

WORDSWORTH CLASSICS

# A Christmas Carol

CHARLES DICKENS



Complete and Unabridged

## A CHRISTMAS CAROL GCSE English Literature FPHS

# CONTEXT

Historical, Social and cultural context of A Christmas Carol:

'A Christmas Carol' is considered an example of an allegory. An allegory is a story that can be interpreted to reveal a hidden meaning, usually a moral or political one. In the case of A Christmas Carol (ACC), Dickens is attacking the politics of the time, saying that the rich were not doing enough to help the poor.

Social injustice is also a huge theme in the novella. It is a situation where unfair practices are being carried out in society. Whatever unjust behaviours are happening might not be things that are considered moral practice, yet may still be happening because of ignorance or lack of understanding.

With A Christmas Carol, Dickens captured the zeitgeist of the mid-Victorian revival of the Christmas holiday. The Zeitgeist (spirit of the age or spirit of the time) is the dominant set of ideals and beliefs that motivate the actions of the members of a society in a particular period in time.

Dickens was inspired to write ACC after he read a report detailing the harsh and poor conditions in which women and children were made to work. They were made to work underground or in appalling conditions in factories. Dickens said he was 'entirely stricken down' by the report.

Charles Dickens himself came from a poor family, but he was lucky enough to attend school. Unfortunately, after his father was jailed for having 'bad debts', Charles Dickens was forced to leave school and start work in a blacking factory (a boot polish factory). He worked there for three years. The conditions were very poor and Charles Dickens suffered from loneliness.

At the time 'A Christmas Carol' is set, the population in England had grown by a massive 64% between Dickens' birth in 1812 and the year of 1843 when the novella was written. Workers were leaving the countryside to crowd into new manufacturing centres and cities.

More and more, employers thought of their workers as tools as interchangeable as any nail or gluepot. Workers were becoming like commodities: not individual humans, but mere resources, their value measured to the ha-penny by how many nails they could hammer in an hour. But in a time of dearth—the 1840s earned the nickname "The Hungry '40s"—the poor took what work they could arrange. And who worked for the lowest wages? Children.

Victorians were worried about the rising crime rate: offences went up from about 5,000 per year in 1800 to about 20,000 per year in 1840, and many of these offences carried prison sentences. Once inside, prisoners were made to do hard, boring work. Walking a treadwheel or picking oakum (separating strands of rope) were the most common forms of hard labour.

The Poor Law was one way that the poor were helped in 1815. The law said that each parish had to look after its own poor. If you were unable to work then you were given some money to help you survive. However, the cost of the Poor Law was increasing every year. By 1830 it cost about £7 million and criticism of the law was rising.

Popular theories about how—or whether—to help the poor often made things worse. The first was the widespread sense that poor people tended to be so because they were lazy and immoral, and that helping them would only encourage their malingering. If they were to be helped, it should be under conditions so awful as to discouraged people from seeking that help. The new workhouses were seen as

the perfect solution—where families were split up, food was minimal and work painful. "Those who are badly off," says the unreformed Scrooge, "must go there."

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 workhouses were truly awful places to be. Women, children and men had different living and working areas in the workhouse, so families were split up. Upon entering the workhouse, they were stripped and bathed (under supervision). They were made to wear a uniform. This meant that everyone looked the same and everyone outside knew they were poor and lived in the workhouse. The young and old as well as men and women were made to work hard, often doing unpleasant jobs. The food was tasteless and was the same day after day. The 'housing' was very basic, providing no comfort or warmth, and was often infested with rats and riddled with disease. Children could also find themselves 'hired out' (sold) to work in factories or mines.

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Select what you consider to be the key information from the source above; add this to the table below in your own words.

