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AQA GCSE English Literature

# A Christmas Carol

By Charles Dickens

8702



# Clear**Revise**<sup>®</sup>

## AQA GCSE **English Literature**

Illustrated revision and practice

**A Christmas Carol**  
By Charles Dickens

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DT2 7EW  
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[sales@pgonline.co.uk](mailto:sales@pgonline.co.uk)  
[www.clearrevise.com](http://www.clearrevise.com)  
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# PREFACE

Absolute clarity! That's the aim.

This is everything you need to ace the question on *A Christmas Carol* and beam with pride. The content is laid out in a beautifully illustrated format that is clear, approachable and as concise and simple as possible.

The checklist on the contents pages will help you keep track of what you have already worked through and what's left before the big day.

We have included worked exam-style questions with answers. There is also an exam-style question at the end of the book. You can check your answer against that given on page 62.

## LEVELS OF LEARNING

Based on the degree to which you are able to truly understand a new topic, we recommend that you work in stages. Start by reading a short explanation of something, then try to recall what you've just read. This will have limited effect if you stop there but it aids the next stage. Question everything. Write down your own summary and then complete and mark a related exam-style question. Cover up the answers if necessary but learn from them once you've seen them. Lastly, teach someone else. Explain the topic in a way that they can understand. Have a go at the different practice questions – they offer an insight into how and where marks are awarded.

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# THE SCIENCE OF REVISION

## Illustrations and words

Research has shown that revising with words and pictures doubles the quality of responses by students.<sup>1</sup> This is known as ‘dual-coding’ because it provides two ways of fetching the information from our brain. The improvement in responses is particularly apparent in students when they are asked to apply their knowledge to different problems. Recall, application and judgement are all specifically and carefully assessed in public examination questions.

## Retrieval of information

Retrieval practice encourages students to come up with answers to questions.<sup>2</sup> The closer the question is to one you might see in a real examination, the better. Also, the closer the environment in which a student revises is to the ‘examination environment’, the better. Students who had a test 2–7 days away did 30% better using retrieval practice than students who simply read, or repeatedly reread material. Students who were expected to teach the content to someone else after their revision period did better still.<sup>3</sup> What was found to be most interesting in other studies is that students using retrieval methods and testing for revision were also more resilient to the introduction of stress.<sup>4</sup>

## Ebbinghaus’ forgetting curve and spaced learning

Ebbinghaus’ 140-year-old study examined the rate at which we forget things over time. The findings still hold true. However, the act of forgetting facts and techniques and relearning them is what cements them into the brain.<sup>5</sup> Spacing out revision is more effective than cramming – we know that, but students should also know that the space between revisiting material should vary depending on how far away the examination is. A cyclical approach is required. An examination 12 months away necessitates revisiting covered material about once a month. A test in 30 days should have topics revisited every 3 days – intervals of roughly a tenth of the time available.<sup>6</sup>

## Summary

Students: the more tests and past questions you do, in an environment as close to examination conditions as possible, the better you are likely to perform on the day. If you prefer to listen to music while you revise, tunes without lyrics will be far less detrimental to your memory and retention. Silence is most effective.<sup>5</sup> If you choose to study with friends, choose carefully – effort is contagious.<sup>7</sup>

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# CONTENTS

Assessment objectives .....	vi	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
		<input type="checkbox"/>

## Context, language and structure

Dickens and <i>A Christmas Carol</i> .....	2	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Context.....	4	<input type="checkbox"/>
Features of the novella.....	9	<input type="checkbox"/>
Language techniques.....	10	<input type="checkbox"/>

## Analysis of staves

Stave One.....	13	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Stave Two.....	18	<input type="checkbox"/>
Stave Three.....	21	<input type="checkbox"/>
Stave Four.....	26	<input type="checkbox"/>
Stave Five.....	29	<input type="checkbox"/>

## Analysis of characters

Characters: Ebenezer Scrooge .....	31	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Characters: Fred.....	36	<input type="checkbox"/>
Characters: Jacob Marley.....	38	<input type="checkbox"/>
Characters: Bob Cratchit.....	39	<input type="checkbox"/>
Characters: The Cratchit Family.....	40	<input type="checkbox"/>
Characters: The Ghost of Christmas Past.....	41	<input type="checkbox"/>
Characters: The Ghost of Christmas Present .....	42	<input type="checkbox"/>
Characters: The Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come .....	43	<input type="checkbox"/>
Characters: Ignorance and Want.....	46	<input type="checkbox"/>

## Analysis of themes

Themes: Redemption .....	47	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Themes: Christmas spirit.....	52	<input type="checkbox"/>
Themes: Poverty.....	56	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>Examination practice</b> .....	<b>60</b>
Levels-based mark schemes for extended response questions.....	61
Examination practice answers.....	62
Index .....	63
Acknowledgments .....	64
<b>Examination tips</b> .....	<b>65</b>

## MARK ALLOCATIONS

All the questions in this book require extended responses. These answers should be marked as a whole in accordance with the levels of response guidance on **page 61**. The answers provided are examples only. There are many more points to make than there are marks available, so the answers are not exhaustive.

# ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVES

In the exam, your answers will be marked against assessment objectives (AOs). It's important you understand which skills each AO tests.

## AO1

- Show the ability to read, understand and respond to texts.
- Answers should maintain a critical style and develop an informed personal response.
- Use examples from the text, including quotes, to support and illustrate points.

## AO2

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

## AO3

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

## AO4

- Use a range of vocabulary and sentence structures for clarity, purpose and effect, with accurate spelling and punctuation.

The AOs on this page have been written in simple language. See the [AQA website](#) for the official wording.



# PAPER 1

## Shakespeare and the 19<sup>th</sup>-century novel

### Information about Paper 1

**Written exam: 1 hour 45 minutes** (this includes the questions on Shakespeare)

**64 marks** (30 marks for Shakespeare plus 4 marks for SPaG, and 30 marks for the 19<sup>th</sup>-century novel)

**40% of the qualification grade** (20% each for Shakespeare and the 19<sup>th</sup>-century novel)

**This guide covers the section on the 19<sup>th</sup>-century novel.**

#### Questions

One extended-writing question per text

# DICKENS AND A CHRISTMAS CAROL

*A Christmas Carol* is a story by Charles Dickens which was first published in 1843.

## Charles Dickens

Charles Dickens (1812–1870) is one of the best-known British writers. He wrote over a dozen novels, including *Oliver Twist*, *Great Expectations*, *Little Dorrit* and *A Tale of Two Cities*.

He had a relatively comfortable childhood, but in 1824, his father was imprisoned for unpaid debts when Charles was 12. Charles' mother joined her husband in debtors' prison (which was usual at the time). While his parents were in prison, Charles left school and worked at a boot blacking factory to support himself, working ten-hour days.

**Comment:** Dickens' experiences of the prison system and child labour influenced his attitudes towards social reform.

Many of Dickens' novels, including *A Christmas Carol*, reference social injustice, poverty and crime, and Dickens was critical of how the poor were treated by society. The popularity of Dickens' novels meant his message about social reform reached a large audience, and his readers recognised that more needed to be done to help the less fortunate. Turn to **pages 5–8** for more on Victorian social problems and social reform.

Charles Dickens



## A Christmas Carol

*A Christmas Carol* has elements of the **ghost story** genre and is an example of a **morality tale**.

**Ghost stories:** The story's full title is: *A Christmas Carol. In Prose. Being a Ghost Story of Christmas.*

*"Prose"* just means 'written without rhythm'. This clarifies to the reader that it isn't a book of Christmas songs

*A Christmas Carol* features several supernatural elements:

**Ghosts:** Scrooge is visited by four different ghosts.

**Time travel:** Scrooge travels backwards and forwards through time.

**Location hops:** The ghosts magically transport Scrooge across London, as well as to his childhood village, a moor, a lighthouse and on to a ship.



Stories with supernatural elements were popular in the 19<sup>th</sup> century because they offered readers an escape from everyday life.

# CONTEXT

The context of the Victorian period is important for understanding the deeper meaning of the novella.



You need to comment on context to get marks for AO3 (page vi).

## Setting

The year the story takes place is never confirmed, but it is likely to be around the time the novella was written (1843), and most of the events take place in London.

**Comment:** Setting the story in London allowed Dickens to highlight the inequality between the rich and poor more easily. Since the two groups lived in close proximity of each other, this made the issue of poverty more pronounced.

The years between 1837–1901 are known as the Victorian period, because this is when Queen Victoria was on the throne.

The events of the novella unfold over three days: Christmas Eve, Christmas Day and Boxing Day.

**Comment:** Dickens chose to set his novella over the Christmas period because it is a holiday associated with kindness and forgiveness, two important themes in the story. Dickens wanted his readers to act with kindness and forgiveness all year round. For more on the theme of Christmas spirit, turn to **pages 52–53**.

## Class

British society in the 19<sup>th</sup> century could be categorised into three classes: upper, middle and working class. The class system was fixed, and it was difficult to move up the hierarchy. Upper-class families were the richest members of society and belonged to the aristocracy (families with inherited land and wealth). Upper-class families probably made up about 5% of the population. Those in the middle-class, like Scrooge, had money, but they earned it through running their own businesses. They accounted for approximately 15% of the population.

