



AQA GCSE English Literature- A Christmas Carol- Fully study notes

English Language (St Thomas More Catholic School)

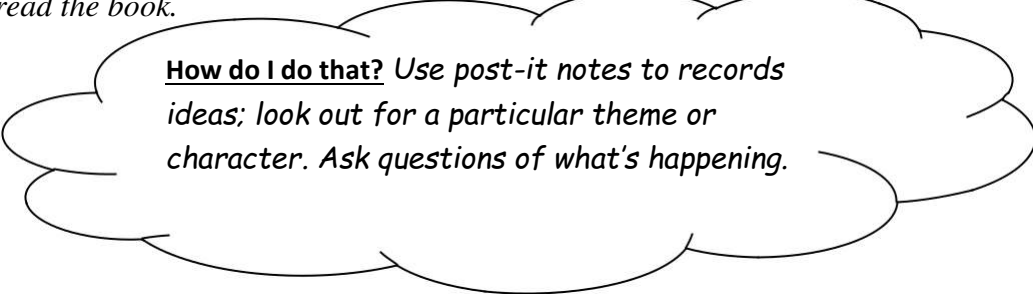
English Literature: Component 2, Section B

A Christmas Carol



How do I revise for A Christmas Carol?

1. **Read the book!** If you already have, that's great; you can always read it again. Try to **actively** read the book.



How do I do that? Use post-it notes to record ideas; look out for a particular theme or character. Ask questions of what's happening.

2. **Get organised!** You have lots of stuff on this book already. Find it. Sort it. **And use it.**
3. **Know what is going on.** Produce mind maps/summaries of each stave. Know what happens and when it happens and also why it's important.
4. **Know your Victorian British history!** Make sure you have a clear view of what was going on then and what it has to do with Dickens' novel. (You could add any links to your mind maps!)
5. **Know who is who.** The Cratchitts, The Fezziwigs, Scrooge's nephew... and know why they are important to the novel. What do they all represent? Know the Ghosts and Spirits. There are 4 and they all are different in terms of appearance and behaviour. Be able to write 5 bullet points for each character (personality/appearance/what the others think of them, particularly Scrooge) and find 5 (minimum) key quotes for them-put it on a big sheet of paper and stick it on your bedroom wall-AND LOOK AT IT!
6. **Be clear on the themes.** There are lots of themes, symbols and motifs used in this book-know what they are, why they're important and which characters have something to do with them.

Make a note of what they are-look for some examples

Who has something do with them

Some key quotes

Put it all on some sort of mind map. (Again look at it from time to time once it's done!)

7. **Learn some quotes.** Don't forget you can't take your book into the exam. Get some cue cards-write 5 key quotes for each theme and each character on them and learn them! On the bus, in the car, just before bed...you get the idea. Stick them in your bag and take them with you, everywhere you go!
8. **Plan some essays.** Time yourself, spend ten/fifteen minutes writing down and then organising your ideas for different questions.
9. **Write some essays.** Practice makes perfect!

Plot

A Christmas Carol has an incredibly simple plot structure. There are only five chapters and the narrative is fairly straightforward. Given what Dickens was trying to achieve with this book, why do you think it could be an advantage to have such a simple plot?



A03 Context: Charles Dickens



Charles Dickens was born on February 7, 1812, and spent the first nine years of his life living in the coastal regions of Kent, a county in southeast England. Dickens' father, John, was a kind and likable man, but he was financially irresponsible, piling up tremendous debts throughout his life. When Dickens was nine, his family moved to London. At twelve, his father was arrested and sent to debtors' prison. Dickens' mother moved seven of their children into prison with their father but arranged for Charles to live alone outside the prison, working with other child labourers at a hellish job pasting labels on bottles in a blacking warehouse.

The three months Charles spent apart from his family were severely traumatic. He viewed his job as a miserable trap - he considered himself too good for it, stirring the contempt of his worker-

companions. After his father was released from prison, Dickens returned to school, eventually becoming a law clerk. He went on to serve as a court reporter before taking his place as one of the most popular English novelists of his time. At age 25, Dickens completed his first novel, *The Pickwick Papers*, which met with great success. This started his career as an English literary celebrity, during which he produced such masterpieces as *Great Expectations*, *David Copperfield*, and *Oliver Twist*.

Dickens' beloved novella *A Christmas Carol* was written in 1843, with the intention of drawing readers' attention to the plight of England's poor. In the tale, Dickens combines description of hardships faced by the poor with a heart-rending, sentimental celebration of the Christmas season. The calloused character of the penny-pinching Ebenezer Scrooge, who opens his heart after being confronted by three spirits, remains one of Dickens' most widely recognized and popular creations.

Read the first paragraph again. List **four** things you learn about Charles Dickens. You **must** use the word **Dickens** in every answer...

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

In the space below, create a timelines of Charles Dickens' life...

