

## Glossary: Tier 2 Vocabulary

Word	Definition	Useage
repent (verb)		
benevolence (noun)		
dominant (adjective)		
blight (noun)		
stave (noun)		
clergyman (noun)		
unhallowed (adjective)		
miser (noun)		
covetous (adjective)		
obstinate (adjective)		
misanthropic (adjective)		
Gothic (noun)		

regret (noun)		
fettered (adjective)		
allegory (noun)		
ethereal (adjective)		
luminescence (noun)		
microcosm (noun)		
morality (noun)		
virtuous (adjective)		
reverently (adverb)		
depraved (adjective)		
emblematic (verb)		

# Knowledge Organiser

## Year 11 – English Literature – 19<sup>th</sup> Century Text: *A Christmas Carol* by Charles Dickens

Context and <u>Setting</u>		Dramatic Devices		Characters	
Queen Victoria's Reign (1837-1901)	during the Victorian era in 1843	ignorance	argued as more <b>dangerous than poverty</b> by Dickens	Tiny Tim	<b>frail, ill, pious</b> ; serves as an important symbol of the consequences of the protagonist's choices
Malthusian Principles - 1798	Thomas Malthus publishes <b>The Principle of Population</b> ; stated humans would eventually be <b>unable to produce enough food to sustain themselves</b>	misanthrope	a person who <b>dislikes humankind and avoids human society</b>	Ghost of Christmas Past	<b>ephemeral, gentle, firm</b> ; represents memory and sympathy for S
John Dickens	Dickens' father <b>arrested for debt, and imprisoned</b>	philanthropist	a person who <b>seeks to promote the welfare of others</b> , especially by <b>donations</b> to good causes	Ghost of Christmas Present	<b>jolly, honest, prophetic</b> ; represents compassion and poverty
1834 – Poor Law Amendment Act	designed to <b>reduce the cost of looking after the poor</b> ; introduction of <b>workhouses</b>	Christmas	annual festival commemorating the birth of Jesus Christ; <b>associated with goodwill and benevolence</b>	Ghost of Christmas yet to Come	<b>silent, frightening, demanding</b> ; represents the consequences of our actions
Key Concepts / themes		Characters		Methods and Devices	
responsibility	individuals have <b>responsibility</b> for the <b>welfare</b> of those around them	Ebenezer Scrooge	<b>miser, redeemed, philanthropist</b> ; journey of <b>redemption drives the narrative</b>	allegory	story in which the <b>characters and events are symbols</b> of something else
change	everyone has the <b>capacity to change</b>	Jacob Marley	<b>materialistic, reformed, regretful</b> ; acts as a warning and a mirror	intrusive narrator	an <b>omniscient narrator</b> both reports the events of a novel and <b>offers further comments on it</b>
redemption	action of being <b>saved from sin, error, or evil</b>	Fred	<b>cheerful, optimistic, forgiving</b> ; foil to S	foil	character with <b>opposite characteristics</b> to the main character.
poverty	common <b>feature of Victorian Britain</b> – Dickens believed we <b>should not turn a blind eye to it</b>	Bob Cratchit	<b>uncomplaining, good-humoured, loving</b> ; S.'s clerk; one of the <b>deserving poor</b> .	<u>character</u> <b>onym</b>	a name which helps to give the reader <b>an idea of a character's personality</b> .
avarice	<b>extreme greed</b> for wealth or material gain			motif	<b>dominant or recurring idea</b> in an artistic work

# GCSE AQA English Literature Overview

## Paper 1: Shakespeare and the 19th-century novel

### What's assessed

- Shakespeare plays
- The 19th-century novel

### How it's assessed

- written exam: 1 hour 45 minutes
- 64 marks
- 40% of GCSE

### Questions

**Section A Shakespeare:** students will answer one question on their play of choice. They will be required to write in detail about an extract from the play and then to write about the play as a whole.

**Section B The 19th-century novel:** students will answer one question on their novel of choice. They will be required to write in detail about an extract from the novel and then to write about the novel as a whole.

## Paper 2: Modern texts and poetry

### What's assessed

- Modern prose or drama texts
- The poetry anthology
- Unseen poetry

### How it's assessed

- written exam: 2 hour 15 minutes
- 96 marks
- 60% of GCSE

### Questions

**Section A Modern texts:** students will answer one essay question from a choice of two on their studied modern prose or drama text.

**Section B Poetry:** students will answer one comparative question on one named poem printed on the paper and one other poem from their chosen anthology cluster.

**Section C Unseen poetry:** Students will answer one question on one unseen poem and one question comparing this poem with a second unseen poem.

## Context of 'A Christmas Carol,' (1843)

Tier 2 Vocabulary:	
repent (verb)	to deeply regret a past act or attitude
benevolence (noun)	kindness
dominant (adjective)	with power and influence over others
blight (noun)	something that spoils or damages something else

A Christmas Carol is a **novella** about a bitter miser called Scrooge. With the help of three ghosts, Scrooge changes and becomes kind and generous. Dickens **explores the real problem of poverty in Victorian England** and carries a **strong moral message** – that **people can repent and change**, and that **better off people have a duty to help the less fortunate**.

### Key distinction:

Working Class	Ruling Class
a group of poorer people in society who complete manual jobs e.g. factory workers	a group of wealthier people in society who own land and businesses
<i>Where have you seen these two ideas explored before in your English Literature studies?</i>	

### Unequal distribution

unfairly spread out, some have lots, some have a little

*What might this be referring to in the context of Victorian England?*

*Where have you seen this concept explored before?*



## Social Justice

'A Christmas Carol' was Dickens's response to how the **working class** in London lived. Writing the story in just six weeks, he was angry at how little the rich cared about the poor, who had almost no access to education, no care in sickness, saw their young children set to work for **ruthless** factory owners and were often incredibly hungry. It was published in December 1843, and by May 1844 had run to seven editions. He had put into it his memories of Camden Town and the walk, or run, to work that Bob Cratchit does; and his sister Fanny's crippled son, now four, who he had seen recently, as Tiny Tim. From his own self he drew the understanding that a grown man may **pity** the child he was, and learn from that pity, as Scrooge does.

It was also his response to the Ragged School he had visited, and the Report of the Children's Employment Commission he had read a little earlier, which showed that children under seven were put to work, unprotected by any legal constraints, sometimes for ten to twelve hours a day. The book went straight to the heart of the public and has remained there ever since, with its mixture of horror, despair, hope and warmth, its message – a Christian message – that even the worst of sinners may **repent** and become a good

man; and its insistence that good cheer, food and drink shared, gifts and even dancing are not merely frivolous pleasures but basic expressions of love and mutual support among all human beings.

1. What was life like for the working class in Victorian England?
2. What does it mean to repent?
3. What is the message about repenting in A Christmas Carol?

## Christmas

Christmas cards were not introduced until 1846, and Christmas crackers until the 1850s. Typically, Christmas was a one-day holiday when presents were given to children, but there was no general sense of **benevolence** and generosity. It was a time of quiet rest. What Dickens did was to transform the holiday by adding his own particular mixture of memories and fears, as well as making it comfortable and cosy. This was also linked to Dickens' ideas about being a good Christian – which in his view involves being generous and charitable all year round, not just at Christmas.

## Victorian England and Poverty

In Victorian England, there was great inequality between the rich and poor, and a very **unequal distribution** of wealth and political power – the traditional ruling class was wholly **dominant**. The Industrial Revolution created lots of jobs in cities, so the population in cities grew rapidly and caused overcrowding in the slums, leading to disease, hunger and crime. The 1830s and 1840s were desperately bad times for the working classes – overworked, underpaid, badly fed, housed and clothed; however, conditions did improve, driven by Christian concern, an increasingly sense of government responsibility, and fear of revolution. On the other hand, the factory owners became incredibly wealthy – increasing inequality.

The Victorians were increasingly aware of the horror of the lives of the poor, and that knowledge served as a reason to keep working hard. People believed that if you worked hard, you could move up the social ladder. For the working classes, hours were very long, work wearisome, **monotonous** and strictly disciplined, wages were poor, health and safety generally neglected, with boys in pottery factories (for example) experiencing stunted growth, rheumatism, and slow poisoning from the pottery fumes. It is not clear that, by the 1840s, the working classes were gaining significantly from the industrial revolution. The 1834 Poor Laws created the workhouse system, which was driven not by sympathy or charity, but blame, for it was their firm conviction that many of the poor had brought their misery on themselves. It actually reduced the help available to the poor. Workhouses were places offering work and accommodation for those so poor they could not support themselves, but they were very unpleasant places where individuals were starved, treated cruelly, separated from their family and punished harshly. They would do hard, boring work such as oakum picking, stone-breaking or domestic duties for women. The workhouse system was intended to scare people out of poverty, as life within them was so awful. Privately, however, the Victorians were extremely generous, far more so than our generation; those with money were expected to give a good proportion of their income on charity for the poor.

Poverty **blighted** Charles Dickens' own childhood. He did not get to go to school, instead working in a blacking factory (which made boot polish) because his father was imprisoned for debt, he wrote: 'what I would have given, if I had had anything to give, to have been sent to any other school, to have been taught something anywhere!' The future was snatched away, the dreams and visions of his youth thrown off. Scrooge's childhood is similar to Dickens's own experiences -in Scrooge's infancy, the blacking factory is present in the image of a decaying building which is made of red brick: it is here that Scrooge sees the heroes of his boyhood reading just as Dickens had once done. The Cratchit family live in a small terraced house which is clearly an evocation of Dickens' own childhood home.

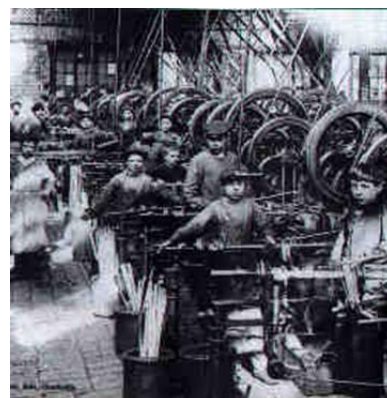
### Victorian Philosophy

Dickens' novels often attack different institutions – workhouses, bad schools, prisons, the Courts, the Civil Service – but behind these attacks lay a grand and urgent concern with human brotherhood and sisterhood, with mutual kindness, benevolence, justice and freedom. Despite a belief in 'the greatest good for the greatest number,' the main attitude towards the poor was that they were to blame for their poverty and that they needed to 'help themselves' out of poverty, rather than being helped by others – this was informed by religious ideas too. Victorian economist Thomas Malthus argued that the population would grow faster than food supplies leading to overpopulation, especially in poor communities – leading to inevitable poverty and the poor getting less and less. Dickens disagreed with this, arguing there were plenty to go around if the rich were to share.

### Questions:

1. How was Christmas different in Victorian England?
2. What sort of conditions did the poor work in?
3. How did Victorians see the poor?
4. Explain Malthus's ideas about poverty
5. What sort of childhood did Dickens have?

**Core thesis: copy into your exercise book:** In his allegorical novella, Dickens exposes the harrowing consequences of a money-orientated, selfish lifestyle on the vulnerable working classes by using the initially miserly Scrooge to embody typical attitudes towards the poor. However, through Scrooge's journey of redemption, Dickens advocates the possibility of positive change for even the most selfish individuals, systems and policies and celebrates the power and possibility of benevolence and charity all year round – not just at Christmas.



## Stave One

Tier 2 Vocabulary / Glossary:	
stave	a set of five parallel lines on any one or between any adjacent two of which a note is written to indicate its pitch
clergyman	a person with a religious duty, especially in Christianity
'Change	short for 'Exchange' - the Royal Exchange, a place for business dealings and trading money.
ironmongery	something made of metal
unhallowed	not blessed; Unholy

### Dickens' Preface:

I have endeavoured in this Ghostly little book, to raise the Ghost of an Idea, which shall not put my readers out of humour with themselves, with each other, with the season, or with me. May it haunt their houses pleasantly, and no one wish to lay it.

Their faithful Friend and Servant,

C. D.

December, 1843.

1. What words can you find in the preface to do with the supernatural?
2. When Dickens says 'haunt their houses' – what does it suggest he wants the ideas in his book to do?
3. Does Dickens want us to be genuinely scared by the story?
4. Why does he address the reader directly in the preface?



## Stave One – How is Scrooge Introduced?

**Summary:** Dickens opens the novella by telling us that Jacob Marley, Scrooge’s business partner, has been ‘dead as a doornail’ for seven years. Scrooge was the only person at his funeral; he went straight back to work after the funeral, and hasn’t painted out Marley’s name. Dickens hints the story will be supernatural by saying ‘Marley was dead to begin with’ and this ensures we believe in his ghost when it appears too. Scrooge is described as a mean, cold man who only cares about making money when we meet him on Christmas eve. It is evident that he does not trust his assistant, Bob Cratchit, and watches him closely in his cold office (because Scrooge won’t pay to heat it). Next, Scrooge’s nephew, Fred, arrives to wish Scrooge a merry Christmas – but Scrooge, responds with ‘Humbug!’ and calls him a fool for being happy without much money.

### Task 1: Recap Stave One:

1. Who is dead, and why does Dickens open the story with this information?
2. Why is cold weather, and the cold office, used as the setting?
3. Who is Bob Cratchit and how does Scrooge treat him?
4. Is Fred similar or different to Scrooge and why is this important?

### Task 2: Note down how each term refers to the text / Scrooge / context

Tier 2 / 3 Vocabulary	
miser	a person who hoards wealth and spends as little money as possible
pathetic fallacy	the attribution of human emotion and conduct to things found in nature that are not human
covetous	having or showing a great desire to possess something belonging to someone else
obstinate	stubbornly refusing to change one's opinion
misanthropic	having or showing a dislike of other people; unsociable

### Task 3: Track with a highlighter and pen – how is Scrooge introduced?

Scrooge never painted out Old Marley’s name. There it stood, years afterwards, above the warehouse door: Scrooge and Marley. The firm was known as Scrooge and Marley. Sometimes people new to the business called Scrooge Scrooge, and sometimes Marley, but he answered to both names. It was all the same to him.

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.

1. What sort of person is Scrooge?
2. What kind of weather is associated with Scrooge and what does this suggest about him?

**Task 4: How does Dickens utilise pathetic fallacy through the weather to reflect Scrooge's miserly nature?**

Explode the following quotations:

'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'

'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'

## Stave One – How and why does Dickens contrast the character of Fred to Scrooge?

**Summary:** Fred asks Scrooge to dine with him and his wife and friends on Christmas day, but Scrooge refuses the invitation. Bob Cratchit lets in two charity collectors, who ask Scrooge for money to help the poor – to which Scrooge rudely responds that he thinks the poor should either go to workhouses or die. The weather gets worse, and we are told a church bell can be seen through the fog, looking down on Scrooge. Away from the office, lots of people are happily getting ready for Christmas.

