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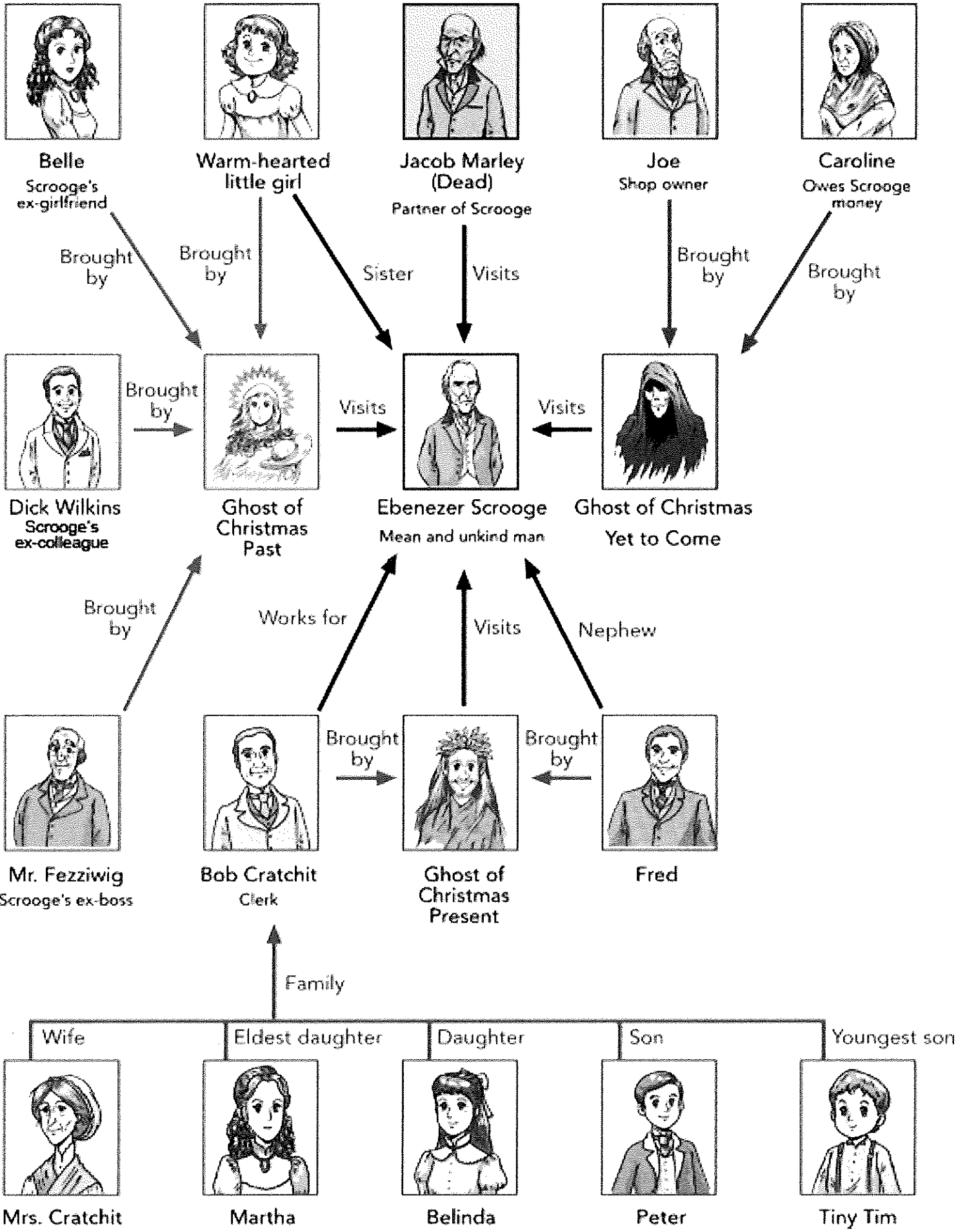
# A Christmas Carol



*English Literature*



*A Christmas Carol: a timeline of major plot events*



## Show how Charles Dickens presents the hardships of life in 19th Century London in A Christmas Carol.

### Marking Criteria /40 marks

**AO1** Answers will show a secure understanding and knowledge of key aspects of the text by commenting specific references from, for example, Staves 1, 3 and 4. Points will be supported by use of specific direct reference to the wider text.

**AO2** Answers will comment on Dickens' use of language in both the extract and the novel. Analysis of the effect of language choice, structure and form will be clear and precise. Apt subject terminology will be used.

**AO3** Answers will show a secure understanding of the period in which the novel is set and its significance in relation to the story. Answers will include close discussion of how Dickens presents the hardships of life in 19th century London through characters and incidents, such as the sights shown by the spirits, and through his use of language to describe the city and its inhabitants.

**'They left the busy scene, and went into an obscure part of the town... The ways were foul and narrow; the shops and houses wretched; the people half-naked, drunken, slipshod, ugly. Alleys and archways, like so many cesspools, disgorged their offences of smell, and dirt, and life, upon the straggling streets; and the whole quarter reeked with crime, with filth, with misery.'** *Stave 4*

### London in the 1840s

Poverty was widespread throughout Britain in the 1840s (known as The Hungry Forties) and social conditions were desperate. London was overcrowded without proper provision of housing or sewage facilities. One area of London was estimated to have contained 2850 people in just 95 houses (an average of 30 per house). London itself was a maze of slums, shops and factories, often heavily wrapped in fog. The fog is thick, heavy and impenetrable, and is used as a symbol to illustrate the oppression of the poor in London. *'Meanwhile the fog and darkness thickened so... The cold became intense... Foggier yet, and colder! Piercing searching, biting cold.'*



**"Many thousands are in want of common necessities; hundreds of thousands are in want of common comforts, sir."**

**"Are there no prisons? ...And the Union workhouses? ...Are they still in operation? ...The Treadmill and the Poor Law are in full vigour then?"** said Scrooge. *Stave 1*

### The Poor Law

The 1601 POOR LAW ACT gave responsibility to local parishes for looking after very poor people, who were able to claim assistance from the parish's householders. Poor people were able to live at home when they were getting parish relief.

