

Charles Dickens' **A**
Christmas
Carol 

Lady Hawkins' School - English Department


AQA GCSE English Literature Paper 1

Tuesday 22 May 2018 - 9.00am 1 hour 45minutes

Section B: A Christmas Carol by Charles Dickens

- You will be given an extract from 'A Christmas Carol' and you will be asked to comment on the extract and then relate the extract to the play as a whole.
- Read the question carefully - this is worth 30 Marks
- You are advised to spend 45/50 minutes on this section

Here are some revision ideas for you

Charles Dickens' **A**
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At a Glance

- Ebenezer Scrooge is a penny-pinching miser who cares more for his money than for those around him. He undergoes a dramatic transformation after a visit from the Ghosts of Christmas Past, Present, and Future.
- Jacob Marley is Scrooge's deceased business partner who comes to visit him as a ghost. He shares his guilt at living a selfish life and advises Scrooge to change his ways.
- Bob Cratchit is a loyal assistant to Scrooge and a loving father. His youngest son, Tiny Tim, is crippled.
- The Ghost of Christmas Past wears a white tunic and flowers and travels back in time with Scrooge to his more hopeful childhood.
- The Ghost of Christmas Present is a loud, jovial spirit who shows Scrooge how those in his life are enjoying Christmas without him.
- The Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come wears a black robe and silently takes Scrooge on a tour of the misery that befalls him and Tiny Tim unless Scrooge changes his ways.

A Christmas Carol: Key quotations

Stave One

P2 "covetous old sinner" – Scrooge – theme of a Christian novel

"solitary as an oyster"

P5 Christmas is "a kind, forgiving, charitable, pleasant time."

P7 "Are there no prisons?" – AO3

P8 "...If they would rather die..they had better do it and decrease the surplus population."

P16 "I wear the chain I forged in life." Marley.

P18 "Mankind was my business. The common welfare was my business..."
Marley

Stave Two

P23 "From the crown of its head there sprung a bright clear jet of light."
Ghost of Christmas Past.

P24 "Your reclamation"

P26 "He sobbed." Scrooge.

P33 "A small matter to make these silly folks so full of gratitude." Ghost of Xmas Past

P34 "another idol has displaced me... a golden one." Belle

Stave Three

P42 "A jolly giant...who bore a glowing torch." Ghost of Xmas Present.

P43 "I learnt a lesson which is working now." Scrooge.

P51 "Spirit," said Scrooge, with an interest he had never felt before, "tell me if Tiny Tim will live."

P52 "If he be like to die, he had better do it and decrease the surplus population." Ghost Xmas Present

P52 "Will you decide what men shall live, what men shall die?"

P53 "They were not a handsome family; they were not well-dressed ...but they were happy, grateful, pleased with one another..." [narrator]

P59 "...for it is good to be children sometimes, and never better at Christmas.."

P63 "yellow, meagre, ragged, scowling, wolfish..."; "This boy is Ignorance. This girl is Want."

Stave Four

P66 "I hope to live to be another man from what I was." Scrooge.

P68 "Old Scratch has got his own at last, hey?"

P76 "But he was very light to carry." Mrs Cratchit.

P80 "Holding up his hand in a last prayer to have his fate reversed..."

Stave 5

Scrooge

P81 "I don't know what to do.....laughing and crying in the same breath... I am as light as a feather, I am as happy as an angel...."(more similes are used to describe his mood.)

P 84 "Scrooge regarded everyone with a delighted smile."

P86 "It's I your uncle Scrooge. I have come to dinner."

P87 Scrooge to Bob Cratchit "and therefore I am about to raise your salary!"

P87"Bob! Make up the fires, and buy another coal scuttle" ...

P87 "He (Scrooge) became as good a friend, as good a master and as good a man as the good old city knew."#

God Bless Us, Every One! (Tiny Tim – last line)

Handy Revision Snippets for A CHRISTMAS CAROL Characters

1 Scrooge

Miserly and mean, Scrooge is isolated from humanity by his desire for making money. He learns about the consequences of his choices and responsibility for others.

2 Bob Cratchit

A poor clerk, Bob Cratchit contrasts with his employer, Scrooge. Rich in family love he maintains his dignity and Christian values throughout hardship.

3 Fred

Scrooge's cheerful, generous nephew expresses Dickens's ideas about the spirit of Christmas and the warmth of family life that Scrooge has rejected.

4 Fezziwig

A benevolent employer, Fezziwig exemplifies the qualities that Scrooge lacks. He celebrates Christmas joyfully, sharing the celebration with his family and employees.