**Comment:** Scrooge owns a “*counting-house*”. This is similar to a modern accountancy firm where accountants record financial transactions made by businesses. It’s also implied that Scrooge is a money lender who profits from loaning money to the poor. In *Stave Four*, the *Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come* shows a family who owe money to Scrooge.

# FEATURES OF THE NOVELLA

*A Christmas Carol* is a novella: a short novel.

## Staves

The novella has five chapters which Dickens calls 'staves'. Staves are also the five lines that musical notes are written on, so this links to the musical title of *A Christmas Carol*.



The exam paper might refer to 'Chapters' instead of 'Staves'. Don't worry, they mean the same thing.



## Narrator

*A Christmas Carol* uses an unnamed, **first-person narrator** to tell parts of the story. The reader never discovers the narrator's identity, but it's implied it is someone who is familiar with Scrooge, as he knows a lot about Scrooge's personality. The narrator conveys his disapproval of Scrooge, describing him as a "covetous, old sinner", which encourages the reader to dislike Scrooge too.

The narrator often uses a **conversational tone**, as well as imaginative and humorous descriptions, to make the story more entertaining for the reader: "I might have been inclined, myself, to regard a coffin-nail as the deadest piece of ironmongery in the trade".

**Comment:** Telling parts of the story from a first-person perspective, as well as using a familiar tone, helps create a closer relationship between the narrator and the reader. It also makes the novella seem more believable, as if the narrator is recalling actual events.

## Structure

Much of the novella is set in Scrooge's present, with the action unfolding between Christmas Eve and Boxing Day. However, there are **time hops** when the ghosts visit Scrooge and show him the past, present and future. This allows the reader to witness how Scrooge's past has shaped him, and the events which lead to his redemption.

**Comment:** Each of the ghosts only have a short amount of time with Scrooge. This increases the pace and urgency of the story: Scrooge must learn his lesson before time runs out.



# LANGUAGE TECHNIQUES

Dickens uses lots of linguistic techniques in *A Christmas Carol*. You need to analyse techniques in your exam answer to get good marks for AO2.



It's not enough to just spot techniques. You also need to explain what effect these techniques have on the reader.

## Foreshadowing

**Foreshadowing** is when a writer hints at something that will happen later in the book.

*"the houses opposite were mere phantoms"*

**Comment:** Dickens uses this metaphor (see **page 12**) to describe how ghostly the houses look in the fog. However, describing the houses as "phantoms" foreshadows the arrival of the ghosts, and creates an eerie and unsettling atmosphere.

## Dramatic irony

**Dramatic irony** describes when the reader knows something that the characters do not.

**Comment:** In Stave Four, Scrooge overhears a group of businessmen discussing someone who has died. The reader suspects that they are talking about Scrooge, however Scrooge doesn't realise they are talking about him. This creates suspense for the reader as they wonder when Scrooge will realise that he is the dead man.

## Symbolism

**Symbolism** is when an author uses a symbol to represent an idea. Dickens uses warmth to symbolise goodwill and cold to symbolise heartlessness.

**Comment:** In Stave One, Scrooge has a "low fire", highlighting his miserly nature, whereas Fred is described as being "a glow", which implies he has a warm personality.

## Allegory

**Allegory** is when a text, or an element of a text, has a hidden, bigger meaning.

*"This boy is Ignorance.  
This girl is Want."*

**Comment:** Ignorance and Want aren't just two poor children, they represent the wider problem of poverty. See **page 57** for more.

## Foil

A **foil** is a character who is the opposite to another character. Writers use foils to reveal information about one character by contrasting their behaviour and emotions with another.

**Comment:** Fred acts as a foil to Scrooge. Where Fred is kind and joyful, Scrooge is greedy and miserable. Fred's positive characteristics emphasise just how unpleasant Scrooge is.

# STAVE ONE

Stave One introduces the character of Scrooge, a miserable and greedy man, who is visited by the ghost of his former business partner, Jacob Marley.

## Stave One: Marley's Ghost

**Comment:** *A Christmas Carol* is told by an unnamed narrator. The narrator often includes his own opinion and speaks in a chatty (by Victorian standards) style, which helps create a sense of familiarity with the reader. For more on the narrator, turn to **page 9**.

The reader is told that Scrooge's business partner, Jacob Marley, is dead: "*Marley was as dead as a door-nail*".

**Comment:** Starting the story with death introduces a morbid tone, and hints at the eerie events to come. This establishes the novella as a **ghost story** (see **page 2**). Readers also need to know that Marley is dead so that they are shocked when his ghost appears later in the stave.

The narrator explains the relationship between Scrooge and Marley: Scrooge was Marley's "*sole friend, and sole mourner*". Despite this, Scrooge "*was not so dreadfully cut up*" by Marley's death, and Scrooge, as an "*excellent man of business*", commemorated Marley's funeral with "*an undoubted bargain*".