A03 Context: Dickens and Poverty

Dickens experienced prison and poverty in his own childhood. In 1824, London, John Dickens was locked in Marshalsea debtor's prison for failing to pay his debts. His son, Charles, aged 11, was sent away to a blacking factory, covering and labelling pots of shoe polish in appalling conditions as well as loneliness and despair. He lived separated from his family, as his younger sister and mother were put in prison with his father. Later, he wrote in a letter with horror: *'No words can describe the secret agony of my soul as I sank into this companionship.... The sense I had of being utterly neglected and hopeless, fired with grief and humiliation, my lonely vulnerability, my hungry misery, and the knowledge they had willingly put me in this situation. I could not bear to think of myself beyond reach of any honourable success.'* After three years he was returned to school, but the experience was never forgotten. Dickens lived just nine doors down from the workhouse until 1831, when he was 19 years old.

What did Dickens think of the law – and the poor – in England?

When Dickens wrote in 1830s London, English law was based on the idea of justice and a fair trial. However, Dickens found the law did not always practice what it preached. His father had been imprisoned in a debtor's jail and Dickens separated from his family and sent to work in miserable conditions and lonely isolation when he was 11. Injustice, more often, was what Dickens experienced from the law for those in poverty.

Dickens became a lifelong supporter of the poor. For example, in January 1837, a trial was held at London Marylebone workhouse, and Dickens was on the jury. The case was a servant girl accused of killing her newborn baby, with the threat of the death penalty if she was found guilty. Eliza Burgess, weak, ill and frightened, was herself an orphan. Her story was that her baby appeared to be dead, so she hid it under the dresser but confessed to her employer. The jury was ready to find her guilty. That night, Dickens could not sleep: the dead baby, the thought of the terrified, unhappy, ignorant young woman in poverty and in prison. Dickens resolved to take on those who were ready to find her guilty. He argued so firmly and forcefully that he won the argument. The verdict was returned: not guilty. He then went out of his way to help victims of the law, even though he was under huge pressure himself to write and earn a living, to avoid debt and the debtor's prison.

How did Dickens' sister-in-law Mary die aged 17 in 1837?

Dickens' beloved sister-in-law, Mary Hogarth, lived with the writer and his wife. Aged just seventeen, she became very ill with fever. Without warning, she died suddenly from it. Her death was a shock and Dickens carried the memory of Mary with him for the rest of his life. Dickens has his characters suffer from illness, but in his books, he can ensure they survive. Mary's death never allowed Dickens to forget how fragile life is.

How and why did Dickens write his books?

Dickens' books were originally published in monthly parts, and Dickens created each episode just in time to be published, so he could not go back and change anything, but had to plot it all out in his mind. He wrote professionally and raised himself and his family out of poverty through the popularity of his writing. Dickens wrote his books to challenge injustice and expose the impact of poverty in 19th century London.

Comprehension Questions (AO1)

Answer in full sentences that make sense on their own.

1. What happened in Dickens' childhood in 1824?
2. Who did Dickens help in 1837 and how did he help them?
3. What happened to Dickens' 17-year old sister-in-law in 1837?
4. Where did Dickens live in 1831?
5. Why did Charles Dickens write his books?

Inequality

What happened to Dickens as a child? (AO3)

1. His father was elected Prime Minister and he went to Westminster
2. His father was hung for murder and he went to prison
3. His father was jailed for debt and he went to work in a factory
4. His father was jailed for street robbery and he became a chimney sweep
5. His father was jailed for house burglary and he went to a workhouse

What was Victorian London like in the 19th century?

Dickens lived his life in 19th century London. He explored its underworld, walking the streets up to twenty miles at a time, and his descriptions of 19th century London allow readers to experience the sights, sounds, and smells of the old city. Victorian London was the largest, most spectacular city in the world. While Britain was experiencing the Industrial Revolution, London was both benefitting and suffering the consequences. In 1800, the population of London was around 1 million. That number exploded to 5 million by 1900. This population explosion caused untold poverty, squalor and filth. In early 19th century London, rich and poor alike were thrown together in the crowded city streets. Crime, especially street robbery and pickpocketing, was common in the dark and in the crowds. Thousands of chimney pots belched coal smoke, and black soot settled everywhere. Raw sewage flowed into the River Thames. Street sellers, pickpockets, gangs, drunks and beggars roamed the streets. Many drank water from the very same parts of the Thames that the open sewers flowed into.

How much did the London population grow between 1800 and 1900? (AO3)

1. 2 million to 8 million
2. 3 million to 12 million
3. 1 million to 4 million
4. 4 million to 16 million
5. 5 million to 20 million

What were the Poor Laws in 19th century Victorian London?

The Poor Laws were passed in 1834 against poverty. Relief for the poor would only be available in workhouses. The conditions of workhouses should be worse than that of the poorest worker outside the workhouse.

Workhouses were to be so bad that anyone capable of coping outside them would choose not to be in one. No one was to receive money or other help from the Poor Law authorities except in a workhouse.