<b>Historical</b>	
<b>Social</b>	
<b>Cultural</b>	

Keywords	Heard	Never heard	What do you think the definition is?	What synonyms could you use?
altruistic				
antithesis				
avaricious				
benevolent				
didactic				

Keywords	Heard	Never heard	What do you think the definition is?	What synonyms could you use?
epiphany				
malevolent				
misanthropic				
parsimonious				
penitent				

Keywords	Definition	Synonyms
altruistic	Showing or having a selfless concern for the well-being of others.	Unselfish, humane, self-sacrificing, noble.
antithesis	A person or thing that is the direct opposite of someone or something else.	Opposite, contrast, reverse.
avaricious	Having or showing an extreme greed for wealth or material gain.	Greedy, covetous, materialistic.
benevolent	Well-meaning and kindly.	Kind, caring, generous, compassionate.
didactic	Intended to teach, particularly in having moral instruction as its purpose.	Moral, educational, informative.

Keywords	Definition	Synonyms
epiphany	A moment of sudden and great revelation or realization.	Realisation, discovery, sudden understanding.
malevolent	Having or showing a wish to do evil to others.	Malicious, spiteful, wicked, nasty.
misanthropic	Having or showing a dislike of other people; unsociable.	Cynical, pessimistic, distrustful, reclusive.
parsimonious	Very unwilling to spend money or use resources.	Stingy, miserly, tight-fisted, ungenerous.
penitent	Feeling or showing sorrow and regret for having done wrong; repentant.	Sorry, remorseful, regretful, apologetic.

# First impression of character: Ebenezer Scrooge

He is unpleasant to everyone  
and has a negativity about him  
that keeps people away.

“he carried his own low  
temperature always about with  
him”



Label the image with your first impressions – support these with evidence from the novella; an example has been done for you.










# A Christmas Carol – Plot Comic Strip

1.1 Scrooge in counting house.	1.2 Scrooge visited by his nephew Fred.	1.3 Scrooge asked to give to charity.
1.4 Scrooge seeing Marley's face on door knocker.	1.5 Scrooge checking through the rooms.	1.6 Visited by Marley's ghost.
2.1 Scrooge wakes up wondering if it was all dream.	2.2 The ghost of Christmas past appears.	2.3 He is taken to his childhood boarding school (primary age). He is also shown himself in the same school as a young man.
2.4 He is shown himself as a clerk at Fezziwig's (where he met Belle)	2.5 When he is shown Belle breaking off their engagement.	2.6 He is shown Belle, who is now a little older and surrounded by a loving family – a family that could have been his.

<p>3.1 He wakes up to find a light coming from another room.</p>	<p>3.2 He meets the ghost of Christmas present.</p>	<p>3.3 They visit the Cratchit's house.</p>
<p>3.4 They visit his nephew, Fred's house.</p>	<p>3.5 The spirit is aging...</p>	<p>3.6 The children who cling to the spirits robes...</p>
<p>4.1 The ghost of Christmas yet to come arrives.</p>	<p>4.2 The pawn shop.</p>	<p>4.3 He is shown a couple celebrating someone's death as they will no longer lose their home.</p>
<p>4.4 He is shown the Cratchit's home after the death of Tiny Tim.</p>	<p>4.5 He is shown a funeral, he finally realises he is the one who has died.</p>	<p>4.6 He falls into a grave screaming that he will change.</p>
<p>5.1 He wakes and realises that he has been saved.</p>	<p>5.2 He sends food to the Cratchit's and visits Fred.</p>	<p>5.3 He is described as a changed man and we are told how this impacts the lives of others.</p>

# Key Characters

CHARACTER	KEY INFORMATION	ROLE IN THE NOVELLA
 <p><b>EBENEZER SCROOGE</b></p>		
 <p><b>BOB CRATCHIT</b></p>		
 <p><b>FRED</b></p>		
 <p><b>JACOB MARLEY</b></p>		
 <p><b>GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PAST</b></p>		
 <p><b>GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PRESENT</b></p>		
 <p><b>GHOST OF CHRISTMAS YET TO COME</b></p>		

# Secondary Characters

CHARACTER	KEY INFORMATION	ROLE IN THE NOVELLA
<b>Belle</b>		
<b>Tiny Tim</b>		
<b>Mrs Cratchit</b>		
<b>Fezziwig</b>		
<b>Scrooge's father</b>		
<b>Scrooge's niece</b>		
<b>The two charity collectors</b>		
<b>The narrator</b>		



## Exploring the Spirits in A Christmas Carol

### 1. Marley (Stave 1)

Marley symbolises worldly greed and spiritual poverty.