With the 1834 POOR LAW AMENDMENT ACT people receiving help from the parish had to live in a workhouse & could no longer live at home. In return for parish relief, they would be made to work hard in the workhouse; which is how the term originated.

### Union workhouses

By 1926 there were 226,000 inmates & around 600 workhouses with an average population of about 400 inmates each.

Life was meant to be much tougher inside the workhouse than outside, and the buildings themselves were deliberately grim & intimidating - they were designed to look like prisons. They were full of illness & disease brought about by over-crowding & the starvation diet. Men, women and children were at all times kept separate. Aversion to the "house" was extremely strong. The work



inmates were made to do was deliberately tedious. Householders objected to supporting idlers, so work was meant to keep people busy and to subsidise costs. After rising at 5am (in summer), an inmate worked 7-12am and 1-6pm. Bed was 8pm. As well as gardening, cooking & sewing, there was corn milling, sack making, oakum picking (unravelling short lengths of rope) & crushing stone. Bones were crushed by hand to make fertiliser. Sometimes the inmates were so hungry that they would pick scraps of flesh off the bones and eat it. The bones were not all animal bones either! Bone crushing was banned after 1845.

### The Treadmill

Most prisons had a treadmill or tread wheel installed, where the prisoner simply walked the wheel. In some prisons, such as Bedford in the earlier part of the 19th century, the treadmill provided flour to make money for the gaol, from which the prisoners earned enough to pay for their keep. However, in later times, there was no end product and the treadmill was walked just for punishment. It became loathed by the prisoners.



**"If they would rather die," said Scrooge, "they had better do it, and decrease the surplus population."**

### Stave 1

**'Scrooge hung his head to hear his own words quoted by the Spirit, and was overcome with penitence and grief.'** Stave 3

### The Cratchits



The book also contains a political edge, most evident in Dickens' development of the bustling, struggling Cratchit family, who are a compelling, if one-dimensional, representation of the plight of the poor. Dickens, with every intention of tugging on your heartstrings, paints the Cratchits as a destitute family that finds a way to express profound gratitude for its emotional riches. Dickens carries this sentiment even further with the tragic figure of the pure-hearted, crippled Cratchit son, Tiny Tim. Scrooge begins to break through his emotional barricade in Stave Three as he expresses pity for Tiny Tim, *"Spirit," said Scrooge, with an interest he had never felt before, "tell me if Tiny Tim will live."* The reader, upon hearing the usually uncaring miser inquire into Tim's

fate, begins to believe Scrooge has a chance at salvation. Scrooge's path to redemption culminates with his figurative "adoption" of Tiny Tim, acting as "a second father" to the little boy.

### Ignorance and Want

The vulnerability and weakness of the poor children is symbolically illustrated by the two children of the Ghost of Christmas Present. The description is deliberately shocking for the reader.

*'From the foldings of its robe, it brought forth two children; wretched, abject, frightful, hideous, miserable.'*

*'Where graceful youth should have filled their features out, and touched them with its freshest tints, a stale and shrivelled hand, like that of age, had pinched and twisted them, and pulled them to shreds. Where angels might have sat enthroned, devils lurked, and glared out menacing. No change, no degradation, no perversion of humanity, in any grade, through all the mysteries of creation, has monsters half so horrible and dread.'*

**"Have they no refuge or resource?" Cried Scrooge'**

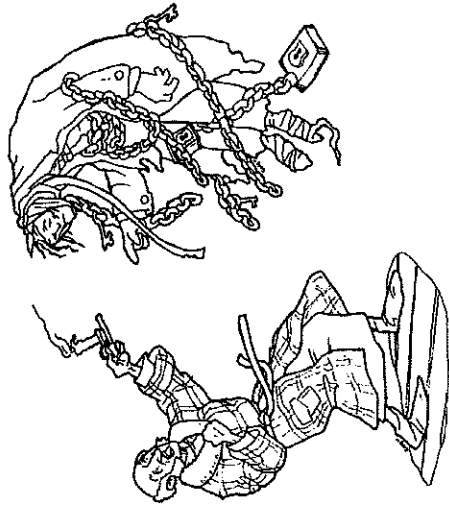


# CHARACTER TABLE

Characters	QUOTE	DETAILS
<b>Ebenezer Scrooge</b>		A miserable, bitter old miser, Scrooge hates irrational things like happiness, generosity, and Christmas, until a trio of Ghosts shows him the error of his ways.
<b>Bob Cratchit</b>		The poor clerk that works for Scrooge's moneylending firm, Cratchit is the father of Tiny Tim, an angelic sickly boy.
<b>Tiny Tim</b>		The youngest member of the Cratchit family, Tiny Tim is a sickly and angelic small boy whose life hinges in the balance of Scrooge's transformation into a better man.
<b>Jacob Marley</b>		Scrooge's long-dead business partner is the first ghostly visitor who haunts him, warning him about the Christmas ghosts soon to come.
<b>Fred Holywell</b>		Scrooge's nephew, the son of his beloved but now dead sister, is his only living relative, and also the only person who wants to pull him out of isolation and back into the world.
<b>Ghost of Christmas Past</b>		An unsettling combination of a small child and an old man, this Ghost takes Scrooge on a tour of his past Christmases in order to reconnect him to his feelings.
<b>Ghost of Christmas Present</b>		A hale and hearty fellow, the Ghost of Christmas Present shows Scrooge how the other half—or rather the 99%—spend their Christmas holidays.
<b>Ghost of Christmas Future</b>		This thing isn't even called a ghost any more—Dickens changes the terminology and starts referring to this super menacing cloaked figure as a "phantom."

