

# KS4 Knowledge Organiser: A Christmas Carol



## Context:

- ✓ Dickens wrote 'A Christmas Carol' in **1843** focusing on how many of society's ills can be blamed on greed.
- ✓ Dickens' early life gave him first-hand experience of poverty.
- ✓ **1832 – The Great Reform Bill** gave many middle class property owners the right to vote for the first time.
- ✓ Large sections of the middle classes, the working classes and women still didn't have the right to vote.
- ✓ **1834 – Poor Law Amendment Act** – Led to a cut in aid given to the poor.
- ✓ **Workhouses** were created which poor people would have to live and work in, if they were unable to pay for their own housing.
- ✓ In **1843**, Dickens read a government report on child labour in England.
- ✓ Dickens wanted to use his popularity to bring the problem of child poverty to the attention of a wider public.
- ✓ Victorian London was a place of great wealth and great poverty.

## PLOT STRUCTURE

### The Preface

Dickens introduces his '**Ghostly Little Book**' and his 'ghost on an idea'. He talks to his reader telling them that he wants if to 'haunt' their memories, so they don't forget why we need to live by **Christian values**.

### Stave One

Scrooge is at work in his counting house. Despite the **Christmas Eve** cold, he refuses to spend money on coals for the fire. Scrooge's turns down his nephew, Fred's, invitation to his Christmas party and the request of two men who want money for charity. Scrooge is visited by the ghost of his dead partner, Jacob Marley, who tells Scrooge that, due to his greedy life, he has to wander the Earth wearing heavy chains. He tells Scrooge that three spirits will visit him during the next three nights.

### Stave Two

He wakes and the **Ghost of Christmas Past** takes Scrooge into the past. Invisible to those he watches, Scrooge revisits his childhood school days, his apprenticeship with a jolly merchant named Fezziwig, and his engagement to Belle, who leaves Scrooge as he loves money too much to love another human being. Scrooge sheds tears of regret before being returned to his bed.

### Stave Three

**The Ghost of Christmas Present** shows Scrooge Christmas as it will happen that year. Scrooge watches the Cratchit family eat a tiny meal in their little home. He sees Bob Cratchit's son, Tiny Tim, whose kindness and humility warm Scrooge's heart. The spectre shows Scrooge his nephew's Christmas party. Toward the end of the day the ghost shows Scrooge two starved children, Ignorance and Want. He vanishes as Scrooge notices a dark, hooded figure coming.

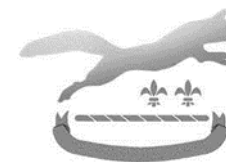
### Stave Four

**The Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come** takes Scrooge through a sequence of scenes linked to an unnamed man's death. Scrooge, is keen to learn the lesson. He begs to know the name of the dead man. He finds himself in a churchyard with the spirit pointing to a grave. Scrooge looks at the headstone and is shocked to read his own name. He is desperate to change his fate and promises to change his ways. He suddenly finds himself safely tucked in his bed.

### Stave Five

**Scrooge is transformed.** He rushes out onto the street hoping to share his newfound Christmas spirit. He sends a turkey to the Cratchit house and goes to Fred's party, As the years go by, he continues to celebrate Christmas with all his heart. He treats Tiny Tim as if he were his own child, gives gifts for the poor and is kind, generous and warm.

## Literature Paper 2 19<sup>th</sup> Century Texts



## Key Terms and ideas:

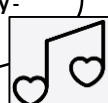
- ✓ Novella
- ✓ Ghost Story
- ✓ Bildungsroman
- ✓ Transformation
- ✓ Redemption
- ✓ Christian Values
- ✓ 1<sup>st</sup> person narrative voice
- ✓ 3<sup>rd</sup> person omniscient narrator
- ✓ Stave
- ✓ Metaphor, simile, imagery
- ✓ Senses
- ✓ Pace
- ✓ Shifts in time, place, person

## Key Concepts and Themes:

- ✓ Greed
- ✓ Avarice
- ✓ Ignorance & Want
- ✓ Redemption
- ✓ Predestination
- ✓ Free Will
- ✓ Poverty
- ✓ Class
- ✓ Isolation