#### The description of Marley

The same face: the very same. Marley in his pigtail, usual waistcoat, tights and boots; the tassels on the latter bristling, like his pigtail, and his coat-skirts, and the hair upon his head. The chain he drew was clasped about his middle. It was long, and wound about him like a tail; and it was made (for Scrooge observed it closely) of cash-boxes, keys, padlocks, ledgers, deeds, and heavy purses wrought in steel. His body was transparent, so that Scrooge, observing him, and looking through his waistcoat, could see the two buttons on his coat behind.

#### Key quotations – suggested pages: 15 - 23

Textual detail	Explanation
“and it was made (for Scrooge observed it closely) of cash-boxes, keys, padlocks, ledgers, deeds, and heavy purses wrought in steel.”	The use of the adverb “closely” shows us that Scrooge was paying careful attention to the chain and what was attached to it. This suggests he is recognising that things like “ledgers “ and “deeds” are things he values in life – making it clear he sees the similarities between himself and Marley’s ghost.

#### Relationship with Scrooge

*How does the spirit act towards Scrooge?*

*How does Scrooge act towards the spirit?*

## 2. The Ghost of Christmas Past (Stave 2)

**The Ghost of Christmas Past symbolises memory and triggers a feeling of regret in Scrooge.**

### The description of the Ghost of Christmas Past

It was a strange figure -- like a child: yet not so like a child as like an old man, viewed through some supernatural medium, which gave him the appearance of having receded from the view, and being diminished to a child's proportions. [...] It wore a tunic of the purest white, and round its waist was bound a lustrous belt, the sheen of which was beautiful. It held a branch of fresh green holly in its hand; and, in singular contradiction of that wintry emblem, had its dress trimmed with summer flowers. But the strangest thing about it was, that from the crown of its head there sprung a bright clear jet of light, by which all this was visible.



Key quotations - *suggested pages: 32, 34, 38-39, 41, 43-44*

Textual detail	Explanation

### Relationship with Scrooge

*How does the spirit act towards Scrooge?*

*What changes do we see in Scrooge?*

### 3. The Ghost of Christmas Present (Stave 3)

The Ghost of Christmas Present symbolises generosity and goodwill and triggers a feeling of guilt in Scrooge.



#### The description of the Ghost of Christmas Present

It was clothed in one simple green robe, or mantle, bordered with white fur. This garment hung so loosely on the figure that its capacious breast was bare, as if disdaining to be warded or concealed by any artifice. Its feet, observable beneath the ample folds of the garment, were also bare; and on its head it wore no other covering than a holly wreath, set here and there with shining icicles. 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. Girded round its middle was an antique scabbard; but no sword was in it, and the ancient sheath was eaten up with rust.

#### Key quotations - suggested pages: 53, 59, 70, 73

<i>Textual detail</i>	<i>Explanation</i>

#### Relationship with Scrooge

*How does the spirit act towards Scrooge?*

*What changes do we see in Scrooge?*

## 4. The Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come (Stave 4)

The Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come symbolises death and triggers a feeling of fear in Scrooge.



