence-nightingale.co.uk/2017/06/21/museum-poetry-education-of-victorian-girls/&docid=0yvuBzsMmu-dzM&tbnid=vykg2MugSBUdRM:&vet=10ahUKEwiPyMDwwO_bAhURdcAKHSlWAUsQMwh_KDYwNg..i&w=728&h=847&bih=584&biw=1024&q=industrial%20revolution%20victorian%20era%20education&ved=0ahUKEwiPyMDwwO_bAhURdcAKHSlWAUsQMwh_KDYwNg&iact=mrc&uact=8)**

**Education**

* Prior to 1870 there was no compulsory education in Britain and the standard of education was influenced largely by the wealth of a person’s background
* Education was normally only available to the wealthy
* During that period, the rich would get a much better education than ordinary citizens
* Roughly two-thirds of Britain’s working class children attended Sunday school which provided a basic foundation in reading, writing and arithmetic, as well as instructing children on religious morals
* Wealthy children were lucky enough to be sent to private boarding schools, where they received a good education, but many other children, who were wealthy, but not rich, were sent to school where the prime goal was for the owners to make money, whilst at the same time providing as little education for them as possible
* Rich children were often raised by nannies, rather than their parents
* Rich parents were of the attitude that children should be seen and not heard and most parents only had children to continue a family name, business or legacy
* Orphans had a miserable lot. If they were ‘lucky’ they were born and raised in workhouses, where they would have to work for their keep, but at least they had a roof over their heads
* However, the children were worked half to death, practically starved and shared living quarters with a great many other unfortunate children in the same position
* The authorities paid for such workhouses and it was seen that they should get their money’s worth out of them

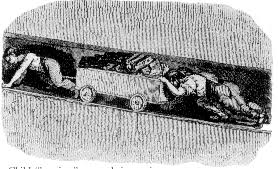
**[](https://www.google.co.uk/imgres?imgurl=http://www.bbc.co.uk/staticarchive/6eda052e5733dcfa4bfbbb4510cb540c78bbbbae.png&imgrefurl=http://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/ks3/history/industrial_era/industrial_revolution_life/revision/2/&docid=WQgUxyCWxXmpIM&tbnid=QVMgjC76zEWCYM:&vet=10ahUKEwiKu7WWwOrbAhVFSsAKHaCQBlkQMwiCASg5MDk..i&w=516&h=524&bih=584&biw=1024&q=Victorian%20England&ved=0ahUKEwiKu7WWwOrbAhVFSsAKHaCQBlkQMwiCASg5MDk&iact=mrc&uact=8)The Working Class and the Wealthy**

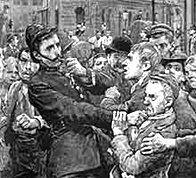
* The large numbers of skilled and unskilled people looking for work kept wages down to a level which allowed for mere basic living
* Available housing was scarce and expensive, resulting in overcrowding
* Workplaces were dangerous and life-threatening environments
* Welfare support was harsh (e.g. The Workhouse )
* There was no healthcare and this included high infant mortality
* Families were forced to live in squalor, often sharing houses with several other families in order to make ends meet
* Most of the money that was ploughed into helping the poor came from charity, which relied on the rich and upper classes giving their money to charitable causes. Many people commented that poor people were poor because of bad decisions they had made: gambling, drinking, unwise spending, large families etc, and were thus reluctant to give their own money to help the poor
* Simple: you either had it or you didn’t
* If you did, you were very lucky; if you didn’t you were very unlucky and there was very little you could do to change your situation
* Opportunities were only available to people who had the money to pay for it
* During the Victorian era, the middle-class was growing and those who were better off could increasingly have at least one servant
* This developing group included everyone from industrialists and bankers earning over £1,000 a year, to shop-keepers and clerks who would earn less than £50 a year

**[](http://www.google.co.uk/url?sa=i&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=images&cd=&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=2ahUKEwjY_P_33-_bAhUKbRQKHeaTB0YQjRx6BAgBEAU&url=http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/learn/story-of-england/victorian/religion/&psig=AOvVaw1p4Q9OTQZXbK3z5YZB5bkz&ust=1530048039130605)Beliefs**

* Most of Britain would have been churchgoers and would have believed in God (including Heaven and Hell)
* During the Victorian period, the people of England were very religious. There were many who regularly visited the church or went to chapel on Sunday
* The emergence of new scientific ideologies played a crucial role in challenging the old religious beliefs and superstitions which had a deep impact on the lives of the people for many years
* During this period that the Church lost its authority and power over the people because of the new industrial and scientific developments. Scientific growth in England during the Victorian period was a major reason why questions were raised against the religious ideologies

**[](https://www.google.co.uk/url?sa=i&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=images&cd=&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=2ahUKEwjC_O6j9ojcAhWDQBQKHQYdCikQjRx6BAgBEAU&url=https://www.magnoliabox.com/products/silhouette-of-a-victorian-child-chimney-sweep-42-32352558&psig=AOvVaw3T2Py-S6QZlNoK0H3jJkrY&ust=1530913197622528)Child Labour**

* The Victorian era became notorious for the employment of young children in factories and mines and as chimney sweeps
* Child labour, often brought about by economic hardship, played an important role in the Industrial Revolution from its outset
* In 1840 only about 20 percent of the children in London had any schooling
* [](https://www.google.co.uk/imgres?imgurl=http://www.victorianweb.org/images/hurrier.gif&imgrefurl=http://www.boston.com/bostonglobe/ideas/brainiac/2012/05/victorian_child.html&docid=vvEJQQ8ur34W4M&tbnid=O5hR_0w9Wil9cM:&vet=12ahUKEwjLl7HqverbAhVmBcAKHRvuBQY4ZBAzKBYwFnoECAEQFw..i&w=278&h=169&bih=584&biw=1024&q=Victorian%20England&ved=2ahUKEwjLl7HqverbAhVmBcAKHRvuBQY4ZBAzKBYwFnoECAEQFw&iact=mrc&uact=8)By 1860 about half of the children between 5 and 15 were in school
* Most children would be sent to work from the age of about 5
* Charles Dickens, for example, worked at the age of 12 in a blacking factory, with his family in a debtors' prison
* Conditions were poor and the children were treated abominably
* Poor children were not afforded the luxury of an education: they had to earn money for their family and were sent to work from an early age
* Boys usually went down coal mines or up chimneys, crawling through tunnels too narrow and low for adults both of which were hugely dangerous and often resulted in fatal accidents and illness due to poor sanitation conditions

[](http://www.google.co.uk/url?sa=i&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=images&cd=&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=2ahUKEwic1sX5w-rbAhVBXhQKHSafB0QQjRx6BAgBEAU&url=http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/british/victorians/crime_01.shtml&psig=AOvVaw0w7RWEz0k5I1KWYY78Od_B&ust=1529868785550350)**Crime**

* As was to be expected, there was crime everywhere in London. The poor had no option but to become petty criminals, stealing food and picking pockets
* Orphaned children had more cause to do so – for them it was a matter of life and death
* Women, who had fallen on hard times, turned to prostitution
* Men lived beyond their means, and punishment for this was harsh: debtors’ prison, where sometimes, they were joined by their whole families
* Prisons were overrun with criminals and it was difficult to keep track of the vast numbers of criminals that the institutions had to house
* Escapees were frequent and people in London lived in constant fear of encountering them
* Jack the Ripper was a notorious serial killer, loose on the streets of London. He knifed and ruthlessly murdered many prostitutes, often sending body parts to the Police force to show off his crimes. People, especially women, lived in constant fear. He was never caught
* The police were seen as ineffectual
* Theft and muggings happened on a daily basis, so it was almost impossible for the police to do their job

[](https://www.google.co.uk/imgres?imgurl=http://1.bp.blogspot.com/-CPcy6FuxCRM/UsHqjNzD3bI/AAAAAAAAAkI/Q4sJsy2J6SM/s1600/629-Charles-Dickens-wallpaper-q80-500x313.jpg&imgrefurl=http://michellemarkel.blogspot.com/2013/12/how-to-say-thank-you-like-charles.html&docid=dIouD3clEQc9pM&tbnid=KMT34lwL6Pxq0M:&vet=10ahUKEwjngYmkxOrbAhWpLMAKHa_fBogQMwh8KEAwQA..i&w=500&h=313&bih=584&biw=1024&q=Victorian%20England%20Dickens&ved=0ahUKEwjngYmkxOrbAhWpLMAKHa_fBogQMwh8KEAwQA&iact=mrc&uact=8)

**Dickens’ Concerns**

* Dickens had experienced poverty and had been forced to work in a factory to pay off his father’s debts
* Dickens was keenly touched by the huge number of poor children who were taken advantage of in the middle decades of the 19th century
* He believed that society should do more to improve the lives of the poor and many of his novels highlight issues which he felt needed reform
* As a successful writer he knew he needed his stories to entertain first rather than simply show how awful life was for working class people

**Publication of the Novella**

* ‘A Christmas Carol’ was first published in London by Chapman & Hall on 19 December 1843 during the Victorian era
* The novella met with instant success and critical acclaim
* Dickens was a popular and very successful writer of novels, short stories and poems
* Often his stories were told in serial form (like soap operas of their day) and published in journals, newspapers or magazines before being collected into novels or novellas
* ‘A Christmas Carol’ remains popular—having never been out of print—and has been adapted many times to film, stage, opera, and other media

[](https://www.google.co.uk/imgres?imgurl=http://teachingenglishlanguagearts.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/12/Sccrooge.jpg&imgrefurl=http://teachingenglishlanguagearts.com/a-christmas-carol-introduction/&docid=LvCW5_wSRMgBzM&tbnid=MIXhYaPmqS_aLM:&vet=10ahUKEwjftf2b3a7cAhVGDOwKHatlDvoQMwh4KC8wLw..i&w=308&h=247&bih=584&biw=1024&q=a%20christmas%20carol%20black%20and%20white&ved=0ahUKEwjftf2b3a7cAhVGDOwKHatlDvoQMwh4KC8wLw&iact=mrc&uact=8)

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1. Why was disease a problem at the time?
2. What did businessmen take advantage of?
3. What kind of communication methods created an impact on society?
4. Who discovered photography in 1839?
5. What was the standard of education influenced by?
6. Who benefited the most from a good education?
7. Who were rich children often raised by?
8. Where were orphans often raised?
9. What were the negative effects of these workhouses?
10. What was housing like for the working class?
11. What did a clerk earn at the time?
12. What did most of Britain believe in at the time?
13. What challenged religious beliefs at the time?
14. Where were young children often employed?
15. How old were most children when they were sent to work?
16. What were the dangers of children being sent into mines and up chimneys?
17. What kind of crime was common at the time?
18. What did women often turn to?
19. Why did men often end up in a ‘debtor’s prison’?
20. Who was a notorious killer at the time?
21. What were Dickens concerns at the time?
22. When was ‘A Christmas Carol’ first published?
23. Where was Dickens stories published?