# A CHRISTMAS CAROL

## Stave 1



Stave Summary:

Links to context:

Links to themes:

# A CHRISTMAS CAROL

## Stave 2



Stave Summary:

Links to context:

Links to themes:



# A CHRISTMAS CAROL

## Stave 3



Stave Summary:

Links to context:

Links to themes:

# A CHRISTMAS CAROL

## Stave 4



Stave Summary:

Links to context:

Links to themes:

# A CHRISTMAS CAROL

## Stave 5



Stave Summary:

Links to context:

Links to themes:

## Responsibility/Society

What characters can you associate with this theme? Explain your reasons.

**Scrooge** – he isolates himself from society and must learn how to engage with other people.

**Fezziwig** – a model for Scrooge. He takes care of his workers by celebrating Christmas with a festive party.

**The Portly Gentleman** – men seeking charitable donations for the poor at Christmas.

**Marley** – delivers a warning to Scrooge about his miserly ways.

What settings/images can you associate with this theme? Explain your reasons.

**Marley's chains** – symbolic of the social responsibility of those with the means to help other people less fortunate.

**The Pawn Shop** - where a group of shady characters sell goods from a dead man. It shows the desperation of Londoners at the time.

**Scrooge's speech about the state of the poor (pages 4-5)** – The argument of overpopulation relates to the ideas of Thomas Robert Malthus and his *Essay on the Principle of Population* (1798). This inhuman view shows a lack of social conscience and responsibility.

What quotations can you find across the novella that reveals this theme? Explain your choices and note down the page number.

**"No beggars implored him to bestow a trifle, no children asked him what it was o'clock" (page 1)**

Scrooge's reputation sets him out as unique; other people are aware of his attitudes and avoid him.

**"Bah!" said Scrooge, "Humbug" (page 2)**

This demonstrates Scrooge's lack of social responsibility and goodwill to other people.

**"we should make some small provision for the Poor and the Destitute" (page 4)**

The Portly Gentleman try to collect for the poor. They believe in giving to those in need.

**"In came all the young men and women employed in the business" (page 20)**

Fezziwig invites everyone to his party, regardless of their social rank.

**"he hoped people saw him in church" (page 30)**

Tiny Tim hopes that other people see him at Christmas to remind them of the meaning of Christmas. This shows social responsibility.

**"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" (page 33)**

Dickens shows that society starts with the family and that love is more important than money.

**"Scrooge was better than his word. He did this and infinitely more..." (page 55)**

Scrooge reforms his ways and shares his wealth with those less fortunate. He learns to value other people.

## Greed & Money

What characters can you associate with this theme? Explain your reasons.

What settings/images can you associate with this theme? Explain your reasons.

What quotations can you find across the novella that reveals this theme? Explain your choices and note down the page number.

# Poverty

What characters can you associate with this theme? Explain your reasons.

What settings/images can you associate with this theme? Explain your reasons.

What quotations can you find across the novella that reveals this theme? Explain your choices and note down the page number.

# Christmas

What characters can you associate with this theme? Explain your reasons.

What settings/images can you associate with this theme? Explain your reasons.

What quotations can you find across the novella that reveals this theme? Explain your choices and note down the page number.

# Isolation

What characters can you associate with this theme? Explain your reasons.

What settings/images can you associate with this theme? Explain your reasons.

What quotations can you find across the novella that reveals this theme? Explain your choices and note down the page number.



# Family

What characters can you associate with this theme? Explain your reasons.

What settings/images can you associate with this theme? Explain your reasons.

What quotations can you find across the novella that reveals this theme? Explain your choices and note down the page number.

## Transformation & Redemption

What characters can you associate with this theme? Explain your reasons.

What settings/images can you associate with this theme? Explain your reasons.

What quotations can you find across the novella that reveals this theme? Explain your choices and note down the page number.

GCSE English Literature  
Practice Exam Question

**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 complete this task.**

**Write about Scrooge's attitude to change in the novella.**

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]

“Leave me! Take me back. Haunt me no longer!”

In the struggle, if that can be called a struggle in which the Ghost with no visible resistance on its own part was undisturbed by any effort of its adversary, Scrooge observed that its light was burning high and bright; and dimly connecting that with its influence over him, he seized the extinguisher-cap, and by a sudden action pressed it down upon its head.

The Spirit dropped beneath it, so that the extinguisher covered its whole form; but though Scrooge pressed it down with all his force, he could not hide the light, which streamed from under it, in an unbroken flood upon the ground.

He was conscious of being exhausted, and overcome by an irresistible drowsiness; and, further, of being in his own bed-room. He gave the cap a parting squeeze, in which his hand relaxed; and had barely time to reel to bed, before he sank into a heavy sleep.

GCSE English Literature  
Practice Exam Question

**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.**

**How does Dickens present the transformation of Scrooge?**

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]

He sat very close to his father's side upon his little stool. Bob held his withered little hand in his, as if he loved the child, and wished to keep him by his side, and dreaded that he might be taken from him.

"Spirit," said Scrooge, with an interest he had never felt before, "tell me if Tiny Tim will live."

"I see a vacant seat," replied the Ghost, "in the poor chimney corner, and a crutch without an owner, carefully preserved. If these shadows remain unaltered by the Future, the child will die."

"No, no," said Scrooge. "Oh, no, kind Spirit! say he will be spared."

"If these shadows remain unaltered by the Future, none other of my race," returned the Ghost, "will find him here. 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.

GCSE English Literature  
Practice Exam Question

**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 complete this task.**

Write about the theme of Christmas Spirit within the novella.