Conditions were to be made harsh to discourage poverty. Child labour was normal in the 19th century, with children as young as 4 years old working as chimney sweeps or factory workers. The Poor Laws punished the most defenseless and helpless people in society. The idea of workhouses was that poverty was the result of laziness and that the dreadful conditions in the workhouse would inspire the poor to improve themselves. In reality, the workhouse was little more than a prison for the poor.

What were the poor laws? (AO3)

1. Laws to create workhouses with terrible conditions to discourage poverty
2. Laws to create a police service
3. Laws to give welfare to poor people
4. Laws to prevent murder with the death penalty
5. Laws to prevent thievery with jail sentences

In your own words, explain how bad life could be for children in Victorian London... (AO1 identifying and interpreting information)

Lined writing area with 16 horizontal lines.

Stave 1 revision MODEL EXAMPLE

“But I am sure I have always thought of Christmas time... - 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,”

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| <p>1. Who says this or who's being described? What is this quote about?</p> | <p>Fred comes to visit Scrooge's office on Christmas eve and they argue over their different opinions about Christmas.</p> |
| <p>2. How does this quote present Fred and his feelings about Christmas?</p> | <p>Dickens presents Fred in a very positive way when he talks to Scrooge. Fred sees Christmas as a special, unique time, "the only time" when people are deliberately kinder to each other.</p> |
| <p>3. Can you identify any language features that particularly help to present Fred's positivity? How do they help?</p> | <p>The list of adjectives used by Fred "kind, forgiving, charitable, pleasant" implies that there are plenty of positive aspects to Christmas, and describes the behaviour that 'good' people like Fred display at that time of year.</p> |
| <p>4. What might be Dickens' intention in presenting Scrooge this way? Think about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Things Dickens liked and disliked in Victorian society</i> - <i>The values, attitudes and behaviours Dickens wanted people to have</i> | <p>Fred's happy attitude is a complete contrast to Scrooge's, and hints at Dickens' belief that people needed to show more compassion and kindness to each other, especially in terms of being "charitable" - Scrooge has money that he refuses to share or help others with. Fred's list of adjectives describes the way Scrooge will eventually behave at the end of the novel, demonstrating the way Dickens wanted his wealthy readers to behave also.</p> |

Stave 1 revision

“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.”

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| 1. Who says this or who's being described? What is this quote about? | |
| 2. How does this quote present Scrooge as an outsider? | |
| 3. Can you identify any language features that particularly help to present Scrooge as an outsider? How do they help? | |
| 4. Can you think of another point in the novel when Scrooge is presented as an outsider? | |

Stave 1 revision

“You wish to be anonymous?”

“I wish to be left alone,” said Scrooge. “Since you ask me what I wish, gentlemen, that is my answer. I don’t make merry myself at Christmas and I can’t afford to make idle people merry. I help to support the establishments I have mentioned: they cost enough: and those who are badly off must go there.”

“Many can’t go there [to the workhouses] ; and many would rather die.”

“If they would rather die,” said Scrooge, “they had better do it, and decrease the surplus population. Besides -- excuse me -- I don’t know that.”

“But you might know it,” observed the gentleman.

“It’s not my business,” Scrooge returned. “It’s enough for a man to understand his own business, and not to interfere with other people’s. Mine occupies me constantly. Good afternoon, gentlemen!”

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| 1. Who is this conversation between? | |
| 2. How does this quote present Scrooge’s attitude to others? | |
| 3. Can you identify any language features that particularly help to present Scrooge’s cruel disinterest? How do they help? | |
| 4. What might be Dickens’ intention in presenting Scrooge this way? Think about: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Things Dickens liked and disliked in Victorian society</i> - <i>The values, attitudes and behaviours Dickens wanted people to have</i> | |

Stave 1 revision

Scrooge took his melancholy dinner in his usual melancholy tavern; and having read all the newspapers, and beguiled the rest of the evening with his banker's-book, went home to bed. He lived in chambers which had once belonged to his deceased partner. They were a gloomy suite of rooms, in a lowering pile of building up a yard, where it had so little business to be, that one could scarcely help fancying it must have run there when it was a young house, playing at hide-and-seek with other houses, and have forgotten the way out again. It was old enough now, and dreary enough, for nobody lived in it but Scrooge, the other rooms being all let out as offices. The yard was so dark that even Scrooge, who knew its every stone, was fain to grope with his hands. The fog and frost so hung about the black old gateway of the house, that it seemed as if the Genius of the Weather sat in mournful meditation on the threshold.

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| 1. Who says this or who's being described? What is this quote about? | |
| 2. How does this description of Scrooge's habits and home suggest his character? | |
| 3. Can you identify any language features that particularly help to suggest Scrooge's character through his habits/home? | |
| 4. Can you think of another point in the novel when Dickens uses the weather/temperature to suggest Scrooge's character? | |

Stave 1 revision

“Man of the worldly mind!” replied the Ghost, “do you believe in me or not?”

“I do,” said Scrooge. “I must. But why do spirits walk the earth, and why do they come to me?”