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The tale begins on Christmas Eve in the 1840's, exactly seven years after the death of Ebenezer Scrooge's business partner, Jacob Marley. Scrooge is presented in the first chapter as a greedy, cold-hearted and stingy businessman, who has no time for kindness, compassion, charity or benevolence.

After being warned by Marley's ghost to change his ways (so that he may avoid a miserable afterlife like him), Scrooge is visited by three additional ghosts; each in its turn, who accompany him to various scenes in the past, present and future with the hope of achieving his change and transformation into someone who is compassionate, loving and truly repentant for his selfish ways.

The first of the spirits, the Ghost of Christmas Past, escorts Scrooge on a journey into the past to previous Christmases. Invisible to those he watches, Scrooge revisits scenes of his boyhood, youth and childhood school days, which stir the old miser's gentle and compassionate side by reminding him of a time when he was more vulnerable and innocent, both as a child and as a young man. He is reminded of his apprenticeship with a jolly merchant named Fezziwig, and his engagement to Belle, a woman who leaves Scrooge because his lust for money overtakes his ability to love another. Scrooge, deeply moved, sheds tears of regret and sadness before the phantom returns him to his bed.

The second spirit, the Ghost of Christmas Present, a majestic giant clad in a green fur robe, takes Scrooge to several, differing scenes in London which include a joy-filled market of people buying the makings of Christmas dinner, and the family feast of Scrooge's underpaid clerk, Bob Cratchit. Scrooge watches the large, bustling Cratchit family prepare a miniature feast in their meagre, impoverished home. He discovers Bob Cratchit’s crippled son, Tiny Tim, a courageous boy whose kindness and humility warms Scrooge’s heart and enlightens the miser of his past and encourages a sense of responsibility and compassion for those less fortunate than himself. The Spirit then takes Scrooge to his nephew’s home to witness the Christmas party. Scrooge finds the jovial gathering delightful and pleads with the spirit to stay until the very end of the festivities. As the day passes, the spirit ages and becomes noticeably frail and older. Toward the end of the day, he shows Scrooge two starved children, Ignorance and Want, living under his coat. The ghost vanishes instantly as Scrooge notices a dark, hooded figure coming toward him.

The third spirit, the ‘Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come’, leads Scrooge through a sequence of mysterious scenes relating to an unnamed man’s recent death. Scrooge sees businessmen discussing the dead man’s riches, some beggars trading his personal effects for cash, and a poor couple expressing relief at the death of their unforgiving creditor. The Spirit then takes Scrooge to Bob Cratchit’s house, where he learns that Tiny Tim has died. Scrooge, anxious to learn the lesson of his latest visitor, begs to know the name of the dead man. After pleading with the ghost, Scrooge finds himself in a churchyard, the spirit pointing to a grave. Scrooge looks at the headstone and is shocked to read his own name. He desperately pleads with the spirit to change his fate, promising to renounce his insensitive, greedy ways and to honour Christmas with all his heart. He suddenly finds himself safely tucked in his bed.

In the fifth and final stave, Scrooge awakens on Christmas morning with joy and love in his heart. He then spends the day with his nephew's family after anonymously sending a prize turkey to the Cratchit home for Christmas dinner. He also attends Fred’s party, to the stifled surprise of the other guests. .Scrooge has become a different man overnight, and now treats his fellow men with kindness, generosity and compassion, gaining a reputation as a man who embodies the true spirit of Christmas. The story closes with the narrator confirming that through facing up to his past and present life, Scrooge finds true understanding, self-awareness and completeness. Overnight, he has transformed from a man who was bitter, cold-hearted and mean to someone who is loving, generous and willing to help those less fortunate than himself.

**Stave 1 (The Ghost of Marley)**

**TASK: Find relevant quotes which focus on the key events in Stave 1**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **KEY EVENT IN STAVE 1** | **KEY QUOTES** |
| Scrooge walks the streets of London and everyone avoids him. |  |
| Fred, Scrooge’s nephew visits his uncle to invite him to Christmas dinner. Scrooge refuses him. |  |
| Two portly gentlemen visit to ask Scrooge to give money to charity, but he refuses and says they should be in prisons or workhouses, or dead. |  |
| Scrooge’s clerk requests Christmas day off, and Scrooge grudgingly allows it, telling him to come in earlier on Boxing Day. |  |
| Scrooge returns home, witnessing a series of supernatural events, starting with Marley’s face appearing in the door knocker. |  |
| Marley’s ghost appears and tells Scrooge he will be doomed to walk the earth in chains after death unless he begins to be kind to people, |  |
| Marley’s ghost tells Scrooge he will be haunted by three spirits. |  |

**STAVE 1 QUESTIONS**

1. How is Scrooge presented at the start of the stave?
2. What do we learn about the relationship between Scrooge and his clerk?
3. How do we know that their social position/class is different to one another?
4. What is the significance of the fire?
5. In what ways are Bob’s beliefs in Christmas spirit similar to Fred’s?
6. How do we know that Scrooge is cynical about Christmas? What does he say?
7. In what way is Fred different to his uncle regarding his views on Christmas?
8. How does Scrooge react when he sees his old partner?
9. What is Marley’s ghost’s overall message?

**FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

`It is required of every man,'' the Ghost returned, ``that the spirit within him should walk abroad among his fellow-men, and travel far and wide; and if that spirit goes not forth in life, it is condemned to do so after death. It is doomed to wander through the world -- oh, woe is me to witness what it cannot share, but might have shared on earth, and turned to happiness!''

How does this quote present Marley’s ghost and its torment?

**Stave 2 (The Ghost of Christmas Past)**

**TASK: Find relevant quotes which focus on the key events in Stave 2**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **KEY EVENT IN STAVE 2** | **KEY QUOTES** |
| Scrooge is awoken by the Ghost of Christmas past, who is a shape-changing creature with a beam of light shining from his head and a fire extinguisher cap. |  |
| Scrooge sees his childhood hometown, and then himself sitting alone at Christmas in school. He sobs at this sight. |  |
| Scrooge sees his sister, Fan, bringing him home from another lonely Christmas. The spirit reminds Scrooge she died, but had a child (Scrooge’s nephew) and Scrooge is uneasy. |  |
| Scrooge sees his old boss Fezziwig throwing a Christmas party for his staff and family. Scrooge enjoys the party, and wishes he could speak to his own clerk. |  |
| At the party, Scrooge meets and falls in love with Belle. |  |
| Scrooge then sees his ex-fiance, Belle, breaking off their engagement because Scrooge is too obsessed with money and she has none. Scrooge describes this as torture. |  |
| Finally, Scrooge sees Belle seven years ago with her charming family. Her husband says he has seen Scrooge, who is all alone. |  |
| Scrooge is overcome and puts the cap on the spirit’s head in a rage. |  |

**Cloze Summary: Complete the missing words in the summary of Stave 2 below:**

Scrooge meets the Ghost of Christmas Past. It symbolises \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ as Scrooge must relive his past to reconnect with his former, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ self. First, Scrooge watches himself as a lonely child in school. He cries for himself and the reader feels \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and begins to understand how he came to be so evil.

Scrooge takes the first step on the road to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ by regretting not giving money to a child who sung him a Christmas carol. He then watches his sister, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, and we learn she dies – Scrooge feels guilty about his nephew, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

Scrooge watches \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ throw a party for his workers. Scrooge begins to enjoy himself and learns that living a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ is harmful and that being disconnected from people doesn’t make life better.

Finally, Scrooge watches the break-up of his \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ with Belle: he becomes distressed as he is forced to see how a “\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_” has become his obsession (i.e. money). Scrooge sits alone and realises he hasn’t had a friend since \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and the ghost disappears; Scrooge falls into a deep sleep.

**sympathy solitary life Marley innocent**

**salvation Fred engagement Little Fan**

**Fezziwig memory “Golden Idol”**

**STAVE 2 QUESTIONS**

1. What astonished Scrooge at the start of the stave?
2. Why was it a ‘great relief’ when he looked out of the window?
3. *In your own words,* describe the ghost of Christmas past.
4. Why do you think Dickens puts Scrooges words in reported speech rather than direct speech for most of page 3?
5. Scrooge says that he has a ‘pimple’ on his cheek; what, in fact, does he have on his cheek and why is this unusual?
6. *In your own words,* describe the schoolhouse.
7. Who is Little Fan?
8. What was the atmosphere at Fezziwig’s?
9. How do Mr and Mrs Fezziwig treat their workers at the end of the party?
10. Where do the apprentices sleep? Why does Dickens add this detail?
11. How does Scrooge’s behaviour change throughout the party?
12. What is the ghost’s lesson for Scrooge to learn?
13. Where do the themes of the Christmas spirit and poverty appear in the party scene?
14. What do you think Scrooge would like to say to the clerks?
15. What is Scrooge’s reaction to the spirit’s statement about Fezziwig, ‘Is that so much that he deserves this praise?’. Why does Scrooge react in this way?

**FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

The poor, despite their circumstances, are full of the Christmas spirit. Wealth and happiness are not connected. To what extent do you agree with this statement?

