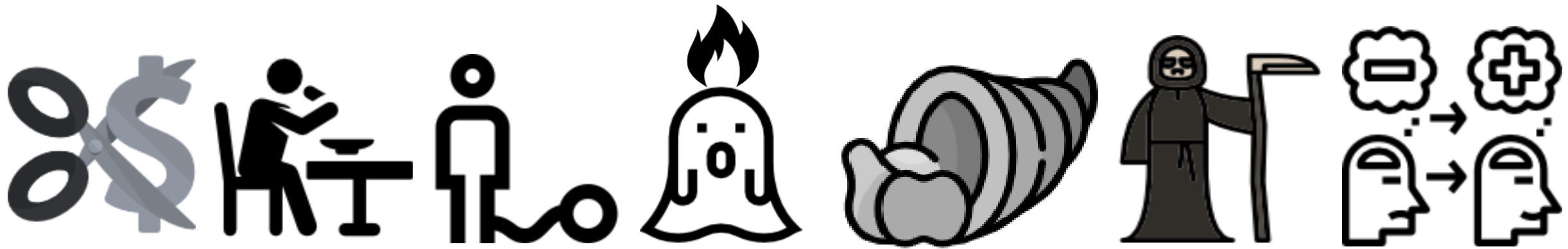


English Literature Paper 1 Section B – Dickens

‘A Christmas Carol’



NAME: _____

CLASS TEACHER: _____

YEAR: _____

Stave 1 – The exposition and inciting incident

PLOT



The chapter starts with an introduction to Marley and how he is 'dead as a door nail'. We learn that Scrooge made a 'bargain' at his friend's funeral.



It's Christmas Eve in London. Scrooge refuses to pay for extra coal to heat the Counting House.



Fred then invites Scrooge to spend Christmas with him and Scrooge refuses. Two charity workers come in to spread Christmas Spirit and Scrooge kicks them out.



Scrooge begrudgingly gives Bob Christmas Day off. Scrooge walks home and has dinner on his own.



He is visited by Marley's ghost who warns him about his fate - he will end up like Marley in the afterlife.

KEY QUOTES

"But he [Scrooge] was a tight-fisted hand at the grindstone"

[Scrooge is] "sharp as flint" and "solitary as an oyster"

"No wind that blew was bitterer than he, no falling snow was more intent upon its purpose, no pelting rain less open to entreaty."

Fred says Christmas is "a kind, forgiving, charitable, pleasant time."

"Scrooge took his melancholy dinner in his own usual melancholy tavern"

"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."

Stave 2 – The Rising Action



Scrooge awakes at midnight and is visited by the first of the three spirits.

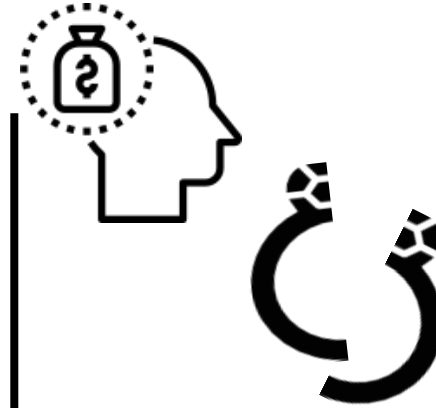
The Ghost of Christmas Past is gentle and firm at the same time.



Scrooge returns to his school days where he is a lonely boy. We meet his sister Fanny and find out that his father is harsh and strict on Scrooge.



We go forward to Fezziwig's party where Scrooge was an apprentice and attended a Christmas party.



Lastly, we see Belle break off their engagement. He then sees that Belle has moved on, has an idyllic family and husband of her own.



Scrooge doesn't want to see anymore from his past. He begs the Ghost to take him back.

KEY QUOTES

"It was a strange figure -- like a child: yet not so like a child as like an old man...."

"A solitary child, neglected by his friends"

"Fuel was heaped on the fire... snug, warm and dry"
(description of Fezziwig's party)

"Another idle has displaced me... a golden one"

"But the relentless Ghost pinioned him in both his arms, and forced him to observe"

Stave 3 – Climax



The second of the three spirits then visits Scrooge when the clock strikes, the Ghost of Christmas Present. Scrooge touches the robe of the second spirit and he sees the city on Christmas morning.