- ✓ Transformation
- ✓ We observe Scrooge observing...
- ✓ The passage of time
- ✓ Family
- ✓ Guilt
- ✓ Generosity
- ✓ Social Responsibility
- ✓ Justice
- ✓ The supernatural
- ✓ Existentialism

Characterisation	Key Quotes
<p><b>Scrooge</b> ✓ A selfish business man who transforms into a charitable philanthropist. Our protagonist.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Hard and sharp as <b>flint</b>... As solitary as an <b>oyster</b>”</li> <li>• “Are there no <b>prisons</b>...? Are there no <b>workhouses</b>...?”</li> <li>• “I will <b>honour</b> Christmas in my heart. I will live in the Past, the Present, and the Future. I will not shut out the <b>lessons</b> that they teach.”</li> </ul>
<p><b>Fred</b> ✓ Scrooge’s nephew whose party invitation he declines. Represents forgiveness and family.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “I have always thought of Christmas as a good time, a <b>kind, forgiving, charitable</b>, pleasant time.”</li> <li>• “Scrooge’s offences carry their own <b>punishment</b>. Who suffers? Himself!”</li> </ul>
<p><b>Jacob Marley</b> ✓ Scrooge’s dead partner who returns to warn Scrooge to change his ways.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “I wear the <b>chain</b> I forged in life.”</li> <li>• “The <b>chain</b> was made up of cash boxes.. ledgers.. heavy purses.”</li> <li>• “My <b>spirit</b> never roved beyond the narrow limits of our money changing hole.”</li> </ul>
<p><b>Bob Cratchitt</b> ✓ Scrooge’s clerk. He loves his family and is shown to be happy and morally upright. He has love but not wealth.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “The clerk’s <b>fire</b> was so very much smaller that it looked like only one coal”</li> <li>• “Tiny Time rode upon his <b>shoulder</b>”</li> <li>• “I think he’s walked a little <b>slower</b> than he used to”</li> </ul>
<p><b>Tiny Tim Cratchitt</b> ✓ Bob’s son whose story plays a part in inspiring Scrooge’s transformation. Represents the victims of poverty.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “He bore a little <b>crutch</b>, and had his <b>limbs</b> supported by an iron frame!”</li> <li>• “Tiny Tim hoped the people saw him in the <b>church</b>, because he was a <b>cripple</b>, and remember upon <b>Christmas</b> day, who made lame beggars walk, and blind men see.”</li> <li>• “<b>God</b> bless us every one”</li> </ul>
<p><b>The Ghost of Christmas Past</b> ✓ A strange combination of young and old, wearing white robes and looking like a candle.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Would you (Scrooge) so soon put out he <b>light</b> I give?”</li> <li>• “A <b>solitary</b> child, <b>neglected</b> by his friends, is left there still – Scrooge <b>sobbed</b>.”</li> <li>• “Scrooge’s <b>heart</b> and <b>soul</b> were in the scene... he remembered everything, enjoyed everything.”</li> </ul>
<p><b>The Ghost of Christmas Present</b> ✓ A portly, jovial gentleman surrounded by a warm glow. He brings joy to the neediest.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “A jolly <b>giant</b> who bore a glowing <b>torch</b> with a cheery <b>voice</b> and a joyful air”</li> <li>• “I see a <b>vacant</b> seat. The child will die”</li> <li>• “They are Man’s. This boy is <b>ignorance</b>. This girl is <b>Want</b>. Beware for I see that written which is <b>Doom</b>.”</li> </ul>
<p><b>The Ghost of Christmas Yet To Come</b> ✓ A robed and hooded spirit who confronts Scrooge with his own tombstone.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “It was <b>shrouded</b> in a deep black garment which <b>concealed</b> its head, its face, its form and left nothing visible except one outstretched <b>hand</b>”</li> <li>• “Scrooge crept towards it, <b>trembling</b>, and following the finger, read upon the stone of the neglected <b>grave</b> his own name, Ebenezer Scrooge.”</li> </ul>
<p><b>Fezziwig</b> ✓ Scrooge’s ex-employer. A representation of a good employer and generosity of spirit.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Bless his <b>heart</b>; it’s Fezziwig alive again!”</li> <li>• “The <b>happiness</b> he gives, is as if it cost a fortune”</li> </ul>
<p><b>Belle</b> ✓ Scrooge’s fiancé as a young man.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Another <b>idol</b> has displaced me... a <b>golden</b> one”</li> </ul>
<p><b>Fan</b> ✓ Scrooge’s sister. Fred’s mother.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “I have come to bring you home dear <b>brother</b>.. <b>home, home, home!</b>”</li> </ul>