Tier 2 / 3 Vocabulary	
avarice	extreme greed for wealth or material gain
symbolism	the use of symbols to represent deeper ideas / concepts
benevolence	the quality of being well-meaning; kindness

**Task 1:** Annotate: What is symbolised by Dickens' use of the fire in Scrooge's office?



'Scrooge has a very small fire, but the clerk's fire was so much smaller that it looked like one coal'

**Task 2:** How do the following terms / concepts apply to the character of Fred? Note down references from the novella that support each word:

- Affectionate
- Equality in treatment
- Benevolent
- Christian
- Embodies the Christian 'ideal' of charity and kindness

**Task 3:** Explain in your exercise book – Why does Dickens use this contrasting language to portray Fred? What is Dickens conveying about attitudes towards equality in Victorian society

## Stave One – How does Dickens portray Scrooge’s attitudes towards the plight of the poor?

### Tier 2 / 3 Vocabulary

Malthusian

of or relating to Malthus or to his theory that population tends to increase at a faster rate than its means of subsistence and that unless it is checked by moral restraint or by disease, famine, war, or other disaster widespread poverty and degradation



**Thomas Malthus:** 1766-1834

Thomas Robert Malthus FRS was an English cleric, scholar and influential economist in the fields of political economy and demography

Malthus wrote about this concept in ‘An Essay on the Principle of Population’. For example he wrote:

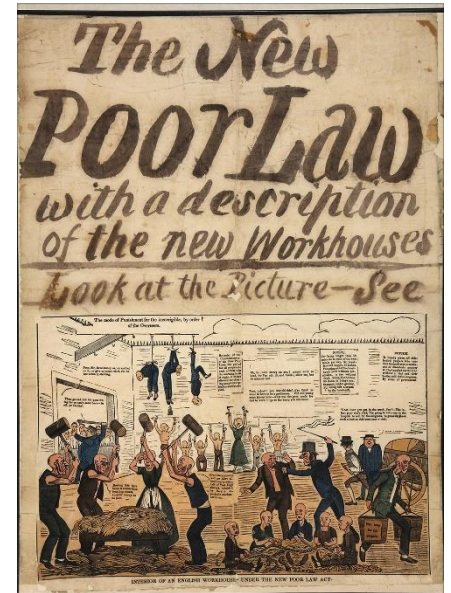
“If the subsistence for man that the earth affords was to be increased every twenty-five years by a quantity equal to what the whole world at present produces, this would allow the power of production in the earth to be absolutely unlimited, and its ratio of increase much greater than we can conceive that any possible exertions of mankind could make it ... yet still the power of population being a power of a superior order, the increase of the human species can only be kept commensurate to the increase of the means of subsistence by the constant operation of the strong law of necessity acting as a check upon the greater power.”

Many viewed Malthus’ ideas as cold-hearted and viewed the Malthusian Population Theory as justification for the exploitation of the working-class people in the Industrial Revolution. For example, in Charles Dickens’ famous story ‘A Christmas Carol’ the character of Ebenezer Scrooge expressed Malthus’ ideas in an early scene. For instance, when approached by two men collecting donations for the poor, Scrooge responded by suggesting that the poor should die and “decrease the surplus population”. ‘A Christmas Carol’ was first published by Dickens in 1843, and is generally viewed as a critique of the social system present in England at the time. As such, Dickens’ portrayal of Ebenezer Scrooge is viewed as a criticism of Malthus’ ideas.

**Task 1:** Explain - In Stave 1, how does Scrooge’s portrayal embody Malthusian ideology?

## The 1834 Poor Law Amendment Act

In 1834, the Poor Law Amendment Act was passed by Parliament. This was designed to reduce the cost of looking after the poor as it stopped money going to poor people (except in exceptional circumstances). Now if people wanted help, they had to go into a workhouse to get it. The poor were given clothes and food in the workhouse in exchange for several hours of manual labour each day. Families were split up inside the workhouse. People had to wear a type of uniform, follow strict rules and were on a bad diet of bread and watery soup. Conditions were made so terrible that only those people who desperately needed help would go there.



### Task 2: Explain:

1. Why is it so important that the rich help the poor?
2. Why does Scrooge refuse?
3. What is Scrooge's opinion about the poor?
4. What are Dickens' views on the Poor Law and what evidence do you have from the text to support your judgment?

**The Charity Men** – The Charity Men are a great opportunity to explore your knowledge of AO3 in your essay: *AO3: Show understanding of the relationships between texts and the contexts in which they were written*

**Task 3:** Note down the following concept and turn it into your own words:

*The Charity Men are contextual constructs, used by Dickens in order to shed light on Scrooge's already avaricious and misanthropic nature. Dickens uses contemporary cultural references that his readers would have recognised to convey the character of Scrooge. Their presence in the novella is an opportunity to explore Dickens' own political views – that Malthusian attitudes were controversial and more should be done in the name of equality. Scrooge is a construct that espouses a Malthusian viewpoint in his response to the charity workers.*

**Task 4:** How do the following quotations demonstrate the contemporary politics of Dickens' era?

"At this festive season of the year, Mr. Scrooge," said the gentleman, taking up a pen, "it is more than usually desirable that we should make some slight provision for the Poor and Destitute, who suffer greatly at the present time. Many thousands are in want of common necessaries; hundreds of thousands are in want of common comforts, sir."

"Are there no prisons?" asked Scrooge.

"Plenty of prisons," said the gentleman, laying down the pen again.

"And the Union workhouses?" demanded Scrooge. "Are they still in operation?"

"They are. Still," returned the gentleman, "I wish I could say they were not."

"The Treadmill and the Poor Law are in full vigour, then?" said Scrooge.

"Both very busy, sir."

"Oh! I was afraid, from what you said at first, that something had occurred to stop them in their useful course," said Scrooge. "I'm very glad to hear it."

## Essay practice: How is Scrooge portrayed in Stave One?

Recap: annotate the following quotation on your MWB – What do you understand about it?

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

Read the following extract and answer the following question:

“At this festive season of the year, Mr. Scrooge,” said the gentleman, taking up a pen, “it is more than usually desirable that we should make some slight provision for the Poor and destitute, who suffer greatly at the present time. Many thousands are in want of common necessities; hundreds of thousands are in want of common comforts, sir.”

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“Under the impression that they scarcely furnish Christian cheer of mind or body to the multitude,” returned the gentleman, “a few of us are endeavouring to raise a fund to buy the Poor some meat and drink, and means of warmth. We choose this time, because it is a time, of all others, when Want is keenly felt, and Abundance rejoices. What shall I put you down for?”

“Nothing!” Scrooge replied.

“You wish to be anonymous?”

“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. I help to support the establishments I have mentioned—they cost enough; and those who are badly off must go there.”

How does Dickens present Scrooge in this extract, and in the opening of ‘A Christmas Carol’?

**Example adapted thesis:** In his emblematic novella ‘A Christmas Carol,’ Dickens uses the cold-hearted and miserly Scrooge in to embody Malthusian economic principles, and to show the cruelty of the greedy Victorian upper classes. By depicting Scrooge’s journey of redemption, however, he celebrates the possibility of repentance and change, and the positive impact this can have on society.

**Plan:**

<i>What?</i>	<i>How?</i>	<i>Why?</i>
Scrooge as avaricious		
	Use of symbolism of the fire / Bob Cratchit as an emblem of poverty	
Scrooge as selfish and isolated		

**Example paragraph:**

Dickens contrasts his protagonist, Scrooge, with the very upbeat gentleman collecting for charity during the ‘festive’ season. Through the dialogue between the two, Dickens strengthens the contrast, and also uses the charity collector to portray his own views on the poor: ‘many thousands are in want of common necessities; hundreds of thousands are in want of common comforts,’ he relates. Dickens uses repetition and alliteration to emphasise how great the extent of the problem of poverty is, and the alliteration of ‘common comforts’ underlines the urgency of the issue. Scrooge’s string of rhetorical questions exposes his cold, uncaring nature: ‘are there no prisons... and the Union workhouses? Are they still in operation?’ His listing of other organisations that might help the poor shows Scrooge is evidently someone who puts his full trust in the state, such as the 1834 Poor Laws which first sent the workless to the workhouse. Scrooge’s Victorian mindset sees the poorest individuals as the ‘undeserving’ poor, and so, without attempting to further understand their difficulties, he refuses to give anything to help them. Dickens here challenges assumptions that the state is able to provide for the poor, along with encouraging his readers to feel more empathy for the poor. Throughout the early pages of ‘A Christmas Carol,’ Dickens exposes Scrooge as a humourless character, whose hatred of joy is even more obvious at Christmas.



### Phrase bank:

Create an embodiment of Malthusian principles/ typical affluent Victorian attitudes towards the poor

Create a contrast to emphasise the extent of Scrooge's transformation

Encourage the reader to reject Scrooge and the selfish, greedy values he embodies

Attacks the cruelty of the Poor Laws of 1834

## Stave One Knowledge Test

1. Who is dead at the start of the novel?
2. What relationship did he have to Marley?
3. Who visits Scrooge to wish him a Merry Christmas?
4. How does Scrooge respond?
5. What word does Scrooge respond with meaning 'nonsense!'?
6. Fill in the gaps: 'Oh! But he was a s\_\_\_\_\_, w\_\_\_\_\_, grasping, scraping, clutching, **covetous**, old s\_\_\_\_\_!'
7. What are these adjectives all linked to and what does this show?
8. Scrooge is described as 'solitary as an \_\_\_\_\_'
9. What does this suggest about Scrooge?
10. Who visits Scrooge and what are they raising money for?
11. What institutions does Scrooge ask about in response?

## Stave One – Marley's Ghost



Scrooge is visited by Jacob Marley's ghost

## Marley's Ghost – the beginning of a haunting

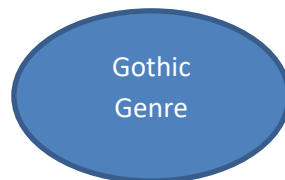
### Tier 2 / 3 Vocabulary

Gothic

(in literature) **something that is characterized by mystery, horror, and gloom** — especially in literature. Gothic literature combines the genres of romance and horror. Some famous writers of Gothic fiction include Charlotte Bronte, Mary Shelley and Edgar Allan Poe.

**Brain Dump:** What do you remember about the genre of The Gothic?

- Characteristics
- Settings
- Plot-types
- Language and structural techniques



*In the following extract, Scrooge gets to his front door in the foggy street and the door knocker changes to the face of Jacob Marley, his old business partner. Scrooge goes up to his rooms, checks them, and then locks himself in. He hears bells ringing.*

**Track and annotate:** How does Dickens utilise the Gothic theme to create a sense of significance in the appearance of Jacob Marley's face?



The yard was so dark that even Scrooge, who knew its every stone, was fain to grope with his hands. The fog and frost so hung about the black old gateway of the house, that it seemed as if the Genius of the Weather sat in mournful meditation on the threshold...

Marley's face. It was not in **impenetrable** shadow as the other objects in the yard were, but had a **dismal** light about it, like a bad lobster in a dark cellar. It was not angry or ferocious, but looked at Scrooge as Marley used to look: with ghostly spectacles turned up on its ghostly forehead. The hair was curiously stirred, as if by breath or hot air; and, though the eyes were wide open, they were perfectly motionless. That, and its livid colour, made it horrible; but its horror seemed to be in spite of the face and beyond its control, rather than a part of its own expression.

As Scrooge looked fixedly at this phenomenon, it was a knocker again.

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. But he put his hand upon the key he had relinquished, turned it sturdily, walked in, and lighted his candle.

He did pause, with a moment's irresolution, before he shut the door; and he did look cautiously behind it first, as if he half expected to be terrified with the sight of Marley's pigtail sticking out into the hall. But there was nothing on the back of the door, except the screws and nuts that held the knocker on, so he said "Pooh, pooh!" and closed it with a bang.

The sound resounded through the house like thunder. Every room above, and every cask in the wine-merchant's cellars below, appeared to have a separate peal of echoes of its own. Scrooge was not a man to be frightened by echoes. He fastened the door, and walked across the hall, and up the stairs; slowly too: trimming his candle as he went....

Sitting-room, bedroom, lumber-room. All as they should be. Nobody under the table, nobody under the sofa; a small fire in the grate; spoon and basin ready; and the little saucepan of gruel (Scrooge had a cold in his head) upon the hob. Nobody under the bed; nobody in the closet; nobody in his dressing-gown, which was hanging up in a suspicious attitude against the wall. Lumber-room as usual. Old fire-guard, old shoes, two fish-baskets, washing-stand on three legs, and a poker.

Quite satisfied, he closed his door, and locked himself in; double-locked himself in, which was not his custom. Thus secured against surprise, he took off his cravat; put on his dressing-gown and slippers, and his nightcap; and sat down before the fire to take his gruel...

After several turns, he sat down again. As he threw his head back in the chair, his glance happened to rest upon a bell, a disused bell, that hung in the room, and communicated for some purpose now forgotten with a chamber in the highest story of the building. It was with great astonishment, and with a strange, inexplicable dread, that as he looked, he saw this bell begin to swing. It swung so softly in the outset that it scarcely made a sound; but soon it rang out loudly, and so did every bell in the house.

### **Task 2:** Questions:

1. What is Scrooge's house like, and what does this reflect about him?
2. What does Dickens do to increase the tension and drama in the final part of the text here?
3. What actions show Scrooge is uneasy?
4. What sound alerts us to the ghost being about to appear?
5. What shows us that Scrooge is determined and strong-willed?
6. Why does Dickens emphasise that Scrooge is not a man who is 'frightened of echoes'?
7. What could darkness represent here?

**Extension:** what is ironic about this phrase?

### **Task 3:** Finish the sentences:

Dickens uses the.... depiction of Scrooge's house to reveal...

Dickens emphasises the darkness of Scrooge's house which could symbolise...

## Stave One – Marley’s regrets

Tier 2 / 3 Vocabulary	
regret (noun)	feel sad, repentant, or disappointed over (something that one has done or failed to do)
fettered (adjective)	restrained with chains or manacles, typically around the ankles

**Summary:** *Scrooge hears the bell, and then the clanking of chains and suddenly Marley’s ghost appears. It is covered with chains and keys and padlocks, all items associated with their business of money lending. Scrooge tries to explain the appearance of the ghost as ‘an undigested bit of beef, a blot of mustard, a crumb of cheese’ suggesting there is ‘more gravy’ than grave about the ghost. Marley’s ghost explains he is in torment because he only cared about money, and now he knows how wrong he was, telling Scrooge he should have cared about people. He tells Scrooge he will be visited by three more ghosts and offers Scrooge a glimpse of an invisible world, full of tormented ghosts who are suffering from being unable to help people who are in need – which they didn’t do when they were alive. Scrooge goes to bed and doesn’t want to think about the visit.*

**Re-read this passage and answer the questions below:**

1. Whose ghost has appeared?
2. Why is the ghost wearing a chain of ‘cashboxes, keys, padlocks’ etc? What does it show caused Marley’s fate?
3. What do these chains represent?
4. How does Scrooge try to explain this?
5. What does the ghost tell Scrooge will happen?