5 Tiny Tim

Cratchit's disabled son is presented sentimentally as angelic and uncomplaining, capable of bringing out the best in people. He embodies the effects of Scrooge's transformation.

A CHRISTMAS CAROL - Language, form and structure

1 The five chapters

The novella is structured in five sections called 'staves', an old word for verses of folk songs, to link with the 'Carol' of its title.

2 Literary genre

Traditional ghost story conventions include a sequence of three apparitions and mysterious shifts in time and place

3 A story to read aloud

The first-person narrative conveys a strong, sometimes ironic, authorial voice with a sense of direct, personal address from Dickens to his reader.

4 Repetitive sentence structures

Patterned sentences emphasise important details or create humorous effects and rhythm when read aloud, e.g. the anaphora of starting several phrases with 'No' (Stave One, p. 3) stresses Scrooge's isolation.

5 Description

Dickens creates rich descriptive effects with adjectives, e.g. he gives many types of food sensual appeal – 'juicy oranges, luscious pears' (Stave Three, p. 42).

A CHRISTMAS CAROL - Themes

1 Social justice

Dickens expresses his social concerns and urges compassion for those in need, showing the effects of poverty through references to hardship, workhouses, debt and prisons.

2 Consequences

Dickens shows the consequences of political and social policy in Victorian England as Scrooge is forced to face the consequences of his choices and actions.

3 Home and family

Examples such as Fred, the Fezziwigs and the Cratchits emphasise the value that Dickens places on the comforts and pleasures of home and family life.

4 Christmas traditions

The novella defines the spirit of Christmas and its traditions by emphasising universal goodwill, compassion for the poor and family celebrations.

5 Transformation and redemption

Scrooge's transformation, and the forgiveness he receives from others, reflects the Christian idea of redemption for all who admit their mistakes and amend their lives.

A CHRISTMAS CAROL - Context

1 Charles Dickens

As well as being a popular author Dickens worked for social reform to improve conditions for children and poor people.

2 Story-telling

Telling ghost stories was a popular form of fireside entertainment, and this one is written in a style that makes it suitable for reading aloud.

3 The Hungry Forties

Social changes, the rapid growth of cities and government legislation resulted in poverty, hunger and hardship for many people in England during the 1840s.

4 The spirit of Christmas

The traditions associated with this Christian festival developed during the nineteenth century, and the ways in which people celebrated it were influenced by the royal family.

5 A Christian message

The Christian principles of love for one's neighbours, repentance and forgiveness are present throughout the novella.

Ebenezer Scrooge

- Miserable
- Tight-fisted
- Redeemed by the end

Scrooge is the main character of Dickens' novella and is first presented as a **miserly**, unpleasant man. He rejects all offerings of Christmas cheer and celebration as 'Humbug!'

On Christmas Eve he is visited by the ghost of his old business partner, Jacob Marley, who warns that he will be visited by three ghosts. Each of the ghosts shows him a scene that strikes fear and regret into his heart and eventually he softens.

By the end of the story, Scrooge is a changed man, sharing his wealth and generosity with everyone.

	How is Scrooge like this?	Evidence	Analysis
Cold-hearted	According to Dickens's description, Scrooge is cold through and through.	<i>No warmth could warm, no wintry weather chill him.</i>	Dickens uses pathetic fallacy to represent Scrooge's nature. The weather is a metaphor for Scrooge's behaviour as he cannot be made either warmer or colder by it.
Miserly	Scrooge is stingy with his money and will not even allow his clerk Bob Cratchit to have a decent fire to warm him on Christmas Eve.	<i>...as the clerk came in with the shovel, the master predicted that it would be necessary for them to part.</i>	The indirect speech shows that Scrooge is threatening and in charge. He will not give permission for Cratchit to take more coal.
Ill-mannered	His nephew visits to wish him a 'Merry Christmas' and Scrooge is rude to him in response.	<i>"Every idiot who goes about with 'Merry Christmas' on his lips, should be boiled with his own pudding, and buried with a stake of holly through his heart."</i>	Scrooge's response is comical, but unpleasant. He cannot accept the generosity that is offered him and instead turns images of Christmas into images of violence.
Self-deluded	When he sees Marley's ghost, Scrooge tries to deny its existence by attributing the vision to something he has eaten.	<i>"You may be an undigested bit of beef, a blot of mustard, a crumb of cheese..."</i>	Although Scrooge is afraid of the ghost, he tries to maintain his authority even over his own senses.