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]

In came a fiddler with a music-book, and went up to the lofty desk, and made an orchestra of it, and tuned like fifty stomach-aches. In came Mrs. Fezziwig, one vast substantial smile. In came the three Miss Fezziwigs, beaming and lovable. In came the six young followers whose hearts they broke. In came all the young men and women employed in the business. In came the housemaid, with her cousin, the baker. In came the cook, with her brother's particular friend, the milkman. In came the boy from over the way, who was suspected of not having board enough from his master; trying to hide himself behind the girl from next door but one, who was proved to

have had her ears pulled by her mistress. In they all came, one after another; some shyly, some boldly, some gracefully, some awkwardly, some pushing, some pulling; in they all came, anyhow and everyhow.

Away they all went, twenty couple at once; hands half round and back again the other way; down the middle and up again; round and round in various stages of affectionate grouping; old top couple always turning up in the wrong place; new top couple starting off again, as soon as they got there; all top couples at last, and not a bottom one to help them! When this result was brought about, old Fezziwig, clapping his hands to stop the dance, cried out, "Well done!" and the fiddler plunged his hot face into a pot of porter, especially provided for that purpose. But scorning rest, upon his reappearance, he instantly began again, though there were no dancers yet, as if the other fiddler had been carried home, exhausted, on a shutter, and he were a bran-new man resolved to beat him out of sight, or perish.

GCSE English Literature  
Practice Exam Question

**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 complete this task.**

Write about the importance of Marley's ghost in the novella.

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]

"It is required of every man," the Ghost returned, "that the spirit within him should walk abroad among his fellowmen, 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!—and witness what it cannot share, but might have shared on earth, and turned to happiness!"

Again the spectre raised a cry, and shook its chain and wrung its shadowy hands.

"You are fettered," said Scrooge, trembling. "Tell me why?"

"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?"

Scrooge trembled more and more.

"Or would you know," pursued the Ghost, "the weight and length of the strong coil you bear yourself? It was full as heavy and as long as this, seven Christmas Eves ago. You have laboured on it, since. It is a ponderous chain!"

Scrooge glanced about him on the floor, in the expectation of finding himself surrounded by some fifty or sixty fathoms of iron cable: but he could see nothing.

"Jacob," he said, imploringly. "Old Jacob Marley, tell me more. Speak comfort to me, Jacob!"

GCSE English Literature  
Practice Exam Question

## 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.**

Write about how Dickens expresses ideas about poverty.

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]

"Spirit," said Scrooge, with an interest he had never felt before, "tell me if Tiny Tim will live."  
"I see a vacant seat," replied the Ghost, "in the poor chimney-corner, and a crutch without an owner, carefully preserved. If these shadows remain unaltered by the Future, the child will die."  
"No, no," said Scrooge. "Oh, no, kind Spirit. Say he will be spared."  
"If these shadows remain unaltered by the Future, none other of my race," returned the Ghost, "will find him here. 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.  
"Man," said the Ghost, "if man you be in heart, not adamant, forbear that wicked cant until you have discovered What the surplus is, and Where it is. Will you decide what men shall live, what men shall die? It may be, that in the sight of Heaven, you are more worthless and less fit to live than millions like this poor man's child. Oh God! To hear the Insect on the leaf pronouncing on the too much life among his hungry brothers in the dust."  
Scrooge bent before the Ghost's rebuke, and trembling cast his eyes upon the ground. But he raised them speedily, on hearing his own name.  
"Mr Scrooge!" said Bob; "I'll give you Mr Scrooge, the Founder of the Feast!"  
"The Founder of the Feast indeed!" cried Mrs Cratchit, reddening. "I wish I had him here. I'd give him a piece of my mind to feast upon, and I hope he'd have a good appetite for it."  
"My dear," said Bob, "the children. Christmas Day."  
"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. You know he is, Robert. Nobody knows it better than you do, poor fellow."  
"My dear," was Bob's mild answer, "Christmas Day."  
"I'll drink his health for your sake and the Day's," said Mrs Cratchit, "not for his. Long life to him. A merry Christmas and a happy new year! -- he'll be very merry and very happy, I have no doubt!"  
The children drank the toast after her. It was the first of their proceedings which had no heartiness. Tiny Tim drank it last of all, but he didn't care twopence for it. Scrooge was the Ogre of the family. The mention of his name cast a dark shadow on the party, which was not dispelled for full five minutes.  
After it had passed away, they were ten times merrier than before, from the mere relief of Scrooge the Baleful being done with. Bob Cratchit told them how he had a situation in his eye for Master Peter, which would bring in, if obtained, full five-and-sixpence weekly. The two young Cratchits laughed tremendously at the idea of Peter's being a man of business; and Peter himself looked thoughtfully at the fire from between his collars, as if he were deliberating what particular investments he should favour when he came into the receipt of that bewildering income. Martha, who was a poor apprentice at a milliner's, then told them what kind of work she had to do, and how many hours she worked at a stretch, and how she meant to lie abed to-morrow morning for a good long rest; to-morrow being a holiday she passed at home. Also how she had seen a countess and a lord some days before, and how the lord was much about as tall as Peter; at which Peter pulled up his collars so high that you couldn't have seen his head if you had been there. All this time the chestnuts and the jug went round and round; and by-and-bye they had a song, about a lost child travelling in the snow, from Tiny Tim, who had a plaintive little voice, and sang it very well indeed. There was nothing of high mark in this. They were not a handsome family; they were not well dressed; their shoes were far from being water-proof; their clothes were scanty; and Peter might have known, and very likely did, the inside of a pawnbroker's. But, they were happy, grateful, pleased with one another, and contented with the time; and when they faded, and looked happier yet in the bright sprinklings of the Spirit's torch at parting, Scrooge had his eye upon them, and especially on Tiny Tim, until the last.