**Task One:** Key Ideas

<b><i>The tradition of the ghost story</i></b>	In Victorian England, it was a tradition to tell ghost stories at Christmas which could be why Dickens chooses this form.  <b>What impact may this form have had on the contemporary reader? How might it affect Dickens’ message?</b>
<b><i>The verbalisation of Dickens’ message to society</i></b>	Marley’s ghost verbalises Dickens’ message that caring for others is more important than money, especially when it shows Scrooge the other phantoms – revealing that Scrooge and potentially readers of the novella could also end up in the horrible torture of not being able to help those who need it.  <b>What other symbols and representations has Dickens’ utilised to convey his message?</b>

**Task Two:** Key Quotation Focus - Marley's 'fettered' ghost and the invisible spirit world – consequences of a selfish life

<p>Scrooge fell upon his knees, and clasped his hands before his face.</p> <p>"Mercy!" he said. "Dreadful <b>apparition</b>, why do you trouble me?"</p> <p>"Man of the worldly mind!" replied the Ghost, "do you believe in me or not?"</p> <p>"I do," said Scrooge. "I must. But why do spirits walk the earth, and why do they come to me?"</p> <p>"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.</p>	<p><i>How does Dickens portray Scrooge's fears here? Why do you think we see Scrooge at his weakest in these moments?</i></p>
<p>"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!"</p> <p>Again the spectre raised a cry, and shook its chain and wrung its shadowy hands.</p> <p>"You are <b>fettered</b>," said Scrooge, trembling. "Tell me why?"</p> <p>"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?"</p>	<p><i>How is Marley's Ghost expressing regret here? What is the purpose of Marley's chain and how is this conveyed through Dickens' imagery?</i></p>
<p>Scrooge followed to the window: desperate in his curiosity. He looked out.</p> <p>The air was filled with phantoms, wandering hither and thither in restless haste, and moaning as they went. Every one of them wore chains like Marley's Ghost; some few (they might be guilty governments) were linked together; none were free. Many had been personally known to Scrooge in their lives. He had been quite familiar with one old ghost, in a white waistcoat, with a monstrous iron safe attached to its ankle, who cried piteously at being unable to assist a wretched woman with an infant, whom it saw below, upon a door-step. The misery with them all was, clearly, that they sought to <b>interfere</b>, for good, in human matters, and had lost the power for ever.</p>	<p><i>How does Dickens rise out of the story to convey his political message here?</i></p>

## Stave One: How are ghosts and the supernatural portrayed in Stave One of the novella?

Tier 2 / 3 Vocabulary	
allegory	a story, poem, or picture that can be interpreted to reveal a hidden meaning, typically a moral or political one

### Example adapted thesis:

In his 'ghostly little book,' 'A Christmas Carol,' Dickens uses the supernatural as an allegory for the change and reformation needed for the Victorian upper classes to become selfless and benevolent. The ghosts that Dickens' protagonists meet guide him through the process of repentance and change, beginning with Marley's ghost in Stave One.

**Example paragraph:** - how is the following paragraph effective? Highlight aspects of the response that you can lift and utilise in your own answer.

Dickens uses the supernatural to highlight the consequences of Scrooge's actions. He portrays Scrooge's fear and astonishment in his 1843 novella 'A Christmas Carol' in his interactions with Marley's Ghost in this extract, as illustrated in his initial cry of 'mercy!' at the start of this passage. Scrooge's question, 'dreadful apparition, why do you trouble me?' evokes his terror at the ghost. Scrooge's questioning continues throughout the excerpt, expressing his confusion and desire to know more about the supernatural: 'but why do spirits walk the earth, and why do they come to me?' Scrooge is shocked and surprised by the sudden revelation of a parallel world he had not previously been aware of. The Ghost's physical appearance is particularly interesting to Scrooge, who has, earlier in the novella, seen the image of his dead friend's face in place of his mysteriously transformed doorknob, and he asks: 'you are fettered. Tell me why?' The Ghost's remark, using mainly monosyllabic words to emphasise the simplicity of the consequence, that 'I wear the chain I forged in life' reveals the supernatural consequences of the choices made in life, as Scrooge will go on to discover. In a society that was almost entirely, monoculturally Christian, Dickens' early readers would have been anxious, like Scrooge, to discover what lays beyond this life.

**Planning:**

<b>What</b>	<b>How (evidence)</b>	<b>Why</b>
Dickens uses the supernatural to highlight Marley's regret and therefore the dangers of selfishness/obsession with money		
Dickens uses the supernatural to signify the start of a change in Scrooge even at this early stage in the novella		

**Phrases to use:**

The ghosts guide Scrooge on a journey of redemption

The 'cash-boxes, keys, padlocks, ledgers, deeds, and heavy purses' of Marley's chains symbolise his greed and guilt

Harrowing consequences of our actions in life after death

Lasting impact of selfishness and greed



## Stave One Knowledge Check

### Stave One Knowledge Check:

1. What did the Poor Laws of 1834 create and why?
2. What does Scrooge ask the charity collector that links to this contextual information?
3. Why did Malthus believe poverty was inevitable?
4. What does Scrooge say which connects him to Malthusian principles?
5. Scrooge is described as 'solitary as an ...'
6. Who is dead at the beginning of the novella?
7. What weather is associated with Scrooge and why?
8. Which character contrasts directly with Scrooge?
9. Who are the three people/ groups who visit Scrooge in his office?
10. What does Scrooge think of Christmas?
11. Scrooge suggests to the charity collector that the poor should die to 'decrease the s... p...'
12. Who was Marley?
13. Where does Scrooge first see Marley's ghost?
14. How does he try to explain the ghost?
15. What is Marley's ghost's chains made from?
16. What do these chains represent?
17. What message is Dickens conveying through Marley's ghost?
18. What does Marley's ghost show to Scrooge and why?
19. Marley says these are the ghosts of 'g... g...'
20. Why is this a political point?

## Stave Two – the first of the spirits



Scrooge extinguishes the Ghost of Christmas Past

## Stave Two: The Ghost of Christmas Past

Tier 2 / 3 Vocabulary	
ethereal (adjective)	a story, poem, or picture that can be interpreted to reveal a hidden meaning, typically a moral or political one
luminescence (noun)	the emission of light by a substance as a result of a chemical reaction

**Summary:** *Scrooge wakes up and the bell of the church clock rings twelve times, even though Scrooge went to bed after 2am. He looks out the window and it is very cold and foggy, and nobody can be seen. He listens for the bell to chime 1am, the time Marley's ghost said his first visitor would arrive and just as the bell chimes, the ghost appears. The ghost looks like a child and an old man at the same time. It is the ghost of Scrooge's past. It has a strange, clear, bright jet of light emerging from its head which Scrooge cannot bear. It says it is there for Scrooge's welfare and reclamation and instructs Scrooge to come with it.*

**Task One:** Re-read this section in your copy of the text; below, highlight useful phrases and words and use them to annotate your text

*The Ghost of Christmas Past personifies what Scrooge has been in the past, and its appearance emphasises this past was long ago but that these were Scrooge's innocent, 'summer' years. The cap that it wears could reflect how Scrooge has suppressed this happy, innocent side to himself over recent decades.*

**Task Two:** Complete the following questions in your exercise book:

1. What is the ghost carrying, and what is on its robe that contrasts with this? Why?
2. What could this ghost represent?
3. What could the jet of light from the ghost's head represent?
4. Why do you think Scrooge wants the spirit to put its cap on, to cover the light from its head?
5. What elements of Scrooge does the light and brightness of the spirit contrast with?

**Task Three:** Exploring key quotations and messages:

Reference	What is suggests the ghost is like	Why Dickens did this
The ghost's voice is 'soft and gentle'		
The ghost exclaims 'What!' and 'Your welfare!' and 'Rise! Walk with me!'		

<p>'Its hair, which hung about its neck and down its back, was white as if with age; and yet the face had not a wrinkle in it, and the tenderest bloom was on the skin.'</p>		
<p>'It held a branch of fresh green holly in its hand; and, in singular <b>contradiction</b> of that wintry <b>emblem</b>, had its dress trimmed with summer flowers.'</p>		
<p>'from the crown of its head there sprung a bright clear jet of light'</p>		

**Task Four:** What does the first ghost represent? Finish the sentences:

Dickens may have used contradictory language to describe the Ghost of Christmas Past to...

Perhaps Dickens uses the Ghost of Christmas Past to reveal/ as a symbol of/ to represent...

Dickens uses the 'bright clear jet of light' to symbolise/ expose...

## Stave Two: Scrooge's childhood and Little Fan

**Summary:** *The Ghost of Christmas Past takes Scrooge to his childhood, when Scrooge had to spend Christmas at school with only his books for company. He remembers the carol singer he chased away from the office and regrets his actions. They see another Christmas where Scrooge is once again left at school for Christmas, but this time his sister Fan arrives to take him home, after persuading their father to let him return to the family. Scrooge responds emotionally to these memories, and we learn that Scrooge loved his sister, but she is now dead.*

**Task One: Extract focus track and annotate:** How Dickens establish Scrooge's change through the depiction of his childhood and Little Fan?



"Why, it's Ali Baba!" Scrooge exclaimed in ecstasy. "It's dear old honest Ali Baba! Yes, yes, I know! One Christmas time, when yonder solitary child was left here all alone, he did come, for the first time, just like that. Poor boy! And Valentine," said Scrooge, "and his wild brother, Orson; there they go! And what's his name, who was put down in his drawers, asleep, at the Gate of Damascus; don't you see him! And the Sultan's Groom turned upside down by the Genii; there he is upon his head! Serve him right. I'm glad of it. What business had he to be married to the Princess!"

To hear Scrooge expending all the earnestness of his nature on such subjects, in a most extraordinary voice between laughing and crying; and to see his heightened and excited face; would have been a surprise to his business friends in the city, indeed.

"There's the Parrot!" cried Scrooge. "Green body and yellow tail, with a thing like a lettuce growing out of the top of his head; there he is! Poor Robin Crusoe, he called him, when he came home again after sailing round the island. 'Poor Robin Crusoe, where have you been, Robin Crusoe?' The man thought he was dreaming, but he wasn't. It was the Parrot, you know. There goes Friday, running for his life to the little creek! Halloo! Hoop! Halloo!"

Then, with a rapidity of transition very foreign to his usual character, he said, in pity for his former self, "Poor boy!" and cried again.

"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."

"What is the matter?" asked the Spirit.

"Nothing," said Scrooge. "Nothing. There was a boy singing a Christmas Carol at my door last night. I should like to have given him something: that's all."

The Ghost smiled thoughtfully, and waved its hand: saying as it did so, "Let us see another Christmas!"

Scrooge's former self grew larger at the words, and the room became a little darker and more dirty. The panels shrunk, the windows cracked; fragments of plaster fell out of the ceiling, and the naked laths were shown instead; but how all this was brought about, Scrooge knew no more than you do. He only knew that

it was quite correct; that everything had happened so; that there he was, alone again, when all the other boys had gone home for the jolly holidays.

He was not reading now, but walking up and down despairingly. Scrooge looked at the Ghost, and with a mournful shaking of his head, glanced anxiously towards the door.

It opened; and 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."

"I have come to bring you home, dear brother!" said the child, clapping her tiny hands, and bending down to laugh. "To bring you home, home, home!"

"Home, little Fan?" returned the boy.

"Yes!" said the child, brimful of glee. "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! He spoke so gently to me one dear night when I was going to bed, that I was not afraid to ask him once more if you might come home; and he said Yes, you should; and sent me in a coach to bring you. And you're to be a man!" said the child, opening her eyes, "and are never to come back here; but first, we're to be together all the Christmas long, and have the merriest time in all the world."

"You are quite a woman, little Fan!" exclaimed the boy.

She clapped her hands and laughed, and tried to touch his head; but being too little, laughed again, and stood on tiptoe to embrace him. Then she began to drag him, in her childish eagerness, towards the door; and he, nothing loth to go, accompanied her.

### **Task Two:** Comprehension Questions:

1. In what ways was Scrooge's childhood happy, and in what ways was it unhappy? How does Dickens use language to illustrate this?
2. Who does he see when alone in the schoolroom? What does this show?
3. How does Scrooge feel about his sister?
4. How does Dickens use description in lines 29-33 to depict the setting vividly?
5. What moment shows Scrooge already begins to feel regret for his actions?

### **Task Three:** How is Fan characterised? Who does she contrast with and who is she similar to?

'darting in' 'childish eagerness' 'clapping her tiny hands'

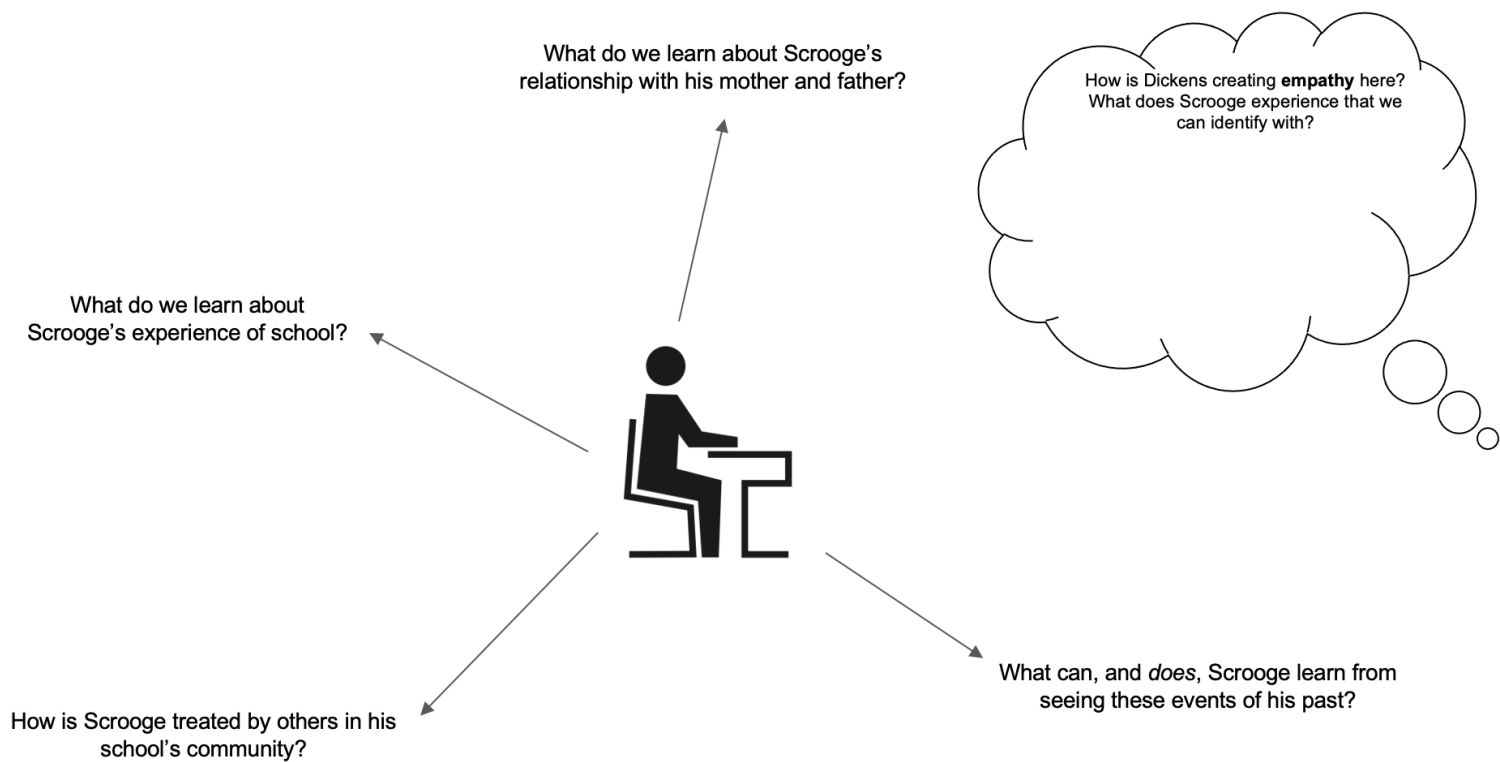
'brimful of glee'

**Task Four:** Finish the sentences:

Dickens characterises Fan as... to...