**Stave 3 (The Ghost of Christmas Present)**

**TASK: Find relevant quotes which focus on the key events in Stave 2**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **KEY EVENT IN STAVE 3** | **KEY QUOTES** |
| The Ghost of Christmas Present appears in Scrooge’s home. He is a jolly giant who carries a horn, and the room is decorated in Christmas splendour. |  |
| Scrooge sees the Cratchit family and their paltry Christmas. He is moved by Tiny Tim, but the spirit tells him he will die if things don’t change. |  |
| Scrooge shows concern for Tiny Tim’s future. |  |
| The spirit shows Scrooge Christmas around the country, from the streets, to the miners, to the lighthouse keepers and sailors. All are festive and happy. |  |
| Scrooge sees his nephew’s Christmas party, where Fred says he pities Scrooge, while the others make fun of him. Scrooge joins in with the party games. |  |
| The spirit shows Scrooge two starved children, Ignorance and Want. He vanishes as Scrooge notices a dark, hooded figure coming. |  |

**Cloze Summary: Complete the missing words in the summary of Stave 3 below:**

Scrooge meets the Ghost of Christmas Present. He symbolises\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_. He sits on a throne of food and wears a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ with no sword (which symbolises peace). The ghost shows Scrooge the Christmas of other people: he waves his torch to spread the Christmas Spirit, focusing on poor people as they “\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_”.

They visit the Cratchit family, who offer the reader an idealised version of the Christmas for the poor. They wear “\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_” to celebrate the day and work as a team to create their meagre Christmas dinner. They \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Scrooge, despite the fact that he underpays Bob and treats him poorly. Scrooge becomes upset for Tiny Tim when the ghost reveals he will die. He realises how \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ he has been and feels \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

for his past ways.

At Fred’s Christmas party, everyone enjoys themselves. The Cratchit family represents the poor and Fred’s party represents the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. The family make fun of Scrooge and his behaviour and don’t have respect for him. Fred says his wealth is of no use as he believes he “\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_”.

The ghost shows Scrooge \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_: they are personified problems of society. Scrooge is horrified and asked if they can be helped, but the ghost uses his own words to shame him: “\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ ” The ghost of Christmas Present dies and leaves Scrooge feeling confused yet he is beginning to realise his past \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ .

**ribbons Ignorance and Want Guilty “Doesn’t do any good with it” selfish “Are there no prisons?” “Are there no workhouses?” toast middle classes generosity and goodwill scabbard mistakes need most**

**STAVE 3 QUESTIONS**

1. How did Scrooge react when the second spirit didn’t arrive ‘when the bell struck one’?
2. Scrooge got up, what did he enter? Describe how it appeared.
3. Describe the appearance of the Ghost of Christmas Present.
4. Why might Dickens include a scene in which the Cratchit family cook their Christmas meal?
5. Why does Mrs Cratchit invite her daughter to sit down “before the fire”?
6. Why might Dickens include the image of Bob carrying his son?
7. How are the references to church important?
8. Why do you think Bob say that his son is “good as gold”?
9. How do the Cratchit family feel about their meal?
10. How does Scrooge react to watching this scene?
11. Why might Dickens include Bob toasting Scrooge as the “founder of the feast”?
12. Overall, what is the atmosphere in this scene?
13. Where did the spirit take him after they were at the Cratchit’s house?
14. How do Scrooge’s niece and nephew feel about him?
15. What did the family do after dinner?
16. Why did Scrooge beg to stay at the party?
17. What did Scrooge notice about the change in the spirit’s appearance?
18. How long will the spirit be ‘upon the globe’?
19. What was under the spirit’s robe?

**FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

*“Are there no prisons?” said the Spirit, turning on him for the last time with his own words. “Are there no workhouses*?”

Why are these words repeated at this point in the novel?

**Ignorance and Want**



‘Forgive me if I am not justified in what I ask," said Scrooge, looking intently at the Spirit's robe, "but I see something strange, and not belonging to yourself, protruding from your skirts. Is it a foot or a claw?"

"It might be a claw, for the flesh there is upon it," was the Spirit's sorrowful reply. "Look here."

From the foldings of its robe, it brought two children; wretched, abject, frightful, hideous, miserable. They knelt down at its feet, and clung upon the outside of its garment.’

**Why would Dickens choose children to symbolise the problems in society?**

* Ignorance: People like Scrooge, who ignore the problems of the poor, create enormous social problems. They create children like this.
* Want: because the population has ‘boomed’ in Victorian times, many people ‘want for’ (go without) the basic necessities such as food and shelter. Combined with the ignorance of the rich, this creates massive social problems. It creates children like this.

**These children will grow into adults who live a life of crime, causing BIGGER problems and creating a cycle.**

**Stave 4 (The Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come)**

**TASK: Find relevant quotes which focus on the key events in Stave 3**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **KEY EVENT IN STAVE 4** | **KEY QUOTES** |
| The Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come shows Scrooge some businessmen carelessly discussing the death of an unnamed man. |  |
| Moving to the backstreets of London, a group of thieves meet. Mrs Dilber, Scrooge’s laundress, laughs about the sheets and bed clothes that she has stolen from the dead man. |  |
| The spirit shows Scrooge a lonely, dead body under a sheet. Scrooge is greatly disturbed, and begs to see someone who feels emotion at the man’s death. |  |
| Scrooge sees a couple who are happy about the man’s death because their debt is erased. Scrooge begs to see some tenderness towards the man. |  |
| Scrooge sees the Cratchit family, who are mourning the death of Tiny Tim. It could be that Scrooge’s death hurt the family as Bob became unemployed and was unable to support Tiny Tim. |  |
| Scrooge finds himself in a churchyard with the spirit pointing to a grave. Scrooge looks at the headstone and is shocked to read his own name. |  |
| He begs to be told he can change, and wakes up in his own bed. |  |

**Cloze Summary: Complete the missing words in the summary of Stave 4 below:**

Scrooge meets the Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come: he looks like the \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (symbolising death). The ghost doesn’t speak; Scrooge does all the talking. This shows Scrooge’s \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ as he has learnt lessons from the other ghosts.

The ghost shows us Scrooge’s business acquaintances (representing Ignorance in society). They are uninterested in what has happened to Scrooge and are only interested in a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. Like Marley, Scrooge’s funeral is “\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_”.

The ghost then takes Scrooge to a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ where people have ransacked his house and dead body and are selling his possessions (representing Want in society). \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, Scrooge’s employee, says that the theft is a “\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_” on him.

Next we meet some debtors of Scrooge who are relieved he has died. Scrooge also learns that \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ has died. He is forced to witness the pain and suffering of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, who tries to remain strong for his family’s sake. Scrooge clearly feels \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ by this tragic event.

Finally, the ghost shows Scrooge his grave. Scrooge becomes emotional and reveals that he is now \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ for his past, selfish ways and admitting that he is a changed man. He declares “I’m not the man I was” and “\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_”.

Scrooge awakes, clinging to the sheets of his \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ in a state of pure \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ .

**Mrs Dilber Tiny Tim repentant Bob**

**“cheap” transformation alarmed “judgement” bed post free meal pawn shop Grim Reaper “I will honour Christmas in my heart” Fear**

**STAVE 4 QUESTIONS**

1. What is the name of the third Spirit?
2. What does the third Spirit say to Scrooge when he sees him?
3. What feelings does Scrooge experience when he meets the third Spirit?
4. Where do Scrooge and the third Spirit overhear the first conversation about death?
5. What types of men are discussing the death?
6. What name do the men give to the man who has died?
7. In what type of establishment does Scrooge see the laundress?
8. What has the laundress stolen from the dead body, which Scrooge finds more shocking?
9. Why is the family that Scrooge visits so happy to hear of the death of the dead man?
10. Who says the line ‘Let me see some tenderness connected with a death’?
11. Who does Scrooge decide that he would like to catch a glimpse of now that he has recognised that he is seeing the future?
12. Where does Scrooge believe that he should be at that time of day, in the future?
13. Where is Scrooge when he realises that in the future he will be dead?
14. Who asks the Spirit if these events are the things that ‘Will be, or are they shadows of things that May be, only?’
15. What is the Spirit’s response to the question of whether these are the things that will surely come to pass?
16. What does the Spirit use to point?
17. What is the name on the tombstone that Scrooge is confronted with?
18. What does Scrooge do after he sees the name on the tombstone?
19. When Scrooge returns to his bedroom, what does he wake up clutching?
20. What does Scrooge promise to honour, from the bottom of his heart?

**FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

Why do you think the Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come has no face and does not speak?

**Stave 5 ( The End of It)**

**Stave 5 (The End of it)**

**TASK: Find relevant quotes which focus on the key events in Stave 3**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **KEY EVENT IN STAVE 5** | **KEY QUOTES** |
| Scrooge awakens with excitement and happiness. |  |
| He sends a turkey to the Cratchit house. |  |
| He walks among the streets and has happy interactions with people. |  |
| He sees the charity man who visited him at the start of the novella and he shows his generosity. |  |
| He goes to Fred's party and humbly asks to be invited. |  |
| Fred invites his uncle to join his family on Christmas day |  |
| Bob is late to work on boxing day and terrified he will lose his job. Scrooge pretends he will sack him but raises his salary instead. |  |
| As the years go by, he continues to celebrate Christmas with all his heart. He treats Tiny Tim as if he was his own child, gives gifts for the poor and is kind, generous and warm. |  |

**STAVE 5 QUESTIONS**

1. How does Scrooge respond when he wakes up in his own bed on Christmas morning?
2. Who tells Scrooge what day it actually is?
3. What does Scrooge send to Bob Cratchit?
4. What does Scrooge do when he meets the man who had asked him for a donation the day before?
5. At whose home does Scrooge have Christmas dinner?
6. How does the change of weather reflect Scrooge’s transformation? What language technique is this?
7. What language device has Dickens used in ‘as light as a feather…as happy as an angel…as merry as a schoolboy…..as giddy as a drunken man’? What is their effect on the reader?
8. How does Scrooge feel about knocking on Fred’s door? Why has Dickens decided to show us this?
9. Identify the repetition Scrooge uses to describe Fred’s party? What is the purpose of this repetition?
10. Everything that Scrooge does wrong in Stave One is put right in Stave Five. Find three examples to support this statement.
11. In Stave Two young Scrooge is left on his own and in Stave Three the Cratchits are described as the model happy family. How is the theme of family presented in Stave Five?
12. What is the meaning of Scrooge’s statement, ‘I will live in the Past, the Present and the Future!’?
13. Why do you think Dickens ends with the narrator’s voice rather than a scene with Scrooge? How effective is this ending?

**FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

* Although the novella is called ‘A Christmas Carol’, the story isn’t finally about Christmas; it’s about our responsibility to others all year round. How far do you agree?
* Some people have described ‘A Christmas Carol’ as a fairy-tale. For others it is a realistic portrayal of the sufferings of the Victorian poor. What is your own opinion and why?
* How far can ‘A Christmas Carol’ be regarded as a blueprint for the perfect Christmas?