### The description of the Ghost of Christmas Present

The Phantom slowly, gravely, silently approached. When it came, Scrooge bent down upon his knee; for in the very air through which this Spirit moved it seemed to scatter gloom and mystery. It was shrouded in a deep black garment, which concealed its head, its face, its form, and left nothing of it visible save one outstretched hand. But for this it would have been difficult to detach its figure from the night, and separate it from the darkness by which it was surrounded. He felt that it was tall and stately when it came beside him, and that its mysterious presence filled him with a solemn dread. He knew no more, for the Spirit neither spoke nor moved.

Key quotations - *suggested pages: 74, 75, 83, 84, 90 -92*

Quotation (spoken by Scrooge)	Explanation

### Relationship with Scrooge

*How does the spirit act towards Scrooge?*

*What changes do we see in Scrooge?*



# Character Timeline: Scrooge's redemption



# Key themes

Theme	Explanation	Characters and key scenes
<b>Social Responsibility</b>	The idea that we are all responsible for one and other.	
<b>Poverty</b>	The suffering of the lower classes due to poor wages and the lack of a welfare system to support those who cannot support themselves (the sick/injured or the old).	
<b>The Christmas Spirit</b>	The Christmas spirit is the hopeful, generous and kind spirit that people show to one another at Christmas time. To believe in the Christmas spirit is to know that to treat each other with respect is more important than what we own.	
<b>Redemption</b>	The action of saving or being saved from sin, error, or evil.	
<b>Family</b>		
<b>The Supernatural</b>		

# Stave 1

<p><b>What are the key events?</b></p>	
<p><b>Which characters are involved and what is their significance?</b></p>	
<p><b>In what ways is this stave important to the novella as a whole?</b></p>	
<p><b>Which key themes are included?</b></p>	

# STAVE 2

<p><b>What are the key events?</b></p>	
<p><b>Which characters are involved and what is their significance?</b></p>	
<p><b>In what ways is this stave important to the novella as a whole?</b></p>	
<p><b>Which key themes are included?</b></p>	

# Stave 3

<p><b>What are the key events?</b></p>	
<p><b>Which characters are involved and what is their significance?</b></p>	
<p><b>In what ways is this stave important to the novella as a whole?</b></p>	
<p><b>Which key themes are included?</b></p>	

# Stave 4

<p><b>What are the key events?</b></p>	
<p><b>Which characters are involved and what is their significance?</b></p>	
<p><b>In what ways is this stave important to the novella as a whole?</b></p>	
<p><b>Which key themes are included?</b></p>	

# Stave 5

<p><b>What are the key events?</b></p>	
<p><b>Which characters are involved and what is their significance?</b></p>	
<p><b>In what ways is this stave important to the novella as a whole?</b></p>	
<p><b>Which key themes are included?</b></p>	

# Practice question – Theme of Family

Read this extract from Stave 2. In the extract Scrooge is watching his ex-fiancée, Belle, with the family she had after she left him.

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 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.

"Belle," said the husband, turning to his wife with a smile, "I saw an old friend of yours this afternoon."

"Who was it?"

"Guess!"

"How can I? Tut, don't I know," she added in the same breath, laughing as he laughed. "Mr. Scrooge."

"Mr. Scrooge it was. I passed his office window; and as it was not shut up, and he had a candle inside, I could scarcely help seeing him. His partner lies upon the point of death, I hear; and there he sat alone. Quite alone in the world, I do believe."

"Spirit!" said Scrooge in a broken voice, "remove me from this place."

"I told you these were shadows of the things that have been," said the Ghost. "That they are what they are, do not blame me!"

"Remove me!" Scrooge exclaimed, "I cannot bear it!"

**In this extract, how does Dickens demonstrate the importance of family both here and elsewhere in the novella?**

**Write about:**

- **How Dickens demonstrates the importance of family.**
- **How Dickens demonstrates Scrooge's regret.**



Question: In this extract, how does Dickens demonstrate the importance of family both here and elsewhere in the novella?

Plan your response below; you should select 3 pieces of evidence from this extract, and 2 from the wider novella. Add them to the table and plan out how you could link them to the questions.