She is a direct contrast to... which has the effect of...

**Task Five:** How does Dickens create empathy and what does Scrooge experience that we can identify with?



## Stave Two: Mr Fezziwig



Mr Fezziwig's Ball



## Stave Two: Mr Fezziwig

Tier 2 / 3 Vocabulary	
benevolence (noun)	the quality of being well meaning; kindness
elation (noun)	great happiness and elation

**Summary:** *The Ghost shows Scrooge another Christmas, when he is an apprentice to Fezziwig. Fezziwig and his whole family throw a Christmas party where everyone has a wonderful time. The Ghost asks why the people are so grateful to Fezziwig when the party costs little money – prompting Scrooge to defend Fezziwig and explain how much happiness he has given. He also regrets how badly he treated Bob Cratchit.*

Task 1: Re –read the following section of the stave:

They went in. At sight of an old gentleman in a Welsh wig, sitting behind such a high desk, that if he had been two inches taller he must have knocked his head against the ceiling, Scrooge cried in great excitement:

“Why, it’s old Fezziwig! Bless his heart; it’s Fezziwig alive again!”

Old Fezziwig laid down his pen, and looked up at the clock, which pointed to the hour of seven. He rubbed his hands; adjusted his capacious waistcoat; laughed all over himself, from his shoes to his organ of benevolence; and called out in a comfortable, oily, rich, fat, **joyful** voice:

“Yo ho, there! Ebenezer! Dick!”

Scrooge’s former self, now grown a young man, came briskly in, accompanied by his fellow-’prentice.

“Dick Wilkins, to be sure!” said Scrooge to the Ghost. “Bless me, yes. There he is. He was very much attached to me, was Dick. Poor Dick! Dear, dear!”

“Yo ho, my boys!” said Fezziwig. “No more work to-night. Christmas Eve, Dick. Christmas, Ebenezer! Let’s have the shutters up,” cried old Fezziwig, with a sharp clap of his hands, “before a man can say Jack Robinson!”

You wouldn’t believe how those two fellows went at it! They charged into the street with the shutters—one, two, three—had ’em up in their places—four, five, six—barred ’em and pinned ’em—seven, eight, nine—and came back before you could have got to twelve, panting like race-horses.

“Hilli-ho!” cried old Fezziwig, skipping down from the high desk, with wonderful **agility**. “Clear away, my lads, and let’s have lots of room here! Hilli-ho, Dick! Chirrup, Ebenezer!”

Clear away! There was nothing they wouldn’t have cleared away, or couldn’t have cleared away, with old Fezziwig looking on. It was done in a minute. Every movable was packed off, as if it were dismissed from public life for evermore; the floor was swept and watered, the lamps were trimmed, fuel was heaped upon the fire; and the warehouse was as snug, and warm, and dry, and bright a ball-room, as you would desire to see upon a winter’s night.

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 anyhow. 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**.

"A small matter," said the Ghost, "to make these silly folks so full of gratitude."

"Small!" echoed Scrooge.

The Spirit signed to him to listen to the two apprentices, who were pouring out their hearts in praise of Fezziwig: and when he had done so, said,

"Why! Is it not? He has spent but a few pounds of your mortal money: three or four perhaps. Is that so much that he deserves this praise?"

"It isn't that," said Scrooge, heated by the remark, and speaking unconsciously like his former, not his latter, self. "It isn't that, Spirit. He has the power to render us happy or unhappy; to make our service light or burdensome; a pleasure or a toil. Say that his power lies in words and looks; in things so slight and insignificant that it is impossible to add and count 'em up: what then? The happiness he gives, is quite as great as if it cost a fortune."

He felt the Spirit's glance, and stopped.

"What is the matter?" asked the Ghost.

"Nothing particular," said Scrooge.

"Something, I think?" the Ghost insisted.

"No," said Scrooge, "No. I should like to be able to say a word or two to my clerk just now. That's all."

His former self turned down the lamps as he gave **utterance** to the wish; and Scrooge and the Ghost again stood side by side in the open air.

### Comprehension Questions:

1. What is the setting of the party like?
2. What do you think the purpose of the description of the attendees is?
3. Why does Dickens include this party scene – what message could he be linking to?
4. What type of person is Fezziwig?
5. How does Fezziwig contrast to Scrooge as a boss?
6. What realisation has Scrooge had about generosity?
7. Why do you think he wants to speak to his clerk? What is he realising?

### In your exercise book, finish the sentences:

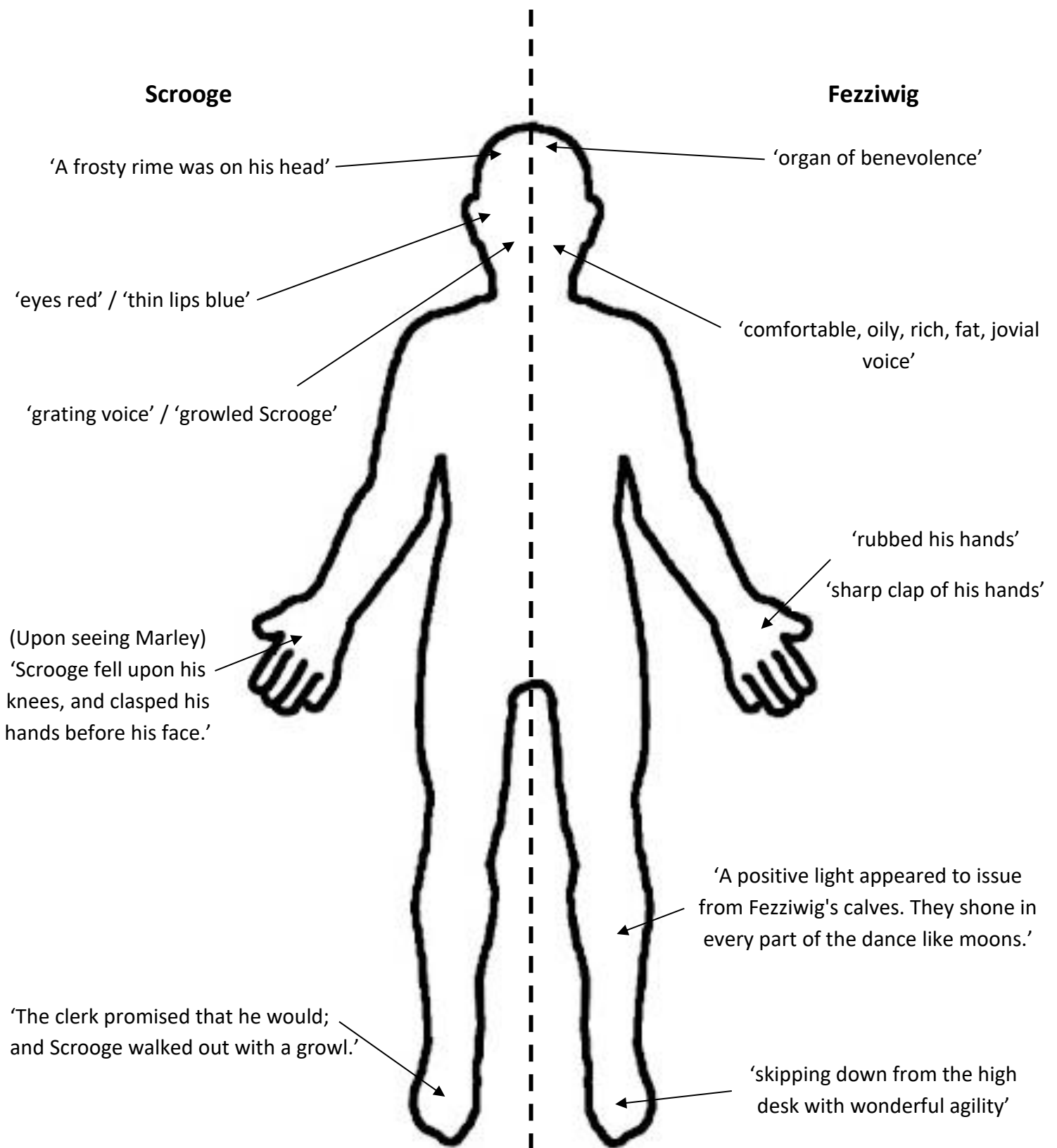
Dickens characterises Fezziwig as... to reveal...

Dickens creates a direct contrast between Scrooge and Fezziwig by... to expose...

Dickens uses the setting of Fezziwig's party to advocate for/ celebrate...

Dickens uses Scrooge's reaction to the Ghost's criticism of Fezziwig to reveal...

## Scrooge and Fezziwig's physicality



### Tasks:

1) Consider each quotation. Pick one word from each quotation and complete single word analysis in the space provided. Remember, your words should be to do with Scrooge and Fezziwig's physicality.

2) Using your notes, consider what Scrooge and Fezziwig are like physically, psychologically and emotionally. Summarise your comparisons in a short paragraph.

**CHALLENGE:** How are Scrooge and Fezziwig's psychological selves mirrored in their physicality?

## The first of the spirits: 'You are changed'

**Summary:** The Ghost shows Scrooge himself as a young man with his fiancé, Belle. His face already reveals a love of money. Belle breaks off the engagement because she says Scrooge loves money more than he loves her. The ghost shows Scrooge that Belle has married someone else and has a happy life and a loving family, which Scrooge is upset by. He presses the cap down on the Ghost's head to hide its light and is returned to his bedroom and falls asleep.

### Extract focus:

For again Scrooge saw himself. He was older now; a man in the prime of life. His face had not the harsh and rigid lines of later years; but it had begun to wear the signs of care and avarice. There was an eager, greedy, restless motion in the eye, which showed the passion that had taken root, and where the shadow of the growing tree would fall.

He was not alone, but sat by the side of a fair young girl in a mourning-dress: in whose eyes there were tears, which sparkled in the light that shone out of the Ghost of Christmas Past.

"It matters little," she said, softly. "To you, very little. Another idol has displaced me; and if it can cheer and comfort you in time to come, as I would have tried to do, I have no just cause to grieve."

"What Idol has displaced you?" he rejoined.

"A golden one."

"This is the even-handed dealing of the world!" he said. "There is nothing on which it is so hard as poverty; and there is nothing it professes to condemn with such severity as the pursuit of wealth!"

"You fear the world too much," she answered, gently. "All your other hopes have merged into the hope of being beyond the chance of its sordid reproach. I have seen your nobler aspirations fall off one by one, until the master-passion, Gain, engrosses you. Have I not?"

Spirit!" said Scrooge, "show me no more! Conduct me home. Why do you delight to torture me?"

"One shadow more!" exclaimed the Ghost.

"No more!" cried Scrooge. "No more. I don't wish to see it. Show me no more!"

But the relentless Ghost pinioned him in both his arms, and forced him to observe what happened next.

They were in another scene and place; a room, not very large or handsome, but full of comfort. Near to the winter fire sat a beautiful young girl, so like that last that Scrooge believed it was the same, until he saw her, now a **comely** matron, sitting opposite her daughter. The noise in this room was perfectly **tumultuous**, for there were more children there, than Scrooge in his **agitated** state of mind could count; and, unlike the celebrated herd in the poem, they were not forty children conducting themselves like one, but every child was conducting itself like forty. The consequences were **uproarious** beyond belief; but no one seemed to care; on the contrary, the mother and daughter laughed heartily, and enjoyed it very much; and the latter, soon beginning to mingle in the sports, got pillaged by the young brigands most ruthlessly. What would I not have given to be one of them! Though I never could have been so rude, no, no! I wouldn't for the wealth of all the world have crushed that braided hair, and torn it down; and for the precious little shoe, I wouldn't have plucked it off, God bless my soul! to save my life.

### Comprehension Questions:

1. Why is Scrooge's fiancée breaking up with him?
2. What drives Scrooge to being so obsessed with money?

3. What is Dickens showing about greed and money, and what this does to love?
4. Why does Belle call money an 'idol' (false god)?
5. What does the description 'eager, greedy, restless motion in the eye' show about his love for money and greed?
6. Why does Scrooge not want to see anything else? How is he feeling?
7. How does Belle's family life contrast with Scrooge's lifestyle?
8. What message is Dickens giving through this contrast?
9. What do Belle and her family represent?
10. At the end of this Stave, Scrooge attempts to cover the 'jet of light' from the spirit's head, but is not able to. Why could this be significant?

**Quotation annotations – I do:**

‘There was an eager, greedy, restless motion in the eye, which showed the passion that had taken root, and where the shadow of the growing tree would fall.’

**Quotation annotations – We do:**

‘Another idol has displaced me; and if it can cheer and comfort you in time to come, as I would have tried to do, I have no just cause.’

**Quotation annotations – You do:**

‘Spirit!’ said Scrooge, “show me no more! Conduct me home. Why do you delight to torture me?”

“One shadow more!” exclaimed the Ghost.

“No more!” cried Scrooge. “No more. I don’t wish to see it. Show me no more!”

## Progress Check: How does Dickens depict Christmas in this excerpt and in the novella?

**Task 1:** Annotate the question for the success criteria (AOs):

*How does Dickens depict Christmas in this excerpt and in the novella?*

But the relentless Ghost pinioned him in both his arms, and forced him to observe what happened next.

They were in another scene and place; a room, not very large or handsome, but full of comfort. Near to the winter fire sat a beautiful young girl, so like that last that Scrooge believed it was the same, until he saw her, now a comely matron, sitting opposite her daughter. The noise in this room was perfectly tumultuous, for there were more children there, than Scrooge in his agitated state of mind could count; and, unlike the celebrated herd in the poem, they were not forty children conducting themselves like one, but every child was conducting itself like forty. The consequences were uproarious beyond belief; but no one seemed to care; on the contrary, the mother and daughter laughed heartily, and enjoyed it very much; and the latter, soon beginning to mingle in the sports, got pillaged by the young brigands most ruthlessly. What would I not have given to be one of them! Though I never could have been so rude, no, no! I wouldn't for the wealth of all the world have crushed that braided hair, and torn it down; and for the precious little shoe, I wouldn't have plucked it off, God bless my soul! to save my life. As to measuring her waist in sport, as they did, bold young brood, I couldn't have done it; I should have expected my arm to have grown round it for a punishment, and never come straight again. And yet I should have dearly liked, I own, to have touched her lips; to have questioned her, that she might have opened them; to have looked upon the lashes of her downcast eyes, and never raised a blush; to have let loose waves of hair, an inch of which would be a keepsake beyond price: in short, I should have liked, I do confess, to have had the lightest licence of a child, and yet to have been man enough to know its value.