Dickens's novella features four ghosts in total: Jacob Marley and the three Ghosts of Christmas. It is a ghost story with a moral tale.

The title of the novella perhaps suggests to the reader that this will ultimately be a joyous/moral tale.

The novella is divided into 5 Staves. In music, a stave is a set of 5 parallel lines in which musical notes are written.

The novella reveals a clear beginning, middle and end through which we see Scrooge’s transformation.

Carols are songs that are popular at Christmas time and usually deal with stories of Christ's birth or with themes associated with the festive season. Some carols focus on joy and the spirit of giving to others.

The novella uses a similar structure to a song to present a moral tale of transformation. The structure links to the theme of Christmas by reflecting the shape of a typical carol.

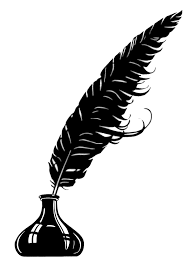
The final (fifth) stave returns to many of the ideas/themes in Stave 1 so there’s symmetry to the novella.

The Staves follow the action of the story with the first stave setting the scene, the middle stave showing the turning point for Scrooge and the final stave concluding the story by presenting him as a changed man.

Scrooge's redemption in the final stave leaves the reader with a sense of both completion and possibility. Furthermore, the last stave is both short and upbeat with Scrooge having rejected all of his earlier miserly ways, becoming a good Christian again.

The structure of three ghosts reveals the past, present and future. The number three is significant in fairy stories, religious tales and traditional myths and legends. Characters are often faced with three choices, granted three wishes, or given three opportunities to change. Scrooge is shown his past, the present and a possible future and then finally finds the ability and willingness to transform.

The tale is written as a novella. This is a short piece of fiction - longer than a short story, but shorter than a novel.

**[](https://www.google.co.uk/imgres?imgurl=http://www.stickpng.com/assets/images/5a01942e7ca233f48ba62734.png&imgrefurl=http://www.stickpng.com/cat/objects/quill-pens?page=1&docid=itTj6xTQOK1EQM&tbnid=4JANwO2Ixc3EFM:&vet=10ahUKEwi0mJ2AgJ3cAhVlAcAKHdCxDeQQMwj4ASguMC4..i&w=800&h=1082&bih=584&biw=1024&q=feather%20pen%20images&ved=0ahUKEwi0mJ2AgJ3cAhVlAcAKHdCxDeQQMwj4ASguMC4&iact=mrc&uact=8)Language Techniques in ‘A Christmas Carol’**

**NARRATIVE VOICE (Third Person Omniscient)**

The novella is written in third person which reflects the voice of the author, Charles Dickens. This can inform the reader of actions, plot and feelings of other characters. It also helps us to understand and appreciate Dickens thoughts about class, wealth and poverty during the Victorian era.

**DIALOGUE**

Dickens uses a lot of dialogue to reflect the realism of the novella and the characters interaction with one another. This is a typical technique used by Dickens in all of his novels and allows readers to become familiar with characters’ feelings and thoughts.

**SIMILES**:

Comparing two things using LIKE or AS (INDIRECT comparison). These reveal vivid images in the reader’s mind by comparing something to something else. Dickens uses many similes to add more interest and to help us to imagine what is taking place.

**METAPHORS:**

Comparing two things that aren't identical but have something in common (a DIRECT comparison). They highlight powerful images in the reader’s mind by relating or comparing something to something else. They allow us to clearly imagine the moment being described.

**PERSONIFICATION**:

Gives human qualities (emotions, gestures) to something non-human (a thing, an idea or an animal). This creates a more meaningful image or interpretation of a main subject being explored.

**REPETITION:**

Words or phrases which are repeated often in a text. These are used to emphasise a particular point or idea so that it sticks in the reader’s mind. Dickens uses this technique to stress the importance of certain events in the plot.

**PATHETIC FALLACY:**

When a human emotion is related to nature or the weather. Can be metaphorical and heightens emotions, thoughts, feelings and atmosphere through the presentation of nature or the weather. Dickens uses this language technique to portray settings, character, actions and atmosphere in the novella.

**PRESENT PARTICIPLES:**

Verbs which are in the PRESENT CONTINUOUS tense and end in ‘...ing’. This technique is used to emphasise IMMEDIACY and REALISM and it makes the readers feel as though they are part of the narrative and the EVENTS which are unfolding. Dickens uses present participles to help the reader to feel a part of the action and the events taking place in the novella.

**DARKNESS AND LIGHT IMAGERY:**

Dickens uses this imagery as a form of CONTRAST to add to the setting, atmosphere and characterisation in the novella.

**Darkness signifies:**

* The darkness and smog of winter (literal)
* Scrooge’s blindness and inability to see the error of his ways at the start of the novella (figurative)
* The evil of the values and beliefs of those who are part of the wealthy society and are ignorant of the suffering of the poverty which surrounds them

**Light signifies:**

* The natural light of candles, lamps and fires in fire places (Literal)
* Scrooge’s growing awareness and self-realisation of the mistakes of his past life (Figurative)
* The Ghost of Christmas Past who is also portrayed as a glowing candle
* Scrooge’s final enlightenment and transformation by the end of the novella

**COLD IMAGERY:**

Dickens also uses cold imagery throughout the novella which not only reflects the cold winter weather but clearly symbolises Scrooge’s coldness as a character. Dickens uses various language techniques to describe this such as Similes, Metaphors, Personification and Pathetic Fallacy (see above). It also serves to symbolise the coldness and selfishness of those who are wealthy and care little for those who are less fortunate than themselves.

**TASK:** Match up the following Language Techniques with the QUOTES below:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Language Technique** | **Quotes** |
| Repetition | “The dealings of my trade were but a drop of water in the comprehensive ocean of my business.” |
| Pathetic Fallacy | ‘To edge his way along the crowded paths of life warning all human sympathy to keep its distance.’ |
| Simile | ‘A squeezing, wrenching, grasping, scraping, clutching, covetous, old sinner!’ |
| Metaphor | ‘The sky was gloomy, and the shortest streets were choked up with a dingy mist, half thawed, half frozen, whose heavier particles descended in shower of sooty atoms.’ |
| Personification | ‘Solitary as an oyster’ |
| Light and Dark Imagery | ‘It was cold, bleak, biting weather: foggy withal: and he could hear the people in the court outside go wheezing up and down, beating their hands upon their breasts, and stamping their feet upon the pavement stones to warm them.’ |
| Present Participles | ‘The chuckle with which he said this, and the chuckle with which he paid for the turkey, and the chuckle with which he paid for the cab...’ |
| Cold Imagery | ‘The city clocks had only just gone three, but it was quite dark already - it had not been light all day: and candles were flaring in the windows of the neighbouring offices...’ |

**[](https://www.google.co.uk/imgres?imgurl=https://us.123rf.com/450wm/scottff72/scottff721501/scottff72150100008/35769221-under-protection-locked-up-security-concept-pad-lock-with-chains-on-a-white-background.jpg?ver=6&imgrefurl=https://www.123rf.com/stock-photo/padlock.html&docid=TDOl-aMT69ugAM&tbnid=-po6H9Q6XytKlM:&vet=12ahUKEwimg-yR3Y3cAhXKKsAKHcCzBy44yAEQMygAMAB6BAgBEAE..i&w=450&h=450&bih=584&biw=1024&q=padlocks%20chains%20drawing&ved=2ahUKEwimg-yR3Y3cAhXKKsAKHcCzBy44yAEQMygAMAB6BAgBEAE&iact=mrc&uact=8)SYMBOLISM**

**Marley’s Chains**

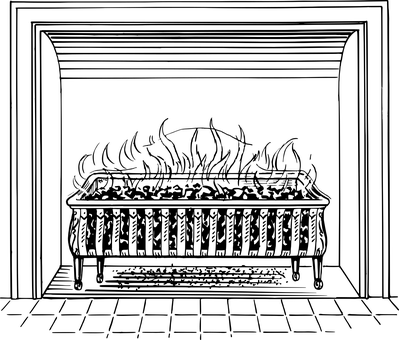
* "***I wear the chain I forged in life," replied the Ghost. "I made it link by link, and yard by yard; I girded it on of my own free will, and of my own free will I wore it. Is its pattern strange to you?"***
* ***“...would you know . . .the weight and length of the strong coil you bear yourself? . . .You have labored on it since.”***

Marley’s chains are the most significant symbol in the novella. They represent greed, selfishness and obsession with worldly goods and money. Marley can never rest as a result of this and he is chained to the confines of purgatory (a place which exists between heaven and hell). He warns Scrooge that if he continues with his present ways, he will also suffer the same consequences.

**[](https://www.google.co.uk/url?sa=i&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=images&cd=&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=2ahUKEwiHuLjz3Y3cAhXLVRQKHXU8D_oQjRx6BAgBEAU&url=https://www.edupics.com/coloring-page-four-poster-bed-i15693.html&psig=AOvVaw3cLbfX8YDmLAM_DXgj0FRp&ust=1531078373755170)Scrooge’s bed**

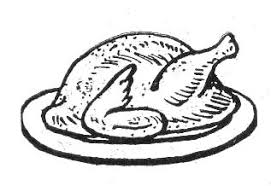
***‘Yes! And the bedpost was his own. The bed was his own, the room was his own.’***

In Stave 2, Scrooge is in his bed awaiting the first ghost - the Ghost of Christmas Past. He is clearly reluctant to leave the comfort and safety of his bed which could symbolise his reluctance to change his ways. At the start of Stave 5, Scrooge returns to his bed a changed man. He is relieved to be back and when he awakes, he is clinging to the sheets of his bedpost. His ‘clinging’ may reflect his desperate need to change his ways and show the world his ability and need to change and become generous, loving and willing to help those who are less fortunate than himself.

**[](https://pixabay.com/en/coal-coke-fire-firebox-fireplace-2027513/)Fire**

***‘Scrooge had a very small fire, but the clerk's fire was so very much smaller that it looked like one coal. But he couldn't replenish it, for Scrooge kept the coal-box in his own room.’***

During the Victorian era, there was no central heating to warm homes – only fires in fire places and the burning of coal and wood to make this happen. Fire symbolises warmth, togetherness and comfort. At the start of the novella, Scrooge has no desire to give extra warmth in the counting house to his employee, Bob Cratchit, and therefore, keeps the coal in his own office.