“It is required of every man,” the Ghost returned, “that the spirit within him should walk abroad among his fellow-men, and travel far and wide; and if that spirit goes not forth in life, it is condemned to do so after death. It is doomed to wander through the world -- oh, woe is me! -- and witness what it cannot share, but might have shared on earth, and turned to happiness!”

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

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

“I wear the chain I forged in life,” replied the Ghost. “I made it link by link, and yard by yard; I girded it on of my own free will, and of my own free will I wore it. Is its pattern strange to you?”

Scrooge trembled more and more.

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| <p>1. Who says this or who's being described? What is this quote about?</p> | |
| <p>2. How does this quote present Marley's ghost and its torment?</p> | |
| <p>3. Can you identify any language features that particularly help to present Marley's ghost's torment? How do they help?</p> | |
| <p>4. What might be Dickens' intention in presenting the ghost's feelings in this way? Think about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Things Dickens liked and disliked in Victorian society</i> - <i>The values, attitudes and behaviours Dickens wanted people to have</i> | |

Stave 2 revision

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. Its hair, which hung about its neck and down its back, was white as if with age; and yet the face had not a wrinkle in it, and the tenderest bloom was on the skin. The arms were very long and muscular; the hands the same, as if its hold were of uncommon strength.

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| <p>1. Who says this or who's being described? What is this quote about?</p> | |
| <p>2. How does this quote present the Ghost of Christmas Past?</p> | |
| <p>3. Can you identify any language features that particularly help to present the ghost and its contradictions?</p> | |
| <p>4. What might be Dickens' intention in presenting the ghost this way? Think about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Things Dickens liked and disliked in Victorian society</i> - <i>The values, attitudes and behaviours Dickens wanted people to have</i> | |

Stave 2 revision

“The school is not quite deserted,” said the Ghost. “A solitary child, neglected by his friends, is left there still.”

Scrooge said he knew it. And he sobbed.

...They went, the Ghost and Scrooge, across the hall, to a door at the back of the house. It opened before them, and disclosed a long, bare, melancholy room, made barer still by lines of plain deal forms and desks. At one of these a lonely boy was reading near a feeble fire; and Scrooge sat down upon a form, and wept to see his poor forgotten self as he used to be.

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| 1. Who says this or who's being described? What is this quote about? | |
| 2. How does this quote present Scrooge's childhood and his reaction to it? | |
| 3. Can you identify any language features that particularly help to present Scrooge's childhood/reaction? How do they help? | |
| 4. Can you think of another point in the novel when Dickens suggest Scrooge's childhood was unhappy? | |

Stave 2 revision

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

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

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

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| <p>1. Who says this or who’s being described? What is this quote about?</p> | |
| <p>2. How does this quote present Fezziwig?</p> | |
| <p>3. Can you identify any language features that particularly help to present Fezziwig positively? How do they help?</p> | |
| <p>4. What might be Dickens’ intention in presenting Fezziwig this way? Think about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Things Dickens liked and disliked in Victorian society</i> - <i>The values, attitudes and behaviours Dickens wanted people to have</i> | |

Stave 2 revision

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

He was not alone, but sat by the side of a fair young girl in a mourning-dress: in whose eyes there were tears, which sparkled in the light that shone out of the Ghost of Christmas Past. "It matters little," she said, softly. "To you, very little. Another idol has displaced me; and if it can cheer and comfort you in time to come, as I would have tried to do, I have no just cause to grieve."

"What Idol has displaced you?" he rejoined.

"A golden one."

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| <p>1. Who says this or who's being described? What is this quote about?</p> | |
| <p>2. How does this quote present Scrooge's greed?</p> | |
| <p>3. Can you identify any language features that particularly help to present Scrooge's greed? How do they help?</p> | |
| <p>4. What might be Dickens' intention in presenting Scrooge this way? Think about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Things Dickens liked and disliked in Victorian society</i> - <i>The values, attitudes and behaviours Dickens wanted people to have</i> | |

Stave 3 revision

The house fronts looked black enough, and the windows blacker... The sky was gloomy, and the shortest streets were choked up with a dingy mist, half thawed, half frozen, whose heavier particles descended in shower of sooty atoms, as if all the chimneys in Great Britain had, by one consent, caught fire, and were blazing away to their dear hearts' content. There was nothing very cheerful in the climate or the town, and yet was there an air of cheerfulness abroad that the clearest summer air and brightest summer sun might have endeavoured to diffuse in vain.

For the people who were shovelling away on the housetops were jovial and full of glee; calling out to one another from the parapets, and now and then exchanging a facetious snowball -- better-natured missile far than many a wordy jest -- laughing heartily if it went right and not less heartily if it went wrong.

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| <p>1. <u>Where's</u> being described? What is this quote about?</p> | |
| <p>2. How does this description present London society?</p> | |
| <p>3. Can you identify any language features that particularly help to present society? How do they help?</p> | |
| <p>4. What might be Dickens' intention in presenting society this way? Think about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Things Dickens liked and disliked in Victorian society</i> - <i>The values, attitudes and behaviours Dickens wanted people to have</i> | |

Stave 3 revision

“And how did little Tim behave?” asked Mrs Cratchit...