But now a knocking at the door was heard, and such a rush immediately ensued that she with laughing face and plundered dress was borne towards it the centre of a flushed and boisterous group, just in time to greet the father, who came home attended by a man laden with Christmas toys and presents. Then the shouting and the struggling, and the onslaught that was made on the defenceless porter! The scaling him with chairs for ladders to dive into his pockets, despoil him of brown-paper parcels, hold on tight by his cravat, hug him round his neck, pommel his back, and kick his legs in irrepressible affection! The shouts of wonder and delight with which the development of every package was received! The terrible announcement that the baby had been taken in the act of putting a doll's frying-pan into his mouth, and was more than suspected of having swallowed a fictitious turkey, glued on a wooden platter! The immense relief of finding this a false alarm! The joy, and gratitude, and ecstasy! They are all indescribable alike. It is enough that by degrees the children and their emotions got out of the parlour, and by one stair at a time, up to the top of the house; where they went to bed, and so subsided.

And now Scrooge looked on more attentively than ever, when the master of the house, having his daughter leaning fondly on him, sat down with her and her mother at his own fireside; and when he thought that such another creature, quite as graceful and as full of promise, might have called him father, and been a spring-time in the haggard winter of his life, his sight grew very dim indeed.

### **Example adapted thesis:**

In his allegorical novella, Dickens depicts contrasting views on and descriptions of Christmas to celebrate the potential of the holiday to promote charity and generosity – in particular, to encourage the rich and greedy Victorian upper classes to share their wealth and help others. Dickens could have been doing this to promote a more serious and lasting message of social responsibility all year round, which he intended to to ‘haunt the houses’ of his readers, to make ultimately help the vulnerable and tackle inequality.

### **Example paragraph:**

This passage evokes a merry, family Christmas, and serves as a sharp contrast to Scrooge’s own, previously stated, views on Christmas as a ‘humbug.’ Here, Dickens depicts a pleasant scene, with a ‘winter fire’ and ‘a comely matron’. Dickens’ language here reveals Scrooge’s youthful fiancée’s aging, as ‘matron’ implies responsibility and age; yet the adjective ‘comely’ tells the reader she is still as attractive as ever. Her large and loud family (‘the noise in this room was perfectly tumultuous’) again contrasts to Scrooge’s lonely experience, and conveys Dickens’ ideas of Christmas as a time for family. The noise in this excerpt is benevolent: it was ‘uproarious beyond belief; but no one seemed to care.’ Here, Christmas is revealed as a time of lax rules and joyous crowding. On the father’s arrival, the children make their way over to him, who is ‘laden with Christmas toys and presents.’ The plenty here starkly contrasts to Scrooge’s own miserly manner concerning the holiday season, and contrasts with his attitude to Christmas at the start of the novel. Dickens uses exclamations, to highlight a scene of joy and wonder: ‘the joy, and gratitude, and ecstasy!’ emphasising the joyfulness of the scene. Similarly, Fezziwig’s earlier ball evokes a sense of family, familiarity, and kindness in the Christmas spirit. It is clear that Victorian attitudes to Christmas were celebratory, and Scrooge’s disregard for them is abnormal.

### **Your response:**

1. Take ten minutes to annotate the extract, underlining 7-10 short quotations and labelling these with your ideas about techniques, context, and why those techniques are used or why that context is referred to.
2. Think about other places you have seen Christmas discussed or depicted in this novella. Is it the same, or different to this extract?
3. Some useful context for this extract: 1843 ‘A Christmas Carol’ is published, 1846 Christmas cards are first introduced

## **Writing:**

How does Dickens depict Christmas in this excerpt and in the novella?

Plan your response using each point (what):

**What** does Dickens have to say about Christmas through this particular extract?

**How** does Dickens achieve these impressions and ideas? How is language used?

**Why** does Dickens portray Christmas in this way?

1. Dickens depicts this Christmas as incredibly happy and joyous to represent a life Scrooge could have had, to show the terrible impacts of his selfish and greedy life.
2. Dickens uses Fezziwig's Christmas party as a way to highlight the generosity and kindness he thought Christmas should bring.
3. Dickens contrasts Scrooge's attitude to Christmas with Fred's and the charity collectors to reveal his miserable and harmful attitude to not just Christmas but also the poor, at the start of the novel.

## **Sentence starters:**

Dickens presents Christmas as... to expose/ reveal... / Dickens uses ..... Christmas to...

He describes... '...' which suggests/ implies/ highlights...

This contrasts with/ echoes/ foreshadows/ evokes...

Dickens could have been doing this to reveal/ expose/ celebrate...



### **Phrase bank:**

A joyous celebration full of good cheer and caring family

Creates a sharp contrast with

Scrooge's miserly, hateful attitude towards Christmas

Generosity and benevolence of employers

Possibility of spreading good cheer with limited funds

Advocate the spread of good will and kindness, especially by the more affluent

### **Stave Two Knowledge Check:**

1. What does the Ghost of Christmas Past look like?
2. What could this Ghost represent?
3. Where does the Ghost take Scrooge first?
4. How does Scrooge react to this?
5. Who was Fezziwig?
6. What does Fezziwig do for his employees that the Ghost shows Scrooge?
7. What realisation does this cause Scrooge to have?
8. Who was Scrooge's fiancée?
9. Why does Scrooge's fiancée break up with him?
10. She says another 'i....' has replaced her in Scrooge's eyes – what is the missing word, and what is she describing?
11. How does Scrooge react to seeing this scene?
12. What final scene does the spirit show him?
13. What does he try to do to the spirit at the end of the Stave?



The Ghost of Christmas Present

## Stave Three: The Second of the Three Spirits 1: 'I am the Ghost of Christmas Present.'

Tier 2 / 3 Vocabulary	
reverently (adverb)	with deep respect

**Summary:** Scrooge wakes before 1am and fearfully waits for the next Ghost, which is the Ghost of Christmas Present. It appears in the next room, surrounded by Christmas food and holding a torch of fire. They visit scenes around the city where the weather is bad, but people are full of joy. There is a sense of excess and celebration in the wealthy part of the city. People who can't afford their own ovens take their Christmas meals to be cooked at the baker, and Scrooge questions the reason for closing everything on Sundays.

**Task 1:** Re-read this section of the novella, up until 'passionate excitement'

**Task 2:** Questions:

1. What is the Ghost of Christmas present sitting on and surrounded by?
2. How could this challenge Malthusian ideas about poverty and food?
3. What does the Ghost of Christmas present look like, and why might this be significant?
4. How does Dickens present Christmas in the city, and what message could he be conveying?
5. How is Scrooge's reaction to this ghost different to the Ghost of Christmas Past and why might this be significant?

**Task 3:** Understanding the significance of the ghost:

The Ghost of Christmas Present personifies both spiritual and material generosity, and Dickens uses the Ghost to attack Malthusian ideas that there is not enough to go around in the world. He uses the Ghost to show Scrooge a variety of Christmas scenes in Victorian Britain, where people make the most of what they have, even in bleak circumstances. He also uses the Ghost as a mouthpiece to show the importance of education, and to argue ignorance is more dangerous than poverty.

**Finish the sentences:**

Dickens uses the Ghost of Christmas Present to embody... by....

Dickens uses the Ghost of Christmas Present to attack/ argue.. by...

#### Task 4: Close analysis of Scrooge's room:

Find and highlight the line which suggests this room is definitely Scrooge's. Why does Dickens want to draw our attention to this?

Find the word 'surprising'. What does it suggest about Scrooge's probable reaction?

Find the words 'living green'. Why is it important that these boughs are still alive? What does it represent/symbolise?

Find the words 'holly, mistletoe and ivy'. What might we usually associate with these plants? Why has Dickens mentioned them?

Find the line about 'mirrors'. What two reasons might there be for Dickens to include this?

It was his own room. There was no doubt about that. But it had undergone a surprising transformation. The walls and ceiling were so hung with living green, that it looked a perfect grove; from every part of which, bright gleaming berries glistened. The crisp leaves of holly, mistletoe, and ivy reflected back the light, as if so many little mirrors had been scattered there; and such a mighty blaze went roaring up the chimney, as that dull petrification of a hearth had never known in Scrooge's time, or Marley's, or for many and many a winter season gone. Heaped up on the floor, to form a kind of throne, were turkeys, geese, game, poultry, brawn, great joints of meat, sucking-pigs, long wreaths of sausages, mince-pies, plum-puddings, barrels of oysters, red-hot chestnuts, cherry-cheeked apples, juicy oranges, luscious pears, immense twelfth-cakes, and seething bowls of punch, that made the chamber dim with their delicious steam. In easy state upon this couch, there sat a jolly Giant, glorious to see; who bore a glowing torch, in shape not unlike Plenty's horn, and held it up, high up, to shed its light on Scrooge, as he came peeping round the door.

Highlight the list of food. What impression does this give of the room?

Now, underline some of the adjectives Dickens uses to describe the food. Why do you think he chose these adjectives in particular?

Find a line that describes the Ghost. What does it show about it?

Find a line which suggests the Ghost brings light with it. How does this relate to the other Ghosts?

Find the verb 'peeping'. What does this suggest about Scrooge's attitude towards the Ghost?

## Stave Three: The Second of the Three Spirits 2: ‘The Spirit... stopped to bless Bob Cratchit’s dwelling.’

Tier 2 / 3 Vocabulary	
microcosm	a community, place, or situation regarded as encapsulating in miniature the characteristics of something much larger
morality	principles concerning the distinction between right and wrong
virtuous	having or showing high moral standards

**Summary:** The Ghost takes Scrooge to the Cratchits’ home, where they have made an effort to make Christmas special despite their poverty. The family enjoy their meal even though there is not enough, and they raise a toast to Scrooge as the employer whose money has provided their feast. Mrs Cratchit finds this difficult as she does not like or respect Scrooge, and Scrooge is told Tiny Tim will die if the future does not change.

**Task 1:** Track the theme of **generosity and love** throughout the extract:

So Martha hid herself, and in came little Bob, the father, with at least three feet of comforter exclusive of the fringe, hanging down before him; and his threadbare clothes darned up and brushed, to look seasonable; and Tiny Tim upon his shoulder. Alas for Tiny Tim, he bore a little crutch, and had his limbs supported by an iron frame!

“Why, where’s our Martha?” cried Bob Cratchit, looking round.

“Not coming,” said Mrs. Cratchit.

“Not coming!” said Bob, with a sudden declension in his high spirits; for he had been Tim’s blood horse all the way from church, and had come home rampant. “Not coming upon Christmas Day!”

Martha didn’t like to see him disappointed, if it were only in joke; so she came out prematurely from behind the closet door, and ran into his arms, while the two young Cratchits hustled Tiny Tim, and bore him off into the wash-house, that he might hear the pudding singing in the copper.

“And how did little Tim behave?” asked Mrs. Cratchit, when she had rallied Bob on his credulity, and Bob had hugged his daughter to his heart’s content.

“As good as gold,” said Bob, “and better. Somehow he gets thoughtful, sitting by himself so much, and thinks the strangest things you ever heard. He told me, coming home, 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, who made lame beggars walk, and blind men see.”

Bob’s voice was tremulous when he told them this, and trembled more when he said that Tiny Tim was growing strong and hearty.

## Task 2: Questions:

1. Does money matter to the happiness of the Cratchits? Why/ why not?
2. How does their house contrast with Scrooge's?
3. Why does Dickens use 'tremulous' and 'trembled' when describing Bob's voice? What does he feel and how does this make the reader feel?

There never was such a goose. Bob said he didn't believe there ever was such a goose cooked. Its tenderness and flavour, size and cheapness, were the themes of universal admiration. Eked out by apple-sauce and mashed potatoes, it was a sufficient dinner for the whole family; indeed, as Mrs. Cratchit said with great delight (surveying one small atom of a bone upon the dish), they hadn't ate it all at last! Yet every one had had enough, and the youngest Cratchits in particular, were steeped in sage and onion to the eyebrows! But now, the plates being changed by Miss Belinda, Mrs. Cratchit left the room alone—too nervous to bear witnesses—to take the pudding up and bring it in.

Suppose it should not be done enough! Suppose it should break in turning out! Suppose somebody should have got over the wall of the back-yard, and stolen it, while they were merry with the goose—a supposition at which the two young Cratchits became livid! All sorts of horrors were supposed.

Hallo! A great deal of steam! The pudding was out of the copper. A smell like a washing-day! That was the cloth. A smell like an eating-house and a pastrycook's next door to each other, with a laundress's next door to that! That was the pudding! In half a minute Mrs. Cratchit entered—flushed, but smiling proudly—with the pudding, like a speckled cannon-ball, so hard and firm, blazing in half of half-a-quarter of ignited brandy, and bedight with Christmas holly stuck into the top

## Task 3: Questions:

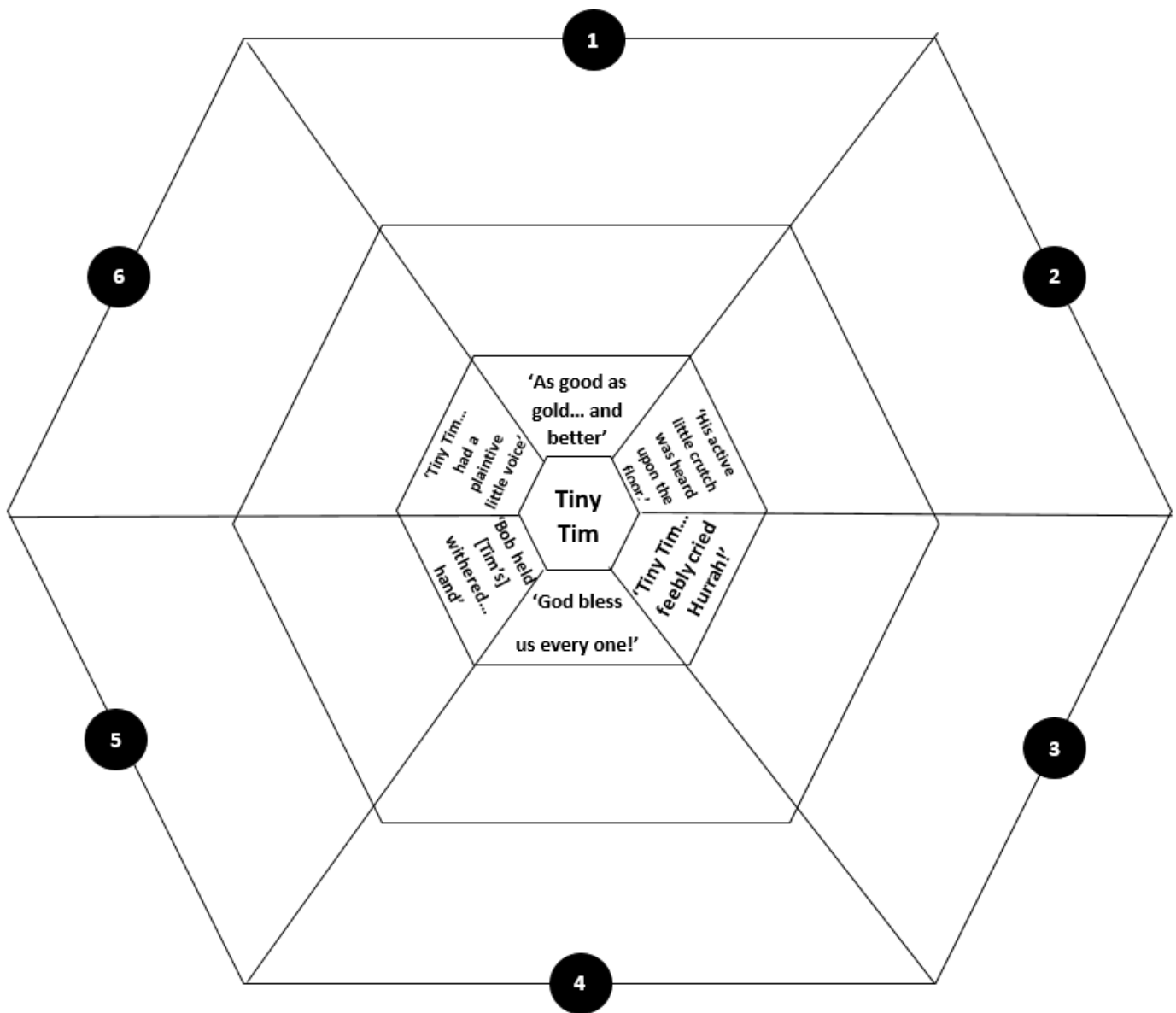
1. What does the ghost predict will happen to Tiny Tim?
2. Whose words are repeated from earlier in the novella on line 45? Why?
3. How does Scrooge react to this?
4. Is Scrooge changing? Why?