**Comment:** This suggests that Marley was not a popular man: only Scrooge attended his funeral, and even Scrooge wasn't particularly upset about Marley's death. Even on the day of Marley's funeral, Scrooge was only concerned about business deals. Marley's lonely funeral **foreshadows** what could happen to Scrooge if he doesn't change his ways.

Scrooge is described as a "*wrenching, grasping, scraping, clutching, covetous old sinner!*".

**Comment:** Dickens uses a long list of adjectives to emphasise just how greedy and unpleasant Scrooge is. Establishing Scrooge as a wholly unlikeable character makes his redemption by the end of the novella more astonishing. See **pages 47–49** for more on the theme of redemption.

Scrooge is also presented as unpopular: "*Nobody ever stopped him in the street to say, with gladsome look, 'My dear Scrooge, how are you?'*". Even though he knows he is disliked, Scrooge doesn't seem to care or want to change. For more on Scrooge, see **pages 31–33**.

Scrooge is presented as an unlikeable character.



# CHARACTERS: FRED

Fred is Scrooge's nephew. Even though Scrooge is unpleasant to Fred, Fred never stops treating his uncle with kindness.

## Stave One

**Comment:** Fred acts as a **foil** to Scrooge. Fred's kind and cheerful nature emphasises Scrooge's miserly and unpleasant ways.

**Joyful:** Fred greets Scrooge with a "cheerful voice".

**Comment:** Fred is described as having "a glow" and his eyes "sparkle". This emphasises Fred's warm and lively personality, and contrasts with the cold atmosphere in Scrooge's office.

Scrooges tries to push Fred away in Stave One.



**Poor:** Scrooge tells Fred, "What reason have you to be merry? You're poor enough".

**Comment:** Even though Fred isn't wealthy, he's happier than Scrooge. Fred admits: "There are many things from which I might have derived good, by which I have not profited". Dickens uses the character of Fred to show that wealth doesn't bring happiness. This also reinforces Scrooge's greed: Scrooge knows his nephew is poor, but doesn't offer to help him.

**Compassionate:** Fred recognises that Christmas is: "a kind, forgiving, charitable, pleasant time".

**Comment:** Fred shows compassion, and he embodies Christmas spirit. For more on the theme of Christmas spirit, turn to **pages 52–53**.

**Determined:** Even though Scrooge is openly dismissive and hostile towards him, Fred keeps trying to reach out to his uncle: "I ask nothing of you; why cannot we be friends?".

**Comment:** Fred's relentless optimism is admirable. Just like Marley and the ghosts, he doesn't want to give up on Scrooge.



Starting with this extract, explore how Dickens uses the ghosts to help Scrooge change his attitudes and behaviours.

Write about:

- how Dickens uses the Ghost of Christmas Past in this extract
- how Dickens uses the ghosts to help Scrooge change his attitudes and behaviours in the novel as a whole.

[30]

*Your answer may include:*

AO1 – show understanding of the text

- *The Ghost of Christmas Past shows Scrooge how Fezziwig treats everyone with kindness. Fezziwig shakes “hands with everybody individually”, including Scrooge’s past self. Scrooge recognises the positive impact that Fezziwig’s generosity has on those around him.*
- *This vision helps Scrooge to acknowledge that he should treat Bob Cratchit with more kindness. Scrooge comments: “I should like to be able to say a word or two to my clerk”.*
- *The other ghosts show Scrooge visions to try to change his attitudes and behaviours. The Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come presents Scrooge with the consequences of a life of greed, whereas the Ghost of Christmas Present shows Scrooge the Cratchits’ Christmas to highlight the importance of family and the idea that wealth does not bring happiness.*

AO2 – show understanding of the writer’s language choices

- *Dickens uses light to describe Fezziwig: a “positive light appeared to issue from Fezziwig’s calves”. This symbolises Fezziwig’s goodness and generosity.*
- *Dickens uses the phrase “pouring out their hearts in praise”. The heart has connotations of love, so this emphasises the strength of love that younger Scrooge felt towards Fezziwig.*
- *The ghost questions Scrooge to elicit a response from him: “What’s the matter?” and “Something I think?”, encouraging Scrooge to reflect on his past behaviour.*

AO3 – relate the novella to the context

- *Dickens uses this extract to highlight that employers have the power to make their employees happy. Dickens believed that better pay and working conditions could help to alleviate some societal problems, such as poverty.*
- *Dickens uses the other ghosts to highlight other societal issues. For example, the Ghost of Christmas Present shows Ignorance and Want to highlight how a lack of education can trap people in a cycle of poverty. Dickens wanted his readers to recognise that reform was needed to bring about societal change.*
- *The ghost story genre allows Dickens to use supernatural elements to convey his messages. For example, he uses the phantoms in *Stave One* to suggest that the punishment for greed was torment in the afterlife.*

*This answer should be marked in accordance with the levels-based mark scheme on page 61.*



**Make sure your answer to this question is in paragraphs and full sentences. Bullet points have been used in this example answer to suggest some information you could include.**

# THEMES: CHRISTMAS SPIRIT

If someone has 'Christmas spirit' it means they act with kindness, generosity and happiness. Dickens thought people should show Christmas spirit all year round.