“As good as gold,” said Bob, “and better. Somehow he gets thoughtful, sitting by himself so much, and thinks the strangest things you ever heard. He told me, coming home, that he hoped the people saw him in the church, because he was a cripple, and it might be pleasant to them to remember upon Christmas Day, who made lame beggars walk, and blind men see.”

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

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| 1. Who says this or who's being described? What is this quote about? | |
| 2. How does this quote present Bob's character? | |
| 3. Can you identify any language features that particularly help to present Bob's character? How do they help? | |
| 4. Can you think of another point in the novel when Dickens presents Bob's character? | |

Stave 3 revision

From the foldings of its robe, it brought two children; wretched, abject, frightful, hideous, miserable. They knelt down at its feet, and clung upon the outside of its garment.

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

They were a boy and girl. Yellow, meagre, ragged, scowling, wolfish; but prostrate, too, in their humility. Where graceful youth should have filled their features out, and touched them with its freshest tints, a stale and shrivelled hand, like that of age, had pinched, and twisted them, and pulled them into shreds. Where angels might have sat enthroned, devils lurked, and glared out menacing. No change, no degradation, no perversion of humanity, in any grade, through all the mysteries of wonderful creation, has monsters half so horrible and dread.

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

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| 1. Who says this or who's being described? What is this quote about? | |
| 2. How does this quote present the children | |
| 3. Can you identify any language features that particularly help to present the children? How do they help? | |
| 4. What might be Dickens' intention in presenting the children in this way? Think about: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- <i>Things Dickens liked and disliked in Victorian society</i>- <i>The values, attitudes and behaviours Dickens wanted people to have</i> | |

Stave 3 revision

'This boy is Ignorance. This girl is Want. Beware them both, and all of their degree, but most of all beware this boy, for on his brow I see that written which is Doom, unless the writing be erased....'

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

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

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| <p>1. Who says this or who's being described? What is this quote about?</p> | |
| <p>2. How does this quote suggest the message the ghost wants Scrooge to understand?</p> | |
| <p>3. Can you identify any language features that particularly help to present the message? How do they help?</p> | |
| <p>4. What might be the message Dickens wants readers (then AND now) to understand? Think about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Things Dickens liked and disliked in Victorian society</i> - <i>The values, attitudes and behaviours Dickens wanted people to have</i> | |

Stave 4 revision

The Phantom slowly, gravely, silently approached. When it came, Scrooge bent down upon his knee; for in the very air through which this Spirit moved it seemed to scatter gloom and mystery. It was shrouded in a deep black garment, which concealed its head, its face, its form, and left nothing of it visible save one outstretched hand. But for this it would have been difficult to detach its figure from the night, and separate it from the darkness by which it was surrounded.

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| 1. Who says this or who's being described? What is this quote about? | |
| 2. How does this quote present the ghost of Christmas yet to come? | |
| 3. Can you identify any language features that particularly help to present the ghost? How do they help? | |
| 4. What might be Dickens' intention in presenting the ghost of the future in such a terrifying way? <i>- Remember it's the ghost of Scrooge's future, but also of society's future (if nothing changes)</i> | |

Stave 4 revision

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

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

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| 1. Who says this or who’s being described? What is this quote about? | |
| 2. How does this quote present Scrooge-how others saw him, and his reaction (now) to this? | |
| 3. Can you identify any language features that particularly help to present Scrooge? How do they help? | |
| 4. What might be Dickens’ purpose in including the characters of the 4 thieves – is their behaviour shocking to us? Why? | |

Stave 4 revision

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

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

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| 1. Who says this or who's being described? What is this quote about? | |
| 2. How does this quote present Scrooge's body? | |
| 3. Can you identify any language features that particularly help to present Scrooge lonely body? How do they help? | |
| 4. Knowledge question: Whose death does the reader hear about next? And how is their death reacted to differently? | |

Stave 5 revision

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

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| <p>1. Who says this or who’s being described? What is this quote about?</p> | |
| <p>2. How does this quote suggest how Scrooge is changing in his approach to life?</p> | |
| <p>3. Can you identify any language features that particularly help to present the message? How do they help?</p> | |
| <p>4. What might be the message Dickens wants readers (then AND now) to understand? Think about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Things Dickens liked and disliked in Victorian society</i> - <i>The values, attitudes and behaviours Dickens wanted people to have</i> | |

Stave 5 revision

“Scrooge was better than his word. He did it all, and infinitely more; and to Tiny Tim, who did not die, he was a second father. He became as good a friend, as good a master, and as good a man, as the good old city knew, or any other good old city, town, or borough, in the good old world.”

| | |
|---|--|
| <p>1. Who says this or who's being described? What is this quote about?</p> | |
| <p>2. How does this quote suggest how Scrooge is changing in his approach to life? (Think about him making physical contact with Bob)</p> | |
| <p>3. Can you identify any language features that particularly help to present the message? How do they help?</p> | |
| <p>4. What might be the message Dickens wants readers (then AND now) to understand? Think about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Things Dickens liked and disliked in Victorian society</i> - <i>The values, attitudes and behaviours Dickens wanted people to have</i> | |

Evaluation

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

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

Some critics have described Scrooge's transformation as "unbelievable". To what extent do you agree with this statement?