Context:					
Method/keyword:					
Link to the way the family is presented:					
Evidence:					
	Extract:	Extract:	Extract:	Wider novella:	Wider novella:

Model response:

In this extract, Dickens presents the theme of family through the contrast between Scrooge's life and that of his ex fiancé. This extract takes part during Stave Two of the novella, Scrooge has been taken on a journey by the Ghost of Christmas Past and has seen things in his history that have caused him to feel regret. Scrooge is described in this scene as wishing he had been blessed with a daughter who could have been "a spring-time in the haggard winter of his life" this metaphor suggests a longing for the warmth and comfort a family could have brought him. The use of the noun "spring-time" connotes the impression that children would have brought new life and hope now his own youth is fading - which cleverly conveys the writers own feelings on the institution of family.

Presenting Scrooge in this way contrasts massively with how he had been at the start of the novella when he was described as preferring to "edge his way along the crowded paths of life, warning all human sympathy to keep its distance" which made clear his distaste for closeness of any kind with other people.

Dickens further conveys Scrooge's regret at having let his chance for a family slip by him when we read; "his sight grew very dim indeed." This subtly hints that Scrooge is so remorseful at having missed his chance at a family that now, having seen what he has missed out on, he is reduced to tears.

In contrast, at the start, Scrooge was described as being a man who "no warmth could warm" This metaphor suggest that regardless of outside influence, his emotions would never thaw and he would never show any signs of caring or kindness. This idea has been disproved in this extract and that allows us to see how Scrooge's character is changing because of his regrets.

A final example from the extract is how Scrooge, who had so far responded well to the sights the ghost had shown him, demands "Remove me!" and states "I cannot bear it!" this series of exclamatory sentences demonstrate the strength of reaction Scrooge has experienced. Only being shown the reality of what he has missed out on when it came to choosing not to having a family has affected him in this way and this reinforces the idea that family is a powerful thing.

Scrooge being an unmarried and childless character would have been quite unusual at the time the novella was written, as the vast majority of people married and started families quite young. Dickens presents Scrooge as a lonely and isolated character and in this extract highlights the difference between his life and that of the families around him to show how happy they are in contrast, in doing so he demonstrates the importance of family.



# Practice question – The Ghosts

*Taken from the beginning of Stave 4 – Scrooge is meeting the Ghost of Christmas Yet To Come for the first time.*

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

*Starting with this extract, explore how Dickens presents the spirits in his novella.*

**Write about:**

- **How Dickens presents the spirit in this extract**
- **Which of the three spirits you think has the most powerful effect on Scrooge**

Question: Starting with this extract, explore how Dickens presents the spirits in his novella.

Plan your response below; you should select 3 pieces of evidence from this extract, and 2 from the wider novella (in this case one for each of the other ghosts). Add them to the table and plan out how you could link them to the questions.

Context:					
Method/keyword:					
Link to the way the spirits/ghosts are presented:					
Evidence:					
	Extract:	Extract:	Extract:	Wider novella:	Wider novella:

## Partial model:

In this extract, Dickens presents the spirits as guides to Scrooge's redemption. Each ghost has an impact on Scrooge that helps him to change; the Ghost of Christmas Past shows Scrooge things that cause him to feel regret, The Ghost of Christmas Present provokes feelings of guilt, and finally The Ghost of Christmas Yet To Come causes him to feel fear which could be argued is what ensures his redemption is permanent.

In this extract, The Ghost of Christmas Yet To Come is described using a lot of symbolism linked to death. Firstly, this spirit is described as a "phantom" that moved "slowly, gravely, silently". This list of adverbs, as well as indicating that it was in no hurry to reach him, and was perhaps approaching him in a slow and intimidating manner. It also hints to the reader that the message it brings may be linked to death due in particular to the use of "gravely".