GCSE English Literature  
Practice Exam Question

**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.**

How does Dickens present impact of the spirits in the novella?

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]

The Phantom slowly, gravely, silently approached. When it came, Scrooge bent down upon his knee; for in the very air through which this Spirit moved it seemed to scatter gloom and mystery.

It was shrouded in a deep black garment, which concealed its head, its face, its form, and left nothing of it visible save one outstretched hand. But for this it would have been difficult to detach its figure from the night, and separate it from the darkness by which it was surrounded.

He felt that it was tall and stately when it came beside him, and that its mysterious presence filled him with a solemn dread. He knew no more, for the Spirit neither spoke nor moved.

"I am in the presence of the Ghost of Christmas Yet To Come?" said Scrooge.

The Spirit answered not, but pointed downward with its hand.

"You are about to show me shadows of the things that have not happened, but will happen in the time before us," Scrooge pursued. "Is that so, Spirit?"

The upper portion of the garment was contracted for an instant in its folds, as if the Spirit had inclined its head. That was the only answer he received.

Although well used to ghostly company by this time, Scrooge feared the silent shape so much that his legs trembled beneath him, and he found that he could hardly stand when he prepared to follow it. The Spirit pauses a moment, as observing his condition, and giving him time to recover.

But Scrooge was all the worse for this. It thrilled him with a vague uncertain horror, to know that behind the dusky shroud there were ghostly eyes intently fixed upon him, while he, though he stretched his own to the utmost, could see nothing but a spectral hand and one great heap of black.

"Ghost of the Future!" he exclaimed, "I fear you more than any spectre I have seen. But as I know your purpose is to do me good, and as I hope to live to be another man from what I was, I am prepared to bear you company, and do it with a thankful heart. Will you not speak to me?"

It gave him no reply. The hand was pointed straight before them.



GCSE English Literature  
Practice Exam Question

## 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.**

Write about the way family is presented in the novella.

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]

"A merry Christmas, uncle! God save you!" cried a cheerful voice. It was the voice of Scrooge's nephew, who came upon him so quickly that this was the first intimation he had of his approach.

"Bah!" said Scrooge, "Humbug!"

He had so heated himself with rapid walking in the fog and frost, this nephew of Scrooge's, that he was all in a glow; his face was ruddy and handsome; his eyes sparkled, and his breath smoked again.

"Christmas a humbug, uncle!" said Scrooge's nephew. "You don't mean that, I am sure."

"I do," said Scrooge. "Merry Christmas! What right have you to be merry? What reason have you to be merry? You're poor enough."

"Come, then," returned the nephew gaily. "What right have you to be dismal? What reason have you to be morose? You're rich enough."

Scrooge having no better answer ready on the spur of the moment, said "Bah!" again; and followed it up with "Humbug."

"Don't be cross, uncle!" said the nephew.

"What else can I be," returned the uncle, "when I live in such a world of fools as this? Merry Christmas! Out upon merry Christmas! What's Christmas time to you but a time for paying bills without money; a time for finding yourself a year older, but not an hour richer; a time for balancing your books and having every item in 'em through a round dozen of months presented dead against you? If I could work my will," said Scrooge indignantly, "every idiot who goes about with 'Merry Christmas' on his lips, should be boiled with his own pudding, and buried with a stake of holly through his heart. He should!"

"Uncle!" pleaded the nephew.

"Nephew!" returned the uncle, sternly, "keep Christmas in your own way, and let me keep it in mine."

"Keep it!" repeated Scrooge's nephew. "But you don't keep it."

"Let me leave it alone, then," said Scrooge. "Much good may it do you! Much good it has ever done you!"

"There are many things from which I might have derived good, by which I have not profited, I dare say," returned the nephew. "Christmas among the rest. But I am sure I have always thought of Christmas time, when it has come round -- apart from the veneration due to its sacred name and origin, if anything belonging to it can be apart from that -- as a good time: a kind, forgiving, charitable, pleasant time: the only time I know of, in the long calendar of the year, when men and women seem by one consent to open their shut-up hearts freely, and to think of people below them as if they really were fellow-passengers to the grave, and not another race of creatures bound on other journeys. And therefore, uncle, though it has never put a scrap of gold or silver in my pocket, I believe that it has done me good, and will do me good; and I say, God bless it!"

The clerk in the tank involuntarily applauded: becoming immediately sensible of the impropriety, he poked the fire, and extinguished the last frail spark for ever.

GCSE English Literature  
Practice Exam Question

**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 complete this task.**

Write about the Ghost of Christmas Yet To Come and the way he influences Scrooge in the story.

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]

The Phantom slowly, gravely, silently approached. When it came, Scrooge bent down upon his knee; for in the very air through which this Spirit moved it seemed to scatter gloom and mystery.

It was shrouded in a deep black garment, which concealed its head, its face, its form, and left nothing of it visible save one outstretched hand. But for this it would have been difficult to detach its figure from the night, and separate it from the darkness by which it was surrounded.

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The upper portion of the garment was contracted for an instant in its folds, as if the Spirit had inclined its head. That was the only answer he received.

Although well used to ghostly company by this time, Scrooge feared the silent shape so much that his legs trembled beneath him, and he found that he could hardly stand when he prepared to follow it. The Spirit paused a moment, as observing his condition, and giving him time to recover.

But Scrooge was all the worse for this. It thrilled him with a vague uncertain horror, to know that behind the dusky shroud, there were ghostly eyes intently fixed upon him, while he, though he stretched his own to the utmost, could see nothing but a spectral hand and one great heap of black.

"Ghost of the Future!" he exclaimed, "I fear you more than any spectre I have seen. But as I know your purpose is to do me good, and as I hope to live to be another man from what I was, I am prepared to bear you company, and do it with a thankful heart. Will you not speak to me?"

It gave him no reply. The hand was pointed straight before them.