You must include

a quote from earlier in the story

a quote from the extract above

Mind Map These Key Quotations

Annotate:

Language analysis (techniques & word class)

Structural analysis (links to other scenes)

Multiple interpretations

Contextual links

Key vocab

“as solitary as an oyster”

Themes:

Mind Map These Key Quotations

Annotate:

Language analysis (techniques & word class)

Structural analysis (links to other scenes)

Multiple interpretations

Contextual links

Key vocab

**“if they would rather die they had better
do it and decrease the surplus
population”**

Themes

Mind Map These Key Quotations

Annotate:

Language analysis (techniques & word class)

Structural analysis (links to other scenes)

Multiple interpretations

Contextual links

Key vocab

“I wear the chain I forged in life”

Themes:

Mind Map These Key Quotations

Annotate:

Language analysis (techniques & word class)

Structural analysis (links to other scenes)

Multiple interpretations

Contextual links

Key vocab

**“The happiness he gives is quite as great
as if it cost a fortune”**

Themes:

Mind Map These Key Quotations

Annotate:

Language analysis (techniques & word class)

Structural analysis (links to other scenes)

Multiple interpretations

Contextual links

Key vocab

**“two children; wretched, abject, frightful,
hideous, miserable”**

Themes:

Mind Map These Key Quotations

Annotate:

Language analysis (techniques & word class)

Structural analysis (links to other scenes)

Multiple interpretations

Contextual links

Key vocab

“assure me that I may yet change the shadows you have shown me here by an altered life”

Themes:

Mind Map These Key Quotations

Annotate:

Language analysis (techniques & word class)

Structural analysis (links to other scenes)

Multiple interpretations

Contextual links

Key vocab

“he became as good a friend, as good a master, and as good a man, as the old city knew”

Themes:

Dickens' style.

In Dickens' time, people used to *read*.

Yes. *Books!* And stories in magazines, which came out in episodes. Many of Dickens' own novels were first published in this form, providing a nice regular source of income. This may explain why many were so long.

They also liked to read aloud and to be read to. Before modern lighting it made sense for one person to read by the light source to the others as they sat around the fireplace. Cosy. (Think how often in "A Christmas Carol" Dickens uses the idea of the warmth of a fire to represent companionship and family closeness)

Dickens himself would read his books to large audiences in theatres—profitable and very popular—so it's reasonable to think that his style is designed for reading aloud.

Read the following extracts.

Scrooge knew he was dead? Of course he did. How could it be otherwise?

Scrooge and he were partners for I don't know how many years. Scrooge was his sole executor, his sole administrator, his sole assign, his sole residuary legatee, his sole friend, and sole mourner.

...The mention of Marley's funeral brings me back to the point I started from. There is no doubt that Marley was dead. This must be distinctly understood, or nothing wonderful can come of the story I am going to relate.

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

EXAM PRACTICE 1.

Write about how Dickens presents Scrooge's attitude to money here, and in the rest of the novella.

In your response you should:

- refer to the extract and the novella as a whole;
- show your understanding of characters and events from the novella;
- refer to the contexts of the novella.

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

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

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

"What Idol has displaced you?" he rejoined.

"A golden one."

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

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

"What then?" he retorted. "Even if I have grown so much wiser, what then? I am not changed towards you."

She shook her head.

"Am I?"

"Our contract is an old one. It was made when we were both poor and content to be so, until, in good season, we could improve our worldly fortune by our patient industry. You *are* changed. When it was made, you were another man."

"I was a boy," he said impatiently.

EXAM PRACTICE 2.

How does Dickens present and develop the character of Bob Cratchit throughout the novella?

In your response you should:

- refer to the extract and the novella as a whole;**
- show your understanding of characters and events from the novella;**
- refer to the contexts of the novella.**

"No, no. There's father coming," cried the two young Cratchits, who were everywhere at once.
"Hide, Martha, hide!"

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

"Why, where's our Martha?" cried Bob Cratchit, looking round.

"Not coming," said Mrs Cratchit.

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

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

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

"As good as gold," said Bob, "and better. Somehow he gets thoughtful sitting by himself so much, and thinks the strangest things you ever heard. He told me, coming home, that he hoped the people saw him in the church, because he was a cripple, and it might be pleasant to them to remember upon Christmas Day, who made lame beggars walk, and blind men see."