## Revisit

**Characterisation:** Read through the character profiles and their quotations. **Make** revision cards for each character.

**Make sure** you include:

- ✓ Their personality, their relationships, their behaviours, their emotions, their impact on Scrooge
- ✓ Key quotes – learn these ready for a mini-test in class.

**Challenge:** Add at least one method to each card, and analyse its impact on the reader. How is Dickens using character to tell us about society?

**Transformation:** How does Dickens present the transformation of Scrooge? **Create** a 5 stage document tracking the transformation of Scrooge. **Include** details, quotes and images. Use the plot structure box overleaf to help.

**Include:**

- ✓ Scrooge in Stave 1, at work, in the street and at home
- ✓ Scrooge in Stave 2 observing his past
- ✓ Scrooge in Stave 3 witnessing the reality of Victorian life
- ✓ Scrooge in Stave 4 seeing his own grave
- ✓ Scrooge in Stave 5 waking up on Christmas morning.

**Challenge:** Analyse the structure Dickens has chosen. Think about how he has used this to fit the bildungsroman genre and to communicate a social message.

**Watch and make notes:**

- ✓ Mr Bruff: [revision playlist](#)
- ✓ BBC Bitesize: [revision videos and mini tests](#)

## Rehearse

**The Ghosts:** From memory, create a map to show each of the 'stops' shown to Scrooge by the three ghosts. The Plot grid overleaf will help you get started, but you will need to add in more detail.

**Make** maps for:

- The Ghost of Christmas Past
- The Ghost of Christmas Present
- The Ghost of Christmas Yet To Come

**Challenge:** Add writing to answer the question: How does Dickens use the ghosts to direct Scrooge through his transformation? Why show him those particular scenes?

**Context:** Starting with the 'context' section, **research** the times Dickens was writing about. **Write about:**

- 1) What is a Workhouse?
- 2) What were the Poor Laws?
- 3) What is the Treadmill that Scrooge mentions?
- 4) Write about Charles Dickens.

**Challenge:** Write about poverty and wealth in Britain today. How different is society now that we have the NHS and a Welfare System? Do you think the wealth divide has reduced and we live a more equal life nowadays?

**Empathy:** Your task is to choose a character and write a monologue in their voice. That character should explain what is happening in their life at that moment, how they are feeling, what they are hoping.

## Respond

**Responding to BIG questions:**

**Think, plan, prepare, write.**

You will need to cover AO1 (SQI), AO2 (MQE-squish) and AO3 (Context) in your essay.

- ✓ How does Dickens present Scrooge as an **outsider to society**?
- ✓ How does Dickens present ideas about **social responsibility**?
- ✓ How does Dickens present the theme of **guilt**?
- ✓ How does Dickens present ideas about **actions and consequences**?
- ✓ How does Dickens present the theme of **loneliness and isolation**?
- ✓ How does Dickens present **happiness and joy** in the novel?

**Challenge:**

Top band answers require SQI, MQE, word level analysis and context. Aim high by making your analysis developed, critical and exploratory.

**Write to respond to the ideas in this section of the novella:**

*'Are there no prisons?' asked Scrooge.*

*'Plenty of prisons,' said the gentleman, laying down the pen again.*

*'And the Union workhouses.' demanded Scrooge. 'Are they still in operation?'*

*'They are. Still,' returned the gentleman, 'I wish I could say they were not.'*

*'The Treadmill and the Poor Law are in full vigour, then?' said Scrooge.*

*'Both very busy, sir.'*