## Key character – Tiny Tim:

It is important to note the context of Tiny Tim s a disabled child – in the Victorian era, society valued those who could contribute physically. People who were disabled were pitied and had to rely on charity. Tiny Tim's 'little crutch' and 'iron frame' both support and trap him – what could this be reflecting?



**Task 4:** What is the significance of Tiny Tim?



## Stave Three: The Second of the Three Spirits 3: 'He loses some pleasant moments.'

**Summary:** The Ghost takes Scrooge to see a variety of people and places where Christmas is celebrated, and everyone is joyful and making the best of their situations, despite bleak settings and circumstances. The tour ends at Fred's house: he and his family are having fun at Christmas. They discuss Scrooge and decide the only person he harms by being so mean is himself. Scrooge joins in with their games even though they cannot see or hear him. They drink a toast to Scrooge in parallel to the Cratchits, as Scrooge has given them cause for laughter.

**Extract Focus:** Christmas at Fred's and parallel scenes

**Task 1:** Track the use of contrast between bleak settings and the joyful characters within – why does Dickens utilise this?

"Ha, ha!" laughed Scrooge's nephew. "Ha, ha, ha!"

If you should happen, by any unlikely chance, to know a man more blest in a laugh than Scrooge's nephew, all I can say is, I should like to know him too. Introduce him to me, and I'll **cultivate** his **acquaintance**.

It is a fair, even-handed, noble adjustment of things, that while there is infection in disease and sorrow, there is nothing in the world so irresistibly contagious as laughter and good-humour. When Scrooge's nephew laughed in this way: holding his sides, rolling his head, and twisting his face into the most extravagant contortions: Scrooge's niece, by marriage, laughed as heartily as he. And their assembled friends being not a bit behindhand, roared out lustily.

"Ha, ha! Ha, ha, ha, ha!"

"He said that Christmas was a humbug, as I live!" cried Scrooge's nephew. "He believed it too!"

"More shame for him, Fred!" said Scrooge's niece, **indignantly**. Bless those women; they never do anything by halves. They are always in earnest.

She was very pretty: exceedingly pretty. With a dimpled, surprised-looking, capital face; a ripe little mouth, that seemed made to be kissed—as no doubt it was; all kinds of good little dots about her chin, that melted into one another when she laughed; and the sunniest pair of eyes you ever saw in any little creature's head. Altogether she was what you would have called provoking, you know; but satisfactory, too. Oh, perfectly satisfactory.

"He's a comical old fellow," said Scrooge's nephew, "that's the truth: and not so pleasant as he might be. However, his offences carry their own punishment, and I have nothing to say against him."

"I'm sure he is very rich, Fred," hinted Scrooge's niece. "At least you always tell me so."

"What of that, my dear!" said Scrooge's nephew. "His wealth is of no use to him. He don't do any good with it. He don't make himself comfortable with it. He hasn't the satisfaction of thinking—ha, ha, ha!—that he is ever going to benefit US with it."

"I have no patience with him," observed Scrooge's niece. Scrooge's niece's sisters, and all the other ladies, expressed the same opinion.



“Oh, I have!” said Scrooge’s nephew. “I am sorry for him; I couldn’t be angry with him if I tried. Who suffers by his ill whims! Himself, always. Here, he takes it into his head to dislike us, and he won’t come and dine with us. What’s the consequence? He don’t lose much of a dinner.”

“Indeed, I think he loses a very good dinner,” interrupted Scrooge’s niece. Everybody else said the same, and they must be allowed to have been **competent** judges, because they had just had dinner; and, with the dessert upon the table, were clustered round the fire, by lamplight.

“Well! I’m very glad to hear it,” said Scrooge’s nephew, “because I haven’t great faith in these young housekeepers. What do you say, Topper?”

Topper had clearly got his eye upon one of Scrooge’s niece’s sisters, for he answered that a bachelor was a wretched outcast, who had no right to express an opinion on the subject. Whereat Scrooge’s niece’s sister—the plump one with the lace tucker: not the one with the roses—blushed.

“Do go on, Fred,” said Scrooge’s niece, clapping her hands. “He never finishes what he begins to say! He is such a ridiculous fellow!”

### Questions:

1. Who is being talked about at Fred’s Christmas?
2. What does Fred conclude about his uncle?
3. How does Dickens create a contrast between Fred and Scrooge? Give one quotation to show this
4. What message about Christmas could Dickens be giving in these pages?
5. This scene is a parallel to Christmas with the Cratchits – how does it differ and how is it similar?

### Finish the sentences in your exercise book:

Dickens uses the parallel scenes of Christmas celebrations at the Cratchits’ house and Fred’s to advocate/celebrate...

Dickens describes Fred ‘holding his sides, rolling his head, and twisting his face into the most extravagant contortions’ in his fit of laughter when the Ghost of Christmas Present takes Scrooge to observe Fred’s Christmas.

The verbs ‘holding’ ‘rolling’ and ‘twisting’ imply...

Dickens draws a direct contrast between... and ... to...

## Progress Check: How does Dickens present the Cratchit family?

### Recap:

Annotate the quotation from Scrooge's nephew with all your ideas about it:

"His wealth is of no use to him. He don't do any good with it. He don't make himself comfortable with it."

Read the excerpt below. You will be answering the question below it:

In this part of the novella, the Ghost of Christmas Present takes Scrooge to visit Bob Cratchit's house.

Then up rose Mrs Cratchit, Cratchit's wife, dressed out but poorly in a twice-turned gown, but brave in ribbons, which are cheap and make a goodly show for sixpence; and she laid the cloth, assisted by Belinda Cratchit, second of her daughters, also brave in ribbons; while Master Peter Cratchit plunged a fork into the saucepan of potatoes, and getting the corners of his monstrous shirt collar (Bob's private property, conferred upon his son and heir in honour of the day) into his mouth, rejoiced to find himself so gallantly attired, and yearned to show his linen in the fashionable Parks. And now two smaller Cratchits, boy and girl, came tearing in, screaming that outside the baker's they had smelt the goose, and known it for their own; and basking in luxurious thoughts of sage and onion, these young Cratchits danced about the table, and exalted Master Peter Cratchit to the skies, while he (not proud, although his collars nearly choked him) blew the fire, until the slow potatoes bubbling up, knocked loudly at the saucepan-lid to be let out and peeled.

"What has ever got your precious father then?" said Mrs Cratchit. "And your brother, Tiny Tim; And Martha warn't as late last Christmas Day by half-an-hour."

"Here's Martha, mother," said a girl, appearing as she spoke.

"Here's Martha, mother!" cried the two young Cratchits. "Hurrah! There's such a goose, Martha!"

"Why, bless your heart alive, my dear, how late you are!" said Mrs Cratchit, kissing her a dozen times, and taking off her shawl and bonnet for her with officious zeal.

"We'd a deal of work to finish up last night," replied the girl, "and had to clear away this morning, mother."

"Well. Never mind so long as you are come," said Mrs Cratchit. "Sit ye down before the fire, my dear, and have a warm, Lord bless ye."

**Task:** Annotate the question for the AOs:

*Starting with this extract, how does Dickens present the Cratchit family?*

### Example Paragraph:

Dickens presents the Cratchit family as joyful and happy, despite the hardships they face. He uses verbs such as 'tearing' and 'screaming' to show how excitable the family and children especially are, as they run around excited for Christmas. He also uses personification of the food, such as the potatoes which 'knocked loudly' on the lid of the pan to reflect their lively and joyous attitudes. This is in spite of their poverty – which is hinted at in Mrs Cratchit's clothes as she was 'dressed out but poorly' and is 'brave' in her ribbons, suggesting she is making the most of a difficult situation. Dickens could be doing this to show that, with the positive attitude the Cratchit's have and the evident care and love they have for each other, they are able to ensure any hardship and still be cheerful. By portraying their Christmas in such depth and their caring attitudes, such as when Mrs Cratchit says 'Lord bless ye' to her daughter, Dickens humanises this working class family, possibly aiming to make readers aware of the real hardship the working class endure, to convey his message that poverty blighted too many childhoods and could be helped with some charitable endeavours of the wealthy.

### Your response:

- Take **ten minutes** to annotate the extract, underlining 7-10 **short quotations** and labelling these with your ideas about **techniques**, **context**, and **why** those techniques are used or why that context is referred to.
- Think about other places the Cratchit family is presented in the novel

What	How	Why
Dickens uses the Cratchits to humanise the working class.		
Dickens presents the Cratchits as hard-working to challenge Victorian assumptions about the poor.		

Dickens presents the Cratchits as warm and loving to contrast with Scrooge to criticise the Malthusian principles which he embodies.		
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**Writing:**

**How does Dickens present the Cratchit family?**

Begin with your adapted core thesis, followed by three full paragraphs and a conclusion.

**Sentence starters:**

Dickens uses the Cratchit family to... by...

He emphasises/ highlights their...

They are described as... '...'/ Mrs/ Mr Cratchit says '...'

Dickens's use of... suggests/ implies...

This echoes/ links to...

Perhaps Dickens could be...

Alternatively...

Dickens could be doing this to...

**Phrases to use:**

Challenge Scrooge's Malthusian principles

Face of the vulnerable working classes

Embody the loving, caring family values that directly contrast with Scrooge's lifestyle

Attack the neglect and disregard towards the poor by the most affluent in Victorian society



*Ignorance and Want*

## Stave Three: The Second of the Three Spirits: 'Want and Ignorance'

Tier 2 / 3 Vocabulary	
depraved	morally corrupt; wicked
emblematic	serving as a symbol of a particular quality or concept; symbolic

**Summary:** The Ghost shows Scrooge two children called Ignorance and Want, who he claims have been created by the society Scrooge lives in. The Ghost says they are both bad, but Ignorance is more dangerous than Want. At the end of the Stave the Ghost disappears and the next visitor appears.

**Extract Focus:** Ignorance and Want

**Task 1:** Track Dickens' warning through the constructs of 'Ignorance' and 'Want'

"Are spirits' lives so short?" asked Scrooge.

"My life upon this globe, is very brief," replied the Ghost. "It ends to-night."

"To-night!" cried Scrooge.

"To-night at midnight. Hark! The time is drawing near."

The chimes were ringing the three quarters past eleven at that moment.

"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.

"Oh, Man! look here. Look, look, down here!" exclaimed the Ghost.

They were a boy and girl. Yellow, meagre, ragged, scowling, wolfish; but prostrate, too, in their humility. 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 into 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 wonderful creation, has monsters half so horrible and dread.

Scrooge started back, appalled. Having them shown to him in this way, he tried to say they were fine children, but the words choked themselves, rather than be parties to a lie of such enormous magnitude.

"Spirit! are they yours?" Scrooge could say no more.

"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, unless the writing be erased. Deny it!" cried the Spirit, stretching out its hand towards the city. "Slander those who tell it ye! Admit it for your factious purposes, and make it worse. And bide the end!"

"Have they no refuge or resource?" cried Scrooge.

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

The bell struck twelve.

Scrooge looked about him for the Ghost, and saw it not. As the last stroke ceased to vibrate, he remembered the prediction of old Jacob Marley, and lifting up his eyes, beheld a solemn Phantom, draped and hooded, coming, like a mist along the ground, towards him.

**Task 2:** Questions:

1. How do the children 'Ignorance' and 'Want' look? Write a quotation for each
2. What do they symbolise?
3. What message could Dickens be conveying about education?
4. How might man have 'created' 'ignorance' and 'want'?
5. Whose words does the ghost repeat? Why is this effective?
6. Why does Dickens end this chapter on such a disturbing image?

**Task 3:** Dickens' political views around disadvantage:

Dickens believed that only through education could the cycle of poverty could be broken. Through allowing poor people better access to well-paid jobs and by giving them the confidence and knowledge to progress in life, Dickens believed that education was the route out of crime and despair. He persuaded his friend, the wealthy Angela Burdett-Couts, to provide financial support for Ragged Schools.

**Respond:** How does Dickens think poverty can be tackled? How does this align with other texts you have studied in your English Literature GCSE?

**Task 4: Quotation annotation:**

**‘wretched, abject, frightful, hideous,  
miserable’**

**‘Yellow, meagre, ragged, scowling, wolfish’**

1. What are the connotations of each word?
2. What tone/atmosphere do the words create?
3. Are there any audio features in these words that control the way you read?
4. Overall, what do you think are the ‘big ideas’ from this section of the text?





**Task 5: Analyse:** Starting with this extract, how does Dickens present the issue of poverty? Write an adapted thesis and one What, How, Why paragraph in your exercise book.

**Thesis:**

In his allegorical novella, Dickens uses... to challenge...

He advocates for... through...

**Paragraph:**

Dickens uses the disturbing image of... to attack...

The children are described as '...' which suggests...

This echoes...

Dickens also draws a contrast with...

Perhaps Dickens could be...

**Phrase bank:**

Attacks the neglect of the vulnerable impoverished population

Advocates for social reform to ensure the working classes have access to education

Disturbing description of decay

Emotive depiction of malnourished children

Emphasises the role of an unequal society and selfish upper classes in creating and perpetuating poverty



The last of the spirits

## Stave Four: The Last of the Spirits 1: 'I fear you more than any spectre I have seen.'

**Summary:** The Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come appears as the most sinister spirit so far. It does not speak, but points the way, showing Scrooge scenes from the future. Business people in the city discuss a colleague who has died, but make it clear they do not care about his death. Thieves meet to sell items they have stolen from the dead man. The Ghost tries to make Scrooge look at the face of the dead man, but he says that he cannot. A young couple are given hope that they no longer have to repay a loan because this man is dead.

**Task: Extract focus:** track the portrayal of the Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come

The Phantom slowly, gravely, silently, approached. When it came near him, 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 onward 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 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!"

**Questions:**

1. How does this ghost look different to the last ghost? What does this suggest?
2. Why is the ghost silent?
3. How is Scrooge's response different to the previous ghosts?