**[](https://www.google.co.uk/imgres?imgurl=http://moziru.com/images/roast-clipart-baked-chicken-16.jpg&imgrefurl=http://moziru.com/explore/Turkey%20clipart%20platter/&docid=H7LjW6xCGVlI8M&tbnid=ZOlHeM5eAfftOM:&vet=12ahUKEwjmioXlvancAhVODewKHRTNAW44ZBAzKDowOnoECAEQPA..i&w=317&h=218&bih=584&biw=1024&q=turkey%20clipart&ved=2ahUKEwjmioXlvancAhVODewKHRTNAW44ZBAzKDowOnoECAEQPA&iact=mrc&uact=8)The Turkey**

***“Do you know whether they’ve sold the prize Turkey that was hanging up there -- Not the little prize Turkey: the big one?"***

The roast turkey had its beginnings in Victorian England. Previously, other forms of roasted meat such as beef and goose were the centrepiece of the Christmas dinner. The turkey was added to this tradition by the more wealthy sections of society in the 19th century. In the novella, Dickens reveals how the Cratchit family could not afford such a delicacy so they made do with a small goose which they were still grateful to have. As a result, In Stave 5, Scrooge buys a turkey for Bob’s family which symbolises his new-found generous spirit and his determination to change.

**[](https://www.google.co.uk/imgres?imgurl=http://www.sewhistorically.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/victorian-christmas-games-2.jpg&imgrefurl=http://www.sewhistorically.com/old-fashioned-christmas-games-christmas-carols/&docid=XlNgSXs39X6xUM&tbnid=55fhaZpbQQ_cqM:&vet=10ahUKEwjUh5nayJfcAhUEzaQKHe1EAT4QMwhiKCAwIA..i&w=500&h=330&bih=584&biw=1024&q=Blind%20man's%20bluff%20origination&ved=0ahUKEwjUh5nayJfcAhUEzaQKHe1EAT4QMwhiKCAwIA&iact=mrc&uact=8)**

**The Party Game – ‘Blind Man’s Buff’**

***‘There was first a game of blind-man's buff. Of course there was. And I no more believe Topper was really blind than I believe he had eyes in his boots. ... Knocking down the fire-irons, tumbling over the chairs, bumping against the piano, smothering himself among the curtains, wherever she went, there went he.’***

The traditional name of the game is called "Blind Man's Buff", where the word *buff* is used in its older sense of a *‘small push’.* The game later also became known as "Blind Man's Bluff”. This is played in a spacious area, such as outdoors or in a large room, in which one player, designated as ‘IT’, is blindfolded and gropes around attempting to touch the other players without being able to see them, while the other players scatter and try to avoid the person who is "it", hiding and sometimes teasing them to influence them to change direction.

**Significance:** The game could also symbolise Scrooge’s blindness to society and his own selfishness and unwillingness to view the ‘real’ world at the time. In a way, he is ‘IT’ during the course of the novella, as he is forced to grope around blindly and in a vulnerable, confused state during the course of the story. He is presented as having no true vision and only until he has moments of realisation i.e. re-visits and ‘makes contact’ with a familiar place or a familiar character from his past, is he able to begin to recognise his past mistakes and weaknesses and take off his ‘blindfold’ of ignorance and lack of awareness.

**FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

Which SYMBOL do you think is the most POWERFUL in the novella?

**The Characters**

****

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Character** | **Profile** |
| **Scrooge** | The miserly owner of a London ‘counting-house’, a nineteenth century term for an accountant’s office. The three spirits of Christmas visit him in the hope of reversing Scrooge’s greedy, cold-hearted approach to life. At the start of the novella he is presented as a cold, miserable and bitter old man but as the novel progresses we see him change into a better man. By the end of the novella, he becomes a generous, warm-hearted, approachable person who wants to change his past by spending time with his family and sharing his wealth with others who are less fortunate than himself. |
| **Jacob Marley / Marley’s Ghost** | In the living world, Jacob Marley was Ebenezer Scrooge's equally greedy partner. He died seven years before the narrative opens but appears to Scrooge as a ghost condemned to wander the world bound in heavy chains. Marley hopes to save his old partner from suffering a similar fate. |
| **Bob Cratchit** | Scrooge’s clerk. He is a kind, mild, and very poor man with a large family and a son who is physically disabled and will possibly die as a result of poverty and lack of finances. Though treated harshly by his boss, Cratchit remains a humble and dedicated employee to Scrooge and he bears no grudge despite his poor circumstances. |
| **Mrs Cratchit** | Bob’s wife, a kind and loving woman. She clearly despises Scrooge for being selfish, mean and underpaying and over-working her husband. During the Christmas family meal, she is unwilling to drink to Scrooge’s health because of his miserly ways and poor treatment of her husband. |
| **Peter Cratchit** | Bob’s oldest son, who inherits his father’s stiff-collared shirt for Christmas. |
| **Martha Cratchit** | Bob’s oldest daughter, who works in a milliner’s shop. (A milliner is a person who designs, produces, and sells hats). |
| **Tiny Tim** | Bob Cratchit’s youngest son who is crippled from birth. Tiny Tim is a highly sentimentalised character whom Dickens uses to highlight the problems of England’s poor society and to create the reader’s sympathy for him. He is presented as a happy boy despite his physical disability. |
| **Fred** | Scrooge’s nephew, the son of his sister, Fan. A friendly, kind and merry man who embraces the Christmas spirit. Every Christmas Eve, he invites his uncle to the family Christmas meal only to be sternly rejected. Fred, like Bob Crachit, has no grudge towards his uncle, despite the rest of the family’s reservations. Fred is Scrooge’s only living relative and also the only person who makes an effort to bring Scrooge out of his isolated, lonely world. |
| **Fan** | Scrooge’s sister; Fred’s mother. Scrooge has fond memories of his dear sister who died at a young age. In Scrooge’s vision of Christmases past, he remembers Fan picking him up from school and taking him home. |
| **Fezziwig** | The cheerful merchant with whom Scrooge was apprenticed as a young man. Fezziwig was renowned for his wonderful Christmas parties and he and his wife are presented as jolly, fun-loving characters. At the time, Scrooge embraces the festivities and meets Belle whom he falls deeply in love with. |
| **Belle** | A beautiful woman whom Scrooge loved deeply when he was a young man. Belle broke off their engagement after Scrooge became consumed with greed and the lust for wealth. She later marries another man. |
| **The Portly Gentlemen** | Two gentlemen who visit Scrooge at the beginning of the novella seeking charitable contributions from him. Scrooge shows his disgust in their.... and makes it clear that he has no interest in supporting those who live in poverty. He ....and promptly throws them out of his office, not giving them a single penny. Towards the end of the novella (Stave 5), he meets one of them on the street after the spirits have visited him, and he promises to make great donations to help the poor. |

**Who said this?**

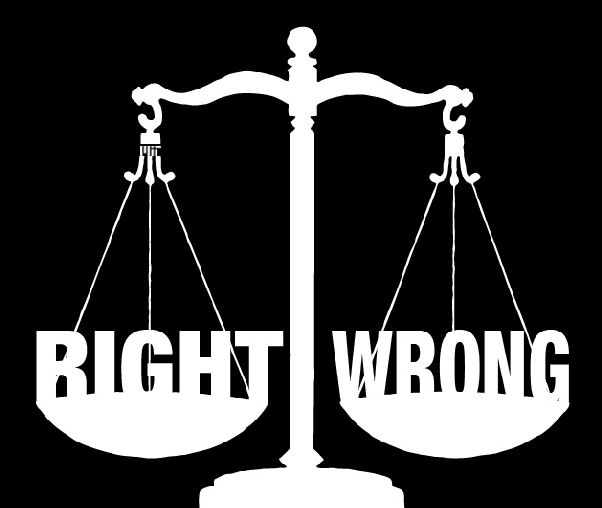
**Task: Match the quotes with the characters**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **QUOTE** | **CHARACTER** |
| ``A merry Christmas, uncle! God save you!'' cried a cheerful voice. |  |
| “We should make some small provision for the Poor and the Destitute.” |  |
| ``I wish to be left alone,'' said Scrooge. ``Since you ask me what I wish, gentlemen, that is my answer. I don't make merry myself at Christmas and I can't afford to make idle people merry. '' |  |
| "Home, for good and all. Home, for ever and ever. Father is so much kinder than he used to be, that home's like Heaven! “ |  |
| ``No more work to-night. Christmas Eve, Dick. Christmas, Ebenezer! Let's have the shutters up,” |  |
| ``Our contract is an old one. It was made when we were both poor and content to be so ... You are changed. When it was made, you were another man.'' |  |
| “He told me... that he hoped the people saw him in the church, because he was a cripple, and it might be pleasant to them to remember upon Christmas Day.'' |  |
| **QUOTE** | **CHARACTER** |
| “I’ll give you Mr Scrooge, the founder of the feast!” |  |
| "His wealth is of no use to him. He don't do any good with it. He don't make himself comfortable with it.” |  |
| “Show me no more! . . .Why do you delight to torture me?” |  |
| “I will live in the Past, the Present, and the future!” |  |
| ‘His hat was off, before he opened the door; his comforter too. He was on his stool in a jiffy; driving away with his pen, as if he were trying to overtake nine o'clock.’ |  |
| “I'll raise your salary, and endeavour to assist your struggling family, and we will discuss your affairs this very afternoon.” |  |

**FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

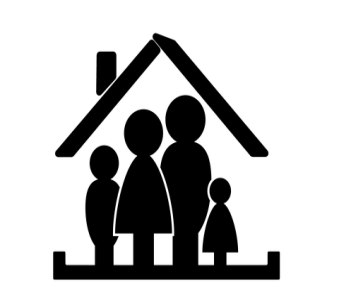
Which main character do you feel is the most consistent throughout the novella? Explain why?