Bob Cratchit

- Humble
- Hardworking
- Family man

Bob Cratchit is Scrooge's clerk and works in unpleasant conditions without complaint. He obeys Scrooge's rules and is timid about asking to go home to his family early on Christmas Eve.

When the Ghost of Christmas Present takes Scrooge to visit the Cratchits on Christmas Day, he sees Bob Cratchit carrying his sickly son Tiny Tim, and later raising a toast to Scrooge for providing the feast.

The *Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come* shows the Cratchits in a future where Tiny Tim has died and here we see how sensitive Bob Cratchit is. His love for his son is shown through his grief.

In the end, when Scrooge changes his ways for the better, Bob Cratchit is delighted. He welcomes Scrooge's new-found generosity and friendship.

	How is Cratchit like this?	Evidence	Analysis
Obedient	Bob takes orders from his bad-tempered boss, Ebenezer Scrooge without complaining.	<i>[he] tried to warm himself at the candle</i>	His efforts to warm himself at the candle are pitiful. He would prefer to do this than challenge Scrooge.
Generous	He proposes a toast to Scrooge even on Christmas Day.	<i>"I'll give you Mr. Scrooge, the Founder of the Feast!"</i>	Scrooge is too miserly to offer his clerk a decent wage, but Cratchit is generous enough to be grateful to his boss.
Sensitive	He cries openly for his son when he is 'dead'.	<i>"My little, little child!" cried Bob. "My little child!"</i>	The repetition of 'little' adds to the sad effect of Bob's cry. We feel sympathy for him at this point.
Fearful	He is afraid of Scrooge's reaction when he arrives late to work after Christmas Day.	<i>"It's only once a year, sir," pleaded Bob, appearing from the Tank.</i>	Bob 'pleaded' which shows he is worried about being punished by Scrooge.

Fred

- Cheerful
- Generous
- Kind-hearted

	<i>How is Fred like this?</i>	<i>Evidence</i>	<i>Analysis</i>
Positive	Even when Scrooge puts down all his talk of Christmas festivities, Fred persists with his good cheer.	<i>"I'll keep my Christmas humour to the last. So A Merry Christmas, uncle!"</i>	We learn about Fred's positive nature from his dialogue. Everything he says focuses on the positive aspects of Christmas.
Persistent	Fred refuses to let Scrooge's miserly attitude dampen his sprits.	<i>"I mean to give him the same chance every year, whether he likes it or not, for I pity him."</i>	He shows his care for his uncle by pledging to continue visiting Scrooge regardless. His concern is revealed by his persistence and pity.
Enthusiastic	When Scrooge finally turns up for Christmas dinner, Fred welcomes him in.	<i>"Let him in! It is a mercy he didn't shake his arm off."</i>	Fred's enthusiasm is evident in his hearty welcome, shaking his uncle's hand with force.

The Ghost of Christmas Past

- Young and old
- Commanding
- Streaming with light

The Ghost of Christmas Past is the first spirit to visit Scrooge after the ghost of Marley. It arrives as the clock chimes one. It is an **ephemeral** spirit that appears to be both old and young at the same time with light streaming from the top of its head.

It takes Scrooge to scenes from his own past, showing him visions of his own childhood, of his young adulthood and of happier times. The final scene he presents is one that Scrooge cannot bear to witness: his lost love, Belle, with her family.

Scrooge turns on the ghost and demands to be shown no more. He attempts to extinguish the ghost's light with its own cap, wrestling it to the ground. However, the light that shines from the ghost cannot be put out.

	How is the Ghost like this?	Evidence	Analysis
Ephemeral	This ghost is shifting in appearance, seeming to be there and not be there at the same time.	<i>...what was light one instant, at another time was dark, so the figure itself fluctuated in its distinctness.</i>	The ghost is surreal and strange. It flickers like a candle and seems to reflect the fact that Scrooge's past behaviour can be redeemed.
Gentle	The ghost is not solid and is also calm and gentle in the way it communicates with Scrooge.	<i>The Spirit gazed upon him mildly. Its gentle touch, though it had been light and instantaneous, appeared still present to the old man's sense of feeling.</i>	The words 'mildly' and 'gentle' give us the overall sense that the ghost is well-meaning.
Quiet	The ghost does not speak much, but answers Scrooge's questions with brief replies.	<i>"Your welfare!" said the Ghost.</i>	When Scrooge asks the ghost what its business is that evening, the response is short and to the point. This ghost does not waste words!
Firm	Although the spirit is ephemeral and gentle, it is also commanding.	<i>It put out its strong hand as it spoke, and clasped him gently by the arm. "Rise! and walk with me!"</i>	The imperatives (verbs in command form) 'Rise' and 'walk' show that the ghost is to be obeyed. It has control here.