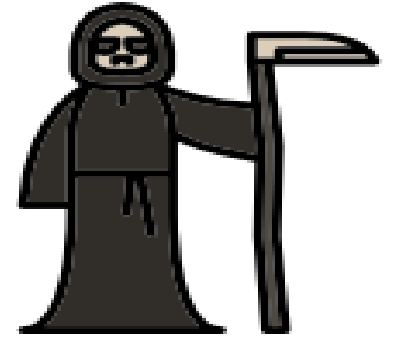
He then sees the Cratchit's Christmas- they have hardly enough food. Bob proposes a toast to Scrooge, but Mrs Cratchit is not happy about this. Scrooge is worried for Tiny Tim.



At Fred's, all the guests mock Scrooge. The Ghost then takes Scrooge to see a range of Christmases where people who could be unhappy (like the miners or the sailors) are happy at Christmas.



The ghost shows Scrooge two starving children named Ignorance and Want. These are the two allegorical figures in the novel. They warn the reader about greed and shirring responsibility.



The spirit disappears as the clock strikes and Scrooge sees a hooded phantom coming towards him.

KEY QUOTES

“there sat a jolly Giant, glorious to see”

“Mr Scrooge, the Founder of this Feast”

“I see a vacant seat. The child will die”

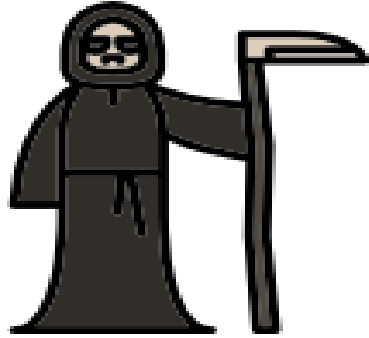
“And every man on board, waking or sleeping, good or bad, had had a kinder word for another on that day than on any day in the year”

“Will you decide what men shall live, what men shall die?” (The Ghost questions Scrooge).

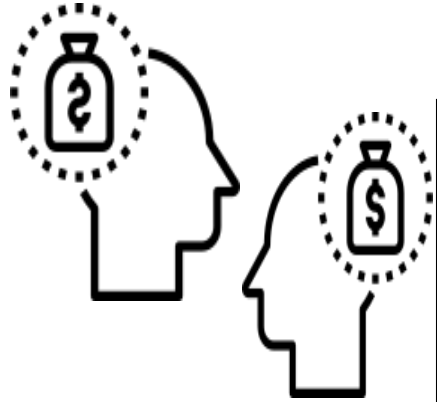
“a solemn Phantom, draped and hooded, coming, like a mist along the ground”

Stave 4 – Falling action

PLOT



The phantom approaches Scrooge; he is silent. Scrooge is terrified and pleads with the phantom.



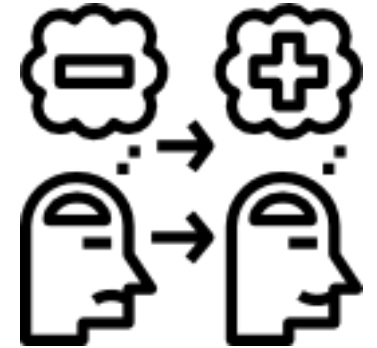
He sees businessmen discussing a dead man and that they would only go to his funeral if there was food.



The ghosts takes Scrooge to a pawnshop where people are selling a dead man's possessions. Scrooge gets to see the horrible state of the poorest areas of London.



The Cratchits are struggling to cope with the death of Tiny Tim. Bob tries to stay positive and comforts his family.



The Ghost shows Scrooge a grave with his name on the headstone.

KEY QUOTES

“I fear you more than any spectre I have seen. But as I know your purpose is to do me good, I am prepared to bear you company with a thankful heart.”

One of the merchants is described as having a ‘monstrous chin’ and another has a mole on his face that ‘shook like the gills of a turkey-cock’

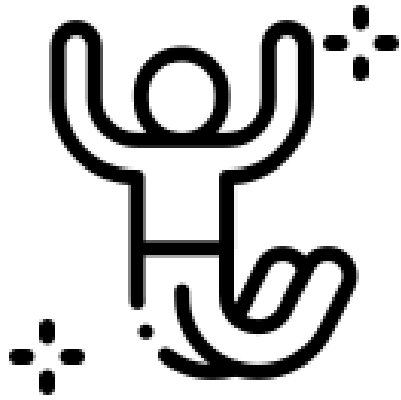
“reeked with crime, with filth, and misery” (a description of a poor street)

“But however and whenever we part from one another, I am sure we shall none of us forget poor Tiny Tim”

“Assure me that I yet may change these shadows you have shown me, by an altered life!”