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

His active little crutch was heard upon the floor, and back came Tiny Tim before another word was spoken, escorted by his brother and sister to his stool before the fire; and while Bob, turning up his cuffs -- as if, poor fellow, they were capable of being made more shabby -- compounded some hot mixture in a jug with gin and lemons, and stirred it round and round and put it on the hob to simmer; Master Peter, and the two ubiquitous young Cratchits went to fetch the goose, with which they soon returned in high procession.

EXAM PRACTICE 3.

How does Dickens criticise Victorian attitudes towards the poor?

In your response you should:

- refer to the extract and the novella as a whole;**
- show your understanding of characters and events from the novella;**
- refer to the contexts of the novella.**

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

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

"Forgive me if I am not justified in what I ask," said Scrooge, looking intently at the Spirit's robe, "but I see something strange, and not belonging to yourself, protruding from your skirts. Is it a foot or a claw?"

"It might be a claw, for the flesh there is upon it," was the Spirit's sorrowful reply. "Look here."

From the foldings of its robe, it brought two children; wretched, abject, frightful, hideous, miserable. They knelt down at its feet, and clung upon the outside of its garment.

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

They were a boy and a girl. Yellow, meagre, ragged, scowling, wolfish; but prostrate, too, in their humility. Where graceful youth should have filled their features out, and touched them with its freshest tints, a stale and shrivelled hand, like that of age, had pinched, and twisted them, and pulled them into shreds. Where angels might have sat enthroned, devils lurked, and glared out menacing. No change, no degradation, no perversion of humanity, in any grade, through all the mysteries of wonderful creation, has monsters half so horrible and dread.

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

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

"They are Man's," said the Spirit, looking down upon them. "And they cling to me, appealing from their fathers. This boy is Ignorance. This girl is Want. Beware them both, and all of their degree, but most of all beware this boy, for on his brow I see that written which is Doom, unless the writing be erased. Deny it!" cried the Spirit, stretching out its hand towards the city. "Slander those who tell it ye. Admit it for your factious purposes, and make it worse. And abide the end."

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

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

EXAM PRACTICE 4.

How does Dickens present ideas about childhood in A Christmas Carol?

In your response you should:

refer to the extract and the novella as a whole;

show your understanding of characters and events from the novella;

refer to the contexts of the novella.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

"No, no. There's father coming," cried the two young Cratchits, who were everywhere at once. "Hide, Martha, hide!"

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

EXAM PRACTICE 5.

It could be said that this is a story of redemption and change. How has Scrooge redeemed himself over the course of the novella?

In your response you should:

refer to the extract and the novella as a whole;

show your understanding of characters and events from the novella;

refer to the contexts of the novella.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Grade 5

Write the two digit question number *inside* the boxes next to the first line of your answer

Answer

Leave blank

2 1

Scrooge Dickens presents the ghosts as mysterious. This is shown in Stave 4 when he meets the ghost of Christmas yet to come. This ghost does not say anything, which brings on a sense of mystery around this character, it also makes what he shows Scrooge even more impactful. This is because Scrooge gets no response to any of the questions that he asks the ghost, apart from one. When he asks who the dead man is, the spirit points to a grave stone with Ebenezer Scrooge on. The portrayal of the ghosts would have excited and captured the imagination of the audience, because at the time, 19th century, ghosts were very popular as Queen Victoria believed in them. By using ghosts in his story this may have helped to increase sales and more people aware of the poor working conditions and treatment of the working class.

However, the ghosts may also be seen as cheerful. This is shown in Stave 3 when Scrooge meets the ghost of Christmas present. The use of the quote "Come in, and know me better men!" shows how jolly and welcoming this ghost is. This may have been done so to show his impatience as he is described as a Jesus like person. However, this may be in contrast to his "rusty scabbard" that hangs at his waist.

The ghosts may also be seen as to be being presented as hard to believe. This is shown by the quote "There's more than one thing alive about you." This shows that they may be unbelievable, as Scrooge's use of humor shows his denial to accept their existence. This is also shown in Stave 2 when Scrooge meets the ghost of Christmas past. He says "but I am mortal and liable to fall." This shows that Scrooge acknowledges their existence but does not believe that they have the power to do as they please. This is in contrast to Stave 5 when he says "they can do anything they like." This shows how they have been effective in convincing Scrooge to not only change his ways but to make him believe in the supernatural.



Write the two digit question number *inside* the boxes next to the first line of your answer

Answer

Leave blank

The ghosts are very important to the novel. This is because each ghost teaches him a valuable lesson. For example, the ghost of Christmas past teaches him about where he went wrong and results of that, such as Belle leaving Scrooge. This teaches Scrooge how he should keep who he loves close so to never lose them.

The ghost of Christmas present shows how people are living as a result of his lack of charity. We start to see a change in Scrooge as he asks "Will Tiny Tim be alright?", which is the first sign of compassion on behalf of Scrooge. But we also see him open up when he asks the spirit if they can stay a while longer at Fred's.