## Christmas and Christianity

Although Christmas is a Christian celebration, Dickens focuses on the secular (non-religious) aspects of the holiday, for example, Christmas dinner, time with family and party games.

Dickens acknowledges that not everyone who claims to be a Christian acts with compassion. Instead, Dickens believes that happiness, kindness and generosity should be part of a person's human nature, rather than being associated with someone's religious beliefs.

**Comment:** Setting the story over the Christmas period allows Dickens to contrast Scrooge's unpleasant, miserly character with the goodwill of others, making his character seem even more unsympathetic.

The majority of Dickens' Victorian readers would have been very familiar with Christmas, so setting the novel at this time of year allows readers to reflect on their own behaviour during the festive period, and consider how they could embody the Christmas spirit all year round.



## The charity collectors

The charity collectors show Christmas spirit by raising money to help those who cannot afford to celebrate Christmas. The charity collectors see Christmas as a time when "*Want is keenly felt and Abundance rejoices*". They recognise that Christmas highlights the division between the rich and the poor, and they want to help those who are struggling.

## Fred

Fred embodies Christmas spirit: he is welcoming, charitable and cheerful. Fred describes Christmas as a time when men and women should "*open their shut-up hearts freely, and think of people below them*". Even though Scrooge initially pushes Fred away, Fred doesn't hold a grudge against him, and welcomes Scrooge into his house on Christmas Day.

Starting with this extract, explore how Dickens presents ideas about joy and happiness in *A Christmas Carol*.

Write about:

- how Dickens presents joy and happiness in this extract
- how Dickens presents ideas about joy and happiness in the novel as a whole.

[30]

Your answer may include:

AO1 – show understanding of the text

- This extract from *Stave Five* follows Scrooge's redemption. He is joyful because he has been given a second chance to make amends and redeem his greedy and selfish past.
- Scrooge finds happiness from donating money to charity, spending time with Fred, as well as simply walking around the streets of London. Dickens suggests that happiness comes from generosity and family, as well as simply enjoying life, rather than from money or possessions.
- This is echoed elsewhere in the novel. For example, Dickens also shows joy and happiness from the generosity of Fezziwig's Christmas party as well the joy of the Cratchit's Christmas celebrations as they spend time as a family.

AO2 – show understanding of the writer's language choices

- In the lines "He went to church, and walked about the streets, and watched the people hurrying to and fro, and patted children on the head..." Dickens repeats the conjunction "and" in the long list of actions to express Scrooge's bustling activity and his new-found enthusiasm for the simple things in life, that bring him "so much happiness".
- The exaggeration of "It is a mercy he didn't shake his arm off" expresses just how delighted Fred is to see Scrooge, and how spending time with family brings Fred joy.
- The repetition of "wonderful" in the phrase "Wonderful party, wonderful games, wonderful unanimity, won-der-ful happiness" emphasises how happy Scrooge is.
- Dickens' use of exclamation marks throughout the extract ("Bless you!") to show the characters' positivity and enthusiasm in their dialogue. This gives the extract an excited and buoyant tone.

AO3 – relate the novella to the context

- Dickens shows how acting with Christmas spirit helps to spread joy and happiness. Dickens wanted readers to embody Christmas spirit all year round.
- Dickens wants his readers to recognise that generosity can lead to happiness, for both the giver and the receiver. When Scrooge was greedy and miserly he was miserable and unhappy, but when he acts with kindness and generosity, Scrooge not only makes himself happy, but also the charity collector and Fred.
- Dickens believed that compassion and generosity could help to alleviate societal problems, such as poverty. Dickens uses the novella to encourage readers to behave in a selfless way.

*This answer should be marked in accordance with the levels-based mark scheme on page 61.*



Make sure your answer to this question is in paragraphs and full sentences. Bullet points have been used in this example answer to suggest some information you could include.

# EXAMINATION PRACTICE

**In this extract from Stave Four, the Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come takes Scrooge to a churchyard. The ghost shows Scrooge what his grave may look like in the future.**

*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.*

Starting with this extract, explore how Dickens presents Scrooge's fears in *A Christmas Carol*.

Write about:

- how Dickens presents what Scrooge is frightened of in this extract
- how Dickens presents Scrooge's fears in the novel as a whole.

