

# Oxford Revise | AQA GCSE English Literature | A Christmas Carol | Answers

## Mark scheme

Behind each exam question is a set of assessment objectives (AOs). The examiner will use these AOs to help mark your answer. If you answer the question accurately, you will automatically cover all the AOs.

Level	Marks	Explanation
1	1–5	<p>A <i>simple</i> response</p> <p>AO1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• simple comments relevant to task and text</li> <li>• reference to relevant detail(s)</li> </ul> <p>AO2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• awareness of writer making choices</li> <li>• possible reference to subject terminology</li> </ul> <p>AO3:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• simple comment on explicit ideas/contextual factors</li> </ul>
2	6–10	<p>A <i>relevant</i> response</p> <p>AO1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• supported response to task and text</li> <li>• comments on references</li> </ul> <p>AO2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• identification of writer’s methods</li> <li>• some reference to subject terminology</li> </ul> <p>AO3:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• some awareness of implicit ideas/contextual factors</li> </ul>
3	11–15	<p>An <i>explained</i> response</p> <p>AO1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• some explained response to task and whole text</li> <li>• references used to support a range of relevant comments</li> </ul> <p>AO2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• explained/relevant comments on writer’s methods with some relevant use of subject terminology</li> <li>• identification of effects of writer’s methods to create meanings</li> </ul> <p>AO3:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• some understanding of implicit ideas/perspectives/contextual factors shown by links between context/text/task</li> </ul>

4	16–20	<p>A <i>clear</i> response</p> <p>AO1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• clear, explained response to task and whole text</li> <li>• effective use of references to support explanation</li> </ul> <p>AO2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• clear explanation of writer's methods with appropriate use of relevant subject terminology</li> <li>• understanding the effects of the writer's methods to create meanings</li> </ul> <p>AO3:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• clear understanding of ideas/perspectives/contextual factors shown by specific links between context/text/task</li> </ul>
5	21–25	<p>A <i>thoughtful</i> response</p> <p>AO1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• thoughtful, developed response to task and whole text</li> <li>• apt references integrated into interpretation(s)</li> </ul> <p>AO2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• examination of writer's methods with subject terminology used effectively to support consideration of methods</li> <li>• examination of effects of writer's methods to create meanings</li> </ul> <p>AO3:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• thoughtful consideration of ideas/perspectives/contextual factors shown by examination of detailed links between context/text/task</li> </ul>
6	26–30	<p>A <i>conceptual</i> response</p> <p>AO1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• critical, exploratory, well-structured argument</li> <li>• conceptualised response to task and whole text</li> <li>• good judgement in choice and use of precise references</li> </ul> <p>AO2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• analysis of writer's methods with subject terminology used appropriately</li> <li>• exploration of effects of writer's methods to create meanings</li> </ul> <p>AO3:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• exploration of ideas/perspectives/contextual factors shown by specific, detailed links between context/text/task</li> <li>• thoughtful, developed response to task and whole text</li> </ul>

## Page 102 Question 1

### Indicative content

*Relevant content may include:*

#### AO1

- Dickens' presentation of Scrooge in the extract, from the beginning of the novel
- Scrooge's experiences with the three Spirits and their effect on his developing character
- contrast between the younger Scrooge and his older self
- Dickens' projection about Scrooge's 'future' life

#### AO2

- Dickens' use of similes to describe the hardness, coldness and solitariness of Scrooge
- language used to describe Scrooge's physical appearance with imagery relating to cold weather
- the negative responses of others to Scrooge
- Dickens' humorous tone

#### AO3

- Scrooge's anti-social behaviour
- expectations about social relationships and social responsibilities
- Scrooge's transformation from 'outsider' to fully functioning member of society over the course of the novel

### Example answer

*The answer given below is a full, high-mark answer.*

This extract is Dickens' introduction to his readers of Ebenezer Scrooge, and what an introduction!

Like most introductions, it starts with reference to Scrooge's name but, unlike in traditional introductions, Dickens makes it plain that Scrooge is actually indifferent to his name and answers both to 'Scrooge' and to 'Marley'. Dickens goes on to explain this indifference by revealing that Scrooge is only interested in his business, in acquiring money and in making gains – his name is of little significance in these projects.

By taking a seeming breath in, 'Oh!' before stating how 'tight-fisted' Scrooge is, Dickens expresses his authorial disapproval of Scrooge. Dickens follows this up with a sequence of violent-sounding present participles – 'squeezing, wrenching, grasping, scraping, clutching' – to depict Scrooge's active and urgent need to acquire money.

Dickens also uses similes to present Scrooge as 'hard as' flint and he uses a sequence of sibilants, including 'secret' and 'self-contained' to lead up to the memorable simile 'solitary as an oyster' to present Scrooge in a highly unsympathetic manner and as a man who keeps no company.

Once Dickens has described Scrooge's nature in this extract, he turns to his physical appearance, and once again presents Scrooge as decidedly unattractive. All of Scrooge's physical features appear to have been blighted by the 'cold within him' which has 'nipped', 'shrivelled', and 'stiffened' various parts of his face and body giving him 'blue' lips and 'red' eyes – the opposite of what we might expect of a normal face.