The Ghost of Christmas Present

- Jolly
- Welcoming
- Prophetic

The Ghost of Christmas Present is a huge and vibrant character who appears as the bell, once again, strikes one. It appears in Scrooge's room, surrounded by a feast. The generous nature of this ghost is reflected in the abundant vision of food.

Scrooge is more humble in the presence of this second spirit and is willing to learn any lessons the ghost will show.

It shows Scrooge visions of the world on Christmas Day, including heart-warming scenes of celebration at the homes of Bob Cratchit and Scrooge's nephew, Fred.

Before it leaves Scrooge, the Ghost shows him two 'yellow, meagre' children who are hiding under its cloak. These are called Ignorance and Want and are a warning to Scrooge to change his ways.

	How is the Ghost like this?	Evidence	Analysis
Jolly	Dickens describes the ghost as open and cheerful - in actions and appearance.	<i>Its dark brown curls were long and free; free as its genial face, its sparkling eye, its open hand, its cheery voice, its unconstrained demeanour, and its joyful air.</i>	The adjectives that Dickens uses are positive and present a solid big and 'joyful' character, in contrast to the indistinct spirit of Christmas Past.
Welcoming	The Ghost invites Scrooge to join him in a welcoming manner.	<i>"Come in!" exclaimed the Ghost. "Come in! and know me better, man!"</i>	The word 'exclaimed' makes the Ghost seem excited to see Scrooge. His invitation to 'know me better' is generous and open-hearted.
Honest	When Scrooge asks whether Tiny Tim will live , the Ghost answers with the words Scrooge had previously spoken to the portly gentlemen who were collecting for charity.	<i>"If he be like to die, he had better do it, and decrease the surplus population."</i>	The Ghost of Christmas Present uses Scrooge's own words against him. In his honest response, that Tiny Tim is likely to die, he holds a mirror up to Scrooge and his behaviour.
Prophetic	The Ghost predicts that Mankind, Scrooge included, will suffer unless the lessons of generosity and tolerance are learned.	<i>"Most of all beware this boy, for on his brow I see that written which is Doom, unless the writing be erased."</i>	He presents two children called 'Ignorance' and 'Want' hiding under his cloak. He warns that 'Doom' awaits Scrooge unless a change is made.

The Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come

- Silent
- Dark
- Ominous

The final Ghost is frightening and eerie. It doesn't say a word to Scrooge, but glides along and points out scenes to him.

The spirit first shows Scrooge a funeral scene, with businessmen wondering about the money that the dead man has left. The Ghost then takes him through dark alleyways to a scene of three people picking through the belongings of the deceased. Scrooge recognises that his own death could be met this way.

Next, the Ghost takes him to the Cratchit household where Scrooge is upset to learn that Tiny Tim has died.

Finally, the Ghost shows him a tombstone engraved with the name: Ebenezer Scrooge. Clutching at the spirit's robes, Scrooge pledges to change his ways if he can avoid this solitary death. The Ghost disappears and leaves Scrooge clutching at his bed curtains.

	How is The Ghost like this?	Evidence	Analysis
Silent	This last ghost does not speak at all. It is the most haunting in appearance.	<i>...a solemn Phantom, draped and hooded, coming, like a mist along the ground, towards him.</i>	Dickens shows a 'solemn' and spooky spirit in the Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come.
Frightening	The ghost fills Scrooge with terror.	<i>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.</i>	The presence of this ghost makes Scrooge afraid. His trembling legs and inability to stand firm show how he is worried about the future that the ghost will show him.
Demanding	The ghost points wherever he wants Scrooge to look and does not move until he obeyed.	<i>Still the Ghost pointed with an unmoved finger to the head.</i>	The Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come silently demands that Scrooge pays attention. The spirit's silence is unrelenting.

Tiny Tim

- Kind
- Disabled
- Thoughtful

Tiny Tim is one of Bob Cratchit's sons. He walks with a crutch and has 'his limbs supported by an iron frame'. Despite his physical difficulties, he is a positive and generous child. He thinks of others and is well-loved by his family.

Scrooge is affected by the child and when he is shown the Cratchit family Christmas by the Ghost of Christmas Present, he worries whether Tiny Tim will live. The Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come shows a possible future in which Scrooge's fears are realised and Tiny Tim has died.

At the end of the novella, after Scrooge changes his character, we learn that he becomes like a second father to Tiny Tim.