[30]

# LEVELS-BASED MARK SCHEMES FOR EXTENDED RESPONSE QUESTIONS

Questions that require extended writing use mark bands. The whole answer will be marked together to determine which mark band it fits into and which mark should be awarded within the mark band.

The descriptors have been written in simple language to give an indication of the expectations of each mark level. See the AQA website for the official mark schemes used.

Level	Students' answers tend to...
<b>6</b> <b>(26–30 marks)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus on the text as conscious construct (i.e. a story written by Dickens intended to have a deliberate effect).</li> <li>• Produce a logical and well-structured response which closely uses the text to explore their argument / interpretation.</li> <li>• Analyse the writer's craft by considering the effects of a writer's choice, linked closely to meanings.</li> <li>• Understand the writer's purpose and context.</li> </ul>
<b>5</b> <b>(21–25 marks)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Start to think about ideas in a more developed way.</li> <li>• Think about the deeper meaning of a text and start to explore alternative interpretations.</li> <li>• Start to focus on specific elements of writer's craft, linked to meanings.</li> <li>• Focus more on abstract concepts, such as themes and ideas, than narrative events or character feelings.</li> </ul>
<b>4</b> <b>(16–20 marks)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sustain a focus on an idea, or a particular technique.</li> <li>• Start to consider how the text works and what the writer is doing.</li> <li>• Use examples effectively to support their points.</li> <li>• Explain the effect of a writer's method on the text, with a clear focus on it having been consciously written.</li> <li>• Show an understanding of ideas and themes.</li> </ul>
<b>3</b> <b>(11–15 marks)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explain their ideas.</li> <li>• Demonstrate knowledge of the text as a whole.</li> <li>• Show awareness of the concept of themes.</li> <li>• Identify the effects of a range of methods on reader.</li> </ul>
<b>2</b> <b>(6–10 marks)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support their comments by using references to / from the text.</li> <li>• Make comments that are generally relevant to the question.</li> <li>• Identify at least one method and possibly make some comment on the effect of it on the reader.</li> </ul>
<b>1</b> <b>(1–5 marks)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Describe the text.</li> <li>• Retell the narrative.</li> <li>• Make references to, rather than use references from, the text.</li> </ul>
<b>0 marks</b>	Nothing worthy of credit / nothing written.

# EXAMINATION PRACTICE ANSWERS

Throughout the novella, Dickens uses fear as a motivator to encourage Scrooge to learn the error of his ways and set him on the path to redemption. This begins in Stave One with the appearance of Marley's ghost, and reaches a climax in this extract from Stave Four where the Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come shows Scrooge a version of the future where he has not redeemed himself. Although each of the ghosts elicit a variety of emotions from Scrooge, including happiness and sadness, it is arguably fear which has the most significant impact on Scrooge's desire to change.

In this extract, Scrooge is frightened that it is too late to redeem himself, and that the visions shown by the Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come will come true. Scrooge is fearful that people will not mourn his passing, and that his death will be quickly forgotten, as suggested by his *"neglected"* grave. Dickens shows Scrooge's fear as he approaches the grave with the use of the verb *"crept"*. This implies Scrooge's reluctance to look at the grave and face what he has probably suspected all along: that he is the dead man. Scrooge's fear is also emphasised with his use of exclamations, for example *"No, Spirit! Oh no, no!"*. This conveys Scrooge's strength of emotion and his desperation to change the course of his fate. Scrooge's fear is also emphasised by his use of imperative verbs, such as *"Say"*, *"hear"* and *"Assure"* as he begs the Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come. These command verbs highlight Scrooge's desperation and his urgency to be reassured by the ghost that he still has the opportunity to change. The cumulative effect of these techniques is to clearly convey Scrooge's fear and distress. Seeing a grown man display such raw emotions would have shocked Victorian readers, particularly because people were expected to suppress strong emotions and to behave in a polite and reserved manner.

Scrooge is visited by several ghosts, but he is most afraid of the Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come. The ghost is characterised as sinister and mysterious; it doesn't speak and the appearance is similar to that of the Grim Reaper, the personification of death. Dickens never describes the ghost's face to the reader, and he may have chosen to present the ghost in this way to represent how the future is unknown. Characterising the Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come as a frightening, death-like spectre reinforces the seriousness of the ghost's message about change and redemption. Using fear to reinforce a serious message is also seen in Stave One, where Marley's ghost is presented as frightening with *"death-cold eyes"*. Marley's ghost also has an important message to impart to Scrooge about the consequences of his selfish behaviour.

Dickens also hoped that the fear of punishment in the afterlife would also resonate with his readers. Since Dickens' Victorian readers were mainly Christians, they would have been very familiar with the ideas of heaven and hell. Marley warns Scrooge that if he continues to be greedy and selfish, he will be punished in the afterlife. This punishment is an eternal purgatory where spirits are unable to help those in the mortal world, as shown by the restless phantoms who cannot intervene in the world of the living. Dickens wanted readers of *A Christmas Carol* to realise that they needed to act with more compassion towards those who were less fortunate, especially those living in poverty. Dickens hoped that fear of this purgatory may have encouraged readers to act with more generosity and kindness.