"Lead on!" said Scrooge. "Lead on! The night is waning fast, and it is precious time to me, I know. Lead on, Spirit!"

GCSE English Literature  
Practice Exam Question

**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.**

Write about the way Christmas is presented in the novella.

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]

"Christmas a humbug, uncle!" said Scrooge's nephew. "You don't mean that, I am sure."

"I do," said Scrooge. "Merry Christmas! What right have you to be merry? What reason have you to be merry? You're poor enough."

"Come, then," returned the nephew gaily. "What right have you to be dismal? What reason have you to be morose? You're rich enough."

Scrooge having no better answer ready on the spur of the moment, said "Bah!" again; and followed it up with "Humbug."

"Don't be cross, uncle!" said the nephew.

"What else can I be," returned the uncle, "when I live in such a world of fools as this? Merry Christmas! Out upon merry Christmas! What's Christmas time to you but a time for paying bills without money; a time for finding yourself a year older, but not an hour richer; a time for balancing your books and having every item in 'em through a round dozen of months presented dead against you? If I could work my will," said Scrooge indignantly, "every idiot who goes about with 'Merry Christmas' on his lips, should be boiled with his own pudding, and buried with a stake of holly through his heart. He should!"

"Uncle!" pleaded the nephew.

"Nephew!" returned the uncle, sternly, "keep Christmas in your own way, and let me keep it in mine."

"Keep it!" repeated Scrooge's nephew. "But you don't keep it."

"Let me leave it alone, then," said Scrooge. "Much good may it do you! Much good it has ever done you!"

"There are many things from which I might have derived good, by which I have not profited, I dare say," returned the nephew. "Christmas among the rest. But I am sure I have always thought of Christmas time, when it has come round -- apart from the veneration due to its sacred name and origin, if anything belonging to it can be apart from that -- as a good time: a kind, forgiving, charitable, pleasant time: the only time I know of, in the long calendar of the year, when men and women seem by one consent to open their shut-up hearts freely, and to think of people below them as if they really were fellow-passengers to the grave, and not another race of creatures bound on other journeys. And therefore, uncle, though it has never put a scrap of gold or silver in my pocket, I believe that it has done me good, and will do me good; and I say, God bless it!"

GCSE English Literature  
Practice Exam Question

**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 complete this task.**

Write about the way in which London and its citizens are presented in 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]

Meanwhile the fog and darkness thickened so, that people ran about with flaring links, proffering their services to go before horses in carriages, and conduct them on their way. The ancient tower of a church, whose gruff old bell was always peeping slyly down at Scrooge out of a gothic window in the wall, became invisible, and struck the hours and quarters in the clouds, with tremulous vibrations afterwards as if its teeth were chattering in its frozen head up there. The cold became intense. In the main street, at the corner of the court, some labourers were repairing the gas-pipes, and had lighted a great fire in a brazier, round which a party of ragged men and boys were gathered: warming their hands and winking their eyes before the blaze in rapture. The water-plug being left in solitude, its overflowings sullenly congealed, and turned to misanthropic ice. The brightness of the shops where holly sprigs and berries crackled in the lamp-heat of the windows, made pale faces ruddy as they passed. Poulterers' and grocers' trades became a splendid joke: a glorious pageant, with which it was next to impossible to believe that such dull principles as bargain and sale had anything to do. The Lord Mayor, in the stronghold of the might Mansion House, gave orders to his fifty cooks and butlers to keep Christmas as a Lord Mayor's household should; and even the little tailor, whom he had fined five shillings on the previous Monday for being drunk and bloodthirsty in the streets, stirred up tomorrow's pudding in his garret, while his lean wife and the baby sallied out to buy the beef.

Foggier yet, and colder! Piercing, searching, biting cold. If the good Saint Dunstan had but nipped the Evil Spirit's nose with a touch of such weather as that, instead of using his familiar weapons, then indeed he would have roared to lusty purpose. The owner of one scant young nose, gnawed and mumbled by the hungry cold as bones are gnawed by dogs, stooped down at Scrooge's keyhole to regale him with a Christmas carol: but at the first sound of God bless you, merry gentleman! May nothing you dismay! Scrooge seized the ruler with such energy of action that the singer fled in terror, leaving the keyhole to the fog and even more congenial frost.

At length the hour of shutting up the counting-house arrived. With an ill-will Scrooge dismounted from his stool, and tacitly admitted the fact to the expectant clerk in the Tank, who instantly snuffed his candle out, and put on his hat.

GCSE English Literature  
Practice Exam Question

**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.**

Write about the way redemption is presented in the novella.

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]

"I don't know what to do!" cried Scrooge, laughing and crying in the same breath; and making a perfect Laocoon of himself with his stockings. "I am as light as a feather, I am as happy as an angel, I am as merry as a schoolboy. I am as giddy as a drunken man. A merry Christmas to everybody! A happy New Year to all the world! Hallo here! Whoop! Hallo!"

He had frisked into the sitting-room, and was now standing there: perfectly winded.

"There's the saucepan that the gruel was in!" cried Scrooge, starting off again, and frisking round the fireplace. "There's the door, by which the Ghost of Jacob Marley entered. There's the corner where the Ghost of Christmas Present, sat. There's the window where I saw the wandering Spirits. It's all right, it's all true, it all happened. Ha ha ha!"

Really, for a man who had been out of practice for so many years, it was a splendid laugh, a most illustrious laugh. The father of a long, long line of brilliant laughs.

"I don't know what day of the month it is," said Scrooge. "I don't know how long I've been among the Spirits. I don't know anything. I'm quite a baby. Never mind. I don't care. I'd rather be a baby. Hallo! Whoop! Hallo here!"