Furthermore, it is described as being "shrouded in a deep black garment" with nothing more than "a spectral hand" visible. This description conjures images closely resembling common depictions of the Grim Reaper. Victorian readers would most likely have recognised this as the personification of death, as during that time period there was an increased interest in all things occult – particularly in things relating to the 'journey' of death; modern readers may not make this link quite so readily.

His ghost differs massively to the other two ghosts who either brought "a bright clear jet of light", or are described as having a "genial face" and "sparkling eye". Both the Ghost of Christmas Past, and the Ghost of Christmas Present are presented as approachable and friendly. The connotations of light convey a sense of positivity, and imply that the ghosts are trying to help Scrooge in some way.

The Ghost of Christmas Yet To Come is in direct contrast to the other two Christmas ghosts as its whole aura is portrayed as negative, that coupled with the multiple references to death in its description, force the reader to doubt its intentions and mirror the character's fear rising fear.



# Practice question – Motif of cold

**Read the following extract from Stave 1 and respond to the question provided.**  
In the extract, we are being introduced to Scrooge for the first time

Oh! But he was a tight-fisted hand at the grind- stone, 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, shriveled 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 dogdays; and didn't thaw it one degree at Christmas.

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

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

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

**Starting with this extract, explore how Dickens presents the motif of cold through his description of Scrooge.**

**Write about:**

- **How Dickens presents the theme of cold in this extract.**
- **How Dickens contrasts this with the motif of fire elsewhere in the novella.**



Question: Starting with this extract, explore how Dickens presents the motif of cold through his description of Scrooge.

Plan your response below; you should select 3 pieces of evidence from this extract, and 2 from the wider novella (in this case consider contrasting imagery linked to fire). Add them to the table and plan out how you could link them to the questions.

Context:					
Method/keyword:					
Link to the motif of cold:					
Evidence:					
	Extract:	Extract:	Extract:	Wider novella:	Wider novella:

Partial model:

In this extract, Dickens presents the motif of cold through his description of Scrooge. This extract takes part during Stave One of the novella, Scrooge is being introduced for the first time and he is presented as a man who is unkind, cruel and beyond redemption.

Scrooge is described in this scene as a man who “no warmth could warm” nor could any “wintery weather chill him“. This metaphor suggest that Scrooge is so emotionally cold that outside influences, such as the weather, were unable to make him any more unpleasant. It could also mean that the actions of those around him did little to affect his mood and behaviour, and implies that his negativity is so deeply rooted within him that he is unlikely to change his ways.

This motif of cold is further developed when we read “he carried his own low temperature always about with him” which effectively conveys the idea that Scrooge is never pleasant, he is always an unkind, uncompassionate man regardless of the setting. The verb “carried” also implies that he acts this way deliberately as he chooses to carry that attitude with him.

In contrast, Dickens juxtaposes the coldness of Scrooge with the warmth displayed by his nephew Fred, this is done in our first introduction to Fed through the motif of fire.

Fred is described as “all in a glow” as he had “so heated himself with walking”. This literally tells us that he has become warm from movement, however, it also conveys the warmth of his character through the language chosen; for example “glow” conveys the impression that his positivity radiates from within him and is visible to anyone who meets him.

Fred is also described as having eyes that “sparkled”, which again gives us the impression that he is filled with light and warmth because of his inner kindness and pleasant nature.

The contrast between the two characters highlights they severity of the effect Scrooge’s poor attitude has both his appearance and the feelings of those around him. We are also being positioned to see that Scrooge’s attitude is not typical of every one of the time period and that there are some that are warm and compassionate to others.