Quiet and dark, beside him stood the Phantom, with its outstretched hand. When he roused himself from his thoughtful quest, he fancied from the turn of the hand, and its situation in reference to himself, that the Unseen Eyes were looking at him keenly. It made him shudder, and feel very cold.

They left the busy scene, and went into an obscure part of the town, where Scrooge had never penetrated before, although he recognised its situation, and its bad repute. 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 stragglng streets; and the whole quarter reeked with crime, with filth, and misery.

Far in this den of infamous resort, there was a low-browed, beetling shop, below a pent-house roof, where iron, old rags, bottles, bones, and greasy offal, were bought. Upon the floor within, were piled up heaps of rusty keys, nails, chains, hinges, files, scales, weights, and refuse iron of all kinds. Secrets that few would like to scrutinise were bred and hidden in mountains of unseemly rags, masses of corrupted fat, and sepulchres of bones. Sitting in among the wares he dealt in, by a charcoal stove, made of old bricks, was a grey-haired rascal, nearly seventy years of age; who had screened himself from the cold air without, by a frousy curtaining of miscellaneous tatters, hung upon a line; and smoked his pipe in all the luxury of calm retirement.

**Questions:**

1. How does Dickens hint at Scrooge's future in these pages?
2. How does Dickens use language to suggest the darker, immoral underside of London?
3. What does Dickens want us to feel about the people we meet here?

Scrooge listened to this dialogue in horror. As they sat grouped about their spoil, in the scanty light afforded by the old man's lamp, he viewed them with a detestation and disgust, which could hardly have been greater, though they had been obscene demons, marketing the corpse itself.

"Ha, ha!" laughed the same woman, when old Joe, producing a flannel bag with money in it, told out their several gains upon the ground. "This is the end of it, you see! He frightened every one away from him when he was alive, to profit us when he was dead! Ha, ha, ha!"

"Spirit!" said Scrooge, shuddering from head to foot. "I see, I see. The case of this unhappy man might be my own. My life tends that way, now. Merciful Heaven, what is this!"

He recoiled in terror, for the scene had changed, and now he almost touched a bed: a bare, uncurtained bed: on which, beneath a ragged sheet, there lay a something covered up, which, though it was dumb, announced itself in awful language.

The room was very dark, too dark to be observed with any accuracy, though Scrooge glanced round it in obedience to a secret impulse, anxious to know what kind of room it was. A pale light, rising in the outer air, fell straight upon the bed; and on it, plundered and bereft, unwatched, unwept, uncared for, was the body of this man.

Scrooge glanced towards the Phantom. Its steady hand was pointed to the head. The cover was so carelessly adjusted that the slightest raising of it, the motion of a finger upon Scrooge's part, would have disclosed the face. He thought of it, felt how easy it would be to do, and longed to do it; but had no more power to withdraw the veil than to dismiss the spectre at his side.

Oh cold, cold, rigid, dreadful Death, set up thine altar here, and dress it with such terrors as thou hast at thy command: for this is thy dominion! But of the loved, revered, and honoured head, thou canst not turn one hair to thy dread purposes, or make one feature odious. It is not that the hand is heavy and will fall down when released; it is not that the heart and pulse are still; but that the hand was open, generous, and true; the heart brave, warm, and tender; and the pulse a man's. Strike, Shadow, strike! And see his good deeds springing from the wound, to sow the world with life immortal!

No voice pronounced these words in Scrooge's ears, and yet he heard them when he looked upon the bed. He thought, if this man could be raised up now, what would be his foremost thoughts? Avarice, hard-dealing, griping cares? They have brought him to a rich end, truly.

1. What has been stolen and by whom? How do they justify their theft?
2. What is the impact of the prefix 'un-' in the sentence on line 65-66?
3. What is Dickens saying people should/ should not do with their money?
4. What realisation does Scrooge come to?

**Task 2:** Note down the key ideas in your own words:

The Ghost of Christmas yet to come is the most sinister and the most mysterious figure – reflecting the fact that the future is uncertain and depends on what our present actions are. It shows Scrooge what will happen if he does not change his ways. Dickens also uses it to personify death, which is inevitable and terrifying for all humans. Its hidden features could reflect the unknown details of death until it strikes, and the ghost does not wait for Scrooge – just as time does not wait or stop for anyone.

### **Task 3: Quotation annotations:**

#### **We Do:**

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.

1. How does Dickens use the symbol of darkness?
2. What is the ghost associated with?
3. Why does this ghost look like this?

#### **You do:**

A pale light, rising in the outer air, fell straight upon the bed; and on it, plundered and bereft, unwatched, unwept, uncared for, was the body of this man.

## Stave Four: The Last of the Spirits 2: 'My little, little child!'

**Summary:** The Ghost shows Scrooge a version of the future where Tiny Tim has died. The family are distraught and Fred has offered to help if he can. They all resolve to remember the goodness of Tiny Tim and take comfort from it. Scrooge realises that he must face the part he played in the scenes the ghost has shown him, and asks the Ghost who the dead man was. He sees a different man working in his office but still doesn't understand the significance until he is shown a gravestone with his name on it and sees that he is the dead man – he then vows to change.

**Task: Extract Focus:** Track the symbolism of Tiny Tim's death and Scrooge's gravestone

Quiet. Very quiet. The noisy little Cratchits were as still as statues in one corner, and sat looking up at Peter, who had a book before him. The mother and her daughters were engaged in sewing. But surely they were very quiet!

“And He took a child, and set him in the midst of them.”

Where had Scrooge heard those words? He had not dreamed them. The boy must have read them out, as he and the Spirit crossed the threshold. Why did he not go on?

The mother laid her work upon the table, and put her hand up to her face.

“The colour hurts my eyes,” she said.

The colour? Ah, poor Tiny Tim!

“They're better now again,” said Cratchit's wife. “It makes them weak by candle-light; and I wouldn't show weak eyes to your father when he comes home, for the world. It must be near his time.”

“Past it rather,” Peter answered, shutting up his book. “But I think he has walked a little slower than he used, these few last evenings, mother.”

They were very quiet again. At last she said, and in a steady, cheerful voice, that only faltered once:

“I have known him walk with—I have known him walk with Tiny Tim upon his shoulder, very fast indeed.”

“And so have I,” cried Peter. “Often.”

“And so have I,” exclaimed another. So had all.

“But he was very light to carry,” she resumed, intent upon her work, “and his father loved him so, that it was no trouble: no trouble. And there is your father at the door!”

She hurried out to meet him; and little Bob in his comforter—he had need of it, poor fellow—came in. His tea was ready for him on the hob, and they all tried who should help him to it most. Then the two young Cratchits got upon his knees and laid, each child a little cheek, against his face, as if they said, “Don't mind it, father. Don't be grieved!”

Bob was very cheerful with them, and spoke pleasantly to all the family. He looked at the work upon the table, and praised the industry and speed of Mrs. Cratchit and the girls. They would be done long before Sunday, he said.

“Sunday! You went to-day, then, Robert?” said his wife.

“Yes, my dear,” returned Bob. “I wish you could have gone. It would have done you good to see how green a place it is. But you’ll see it often. I promised him that I would walk there on a Sunday. My little, little child!” cried Bob. “My little child!”

He broke down all at once. He couldn’t help it. If he could have helped it, he and his child would have been farther apart perhaps than they were.

He left the room, and went up-stairs into the room above, which was lighted cheerfully, and hung with Christmas. There was a chair set close beside the child, and there were signs of some one having been there, lately. Poor Bob sat down in it, and when he had thought a little and composed himself, he kissed the little face. He was reconciled to what had happened, and went down again quite happy.

### **Questions:**

1. How does Dickens evoke the sadness of Tiny Tim’s death here?
2. How does this contrast to Scrooge’s death?
3. How does the scene contrast to the Christmas scene at the Cratchit’s?
4. When was Tiny Tim’s death foreshadowed?
5. Why is the word ‘little’ repeated? What does it make us feel?

“It’s just as likely as not,” said Bob, “one of these days; though there’s plenty of time for that, my dear. But however and whenever we part from one another, I am sure we shall none of us forget poor Tiny Tim—shall we—or this first parting that there was among us?”

“Never, father!” cried they all.

“And I know,” said Bob, “I know, my dears, that when we recollect how patient and how mild he was; although he was a little, little child; we shall not quarrel easily among ourselves, and forget poor Tiny Tim in doing it.”

“No, never, father!” they all cried again.

“I am very happy,” said little Bob, “I am very happy!”

Mrs. Cratchit kissed him, his daughters kissed him, the two young Cratchits kissed him, and Peter and himself shook hands. Spirit of Tiny Tim, thy childish essence was from God!

“Spectre,” said Scrooge, “something informs me that our parting moment is at hand. I know it, but I know not how. Tell me what man that was whom we saw lying dead?”

The Ghost of Christmas Yet To Come conveyed him, as before—though at a different time, he thought: indeed, there seemed no order in these latter visions, save that they were in the Future—into the resorts



of business men, but showed him not himself. Indeed, the Spirit did not stay for anything, but went straight on, as to the end just now desired, until besought by Scrooge to tarry for a moment.

“This court,” said Scrooge, “through which we hurry now, is where my place of occupation is, and has been for a length of time. I see the house. Let me behold what I shall be, in days to come!”

The Spirit stopped; the hand was pointed elsewhere.

“The house is yonder,” Scrooge exclaimed. “Why do you point away?”

The inexorable finger underwent no change.

Scrooge hastened to the window of his office, and looked in. It was an office still, but not his. The furniture was not the same, and the figure in the chair was not himself. The Phantom pointed as before.

He joined it once again, and wondering why and whither he had gone, accompanied it until they reached an iron gate. He paused to look round before entering.

A churchyard. Here, then; the wretched man whose name he had now to learn, lay underneath the ground. It was a worthy place. Walled in by houses; overrun by grass and weeds, the growth of vegetation's death, not life; choked up with too much burying; fat with repleted appetite. A worthy place!

The Spirit stood among the graves, and pointed down to One. He advanced towards it trembling. The Phantom was exactly as it had been, but he dreaded that he saw new meaning in its solemn shape.

“Before I draw nearer to that stone to which you point,” said Scrooge, “answer me one question. Are these the shadows of the things that Will be, or are they shadows of things that May be, only?”

Still the Ghost pointed downward to the grave by which it stood.

“Men's courses will foreshadow certain ends, to which, if persevered in, they must lead,” said Scrooge. “But if the courses be departed from, the ends will change. Say it is thus with what you show me!”

The Spirit was immovable as ever.

Scrooge crept towards it, trembling as he went; and following the finger, read upon the stone of the neglected grave his own name, Ebenezer Scrooge.

“Am I that man who lay upon the bed?” he cried, upon his knees.

The finger pointed from the grave to him, and back again.

“No, Spirit! Oh no, no!”

The finger still was there.

“Spirit!” he cried, tight clutching at its robe, “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!”

For the first time the hand appeared to shake.

“Good Spirit,” he pursued, as down upon the ground he fell before it: “Your nature intercedes for me, and pities me. Assure me that I yet may change these shadows you have shown me, by an altered life!”

The kind hand trembled.

“I will honour Christmas in my heart, and try to keep it all the year. I will live in the Past, the 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!”

In his agony, he caught the spectral hand. It sought to free itself, but he was strong in his entreaty, and detained it. The Spirit, stronger yet, repulsed him.

Holding up his hands in a last prayer to have his fate reversed, he saw an alteration in the Phantom's hood and dress. It shrunk, collapsed, and dwindled down into a bedpost.

### **Questions:**

1. How does Dickens build up tension in this stave?
2. When does Scrooge experience an epiphany (sudden realisation)?
3. How does Dickens evoke Scrooge's changing character in Stave Four?
4. How does Scrooge's grave contrast to Tiny Tim's?
5. How might Tiny Tim's death have been sacrificial?

## The Dichotomy of Death

1. Highlight three words or phrases in each extract which conveys the tone or mood of the moment.
2. Annotate them. What is Dickens conveying to the reader?
3. Summarise your thoughts in the boxes at the bottom.

He recoiled in terror, for the scene had changed, and now he almost touched a bed: a bare, uncurtained bed: on which, beneath a ragged sheet, there lay a something covered up, which, though it was dumb, announced itself in awful language.

The room was very dark, too dark to be observed with any accuracy, though Scrooge glanced round it in obedience to a secret impulse, anxious to know what kind of room it was. A pale light, rising in the outer air, fell straight upon the bed; and on it, plundered and bereft, unwatched, unwept, uncared for, was the body of this man.

**How have people reacted to this death? Why?**

He broke down all at once. He couldn't help it. If he could have helped it, he and his child would have been farther apart perhaps than they were.

He left the room, and went up-stairs into the room above, which was lighted cheerfully, and hung with Christmas. There was a chair set close beside the child, and there were signs of some one having been there, lately. Poor Bob sat down in it, and when he had thought a little and composed himself, he kissed the little face. He was reconciled to what had happened, and went down again quite happy.

**How have people reacted to this death? Why?**

**CHALLENGE: How far can the reader consider these two moments as dichotomous? Why might Dickens wish to present them in this way? What does it convey about the two deaths and the people who have died?**

## Progress Check: How does Dickens depict the poor in this extract and in the novel?

### Recap:

Annotate the quotation with all your ideas about it:

*“If there is any person in the town, who feels emotion caused by this man’s death,” said Scrooge quite agonised, “show that person to me, Spirit, I beseech you!”*

Read the excerpt below. You will be answering the question below it:

He lay, in the dark empty house, with not a man, a woman, or a child, to say that he was kind to me in this or that, and for the memory of one kind word I will be kind to him. A cat was tearing at the door, and there was a sound of gnawing rats beneath the hearth-stone. What they wanted in the room of death, and why they were so restless and disturbed, Scrooge did not dare to think.

“Spirit!” he said, “this is a fearful place. In leaving it, I shall not leave its lesson, trust me. Let us go!”

Still the Ghost pointed with an unmoved finger to the head.

“I understand you,” Scrooge returned, “and I would do it, if I could. But I have not the power, Spirit. I have not the power.”

Again it seemed to look upon him.

“If there is any person in the town, who feels emotion caused by this man’s death,” said Scrooge quite agonised, “show that person to me, Spirit, I beseech you!”

The Phantom spread its dark robe before him for a moment, like a wing; and withdrawing it, revealed a room by daylight, where a mother and her children were.

She was expecting some one, and with anxious eagerness; for she walked up and down the room; started at every sound; looked out from the window; glanced at the clock; tried, but in vain, to work with her needle; and could hardly bear the voices of the children in their play.

At length the long-expected knock was heard. She hurried to the door, and met her husband; a man whose face was careworn and depressed, though he was young. There was a remarkable expression in it now; a kind of serious delight of which he felt ashamed, and which he struggled to repress.

He sat down to the dinner that had been hoarding for him by the fire; and when she asked him faintly what news (which was not until after a long silence), he appeared embarrassed how to answer.

"Is it good?" she said, "or bad?"—to help him.

"Bad," he answered.

"We are quite ruined?"

"No. There is hope yet, Caroline."

"If he relents," she said, amazed, "there is! Nothing is past hope, if such a miracle has happened."

"He is past relenting," said her husband. "He is dead."