**[](https://www.google.co.uk/imgres?imgurl=https://images.fineartamerica.com/images/artworkimages/mediumlarge/1/silhouette-illustration-from-a-christmas-carol-by-charles-dickens-english-school.jpg&imgrefurl=https://fineartamerica.com/featured/silhouette-illustration-from-a-christmas-carol-by-charles-dickens-english-school.html&docid=-KPjkLEY-fhS0M&tbnid=Lz0QEsxFweUzjM:&vet=10ahUKEwjSntKsxerbAhXEOcAKHQ6uDgcQMwjWAShVMFU..i&w=900&h=416&bih=584&biw=1024&q=charles%20dickens%20a%20christmas%20carol%20original%20illustrations&ved=0ahUKEwjSntKsxerbAhXEOcAKHQ6uDgcQMwjWAShVMFU&iact=mrc&uact=8)**

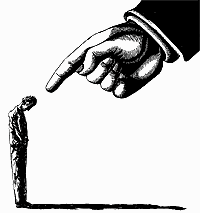
**[](https://www.google.co.uk/url?sa=i&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=images&cd=&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=2ahUKEwjA2J_Xs6TcAhUKtRoKHRIsDKgQjRx6BAgBEAU&url=https://www.quora.com/What-are-morals-and-morality&psig=AOvVaw3zWEa0YjRQaPwRGtofvsTQ&ust=1531857345749138)THE MAIN THEMES**

**Responsibility (Moral) and Society**

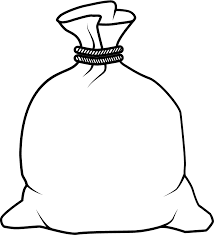
Throughout the novella, Dickens reveals his concerns of a society where there is an unequal distribution of wealth. He reveals how the rich enjoy comfort and feasting at Christmas and ignore the dreadful living conditions of those who are less privileged (they clearly punish the poor for their poverty through such things as the “Treadmill” and the “Workhouses”). In his writing, The Ghost of Christmas Present presents the children (Ignorance and Want) and states that they are society’s responsibility and should be treated with dignity and compassion. Dickens set the novella over Christmas to encourage the wealthy to share and be more compassionate for those less fortunate than themselves.

**[](https://pixabay.com/en/family-father-mother-child-girl-home-roo-2057307/)Family**

Family is an important part of the novella and Scrooge The Ghost of Christmas Past forces Scrooge to confront his own family as a young boy when he is rejected and left alone at boarding school over Christmas. He also witnesses the close family of Bob Cratchit, his loyal clerk, who are clearly suffering as a result of his poor wages and his son’s disability. Despite their poverty, they still celebrate Christmas as a close family and embrace what they do have rather than what they do not have.

**[](http://www.google.co.uk/url?sa=i&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=images&cd=&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=2ahUKEwirr8aDy5LcAhUSM-wKHTruDq4QjRx6BAgBEAU&url=http://www.chakras.org.uk/chakra_yoga_health_holistic_guilt.htm&psig=AOvVaw3QEYHYUJAtFZgtEmrXJi_w&ust=1531245184954960)Guilt/Blame**

At the start of the novella, Dickens portrays Scrooge as a representation of the ignorance and greed of society at the time. Scrooge is forced to confront his selfishness through the visitations of the spirits and as a result, he feels increasingly guilty and realises how he has allowed his obsession with money to dictate his entire life. By the end of the novella, Scrooge feels he is to blame for his lack of understanding and poor judgement of those who have no choice but to either live on the streets or reside in workhouses.

**[](https://www.google.co.uk/imgres?imgurl=https://clothingcleanup.com.au/images/vectors/moneybag.svg&imgrefurl=https://clothingcleanup.com.au/acceptables&docid=WADCtzbK3vtzhM&tbnid=CTWjxIYfubSUWM:&vet=12ahUKEwi7nPGy_YjcAhUpDMAKHUgKCag4ZBAzKEgwSHoECAEQTA..i&w=728&h=800&bih=584&biw=1024&q=money%20bag%20drawing&ved=2ahUKEwi7nPGy_YjcAhUpDMAKHUgKCag4ZBAzKEgwSHoECAEQTA&iact=mrc&uact=8)Greed and Money**

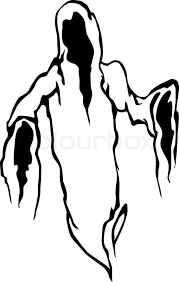
This is a dominant theme throughout the novella and Scrooge represents this through his selfish obsession and lust for money. The ghosts all focus on this and how Scrooge’s life has been dominated by his greed and miserly ways resulting in his lonely, anti-social existence. His partner, Jacob Marley, was of a similar nature and this is why he comes to Scrooge, warning him that if he continues the way he does, he will be condemned to an eternal life of damnation and hell. We also see the greed of those who fight over Scrooge’s belongings after his death...

**[](http://www.google.co.uk/url?sa=i&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=images&cd=&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=2ahUKEwjBssnfzJLcAhXIjqQKHVBwDp4QjRx6BAgBEAU&url=http://getdrawings.com/poverty-drawing&psig=AOvVaw10eRmiDhBpBLvBRyubglEL&ust=1531245619728484)Wealth vs Poverty**

[](https://www.google.co.uk/imgres?imgurl=https://ih1.redbubble.net/image.100703521.8814/poster,210x230,f8f8f8-pad,210x230,f8f8f8.lite-1.jpg&imgrefurl=https://www.redbubble.com/shop/choices+drawing+posters&docid=17COukNtgM2bqM&tbnid=YDg19sWbWarI_M:&vet=12ahUKEwjf2eyR_ojcAhXMTsAKHXCGC_k4ZBAzKAgwCHoECAEQCQ..i&w=210&h=230&itg=1&bih=584&biw=1024&q=choices%20drawing&ved=2ahUKEwjf2eyR_ojcAhXMTsAKHXCGC_k4ZBAzKAgwCHoECAEQCQ&iact=mrc&uact=8)Dickens wanted to present the great division between the wealthy and the poor as it was during Victorian society in ‘A Christmas Carol’. He was aware of the suffering of those who had very little because he too had suffered poverty as a child due to his father’s debt. He was separated from his family and forced to work in a factory as a child. These personal experiences inspired him to write ‘A Christmas Carol’ and this is why he created the characters of Bob Cratchit and his family to symbolise the poverty, hardship, pain and suffering that existed at that time.

**Loneliness and Isolation**

Scrooge is clearly presented as a lonely, isolated, old man who has no friends or close family as a result of his own past choices. His past life has moulded his character and created someone who lives a solitary life, pushing away those who care and having little concern or interest.... for his family, friends and those who are less fortunate than himself.

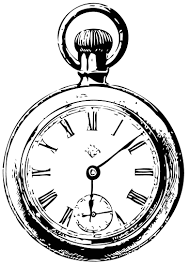
**[](https://www.google.co.uk/imgres?imgurl=http://getdrawings.com/images/halloween-ghosts-drawing-7.jpg&imgrefurl=http://getdrawings.com/halloween-ghosts-drawing&docid=U8Sxckazc4XWgM&tbnid=vuISEfelTbAX5M:&vet=10ahUKEwjfmKOJ-ojcAhUHLsAKHep4Dd8QMwiiAigSMBI..i&w=509&h=800&bih=584&biw=1024&q=ghosts%20drawing&ved=0ahUKEwjfmKOJ-ojcAhUHLsAKHep4Dd8QMwiiAigSMBI&iact=mrc&uact=8)The Supernatural**

[](https://www.google.co.uk/imgres?imgurl=https://img.clipartxtras.com/b64f9f00fc09aecb3713ad2e8fb229b8_christmas-cliparts-carolers-free-download-clip-art-free-clip-victorian-christmas-carolers-clipart_364-212.jpeg&imgrefurl=https://clipartxtras.com/categories/view/c6653e688298a50c65d2f44882c15109ef11ec12/victorian-christmas-carolers-clipart.html&docid=kMsv8HwY3FseeM&tbnid=DZut0Gk7yuECkM:&vet=12ahUKEwj8lrmx-4jcAhXHDsAKHQqOAY84ZBAzKDQwNHoECAEQNQ..i&w=364&h=212&bih=584&biw=1024&q=Christmas%20victorian%20drawing&ved=2ahUKEwj8lrmx-4jcAhXHDsAKHQqOAY84ZBAzKDQwNHoECAEQNQ&iact=mrc&uact=8)This was a part of the Christmas story-telling tradition that started in the 17th century. By the 19th century, there was an interest in spiritualism; people believed spirits who resided in the afterlife wanted to communicate with the living. Scrooge is presented with four spirits who wish to help Scrooge to become more giving and less miserly and to show him the suffering and pain of those less fortunate than himself. Dickens uses supernatural events to create an element of mystery and the unknown which creates tension and suspense for the reader.

**Christmas**

[](https://www.google.co.uk/imgres?imgurl=https://photos.gograph.com/thumbs/CSP/CSP811/vector-man-making-a-choice-on-clip-art-vector_k8110592.jpg&imgrefurl=https://www.gograph.com/vector-clip-art/crossroads.html&docid=4_GJIVAOzCP3_M&tbnid=CVKZkRPQJZ-njM:&vet=10ahUKEwiOoY2Q8KHcAhXQfMAKHdL0CLcQMwhGKBMwEw..i&w=170&h=130&bih=584&biw=1024&q=making%20choices&ved=0ahUKEwiOoY2Q8KHcAhXQfMAKHdL0CLcQMwhGKBMwEw&iact=mrc&uact=8)Christmas time is at the heart of the novella. It represents a time of giving, family, good will and celebration. The celebration of Christmas is all about **sharing***.* At the start of the novella, Scrooge clearly despises Christmas and he makes no attempt to share his wealth with those less fortunate than himself. By the end, he is like a child and he relishes and embraces the spirit of Christmas and is determined to make up for lost time and all the Christmases he rejected and despised over the years.

**Choices** Throughout the novella, Scrooge is forced to make choices which ultimately become life-changing. He has to decide whether or not to change his ways from being a cold, heartless, mean and miserly old man and make the choice of transforming into a warm, kind, generous and caring person. By the end of the novella, Scrooge clearly makes this choice and the reader is filled with relief and joy.