# A CHRISTMAS CAROL - CHARLES DICKENS

PLOT		CHARACTERS		KEY VOCAB		KEY QUOTATIONS	
Stave 1	Ebenezer Scrooge is at work in his counting house. Despite the Christmas Eve cold, he refuses to spend money on coals for the fire. Scrooge turns down his nephew Fred's invitation to his Christmas party and the request of two men who ask for a donation. Back at home, Scrooge is visited by the ghost of his dead partner, Jacob Marley, who tells Scrooge that, due to his own greedy life, he is doomed to wander the Earth wearing heavy chains. Marley tries to save Scrooge from the same fate. He tells Scrooge that three spirits will visit him during the next three nights. Scrooge falls asleep.	Ebenezer Scrooge	A selfish business man who transforms into a charitable philanthropist.	altruistic	"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."		
		Jacob Marley	Scrooge's dead partner who returns as a ghost to warn Scrooge to change his ways.	antithesis	"Another idol has displaced me. A golden one."		
Stave 2	Scrooge wakes to the Ghost of Christmas Past. Invisible to those he watches, Scrooge revisits his childhood school days, his apprenticeship with a jolly merchant named Fezziwig, and his engagement to Belle, who breaks off her engagement to Scrooge as he loves money too much to love another human being. Scrooge sheds tears of regret before being returned to his bed.	Bob Cratchit	Scrooge's clerk who doesn't have much money. He loves his family and is shown to be happy and morally upright.	avaricious	"He had so heated himself with rapid walking in the fog and frost, this nephew of Scrooge's, that he was all in a glow; his face was ruddy and handsome; his eyes sparkled, and his breath smoked again."		
		Tiny Tim	Bob's ill son whose story plays a part in inspiring Scrooge's transformation.	benevolent	"Old Marley was as dead as a door-nail."		
Stave 3	The Ghost of Christmas Present shows Scrooge Christmas as it will happen that year. Scrooge watches the Cratchit family eat a tiny meal in their little home. He sees Bob Cratchit's crippled son, Tiny Tim, whose kindness and humility warm Scrooge's heart. The spectre shows Scrooge his nephew's Christmas party. Scrooge asks the spirit to stay until the very end. Toward the end of the day the ghost shows Scrooge two starved children, Ignorance and Want. He vanishes as Scrooge notices a dark, hooded figure coming.	The ghost of Christmas Past	A strange combination of young and old, wearing white robes and looking like a candle.	malevolent	"I wear the chain I forged in life. I made it link by link and yard by yard. I girded it of my own free will, and by my own free will I wore it."		
		The ghost of Christmas Present	A portly, jovial gentleman surrounded by a warm glow. He brings joy on the most needy townsfolk.	misanthropic	"Tell me I may sponge away the writing on this stone."		
Stave 4	The Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come takes Scrooge through a sequence of scenes linked to an unnamed man's death. Scrooge is keen to learn the lesson. He begs to know the name of the dead man. He finds himself in a churchyard with the spirit pointing to a grave. Scrooge looks at the headstone and is shocked to read his own name. He is desperate to change his fate and promises to change his ways. He suddenly finds himself safely tucked in his bed.	The ghost of Christmas yet to come	A robed and hooded spirit who confronts Scrooge with his own tombstone.	penitent	"They were a boy and a girl. Yellow, meagre, ragged, scowling, wolfish."		
		<b>HISTORICAL CONTEXTS</b>		responsibility	"They are Man's."		
Stave 5	The Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come takes Scrooge through a sequence of scenes linked to an unnamed man's death. Scrooge is keen to learn the lesson. He begs to know the name of the dead man. He finds himself in a churchyard with the spirit pointing to a grave. Scrooge looks at the headstone and is shocked to read his own name. He is desperate to change his fate and promises to change his ways. He suddenly finds himself safely tucked in his bed.	Dickens became a writer of fiction and journalism, reporting on court cases and working for radical newspapers on his disillusionment with politics and the class system.		redemption	"Assure me that I may yet change these shadows you have shown me, by an altered life."		
		Dickens was put to work in a warehouse, pasting labels on bottles. He had experience of poverty.		supernatural	"I am light as a feather, I am as happy as an angel, I am as merry as a school boy. I am as giddy as a drunken man."		
		Dickens became a writer of fiction and journalism, reporting on court cases and working for radical newspapers on his disillusionment with politics and the class system.		vignette			
		1832 – The Great Reform Bill gave many middle class property owners the right to vote for the first time. Large sections of the middle classes, the working classes and women still didn't have the right to vote.		<b>STYLISTIC FEATURES</b>			
		1834 – Poor Law Amendment Act – Led to a cut in aid given to paupers to help them stay in their own homes. Workhouses were created which poor people would have to live and work in, if they were unable to pay for their own housing.		intrusive narrator			
		September 1843 – Dickens visits a "Ragged School."		motifs/symbols			
		December 1843 - Dickens writes 'A Christmas Carol', focusing on how many of society's ills can be blamed on greed for money and status.		pathetic fallacy			
				flashback			
				flashforward			
				allegory			