# INDEX

## A

allegory 10, 25, 46  
alliteration 11, 31  
Assessment Objectives vi

## B

Belle 20, 32

## C

chain 17  
charity collectors 5, 6, 8, 15,  
16, 30, 49, 52, 56  
child labour 5  
Christianity 30, 40, 42, 47, 52  
Christmas spirit 52, 53  
class 4  
middle class 4, 8  
upper class 4, 8  
working class 3, 4, 5, 6, 23  
comic relief 12  
context 4–8  
Cratchit, Belinda 40  
Cratchit, Bob 5, 6, 14, 19, 23,  
28, 30, 39, 49  
Cratchit family 40, 53, 56  
Cratchit, Martha 5, 40  
Cratchit, Mrs 23, 24, 28, 40  
Cratchit, Peter 40

## D

Dickens, Charles 2, 8  
Doom 25, 46  
doorknocker 16  
dramatic irony 10, 26, 33

## E

exclamations 11, 25

## F

Fan 18  
Fezziwig 19, 53  
foil 10, 14, 36  
food 8  
foreshadowing 10, 13, 14, 16,  
32  
Fred 14, 15, 18, 24, 28, 30, 36,  
37, 49, 52

## G

Ghost of Christmas Past  
18–20, 28, 41, 48  
Ghost of Christmas Present 16,  
21–25, 42, 48, 53  
Ghost of Christmas Yet to  
Come 4, 26–28, 43, 48  
ghost story 2, 13  
Grim Reaper 26, 43

## H

housing 6  
humbug 15  
humour 12

## I

Ignorance and Want 25, 46, 57  
imperative verbs 18, 25  
Industrial Revolution 6

## J

Jesus 21, 42  
juxtaposition 12

## L

language techniques 10  
London 4

## M

Malthus, Thomas 8  
Marley's ghost 17, 38, 47  
Marley, Jacob 13, 38  
metaphor 12, 17  
morality tale 3

## N

narrator 9, 14  
novella 9  
nutrition 6

## O

Old Joe 27, 57  
onomatopoeia 11

## P

pace 19, 24, 25  
personification 12  
Poor Law 8  
poverty 6, 7, 15, 25, 31, 46, 56  
prisons 7  
puns 12  
purgatory 17

## R

redemption 47–49  
rhetorical questions 11

## S

Sabbatarianism 22  
scabbard 42  
Scrooge, Ebenezer 4–6, 13,  
15–33, 47, 53, 56  
sensory language 11  
simile 12  
slums 6, 27  
Stave One 13–17  
Stave Two 18–20  
Stave Three 21–25  
Stave Four 26–28  
Stave Five 29, 30  
staves 9  
structure 49  
symbolism 10, 21, 31, 41

## T

Three thieves 27, 57  
time hops 2, 9  
Tiny Tim 23, 28, 30, 40, 56  
tone 29  
torch 21, 22, 42  
treadmill 7  
turkey 29

## V

Victorian era 3–8

## W

workhouse 7, 8, 15

# EXAMINATION TIPS

With your examination practice, use a boundary approximation using the following table. Be aware that the grade boundaries can vary from year to year, so they should be used as a guide only.

Grade	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Boundary	88%	79%	71%	61%	52%	43%	31%	21%	10%

1. Read the question carefully. Don't give an answer to a question that you *think* is appearing (or wish was appearing!) rather than the actual question.
2. Spend time reading through the extract, and think about what happens before and after, and how it links to other parts of the novella. The statement above the extract will help you identify where in the novella it is from.
3. It's worth jotting down a quick plan to make sure your answer includes sufficient detail and is focused on the question.
4. The question will ask you about the extract and the novella as a whole, but you don't need to spend an equal amount of time on both. If you're struggling to make close textual references about the extract, you can concentrate on the rest of the novella instead.
5. Start your answer with a brief introduction where you summarise the main points of your response. This can help your answer to stay on-track.
6. A discussion of Dickens' methods can include his language choices, but also structural choices (such as the ordering of events), how characters develop, and what their actions tell you about their characterisation.
7. Include details from the text to support your answer. These details might be quotes, or they can be references to the text.
8. Make sure your handwriting is legible. The examiner can't award you marks if they can't read what you've written.
9. The examiner will be impressed if you can correctly use technical terms like 'dramatic irony', 'metaphor', 'allegory', 'personification' etc, but to get the best marks you need to explore the effect of these techniques.
10. Use linking words and phrases to show you are developing your points or comparing information, for example, "this reinforces", "this shows that" and "on the other hand". This helps to give your answer structure, and makes it easier for the examiner to award you marks.
11. If you need extra paper, make sure you clearly signal that your answer is continued elsewhere. Remember that longer answers don't necessarily score more highly than shorter, more concise answers.