Stave 5 – The Resolution

PLOT



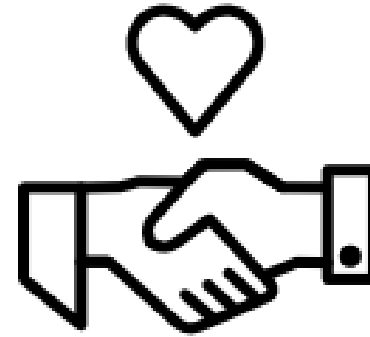
Scrooge wakes up on Christmas morning. Scrooge is grateful for a second chance in life and sings the praises of Marley.



He pays the first boy to deliver a huge turkey to the Cratchit family. He asks the boy to get the biggest turkey available.



He apologises to the charity workers and donates money enough to cover all the years he did not help.



He visits Fred and he is welcomed in. The next morning he meets Bob at the office and raises his wages.



The novel ends with a description of how Scrooge has changed by helping everyone. He becomes like a father to Tiny Tim.

KEY QUOTES

“No fog, no mist; clear, bright, jovial, stirring, cold; cold, piping for the blood to dance to; Golden sunlight”

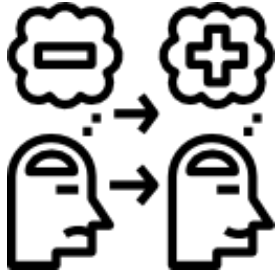
“It was a Turkey! He never could have stood upon his legs, that bird. ”

“Not a farthing less. A great many back-payments are included in it, I assure you.”

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

“And so, as Tiny Tim observed, God Bless Us, Every One!”

CHARACTERS



Ebenezer Scrooge

A miserable and cold-hearted owner of a London counting-house. His name means stone of help.

Symbolic of...

Symbolic of the wealthy and those in society who choose to ignore the poor. However, through Scrooge, Dickens also symbolises the power of admitting one's sins when seeking redemption.

Critical Vocabulary

1. **Parsimonious:** very unwilling to spend money or use resources.
2. **Frugal:** cautious with money.
3. **Egocentric:** self-centred – only caring about yourself and not others.



Jacob Marley

When alive, he was Scrooge's equally greedy partner. Died 7 years before the story and returns to warn Scrooge. Marley hopes to save his partner from purgatory.

Symbolic of...

Symbolic of the future and the consequences of leading an uncharitable existence. His chains are symbolic of his many sins.

Critical Vocabulary

1. **Condemned:** sentenced to a particular punishment.
2. **Tormented:** severe physical and mental suffering.
3. **Imprisoned:** to keep someone in prison like conditions.

CHARACTERS



Bob Cratchit

Scrooge's clerk; he is a kind, mild but poor man with a large family. He is treated harshly by Scrooge, but he remains loyal and humble.

Symbolic of...

Symbolic of the deserving poor. Those who work but can never get themselves out of poverty.

Critical Vocabulary

1. **Humble:** being modest; having a low opinion of one's importance.
2. **Loyal:** showing a firm support to a person or idea.
3. **Dedicated:** committed to a task or purpose.



Fred

Scrooge's nephew. He invites Scrooge to every annual Christmas party even if Scrooge refuses to go.

Symbolic of...

Symbolic of those in society with some wealth that are helpful and charitable.

Critical Vocabulary

1. **Genial:** friendly and cheerful.
2. **Forgiving:** ready and willing to be compassionate and understand.
3. **Enthusiastic:** showing intense and eager interest.

CHARACTERS



Tiny Tim

Bob's young son. He has been disabled from birth.

Symbolic of...

Symbolic of the poor. Dickens uses him to explain England's poor.

Critical Vocabulary

1. **Virtuous**: showing high moral standards – extremely good.
2. **Grateful**: showing appreciation for something.
3. **Patient**: able to accept problems without becoming annoyed.



Little Fan

Scrooge's sister and Fred's mum. Visited him at school.

Symbolic of...

Symbolic of family and kindness.

Critical Vocabulary

1. **Innocent** – not guilty of a crime or offence.
2. **Compassionate** – showing concern for others' suffering.
3. **Optimistic** – hopeful and confident about the future.

CHARACTERS



Ghost of Christmas Past

First spirit to visit Scrooge. Child-like with a glowing head.