She was a mild and patient creature if her face spoke truth; but she was thankful in her soul to hear it, and she said so, with clasped hands. She prayed forgiveness the next moment, and was sorry; but the first was the emotion of her heart.

"What the half-drunken woman whom I told you of last night, said to me, when I tried to see him and obtain a week's delay; and what I thought was a mere excuse to avoid me; turns out to have been quite true. He was not only very ill, but dying, then."

"To whom will our debt be transferred?"

"I don't know. But before that time we shall be ready with the money; and even though we were not, it would be a bad fortune indeed to find so merciless a creditor in his successor. We may sleep to-night with light hearts, Caroline!"

**Question:** How does Dickens depict the poor in this extract and in the novel?

**Task:** Annotate the example paragraph for the AOs:

In Stave Four, the reader of Dickens' 1843 novella 'A Christmas Carol' gains an insight into the home of a couple who owe Scrooge money (his debtors). Dickens evokes their home to be a 'fearful place', according to Scrooge, and in its opening description he adds the detail of 'gnawing rats beneath the hearth-stone.' Rats are associated with disease and dirt, suggesting real poverty. The man's face is 'careworn and depressed', revealing that poverty has a physical impact, even on the 'young' in this case. Dickens was outraged by the fierceness of the 1834 Poor Laws, which sent the workless to the workhouse, condemned the impact of such laws on the poor through his writing. The debtors describe Scrooge as a 'merciless' 'creditor.' With these words, Dickens implies that the poor are ever at the mercy of those rich enough to lend them money; they are never financially free. This is similar to the Cratchits, who we see earlier in the novella are at the mercy of Scrooge to allow Bob Cratchit a day off for Christmas: there is no security in the lives of the poor of this novella. In contrast, when Dickens depicts the poor huddled in the 'hut' for warmth, yet still happy and joyful at Christmastime, he does suggest that love and companionship can overcome poverty.

**Your Response:**

<b>What?</b>	<b>How?</b>	<b>Why?</b>
<b>Dickens uses the young couple the Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come takes him to visit to reveal the impact of debt on the poor to both Scrooge and Victorian readers.</b>		
<b>Dickens uses Tiny Tim to expose the devastating impact of poverty on children</b>		
<b>Dickens uses the grotesque symbols of ignorance and want to highlight the damage of poverty.</b>		

## Stave Five: The End of It 1: 'Merry Christmas!'

**Summary:** Scrooge wakes on Christmas day and finds everything as he left it the day before. He is overwhelmed at having a chance to put things right and delights in everything he sees. He arranges for a prize turkey to be sent to the Cratchits anonymously, and makes a large donation to charity with the charity collectors – making up for his past neglect of charity and setting the balance right for his past acts.

**Task: Extract focus:** Track the portrayal of Scrooge's 're-birth':

Yes! and the bedpost was his own. The bed was his own, the room was his own. Best and happiest of all, the Time before him was his own, to make amends in!

"I will live in the Past, the Present, and the Future!" Scrooge repeated, as he scrambled out of bed. "The Spirits of all Three shall strive within me. Oh Jacob Marley! Heaven, and the Christmas Time be praised for this! I say it on my knees, old Jacob; on my knees!"

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.

"They are not torn down," cried Scrooge, folding one of his bed-curtains in his arms, "they are not torn down, rings and all. They are here—I am here—the shadows of the things that would have been, may be dispelled. They will be. I know they will!"

His hands were busy with his garments all this time; turning them inside out, putting them on upside down, tearing them, mislaying them, making them parties to every kind of extravagance.

"I don't know what to do!" cried Scrooge, laughing and crying in the same breath; and making a perfect Laocoön 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 going 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!

Running to the window, he opened it, and put out his head. No fog, no mist; clear, bright, jovial, stirring, cold; cold, piping for the blood to dance to; Golden sunlight; Heavenly sky; sweet fresh air; merry bells. Oh, glorious! Glorious!

“What’s to-day!” cried Scrooge, calling downward to a boy in Sunday clothes, who perhaps had loitered in to look about him.

“Eh?” returned the boy, with all his might of wonder.

“What’s to-day, my fine fellow?” said Scrooge.

“To-day!” replied the boy. “Why, Christmas Day.”

“It’s Christmas Day!” said Scrooge to himself. “I haven’t missed it. The Spirits have done it all in one night. They can do anything they like. Of course they can. Of course they can. Hallo, my fine fellow!”

“Hallo!” returned the boy.

“Do you know the Poulterer’s, in the next street but one, at the corner?” Scrooge inquired.

“I should hope I did,” replied the lad.

“An intelligent boy!” said Scrooge. “A remarkable boy! Do you know whether they’ve sold the prize Turkey that was hanging up there?—Not the little prize Turkey: the big one?”

“What, the one as big as me?” returned the boy.

“What a delightful boy!” said Scrooge. “It’s a pleasure to talk to him. Yes, my buck!”

“It’s hanging there now,” replied the boy.

“Is it?” said Scrooge. “Go and buy it.”

“Walk-er!” exclaimed the boy.

“No, no,” said Scrooge, “I am in earnest. Go and buy it, and tell ’em to bring it here, that I may give them the direction where to take it. Come back with the man, and I’ll give you a shilling. Come back with him in less than five minutes and I’ll give you half-a-crown!”

The boy was off like a shot. He must have had a steady hand at a trigger who could have got a shot off half so fast.

“I’ll send it to Bob Cratchit’s!” whispered Scrooge, rubbing his hands, and splitting with a laugh. “He sha’n’t know who sends it. It’s twice the size of Tiny Tim. Joe Miller never made such a joke as sending it to Bob’s will be!”

## **Task 2: Questions:**

1. How has Scrooge changed?
2. How does Dickens depict Scrooge’s changed character?
3. How does Dickens use dialogue to evoke Scrooge’s joy?
4. What is Scrooge so happy to discover at the start of these pages?



**Task 3: The structure of the novella; and the narrator:** Highlight words and phrases that you can learn and utilise in your own essays:

Dickens wrote *A Christmas Carol* to be read aloud at Christmas. He called each section of the novella a 'stave' rather than a chapter – referring to the five lines music is written on. Dickens could have been playing with the novella form, and reminding us it a Christmas tale. It could also reflect Christmas carols sung around Christmas time – telling stories of new life and possibilities, like the novella does. Through drawing parallels at the end of the novel to the start of the novel, and showing us Scrooge has resolved to change and makes up for his previous actions, Dickens creates a balanced structure – showing the equilibrium has been restored by Scrooge's redemption.

He also creates an intrusive narrator throughout the novella with a clear voice from the opening by using the first person. Due to the preface, Dickens associates himself strongly with the narrator and this allows him to make political comments on the treatment of the poor and vulnerable, and encourages us to reject Scrooge and his miserly way of life from the outset.

The novella is also an allegory – a tale that is relatively simple on the surface, but has a deeper, symbolic meaning. In this case, Scrooge changing due to his encounters with the ghosts is an allegory of how a whole society or group of affluent people could change for the better.

**Respond:**

1. Why might Dickens have used 'Staves' to organise the novella?
2. How is Scrooge's journey similar to the Christmas story?
3. What is an 'intrusive' narrator?
4. What is an allegory?

## Stave Five: The End of It 2: 'God Bless Us, Everyone!'

**Summary:** Scrooge goes to Fred's home and asks if he can join him for Christmas after all – he is welcomed and they have a wonderful time. Scrooge is at the office early on Boxing Day so that he can play a joke on Bob. He raises Bob's salary and offers to help Tiny Tim and the family. Scrooge gains a reputation for being a generous and good man, and Tiny Tim survives.

**Task: Extract focus:** Track the transformation of Scrooge and parallels to Stave One

He went to church, and walked about the streets, and watched the people hurrying to and fro, and patted children on the head, and questioned beggars, and looked down into the kitchens of houses, and up to the windows, and found that everything could yield him pleasure. He had never dreamed that any walk—that anything—could give him so much happiness. In the afternoon he turned his steps towards his nephew's house.

He passed the door a dozen times, before he had the courage to go up and knock. But he made a dash, and did it:

"Is your master at home, my dear?" said Scrooge to the girl. Nice girl! Very.

"Yes, sir."

"Where is he, my love?" said Scrooge.

"He's in the dining-room, sir, along with mistress. I'll show you up-stairs, if you please."

"Thank'ee. He knows me," said Scrooge, with his hand already on the dining-room lock. "I'll go in here, my dear."

He turned it gently, and sidled his face in, round the door. They were looking at the table (which was spread out in great array); for these young housekeepers are always nervous on such points, and like to see that everything is right.

"Fred!" said Scrooge.

Dear heart alive, how his niece by marriage started! Scrooge had forgotten, for the moment, about her sitting in the corner with the footstool, or he wouldn't have done it, on any account.

"Why bless my soul!" cried Fred, "who's that?"

"It's I. Your uncle Scrooge. I have come to dinner. Will you let me in, Fred?"

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. His niece looked just the same. So did Topper when he came. So did the plump sister when she came. So did every one when they came. Wonderful party, wonderful games, wonderful unanimity, won-der-ful happiness!

### Questions:

1. What techniques does Dickens use here to show how much fun they are having?
2. Whose house has Scrooge gone to?

But he was early at the office next morning. Oh, he was early there. If he could only be there first, and catch Bob Cratchit coming late! That was the thing he had set his heart upon.

And he did it; yes, he did! The clock struck nine. No Bob. A quarter past. No Bob. He was full eighteen minutes and a half behind his time. Scrooge sat with his door wide open, that he might see him come into the Tank.

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.

"Hallo!" growled Scrooge, in his accustomed voice, as near as he could feign it. "What do you mean by coming here at this time of day?"

"I am very sorry, sir," said Bob. "I am behind my time."

"You are?" repeated Scrooge. "Yes. I think you are. Step this way, sir, if you please."

"It's only once a year, sir," pleaded Bob, appearing from the Tank. "It shall not be repeated. I was making rather merry yesterday, sir."

"Now, I'll tell you what, my friend," said Scrooge, "I am not going to stand this sort of thing any longer. And therefore," he continued, leaping from his stool, and giving Bob such a dig in the waistcoat that he staggered back into the Tank again; "and therefore I am about to raise your salary!"

Bob trembled, and got a little nearer to the ruler. He had a momentary idea of knocking Scrooge down with it, holding him, and calling to the people in the court for help and a strait-waistcoat.

"A merry Christmas, Bob!" said Scrooge, with an earnestness that could not be mistaken, as he clapped him on the back. "A merrier Christmas, Bob, my good fellow, than I have given you, for many a year! I'll raise your salary, and endeavour to assist your struggling family, and we will discuss your affairs this very afternoon, over a Christmas bowl of smoking bishop, Bob! Make up the fires, and buy another coal-scuttle before you dot another i, Bob Cratchit!"

Scrooge was better than his word. He did it all, and infinitely more; and to Tiny Tim, who did not die, he was a second father. He became as good a friend, as good a master, and as good a man, as the good old city knew, or any other good old city, town, or borough, in the good old world. Some people laughed to see the alteration in him, but he let them laugh, and little heeded them; for he was wise enough to know that nothing ever happened on this globe, for good, at which some people did not have their fill of laughter in the outset; and knowing that such as these would be blind anyway, he thought it quite as well that they should wrinkle up their eyes in grins, as have the malady in less attractive forms. His own heart laughed: and that was quite enough for him.

He had no further intercourse with Spirits, but lived upon the Total Abstinence Principle, ever afterwards; and it was always said of him, that he knew how to keep Christmas well, if any man alive possessed the knowledge. May that be truly said of us, and all of us! And so, as Tiny Tim observed, God bless Us, Every One!

### **Questions:**

1. How has Scrooge changed by the end of this novella?
2. What is the effect of the repetition of 'good'?
3. What is Dickens' moral message?
4. Why does Dickens end the novella on the words of Tiny Tim?
5. What could Tiny Tim represent and why?

**Task 3:** Making parallels between Stave 1 and 5:

Chapter 1	Chapter 5
The office fire is weak and small	
Scrooge resents having to pay Bob at Christmas	
Scrooge's dialogue is curt and bad-tempered	
Scrooge is a miser who hoards money	
Scrooge rejects Fred's invite for Christmas	
Scrooge does not wish anyone a 'Merry Christmas'	

When he returns from his adventure, what does Scrooge do? How has he changed?

What 'adventure' is Scrooge called to?  
What supernatural help does he receive?

1

7

6

How does Scrooge atone for what he has done?  
What metaphorical gift has he been given?  
When and how does he return to what he 'knows'?



What is the literal threshold Scrooge crosses?  
Who is the 'guardian' of this threshold? Who helps him cross? When does he cross into the 'unknown'?

Return

(Gift of the Goddess)

KNOW  
UNKNOWN

Call to Adventure

Supernatural aid

Threshold Guardian(s)

Threshold (beginning of transformation)

Helper

Mentor

# The Hero's Journey

Challenges and Temptations

Helper

Transformation

REVELATION

ABYSS

death & rebirth

Atonement

2

5

3

What challenge does Scrooge face?  
Who helps him learn these lessons?  
Who mentors him on this journey?

4

At what point does Scrooge reach the 'abyss' of his story, when he has no choice but to be 'reborn'?

How does Scrooge say he will transform?

## Progress Check: A Christmas Carol Essay:

Read the extract below and answer the question.

A churchyard. Here, then; the wretched man whose name he had now to learn, lay underneath the ground. It was a worthy place. Walled in by houses; overrun by grass and weeds, the growth of vegetation's death, not life; choked up with too much burying; fat with repleted appetite. A worthy place!

The Spirit stood among the graves, and pointed down to One. He advanced towards it trembling. The Phantom was exactly as it had been, but he dreaded that he saw new meaning in its solemn shape.

"Before I draw nearer to that stone to which you point," said Scrooge, "answer me one question. Are these the shadows of the things that Will be, or are they shadows of things that May be, only?"

Still the Ghost pointed downward to the grave by which it stood.

"Men's courses will foreshadow certain ends, to which, if persevered in, they must lead," said Scrooge. "But if the courses be departed from, the ends will change. Say it is thus with what you show me!"

The Spirit was immovable as ever.

Scrooge crept towards it, trembling as he went; and following the finger, read upon the stone of the neglected grave his own name, Ebenezer Scrooge.

"Am I that man who lay upon the bed?" he cried, upon his knees.

The finger pointed from the grave to him, and back again.

"No, Spirit! Oh no, no!"

The finger still was there.

"Spirit!" he cried, tight clutching at its robe, "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!"

For the first time the hand appeared to shake.

"Good Spirit," he pursued, as down upon the ground he fell before it: "Your nature intercedes for me, and pities me. Assure me that I yet may change these shadows you have shown me, by an altered life!"

The kind hand trembled.

"I will honour Christmas in my heart, and try to keep it all the year. I will live in the Past, the 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!"

In his agony, he caught the spectral hand. It sought to free itself, but he was strong in his entreaty, and detained it. The Spirit, stronger yet, repulsed him.

Holding up his hands in a last prayer to have his fate reversed, he saw an alteration in the Phantom's hood and dress. It shrunk, collapsed, and dwindled down into a bedpost.

How does **Scrooge change** in this extract and in the novel as a whole

- Write about Scrooge's change in the extract
- Write about Scrooge's change in the texts as a whole
- Write about how Dickens presents this change