	How is Tiny Tim like this?	Evidence	Analysis
Kind	After Bob Cratchit raises a toast at the Christmas dinner table, Tiny Tim echoes the toast and includes everyone.	<i>"God bless us every one!"</i>	We learn that Tiny Tim is kind and able to offer an equal love to all mankind.
Thoughtful	Tiny Tim rises above his own suffering and hopes that people who see him will think of Jesus.	<i>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.</i>	Dickens suggests that the child is exceptionally thoughtful for his age. This highlights how ungenerous Scrooge, an adult, can be.
Patient	In the scene that the Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come shows of the Cratchits, Bob remembers his son as a patient child.	<i>...we recollect how patient and how mild he was.</i>	Tiny Tim is remembered fondly by his family for his good qualities.

<p>The door of Scrooge's counting-house was open that he might keep his eye upon his clerk, who in a dismal little cell beyond, a sort of tank, was copying letters. Scrooge had a very small fire, but the clerk's fire was so very much smaller that it looked like one coal. But he couldn't replenish it, for Scrooge kept the coal-box in his own room; and so surely as the clerk came in with the shovel, the master predicted that it would be necessary for them to part. Wherefore the clerk put on his white comforter, and tried to warm himself at the candle; in which effort, not being a man of a strong imagination, he failed.</p>	5
<p>"A merry Christmas, uncle! God save you!" cried a cheerful voice. It was the voice of Scrooge's nephew, who came upon him so quickly that this was the first intimation he had of his approach.</p>	10
<p>"Bah!" said Scrooge, "Humbug!"</p> <p>He had so heated himself with rapid walking in the fog and frost, this nephew of Scrooge, that he was all in a glow; his face was ruddy and handsome; his eyes sparkled, and his breath smoked again.</p>	15
<p>"Christmas a humbug, uncle!" said Scrooge's nephew. "You don't mean that, I am sure?"</p> <p>"I do," said Scrooge. "Merry Christmas! What right have you to be merry? What reason have you to be merry? You're poor enough."</p>	20
<p>"Come, then," returned the nephew gaily. "What right have you to be dismal? What reason have you to be morose? You're rich enough."</p> <p>Scrooge having no better answer ready on the spur of the moment, said, "Bah!" again; and followed it up with "Humbug."</p>	25
<p>"Don't be cross, uncle!" said the nephew.</p> <p>"What else can I be," returned the uncle, "when I live in such a world of fools as this? Merry Christmas! Out upon merry Christmas! What's Christmas time to you but a time for paying bills without money; a time for finding yourself a year older, but not an hour richer; a time for balancing your books and having every item in 'em through a round dozen of months presented dead against you? If I could work my will," said Scrooge indignantly, "every idiot who goes about with 'Merry Christmas' on his lips, should be boiled with his own pudding, and buried with a stake of holly through his heart. He should!"</p>	30

Starting with this extract, how does Dickens present attitudes to Christmas in the novella?

Write about:

- How Dickens presents attitudes to Christmas in this episode
- How Dickens presents attitudes to Christmas in the novella as a whole.

[30 marks]

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<p>"Uncle!" pleaded the nephew.</p> <p>"Nephew!" returned the uncle, sternly, "keep Christmas in your own way, and let me keep it in mine."</p>	20
<p>"Keep it!" repeated Scrooge's nephew. "But you don't keep it."</p> <p>"Let me leave it alone, then," said Scrooge. "Much good may it do you! Much good it has ever done you!"</p>	25
<p>"There are many things from which I might have derived good, by which I have not profited, I dare say," returned the nephew. "Christmas among the rest. But I am sure I have always thought of Christmas time, when it has come round -- apart from the veneration due to its sacred name and origin, if anything belonging to it can be apart from that -- as a good time: a kind, forgiving, charitable, pleasant time: the only time I know of, in the long calendar of the year, when men and women seem by one consent to open their shut-up hearts freely, and to think of people below them as if they really were fellow-passengers to the grave, and not another race of creatures bound on other journeys. And therefore, uncle, though it has never put a scrap of gold or silver in my pocket, I believe that it has done me good, and will do me good; and I say, God bless it!"</p>	30
<p>The clerk in the tank involuntarily applauded: becoming immediately sensible of the impropriety, he poked the fire, and extinguished the last frail spark for ever.</p>	35
	40

Starting with this extract, how does Dickens present Scrooge's nephew, Fred?

Write about:

- The way Dickens presents Fred and his relationship with Scrooge in this extract
- How Fred is important to the novel as a whole