Symbolic of...

Symbolic of the past and the light could be a symbol of truth.

Critical Vocabulary

1. **Ephemeral:** lasting for a short time.
2. **Gentle:** being a mild, kind and tender person.
3. **Firm:** showing determination and strength of character.



Ghost of Christmas Present

Second spirit to visit Scrooge in a giant green robe. Life span is restricted to Christmas and is the only ghost which transforms.

Symbolic of...

A symbol of Christmas as he is jolly. He carries a cornucopia: a symbol of abundance.

Critical Vocabulary

1. **Welcoming:** behaving in a polite and friendly way to a guest.
2. **Honest:** truthful and sincere.
3. **Prophetic:** predicting what will happen in the future.



Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come

Third and final spirit to visit Scrooge. Does not speak. He is a silent phantom that shows Scrooge his lonely death.

Symbolic of...

A symbol of the bleak future awaiting society if it does not change.

Critical Vocabulary

1. **Ominous:** suggesting something bad is going to happen.
2. **Frightening:** making someone feel afraid or anxious.
3. **Commanding:** having a position of authority.

MINOR CHARACTERS



Fezziwig

- Scrooge's boss when Scrooge was an apprentice. Celebrated Christmas with his employees.
- Contrasts with Scrooge and shows that you can be a good man of business without being mean.



Belle

- Scrooge's fiancé. She breaks up their engagement because of Scrooge's obsession with wealth.
- Symbolic of the missed opportunities – Dickens paints an idyllic family picture as Belle, her daughter and her husband.



Charity Workers

- The two 'portly men' that try to get money from Scrooge.
- Like Dickens, many people were actually aware of the conditions and hardships many poor people faced.

Peter Cratchit

- Bob's eldest son.
- Symbolic of family and how he plays a part in making the Christmas dinner.



Martha Cratchit

- Bob's eldest daughter.
- Martha works hard to make it to Christmas day with her family. She speaks of work and the hardship in the factories.

Mrs Cratchit

- Bob's wife. She criticises Scrooge.
- She is proud and frustrated by their poor situation.



Mrs Dilber

- Scrooge's laundress who steals Scrooge's clothes.
- Highlights the cruelty that Scrooge experiences once he is dead because he never showed kindness.



Caroline and her husband

- Two people who owed money to Scrooge who are happy when he dies.
- Dickens highlights the dangers of debt – Caroline and her husband benefit when Scrooge dies as they won't have to pay him.

THEMES

Compassion & Forgiveness



Scrooge has those who pity him (Belle, Bob, Fred) and those who dismiss him as he does them (business people, his servants). Also compassion for the poor.

Choices



Life depends on the choices you make- Scrooge chooses to isolate himself like he also chooses to support the Cratchits. The choices we make in this life will affect our afterlife.

Family



Inspirational characters belong to large families or groupings such as Bob, Belle and Fezziwig. Dickens presents 'family' as very important in offering a support network.

Isolation



Scrooge isolated himself rather than being forced into that state.

Guilt & Blame



Scrooge has no remorse or guilt until the Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come. He gradually (after some time) begins to feel shame for what he has done, and changes.

Supernatural



Supernatural elements such as the three ghosts, Marley's ghost and Scrooge flying out the window. Also, the idea of being transported to the past and future.

Redemption



Dickens explores the possibility of redemption. Setting the novel at Christmas reminds the reader of Christ's birth and how we can be forgiven for our sins.

Transformation



From a young lonely boy to an old bitter man- he changes back the boy he one was.

CONTEXT

Ghost Stories:



Dickens wrote 'A Christmas Carol' in 1843. At the time there was a tradition for reading ghost stories at Christmas.

Thomas Malthus:



He was an economist that argued that human population would always grow faster than food supplies. For Malthus, because overpopulation which inevitably leads to poverty, those worst-off in society should get less and less – they are seen as a drain on society.

Industrial Revolution:



The rise of the manufacturing goods in factories meant that more people moved from the countryside to the city.

The Hungry Forties:



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

The Poor:



The poor lived in terrible and overcrowded conditions. They were exploited by factory owners. Furthermore, the rich often saw the poor as criminal and untrustworthy.

Workhouses:



These were introduced by the Poor Law, where unemployed people would have to work in order to receive food and shelter. However, workhouses were extremely harsh places and families were often split.

The Spirit of Christmas:



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

A Christian Message :



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

DICKENS' USE OF METHODS ...