## Write a narrative inspired by this image:

You should imagine you are Marley's Ghost and have just left Scrooge. It should be written as a narrative, but your work still needs to be descriptive; in order to be sure you are adding enough description, you need to select at least 3 areas from the images provided to use in your description. Avoid naming things, instead use figurative language to describe them.



### You should aim to include:

- metaphor
- simile
- personification
- a rhetorical question
- varied sentence openers
- varied punctuation
- ambitious vocabulary

Spend at least 10 minutes planning your response before you begin. Remember to proof read and check for content at the end.

You should time the task as follows:

- 10 minutes planning
- 35 minutes writing
- 5 minutes proof reading and improving

**Remember: plan, do, review!**

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### conflict/action:

What is bothering him?

### setting:

Where is your scene taking place?

Marley's  
ghost  
narrative

### character:

What does your character look like? What is their history?

## **conflict/action:**

- he has hope- jealous but wants him to redeem himself
- revenge- Marley didn't have the chance and so Scrooge shouldn't
- mixed emotion- revenge/hope- if he is successful it could benefit both Scrooge and Marley
- he never had the opportunity
- if Scrooge doesn't succeed it might affect Marley

## **character:**

- drifting away- out the window- from his
- friends house.
- thinking about his conversation. Should
- Scrooge be given this chance?
- spirits surrounded him- miserable,
- groaning, tormented by their past lives.
- filled with regret.

## **setting:**

- gloomy/cold atmosphere
- dark enshrouds the building that
- Scrooge inhabits.
- ominous feeling- nervous energy
- foggy
- lone house that towers- decrepit
- ice and snow on the cobbled streets
- gas lamp posts
- small Christmas wreaths on doors

## **Model**

A thick mist filled the chilly air, oozing through the alleyways and spilling out onto the icy cobbled streets. One lone street lamp glowed dimly - its weak flame casting barely enough light to penetrate the fog that surrounded it; from its ornate frame hung daggers of ice, dangling precariously as if waiting to fall on some unlucky passer-by. Not tonight though. Tonight the streets were empty of humankind. Tonight the streets belong to the dead.

Drifting away from his friend's home, the wails of other lost souls permeated the air around him, Marley pondered over the conversation he had just had. Each night the spirits rose from their graves and walked the earth unnoticed by mankind - tonight was no exception.

Transparent figures filled every inch of space: rattling chains; banging their cash boxes; moaning in anguish. Usually Marley's own voice rose up amongst them, but tonight it fell silent.

He had long accepted his fate, doomed to walk amongst the living for eternity with no hope of redemption; it had seemed a fitting punishment for his sins. But now? Now he questioned the fairness of it all. A sudden cry of anguish escaped his wrinkled lips and he raised his chains to the heavens in fury - causing other passing souls to pause and stare in wonder. Lowering his hands once more he dipped his chin and allowed his head to hang in shame; his eyes fixed on the frozen pavement below. Selfish desires had cost him so much already, he would not allow himself to slip back into old habits and revert to the damaged soul he had once been. He would find a way to support his old friend - somehow.