He was checked in his transports by the churches ringing out the lustiest peals he had ever heard. Clash, clang, hammer; ding, dong, bell! Bell, dong, ding; hammer, clang, clash! Oh, glorious, glorious!

## A Christmas Carol – Key Quotations

### Ebenezer Scrooge

Hard and sharp as flint  
Solitary as an oyster  
No warmth could warm him  
I can't afford to make idle people merry  
I could walk it blindfolded  
Another idol has displaced me - Belle  
Release me, I cannot bear it  
Tell me, will Tiny Tim live?  
Scrooge watched in horror  
I have not the power, Spirit  
I am not the man I was...I will not shut out the lessons they have taught me  
Merry as a schoolboy  
Light as a feather

### Jacob Marley

Old Marley was as dead as a door-nail  
I wear the chain I forged in life  
Mankind was my business  
It is a most ponderous chain

### Fred (Scrooge's nephew)

A merry Christmas, uncle! God save you!' cried a cheerful voice.  
I believe that it has done me good, and will do me good; and I say, God bless it!  
Don't be angry, uncle. Come! Dine with us tomorrow.  
I want nothing from you; I ask nothing of you; why cannot we be friends?  
I feel sorry for him. Who suffers from his ill-whims? Him.

### Bob Cratchit

The clerk in the Tank involuntarily applauded  
And a merry Christmas to you sir  
Tiny Tim upon his shoulder  
He grows stronger every day, my dear  
Mr Scrooge, the Founder of the Feast  
None of us shall forget Tiny Tim

### Ghost of Christmas Past

Would you so soon put out with your worldly hands the light that I give?  
Do you remember the way?  
A solitary child is left here still  
These are the shadows of things that have been...do not blame me

### Ghost of Christmas Present

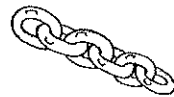
Jolly giant  
Come in and know me better man!  
It's all your poor clerk can afford  
Well if he is to die, he had better do it and decrease the surplus population  
My life upon this globe is very short  
Want and Ignorance...beware them both

### Ghost of Christmas Yet To Come

The Phantom slowly, gravely, silently approached  
It gave him no reply. The hand was pointed straight before them  
I fear you more than any spectre I have seen  
It's likely to be a very cheap funeral  
He frightened everyone away from him when he was alive, to profit us when he was dead!  
We may sleep tonight with light hearts!  
The Spirit stood among the graves, and pointed down to one

### STAVE ONE

- 'Marley was dead: to begin with.'
- 'Marley was as dead as a doornail.'
- 'He was a tight-fisted hand at the grindstone, Scrooge!'
- 'Hard and sharp as flint.'
- 'Solitary as an oyster.'
- 'External heat and cold had little influence on Scrooge.'
- 'It was cold, bleak, biting weather.'
- 'The fog came pouring in at every chink and keyhole.'
- 'His clerk, who in a dismal little cell beyond... was copying letters...'
- 'He was all in a glow; his face was ruddy and handsome; his eyes sparkled.' (Fred)
- 'At the ominous word liberality, Scrooge frowned.'
- 'Are there no prisons?' asked Scrooge.'
- 'I don't make merry myself at Christmas, and I can't afford to make idle people merry.'
- 'If they would rather die... they had better do it, and decrease the surplus population.'
- 'Meanwhile the fog and darkness thickened.'
- 'Piercing, searching, biting cold.'
- 'There was nothing at all particular about the knocker on the door.'
- 'To say that he was not startled, or that his blood was not conscious of a terrible sensation to which it had been a stranger from infancy, would be untrue.' (Scrooge after seeing Marley's face)
- 'The same face: the very same.' (Marley's ghost)



- 'How now!' said Scrooge, caustic and cold as ever.'
- 'I wear the chain I forged in life.'
- 'Or would know,' pursued the Ghost,
- 'the weight and length of the strong coil you bear yourself? It was full as heavy and as long as this, seven Christmas Eves ago. You have laboured on it, since. It is a ponderous chain!'
- 'No rest, no peace. Incessant torture of remorse.'
- 'Mankind was my business.'
- 'The misery with them all was, clearly, that they sought to interfere, for good, in human matters, and had lost the power for ever.'
- 'He tried to say, 'Humbug!' but stopped at the first syllable.'

### STAVE TWO

- 'Was it a dream or not?'
- 'Scrooge... found himself face to face with the unearthly visitor...'
- 'It was a strange figure – like a child: yet not so like a child as like an old man.'
- 'It wore a tunic of the purest white.'
- 'From the crown of its head there sprang a bright clear jet of light.'
- 'Are you the spirit, sir, whose coming was foretold to me?' asked Scrooge.'
- 'The voice was soft and gentle.'
- 'Would you so soon put out, with worldly hands, the light I give?'
- 'I am a mortal,' Scrooge remonstrated, "and liable to fall."
- 'He was conscious of a thousand odours floating in the air, each one connected with a thousand thoughts, and hopes, and joys, and cares long, long forgotten!'
- 'Your lip is trembling," said the Ghost. "And what is that upon your cheek?'
- 'The school is not quite deserted... A solitary child, neglected by his friends, is left there still.'
- 'A lonely boy was reading near a feeble fire.'
- 'Scrooge... wept to see his poor forgotten self as he used to be.'
- 'There was a boy singing a Christmas carol at my door last night. I should like to have given him something: that's all.'



- 'A little girl, much younger than the boy, came darting in, and putting her arms about his neck, and often kissing him, addressed him as her 'dear, dear brother.'
- 'Father is so much kinder than he used to be, that home's like Heaven!'
- 'He called out in a comfortable, oily, rich, fat, jovial voice.' (Fezziwig)
- 'He has the power to render us happy or unhappy; to make out service light or burdensome; a pleasure or a toil.' (Scrooge talking about Fezziwig)
- 'Another idol has displaced me.' (Belle)
- 'You fear the world too much.'
- 'Our contract is an old one.'
- 'He seized the extinguisher-cap, and by sudden action pressed it down upon its head.'
- 'He could not hide the light: which streamed from under it, in an unbroken flood upon the ground.'