Allegory: a story with a hidden/symbolic meaning.

Allusion: an indirect or passing reference to another text.

Irony: where words are used in such a way that their intended meaning is different from the actual meaning of the words.

Pathetic Fallacy: a literary term for the attribution of human emotion and conduct to things found in nature that are not human.

Simile: a stated comparison using 'like' or 'as'.

Charactonym: a name given to a literary character that is descriptive of a quality or trait of that character.

Personification: the attribution of the qualities of a human being to inanimate objects.

Parallelism: repetition of words, or phrases that are similar in structure.

Foil: a character that shows qualities that are in contrast with the qualities of another character.

Antithesis: an opposition of ideas expressed by parallelism of phrases or words that are the opposite of each other.

Foreshadowing: a warning or indication of a future event.

Flashback: a scene set in an earlier time than the main story.

Fairy tale: a children's story about magical and imaginary beings and lands; they often start with 'once upon a time'.

Structure: the novel is structured non-chronologically. It could be divided into three distinct sections:

①

The beginning, where we meet Scrooge and Marley;

②

The middle, where Scrooge is met by the three ghosts;

③

The end, where Scrooge changes.

The contrast between the harsh Scrooge presented at the beginning and the redeemed Scrooge depicted at the end could symbolise how there is always hope.

Allegory:



Dickens uses his novel to send a message about the importance of taking care of those less fortunate in our society. He believed it was morally wrong to ignore and not support the poor.

Dialogue:



Dickens uses dialogue to create a certain mood or highlight ideas about characters. At the start of the novel, Fred's speech is contrasted to Scrooge's speech.

Tone:



The omniscient narrator is often sarcastic like when he refers to Scrooge as an 'excellent man of business' when arranging Marley's funeral with an 'undoubted bargain'. The sarcastic tone gets darker as the novel develops: the graveyard where Scrooge is buried is described as a 'worthy place!'

DICKENS' USE OF METHODS ...

Symbolism:



Dickens repeats a range of images that are symbolic of key ideas. For example, images of fire and brightness are used as symbols of emotional warmth.

Personification:



Dickens uses personification to bring the setting to life – a 'gruff old bell' is described as 'peeping slyly' down at Scrooge as if judging him. Most importantly, 'Ignorance' and 'Want' are personified as ragged, desperate children.

Similes:



Dickens uses similes to create a comic and light-hearted mood: Scrooge is 'solitary as an oyster' and even a sinister image like Marley's chain is softened when described as 'wound about him like a tail'.

Metaphor:

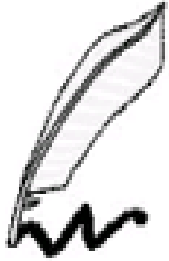


Some of Dickens' metaphors are much more serious like when he describes the effects of the dense fog on the streets that 'the houses opposite were mere phantoms'.

A good literature response:

Discuss the writer

Dickens presents Scrooge as a selfish and miserly character at the novella's beginning because Scrooge does not want to help the poor. Dickens wanted to challenge readers at the time who had a similar attitude to Scrooge and encourage them to have more compassion for their fellow man.



Zoom in on key words

He is 'hard' on Bob through denying him adequate fire and warmth; he is 'sharp' with the two portly gentlemen who are collecting money for the poor. Both adjectives emphasise his lack of kindness and how he is devoid of any tender feeling. The words are monosyllabic highlighting his short temper and severe personality towards others.



“ ”



Include quotations/evidence

Scrooge is described as being “as hard and sharp as flint” and “as solitary as an oyster”.

Engage with readers and context

The reader is left feeling dislike for Scrooge, which is Dickens' way of trying to make his contemporary readership dislike such self-interested figures in Victorian society – in particular money-lenders. Through 'A Christmas Carol', Dickens reminds his readers that we are all responsible for the well-being of every member in our community; we must always exercise charity.



What's the writer used or done?

Why?

... the use of the similes dehumanise Scrooge as he is presented as unfeeling and lacking emotion. Dickens' use of the adjectives 'hard', 'sharp' and 'solitary' all highlight Scrooge's misanthropic personality at the start of the novella.

What lessons do we learn?

Dickens shows an almost miraculous change in the character of Scrooge by the end of the novel, where Scrooge becomes kind to all that cross his way. Dickens is teaching us to embrace, help and become active in our communities by adopting the ideals of Christmas 'all year round'.