**[](https://www.google.co.uk/imgres?imgurl=http://petticoatsandpistols.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/10/watch.png&imgrefurl=http://petticoatsandpistols.com/2011/10/21/its-about-timeplus-kindle-drawing-and-book-giveaway/&docid=kC7-L80-Dz-tAM&tbnid=Zem9vuky0BPgdM:&vet=10ahUKEwjMqoTO_ojcAhXJBcAKHeG6DA4QMwjUASgRMBE..i&w=368&h=512&bih=584&biw=1024&q=time%20drawing&ved=0ahUKEwjMqoTO_ojcAhXJBcAKHeG6DA4QMwjUASgRMBE&iact=mrc&uact=8)Time**, **Memory and the Past**

[](https://www.google.co.uk/imgres?imgurl=https://i.pinimg.com/originals/35/06/ac/3506acee7d72aae9c3445ad07f351c08.gif&imgrefurl=https://www.pinterest.com/pin/281615782931037599/&docid=ybRkQ3LlCojUmM&tbnid=OCB_GkYtPq0-uM:&vet=10ahUKEwiTiZTrgYncAhWCDsAKHVZKCncQMwiJAShAMEA..i&w=792&h=612&bih=584&biw=1024&q=forgiveness%20drawings%20black%20and%20white&ved=0ahUKEwiTiZTrgYncAhWCDsAKHVZKCncQMwiJAShAMEA&iact=mrc&uact=8)The novella focuses on the past, the present and the future. The spirits take Scrooge on a voyage through the realms of time and he has to confront his worst fears through a voyage of self-discovery. He is forced to remember his sad childhood and the mistakes he made when discovered and lost true love. As a result, his journey through time becomes life-changing, permanent and positive.

**Forgiveness and Redemption**

[](https://www.google.co.uk/url?sa=i&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=images&cd=&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=2ahUKEwiAmeKtip3cAhWB7xQKHfXRCXkQjRx6BAgBEAU&url=https://www.flaticon.es/icono-gratis/cumpleanos_185498&psig=AOvVaw1EEDQCVW6YJITdoeEwGr0W&ust=1531605642083091)This means seeing the error of your ways and being saved from sin or evil. Scrooge is transformed from a mean, greedy and lonely old miser, who was blind to his sin, into a generous, good-natured character who wants to make a significant change, not only for himself but for others. He realises the mistakes of his past and wants to make amends and seeks forgiveness and redemption. The moral message of the novella is that all human beings have the opportunity and can make the choice to behave in kinder ways towards each other and be saved from damnation and eternal suffering in the afterlife, as advised by his partner, the ghost of Jacob Marley.

**Generosity and Compassion**

This is the essence of the Christmas spirit and this is why Dickens sets the novella during this time of celebration. Scrooge’s nephew and his clerk show compassion towards Scrooge which is

in stark contrast to those who coldly dismiss Scrooge (e.g. his fellow business associates, his servants and..... the pawn shop owner) as he does them. Dickens clearly intended to share the importance of compassion and empathy, particularly amongst the wealthier members of society.

**[](https://pixabay.com/en/spirituality-spiral-hands-spiritual-abst-303281/)**

**Transformation (both physical and emotional)**

By the end of the novella, Scrooge is transformed from a mean, greedy and lonely old miser to a kind, compassionate, caring man who wants to help others in need. The ghosts take him on a voyage of self-discovery and enlightenment and by the end of the novella he makes a permanent, positive transformation.

**[](https://www.stpetersudbury.co.uk/event/christmas-carol-candlelight-anthony-roberts/)**

**Which Themes?**

**Task: Complete the following table using the following quotes from the novella:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Quotes** | **Themes** |
| ‘No beggars implored him to bestow a trifle, no children asked him what it was o’clock.’ |  |
| "Good afternoon," said Scrooge.  "I want nothing from you; I ask nothing of you; why cannot we be friends?” |  |
| “Merry Christmas! What right have you to be merry? What reason have you to be merry?” |  |
| "It's not my business," Scrooge returned. "It's enough for a man to understand his own business, and not to interfere with other people's. Mine occupies me constantly. Good afternoon, gentlemen!" |  |
| “Are there no prisons? Are there no workhouses?” |  |
| ``If they would rather die,'' said Scrooge, ``they had better do it, and decrease the surplus population.” |  |
| ``And the Union workhouses?'' demanded Scrooge. ``Are they still in operation?'' |  |
| "I wear the chain I forged in life,"  replied the Ghost. "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.” |  |
| "Business!" cried the Ghost, wringing its hands again. "Mankind was my business. The common welfare was my business; charity, mercy, forbearance, and benevolence, were, all, my business.” |  |
| ‘Every one of them wore chains like Marley's Ghost; some few (they might be guilty governments) were  linked together; none were free.’ |  |
| ‘So he listened for the hour. To his great astonishment the heavy bell went on from six to seven, and from seven to eight, and regularly up to twelve; then stopped. Twelve! It was past two when he went to bed. The clock was wrong.’ |  |
| **Quotes** | **Themes** |
| “A solitary child, neglected by his friends, is left here still” |  |
| “What Idol has replaced you?” “A golden one.” |  |
| "Clear away, my lads, and let's have lots of room here! Hilli-ho, Dick! Chirrup, Ebenezer!" |  |
| "I wish," Scrooge muttered, putting his hand in his pocket, and looking about him, after drying his eyes with his cuff: "but it's too late now." |  |
| ‘Martha dusted the hot plates; Bob took Tiny Tim beside him in a tiny corner at the table; the two young Cratchits set chairs for everybody, not forgetting themselves... At last the dishes were set on, and grace was said.’ |  |
| "It should be Christmas Day, I am sure," said she, "on which one drinks the health of such an odious, stingy, hard, unfeeling man as Mr. Scrooge.’ |  |
| “His wealth is of no use to him. He don’t do any good with it.” |  |
| "What is the matter?" asked the Spirit.  "Nothing," said Scrooge.  "There was a boy singing a Christmas Carol at my door last night. I should like to have given him something: that's all." |  |
| "If these shadows remain unaltered by the Future, none other of my race,...What then? If he be like to die, he had better do it, and decrease the surplus population."  Scrooge hung his head to hear his own words quoted by the Spirit, and was overcome with penitence and grief.’ |  |
| ‘They were not a handsome family; they were not well dressed . . . but, they were happy, grateful, pleased with one another, and contented with the time.’ |  |
| “A merry Christmas, Bob … I’ll raise your salary.” |  |
| “I will honour Christmas in my heart, and try keep it the whole year round.” |  |
| “We should make some small provision for the Poor and the Destitute.” |  |
| ‘Scrooge was better than his word. He did this and infinitely more…’ |  |

**FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

Which theme do you think is the most significant in the novella? Explain why.

**The Ghosts**

[](https://www.google.co.uk/url?sa=i&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=images&cd=&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=2ahUKEwjTtOrPmZXcAhVKWRQKHfuDA1kQjRx6BAgBEAU&url=https://www.pinterest.co.uk/pin/567383253027692385/&psig=AOvVaw3C7Q-UbrF87JyzC0cJr9Ct&ust=1531335008872495)

**The Ghost of Marley**

In the living world, Jacob Marley was Ebenezer Scrooge's equally greedy partner. He died seven years before the narrative opens but appears to Scrooge as a ghost condemned to wander the world bound in heavy chains. Marley hopes to save his old partner from suffering a similar fate. Jacob Marley was Scrooge’s partner when he was alive. Marley died seven years before the narrative opens. In Stave 1, he appears to Scrooge as a fearful ghost condemned to purgatory and to wander the world bound in heavy chains as a result of his greed and selfish ways when he was alive. Marley visits Scrooge in the hope of saving his old partner from suffering a similar fate. He warns him that if he continues to live the way he does he will end up like him and will suffer a similar if not worse fate in the afterlife.

**[](https://www.google.co.uk/url?sa=i&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=images&cd=&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=2ahUKEwj3xOChlJXcAhWDPhQKHQxpCSQQjRx6BAgBEAU&url=https://monicamarier.com/2014/12/08/advent-calendar-day-8/cc_07/&psig=AOvVaw2OWw583DZ2LhxGk2TN3xu7&ust=1531333266740953)The Ghost of Christmas Past**

The first spirit to visit Scrooge - a curiously childlike apparition with a glowing head. The spirit uses a cap to dampen the pure light coming from his head. The ghost is described as *‘from the crown of its head there sprung a bright clear jet of light’* (a link to Bible and Christ who was seen as ‘the light of the world’). He takes Scrooge on a tour of his past experiences of Christmas, viewing himself as a lonely schoolboy forced to relive the harsh realities of his life as a child when he was rejected by his family on Christmas day and ending up spending Christmas at boarding school. The ghost reminds Scrooge of his sister’s visit, Little Fan, who tells him that their father has changed and takes him home. Scrooge finds it hard to confront this painful time in his childhood. He then relives his past life as a young apprentice to the generous, jolly Fezziwig and he is reminded of a Christmas which was special, fun and memorable. It was at this time that he meets the beautiful Belle and he falls deeply in love and becomes engaged to her. Sadly, as time goes by, the ghost takes him back to the time when his ambition and obsession with making money resulted in Belle breaking off the engagement. As a result of this painful memory, Scrooge tries to squash the ghost as he finds it hard to deal with the sadness and grief of this event.

**[](https://www.google.co.uk/imgres?imgurl=https://pre00.deviantart.net/2b8f/th/pre/i/2009/029/1/0/ghost_of_christmas_present_by_lppj_lppj.jpg&imgrefurl=https://lppj-lppj.deviantart.com/art/ghost-of-christmas-present-111097503&docid=YjTwphxxmhIV8M&tbnid=U0z8Bn_CUwuCgM:&vet=10ahUKEwiPgen_mJXcAhVkAsAKHUzRBEYQMwi3AShDMEM..i&w=1024&h=1389&bih=584&biw=1024&q=ghost%20of%20christmas%20present&ved=0ahUKEwiPgen_mJXcAhVkAsAKHUzRBEYQMwi3AShDMEM&iact=mrc&uact=8)**

**The Ghost of Christmas Present**

The second spirit to visit Scrooge is a majestic, colourful giant clad in a green robe who resembles Father Christmas. He is a jolly, high-spirited apparition and his lifespan is restricted to Christmas Day. He escorts Scrooge on a tour of the Christmas celebrations throughout London which includes visiting his employee, Bob Cratchit’s humble dwelling, and his nephew’s home, as well as a tour of poor miners and sailors who all embrace the Christmas spirit, *‘...the people who were shovelling away on the housetops were jovial and full of glee’,* ....*‘the old man, in a voice that seldom rose above the howling of the wind upon the barren waste, was singing them a Christmas song.’* Scrooge is shown the true meaning of the spirit of Christmas and how family is more important than having lots of money. He also shows Scrooge the ways others find ways to celebrate Christmas despite their poverty and isolation. *‘But they were happy, grateful, pleased with one another, and contented with the time’*. He also uses Scrooge’s words against him “*if they’d rather die, they’d better do it and decrease the surplus population”* which makes Scrooge feel a twinge of guilt for the first time. Scrooge meets Bob’s son, Tiny Tim, for the first time, and becomes aware of his disability and the possibility that his life could end soon without the proper care needed which costs money. Eventually the ghost reveals 2 children beneath his robes who represent/symbolise Greed and Ignorance and again, Scrooge is forced to confront how the conditions of society have created these monsters.