The ghost of Christmas yet to come acts as a way to show Scrooge what will happen if he does not change. We see that people are happy Scrooge is dead, but he seems most affected by the news that Tiny Tim is dead. This spirit is able to convince Scrooge to truly change his ways, and for that reason I feel that the ghost of Christmas yet to come was the most important.



Grade 9

21

~~In Dickens~~ In Dickens' novella 'A Christmas Carol', the theme of the supernatural is heavily touched upon, as four ghosts help to transform Ebenezer Scrooge into a loving, spiritual character through implementing humbling fear. Their importance is immeasurable, seeing the novel progress to the conclusion it does as the sole catalysts of change.

In the extract, we are faced with the ghost of Scrooge's partner ~~Jacob~~ Jacob Marley in Stave 1. The importance of the supernatural beings lies in their relative acceptance from Scrooge himself, which we will see increases as the novel progresses. But in the extract it is early, and Scrooge simply sees 'more of gray than of the grave' about Marley - a humourously dismissive statement perhaps brought on by fear as it is so out of character for Scrooge to make a joke - 'a means of ... keeping down his terror.' This terror only grows as the play unfolds.

Alongside Scrooge's acceptance, the ghosts ~~are~~ must be able to teach Scrooge necessary lesson - this is ~~the~~ what Dickens uses them for after all. The lesson in the first stave being that 'mankind was (Jacob's) business!', a business that Scrooge has either forgotten about or never had the concept of in the first place. Dickens uses such a 'chilling influence' to alert the reader to their responsibility by slowing the



Write the two digit question number *inside* the boxes next to the first line of your answer

Answer

Leave blank

consequences of Scrooges lack of it. Dickens used Marley's message as a message ~~to~~ not only to Scrooge, but to the many wealthy readers of his work at the time, to take ~~action~~ action for the good of 'mankind'. It is important that Dickens works his message into his readers early, to match their impact from the following ghosts with Scrooges - so that they might sympathise and be made ~~socially aware~~ socially aware: early. Contextually, it is widely known that ghost stories were read at Christmas time during the Victorian era, and Dickens shortened this story into a novella so the ghosts could take effect in a single ~~to~~ 'sitting' of reading.

In Stave 2, the Ghost of Christmas Past sets about disrupting Scrooge's emotions, immediately as the Ghost shows him his past, Scrooge had 'an usual catching in his voice,' and then 'wept' to see his poor past self alone in school at Christmas. 'wept' is a disproportionate measure of sorrow for someone whom 'no warmth could warm', showing that the supernatural is already ~~to~~ making inroads into the severely cold, emotionless Scrooge's 'personality deficit' as it were. "Small matter, to make these silly foles so full of gratitude" exclaimed the spirit, dislikening him to the buzzing, ~~benevolent~~ benevolent Mr Fezziwig. The importance of this is Dickens' demonstration of Scrooge's chance to change and potential ~~to~~ of redemption, to be like Mr Fezziwig. This only strengthens the importance of the



Write the two digit question number *inside* the boxes next to the first line of your answer.

Answer

Leave blank

ghosts, one of which is showing him this very scene.

In Stave 3, ~~we~~ Scrooge and the reader are introduced to the Ghost of Christmas present, who mocks Scrooge, ~~after his~~ exploiting his emotional weakness brought on by ~~the~~ his previous encounter. 'Are there no prisons?' the spirit asks, echoing Scrooge's initial philosophy - to which Scrooge was 'overcome with penitence and grief' to hear. This ghost's importance lies ~~over~~ predominantly in threat ('I see a vacant seat, a crutch without an owner') and delivering his individual lesson to Scrooge through shedding light on the potential consequences 'if these shadows remain unaltered?' In essence, this spirit brings Scrooge back into balance with reality, declaring to him that he 'may be ~~less~~ more worthless and less fit to live than millions like this poor man's child' (i.e. Bob and Tiny Tim.) Perhaps this is the turning point in the novel, when Scrooge 'pleads to know if Tiny Tim will live.' In which case, it is no coincidence that Dickens has written this scene in the middle of the text: the centre of attention, reflecting the centrifugal importance that the spirits have on the story.

Many would argue that ~~the~~ the supernatural work on ~~Scrooge~~ Scrooge is done by Stave 4. However, the final spirit remains important ~~as~~ as, although it never speaks, it switches Scrooge's lesson from external to personal - more specifically his death ~~of~~ and others' attitudes ~~to~~.



Write the two digit question number *inside* the boxes next to the first line of your answer

Answer

Leave blank

towards HIM, rather than his attitudes towards others. The visions he is shown of his harrowing future are well and truly the final blow in the ghosts' battle against Scrooge's former self. The ghost he 'feared the most' convinces him to 'live in the Past, Present and the Future, the spirits of all three shall strive within ~~him~~ (he) will not shut out the lessons that they teach!' Dickens presents it in plain words. Scrooge, the 'oyster', the 'sinner' had been well and truly changed - ~~none~~ no element of which would have been possible without the ghosts, who act as a whole being to enlighten Scrooge to social responsibility and redemption.