### STAVE THREE

- 'A strange voice called him by his name, and bade him enter.'
- 'Such a mighty blaze went roaring up the chimney.'
- 'Heaped up on the floor, to form a kind of throne, were turkeys, geese, game, poultry...'
- 'In easy state upon this couch, there sat a jolly Giant, glorious to see; who bore a glowing torch... and held it up, high up, to shed its light on Scrooge.'
- 'Come in! and know me better, man!'
- 'His dark brown curls were long and free: free as its genital face, its sparkling eye, its open hand.'
- 'Girded round its middle was an antique scabbard: but no sword was in it, and the ancient sheath was eaten up with rust.'
- 'There are some upon this earth of yours... who lay claim to know us, and who do their deeds of passion, pride, ill-will, hatred, envy, bigotry, and selfishness in our name...'
- 'Then up rose Mrs Cratchit, Cratchit's wife... brave in ribbons.'
- '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, who made lame beggars walk and blind men see.'
- 'It was a sufficient dinner for the whole family.'
- 'If these shadows remain unaltered by the Future, the child will die.'
- 'What then? If he be like to die, he had better do it, and decrease the surplus population.'
- 'Mr Scrooge!' said Bob; 'I'll give you Mr Scrooge, the Founder of the Feast!'
- 'There was nothing of high mark in this. They were not a handsome family; they were not well dressed; their shoes were far from being water-proof; their clothes were scanty.'
- 'A place where Miners live, who labour in the bowels of the earth," returned the Spirit. "But, they know me. See!'
- 'I am sorry for him; I couldn't be angry with him if I tried.' (Fred talking about Scrooge)
- 'They were a boy and girl. Yellow, meagre, ragged, scowling, wolfish: but prostrate, too, in their humility.'
- 'They are Man's," said the Spirit, looking down upon them. "And they cling to me, appealing from their fathers. This boy is Ignorance. This girl is Want. Beware them both, and all of their degree, but most of all beware this boy, for on his brow I see that written which is Doom.'



## STAVE FOUR

- 'The Phantom slowly, gravely, silently, approached.'
- 'It seemed to scatter gloom and mystery.'
- 'It was shrouded in a deep black garment, which concealed its head, its face, its form, and left nothing visible.'
- 'It was tall and stately.'
- 'Scrooge feared the silent shape so much that his legs trembled beneath him.'
- 'There were ghostly eyes intently fixed upon him.'
- "'I hope to live to be another man from what I was, I am prepared to bear you company, and do it with a thankful heart.'"
- "'It's likely to be a very cheap funeral.'"
- 'They were men of business: very wealthy, and of great importance. He had made a point of always standing well in their esteem: in a business point of view that is; strictly in a business point of view.'
- "'Every person has a right to take care of themselves. He always did.'" (Mrs Dilber talking about Scrooge)
- 'Scrooge listened to this dialogue in horror.'
- "'Spirit!' said Scrooge, shuddering from head to foot. 'I see, I see. The case of this unhappy man might be my own.'"
- 'Oh cold, cold, rigid, dreadful Death, set up thine altar here.'
- "'Before that time we shall be ready with the money; and even though we were not, it would be bad fortune indeed to find so merciless a creditor in his successor.'"
- "'Let me see some tenderness connected with a death.'"
- 'Ah, poor Tiny Tim!'
- "'Don't mind it, father. Don't be grieved!'"
- "'My little, little child!' cried Bob. "My little child!'"
- 'The Spirit was immovable as ever.'
- "'Hear me! I am not the man I was. I will not be the man I must have been but for this intercourse. Why show me this, if I am past all hope?'"
- "'I will honour Christmas in my heart, and try to keep it all the year. I will live in the Past, Present, and the Future. The Spirits of all Three shall strive within me. I will not shut out the lessons that they teach. Oh, tell me I may sponge away the writing on this stone.'"

## STAVE FIVE

- 'He was so fluttered and so glowing with his good intentions, that his broken voice would scarcely answer to his call.'
- 'He had been sobbing violently in his conflict with the Spirit, and his face was wet with tears.'
- 'His hands were busy with his garments all this time: turning them inside out, putting them on upside down, tearing them, mistaking them, making them parties to every kind of extravagance.'
- "'I am as light as a feather, I am as happy as an angel, I am as merry as a school-boy.'"
- 'For a man who had been out of practice for so many years, it was a splendid laugh, a most illustrious laugh.'
- 'No fog, not mist; clear, bright, jovial, stirring, cold.'
- 'Oh, glorious. Glorious!'
- 'The Spirits have done it all in one night. They can do anything they like. Of course they can.'"
- "'An intelligent boy!" said Scrooge. "A remarkable boy!'"
- "'Allow me to ask for your pardon.'"
- 'Everything could yield him pleasure.'
- 'Let him in! It is a mercy he didn't shake his arm off. He was at home in five minutes. Nothing could be heartier.' (Scrooge welcomed by Fred)
- "'I'll raise your salary, and endeavour to assist your struggling family, and we will discuss your affairs this very afternoon.'"
- 'Scrooge was better than his word. He did it all and infinitely more.'
- 'His own heart laughed: and that was quite enough for him.'
- 'He knew how to keep Christmas well.'
- 'And so, as Tiny Tim observed, God bless Us, Every One!'

Learn some quotations!

Colour code **THEME** or **IMAGERY**.

Choose five quotations from each act and memorise them.

Colour code quotations by character.

Draw pictures to help you remember key images.

Look for **LANGUAGE TECHNIQUES** (eg. metaphors, similes, symbols)