**The Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come**

The third and final spirit to visit Scrooge, a silent phantom clad in a hooded black robe who terrifies Scrooge with visions of his death.

The ghost has no face nor voice and he takes him into the future and presents him with visions of dark, ominous and fearful images. He sees his fellow businessman in the City of London discussing his funeral (unknown to him at the time). He sees a group of scavengers going through his belongings and then discovers Tiny Tim has died before he sees his own grave. He also takes Scrooge through *‘alleys and archways, like so many cesspools, disgorged their offences of smell and dirt and life’* and to *‘an obscure part of the town’*. He presents Scrooge with images of his lonely death forcing Scrooge to see his eventual fate where nobody mourns his passing. The Ghost of Christmas Yet To Come highlights and predicts:

* Scrooge’s doomed future as a result of his past life
* The prediction of the tragic death of Tiny Tim
* Scrooge’s own death as a result of his selfish, lonely existence

**Which Spirit do the following quotes refer to?**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Quote** | **Which Spirit?** |
| ‘...sparkling eye...’ |  |
| ‘...a solemn phantom...’ |  |
| “It is doomed to wander through the world . . . .And witness what it cannot share, but might have shared on earth, and turned to happiness...” |  |
| ‘...it was shrouded in a deep black garment...’ |  |
| ‘...kind, generous, hearty nature...’ |  |
| ‘...like an old man...’ |  |
| “Would you know . . .the weight and length of the strong coil you bear yourself? . . .You have labored on it since.” |  |
| ‘...the ghost grew older, clearly older...’ |  |
| “The child will die...” |  |
| “No rest, no peace, incessant torture of remorse.” |  |
| ‘...cheery voice...’ |  |
| **Quote** | **Which Spirit?** |
| ‘...the voice was soft and gentle...’ |  |
| ‘...it brought two children; wretched, abject, frightful, hideous, miserable...’ |  |
| “Oh! Captive, bound and double-ironed...” |  |
| ‘...a jolly giant...’ |  |
| [Ignorance and Want] “Beware them both...” |  |
| ‘Like a mist along the ground...’ |  |
| “I am here tonight to warn you that you have yet a chance and hope of escaping my fate...” |  |
| ‘...unearthly visitor...’ |  |
| ‘A monstrous iron safe attached to its ankle, who cried piteously at being unable to assist a wretched woman with an infant, who it saw below upon a doorstep.’ |  |
| ‘...a genial face...’ |  |
| ‘...it seemed to scatter gloom and mystery..’ |  |
| ‘...like a child...’ |  |
| ‘...the spirit was as immoveable as ever...’ |  |

**QUESTIONS**

1. Why do the ghosts look like they do?
2. Why is the Ghost of Christmas Past half-child, half-old man?
3. Why is the Ghost of Yet to Come a hooded phantom that doesn't talk?
4. What would change if the Ghost of Yet to Come could simply answer Scrooge's questions?

**FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

Which ghost do you feel has the greatest EFFECT on Scrooge’s transformation?

**How Does Scrooge Change?**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **In the Beginning (Stave 1)** | **By the End (Stave 5)** |
| He is miserable and rude to others | He is positive and compassionate to others |
| He rejects Fred’s kind invitation to spend Christmas Day with him | He visits Fred on Christmas Day |
| He refuses to give money to the charity men | He offers a large contribution to charity |
| He goes home alone | He goes to church and to his nephew’s home |
| He complains about Bob’s wages | He raises Bob’s wages |
| His fire is nearly dead | He orders the fires to be lit |

**FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

Scrooge begins by being isolated and feared by others. By the end of the novella he clearly becomes more compassionate towards other characters. What point do you think that Dickens is making?

**QUESTIONS - CONSOLIDATION**

* Although the novella is called ‘A Christmas Carol’, the story isn’t only about Christmas; it’s about our responsibility to others all year round. What do you think?
* How does Dickens teach us that emotional support is more important than money?
* Some people have described ‘A Christmas Carol’ as a fairy-tale. For others it is a realistic portrayal of the suffering of the poor during the Victorian era. Which ‘interpretation’ of the novella do you most agree with so far?
* How far can ‘A Christmas Carol’ be seen as a good example of the values and real meaning of Christmas?
* Who is the intended audience of this novella? Are we supposed to identify with Scrooge and reach into our own selfish ways?

**How to Approach the Exam**

‘A Christmas Carol’ is part of your **COMPONENT 2** English Literature exam:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **English Literature Component 1: 2 hours** | **English Literature**  **Component 2: 2 hours 30 mins** |

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| A) Shakespeare:  - Part (a) (20 mins)  - Part (b) (40 mins) | B) The Poetry Anthology (1 hr)  - Part (a) (20 mins)  - Part (b) (40 mins) | A) Post 1914 Text (45 mins)  - Part (a) (20 mins)  - Part (b) (40 mins) | B) ‘A Christmas Carol’ (45 mins) | C) Unseen poetry (1hr)  - Part (a) (20 mins)  - Part (b) (40 mins) |

**REVISION TIPS**

* In the ‘A Christmas Carol’ section you will be given a source-based question. This means you will need to write about your character or theme in relation to the whole story, but you will have an extract from the novel to help you form your response
* It is essential to plan your essay – choose five key events from across the text (beginning, middle, end) and then read the extract to see where you can fit these quotes into your response
* You are assessed on your understanding of language so use the quotes from the extract to gain marks here e.g. *Dickens uses the simile ‘tight-fisted as a grindstone’ to suggest that Scrooge was…*
* You also need to make some references to the context of the novel – where it was set (Victorian London) and how this affects our understanding e.g. *Just like many of the poor in Victorian London, the Cratchits struggle to find enough money to eat properly…*

**Things you should be doing in your revision time at home:**

* **Re-read the novella** with a pen in your hand (underline **key quotations** and make notes in the margin where scenes link to particular **characters** and /or **themes**).
* Watch the **film versions**
* **Learn the plot** off by heart – all the key moments, in the correct order.
* **Learn key points and quotations** for all the **main characters** and **themes** that may come up on the essay question. Make sure you have created **revision cards**
* **Practise writing essays**
* Start now, **pace yourself** - this revision work will help you go into the exam with confidence.
* **Don’t** leave it until the last minute!

**EXAMPLE QUESTION**

**SECTION B (19th Century Prose)**

***A Christmas Carol***

*You are advised to spend about 45 minutes on this question.*

**You should use the extract below and your knowledge of the whole novel to answer this question.**

Explore the presentation of Scrooge throughout the novel.

In your response, you should:

* refer to the extract and the novel as a whole;
* show your understanding of characters and events in the novel;
* refer to the contexts of the novel. [40]

Oh! But he was a tight-fisted hand at the grindstone, Scrooge! a squeezing, wrenching, grasping, scraping, clutching, covetous old sinner! Hard and sharp as flint, from which no steel had ever struck out generous fire; secret, and self-contained, and solitary as an oyster. The cold within him froze his old features, nipped his pointed nose, shrivelled his cheek, stiffened his gait; made his eyes red, his thin lips blue; and spoke out shrewdly in his grating voice. A frosty rime was on his head, and on his eyebrows, and his wiry chin. He carried his own low temperature always about with him; he iced his office in the dog-days, and didn’t thaw it one degree at Christmas.

External heat and cold had little influence on Scrooge. No warmth could warm, no wintry weather chill him. No wind that blew was bitterer than he, no falling snow was more intent upon its purpose, no pelting rain less open to entreaty. Foul weather didn’t know where to have him. The heaviest rain, and snow, and hail, and sleet could boast of the advantage over him in only one respect. They often ‘came down’ handsomely, and Scrooge never did.

Nobody ever stopped him in the street to say, with gladsome looks, ‘My dear Scrooge, how are you? When will you come to see me?’ No beggars implored him to bestow a trifle, no children ever asked him when it was o’clock, no man or woman ever once in all his life enquired the way to such and such a place, of Scrooge. Even the blind men’s dogs appeared to know him; and, when they saw him coming on, would tug their owners into doorways and up courts; and then would wag their tails as though they said, ‘No eye at all is better than an evil eye, dark master!’

But what did Scrooge care? It was the very thing he liked. To edge his way along the crowded parts of life, warning all human sympathy to keep its distance, was what the knowing ones call ‘nuts’ to Scrooge.

Once upon a time – of all the good days in the year, on Christmas Eve – old Scrooge sat busy in his counting-house. It was cold, bleak, biting weather; foggy withal; and he could hear people in the court outside go wheezing up and down, beating their hands upon their breasts, and stamping their feet upon the pavement stones to warm them. The City clocks had only just gone three, but it was quite dark already – it had not been light all day – and candles were flaring in the windows of neighbouring offices, like ruddy smears upon the palpable brown air. The fog came pouring in at every chink and keyhole, and was so dense without, that, although the court was of the narrowest, the houses opposite were mere phantoms. To see the dingy cloud come drooping down, obscuring everything, one might have thought that nature lived hard by, and was brewing on a large scale.

The door of Scrooge’s counting-house was open, that he might keep his eye upon his clerk, who in a dismal little cell beyond, a sort of tank, was copying letters. Scrooge had a very small fire, but the clerk’s fire was so very much smaller that it looked like one coal. But he couldn’t replenish it, for Scrooge kept the coal-box in his own room; and so surely as the clerk came in with the shovel, the master predicted that it would be necessary for them to part. Wherefore the clerk put on his white comforter, and tried to warm himself at the candle; in which effort, not being a man of strong imagination, he failed.