**Good luck!**

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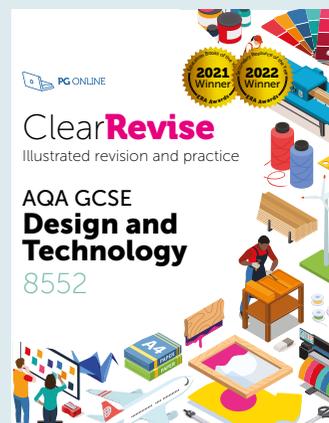
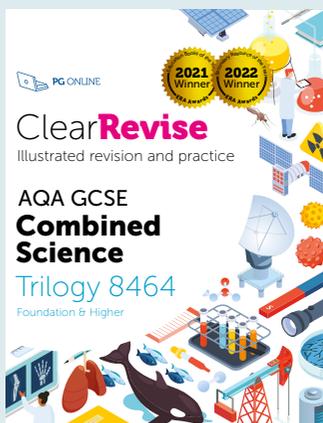
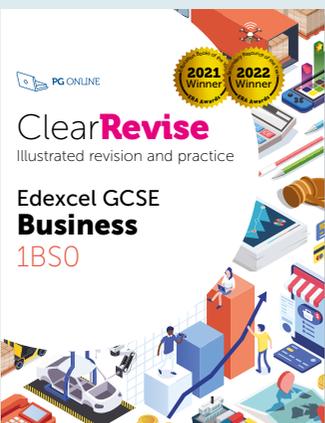
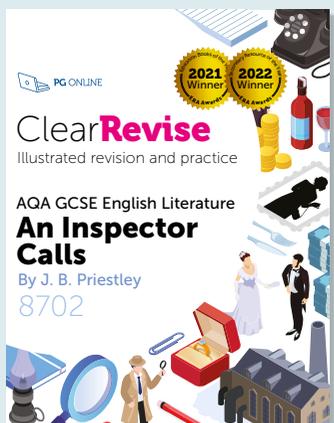
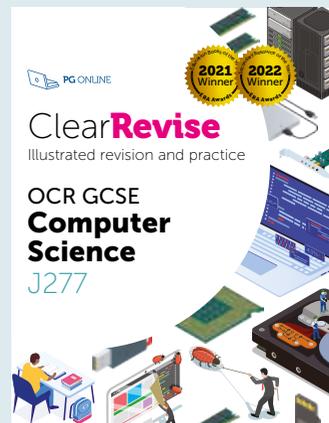
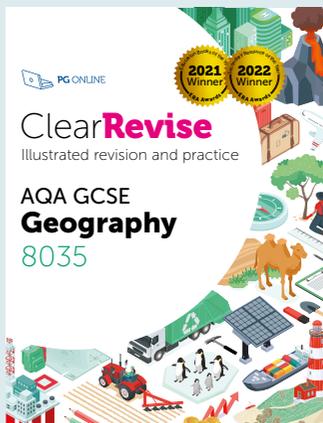
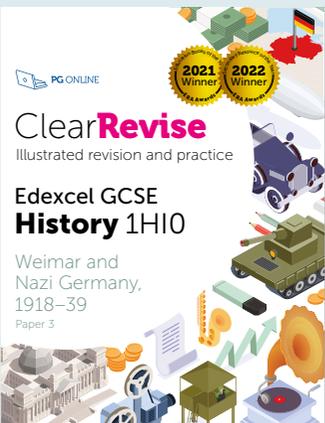
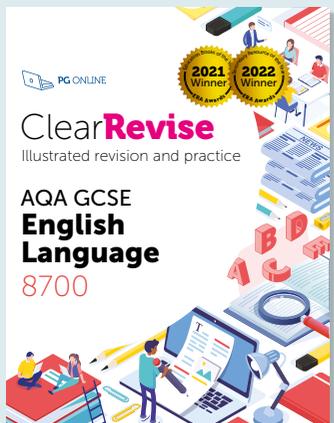
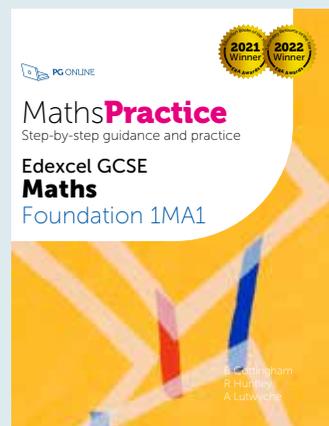
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