Dickens compares Scrooge to some of the worst aspects of wintry weather and declares Scrooge to be more bitter than winter at its harshest. He uses comedy to emphasise Scrooge's complete lack of positive qualities by ending his description with the amusing observation that while 'foul weather' often comes down 'handsomely', 'Scrooge never did'.

Dickens associates Scrooge with the cold at the beginning of the novel; his office is cold, his home is cold and so is his heart. However, as the novel unfolds, Dickens presents Scrooge as capable of thaw and there are several significant moments in the novel where we see the ice begin to melt.

The first occasion comes when the Ghost of Christmas Past reveals to him 'a lonely boy', 'reading near a feeble fire' in his old schoolhouse. Dickens tells us that 'Scrooge sat down upon a form, and wept to see his poor forgotten self'. But Dickens suggests that, although Scrooge is initially self-pitying in this moment, he is more receptive to change than might be expected of a man harsher than 'winter', as he soon shifts his thoughts to the carol singer that he had frightened away from his office on Christmas Eve, expressing the wish, 'I should like to have given him something'. In this way, Dickens presents Scrooge taking his first step towards rejoining society.

Scrooge's experiences with the Ghost of Christmas Present begin to bring about a change in his character and Dickens reflects this by presenting him, for the first time, in wholly positive terms – a complete change from the introduction to him: 'Uncle Scrooge had imperceptibly become so gay and light of heart'. Scrooge wants to toast Fred and his family and is noticeably touched by Fred's kind words about him.

Scrooge makes fairly rapid progress in the company of the Spirits, having realised that their mission is 'to do me good' as he admits to the Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come.

Before that, the Ghost of Christmas Present brings about a change of attitude in Scrooge when he takes him to the Cratchit's home and to Fred's home. Dickens presents Scrooge's emerging humanity when he is moved to implore this Ghost, 'with an interest he had never felt before, "tell me if Tiny Tim will live"'. Later in the same chapter, Dickens presents a new child-like quality in Scrooge when he requests more time at Fred's party, asking for 'One half hour, Spirit, only one!'

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Dickens presents Scrooge as a fairly willing traveller on a journey of re-discovery in the company of the Spirits of Christmas Past and Present. He is shown reacting sentimentally to moments from his younger

days and recovers tender feelings about his first employer, Fezziwig, and his first 'love', Belle. However, Dickens shows us how the Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come shocks Scrooge into confronting his likely future.

Scrooge is shown to be horrified by the intimidating appearance of the final Spirit as well as by the visions that it shows him. Scrooge is bewildered as he discovers that in place of 'his own image', 'another man stood'. Dickens presents Scrooge's inner thoughts to us here when he attributes this absence to the fact that he is already considering 'a change of life'. In this chapter, Dickens shows Scrooge taking a very long time to realise that the miserable corpse left to lie on a bed without bed curtains, and with no friend to protect him, is himself.

Dickens presents Scrooge as a completely new man in the final chapter. Gone is the man of 'flint' and 'ice', who declared Christmas to be a 'humbug'.

Dickens returns to images of the weather to present Scrooge's new perspective on life as he emerges from cold and darkness to a new dawn of 'Golden sunlight; Heavenly sky; sweet fresh air'.

No longer described as 'hard as flint', Dickens allows Scrooge to present himself to the reader for himself, announcing, '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.'

Dickens shows us many different facets of Scrooge in the novel; he is not a mere caricature of a miserly old man, as he first appears to us, in his testy exchanges with Bob and Fred and in the printed extract.

The extract is written in the third person and appears to be a faithful picture of the man Scrooge 'is' at the start of the novel. However, through the diligence of old Marley and the Spirit guides, Scrooge rediscovers his better qualities to become, as Dickens insists at the end of the novel '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'.

## Page 103 Question 2

### Indicative content

*Relevant content may include:*

#### AO1

- Fred's interaction with Scrooge in the extract: friendly and informal
- Fred's personal qualities: his politeness, his respect and sympathy for others
- sympathy generated through Fred's good humour, his apparent concern for his 'fellow-passengers' on the journey of life
- examples of Fred's sympathetic qualities as demonstrated throughout the novel

## AO2

- Fred's questioning tone and his teasing of his uncle in the extract
- Fred's incomprehension of Scrooge's opposition to Christmas shown in the use of questions and exclamations throughout the extract
- Fred's good-natured 'mirroring' of some of Scrooge's expressions
- Dickens' use of adverbs to contrast Fred's speech – 'gaily', 'pleaded' – compared with Scrooge's – 'sternly'

## AO3

- Fred's attitudes towards Christmas as contrasted with Scrooge's
- references to financial responsibilities
- notions of social responsibility
- ideas about moral values

## Example answer

*The answer given below is a full, high-mark answer.*

In this extract, the first voice that we 'hear', as readers, is the sympathetic voice of Scrooge's nephew, Fred, who is attempting to coax his uncle Scrooge into a better mood.

The fact that Fred's voice is gently quizzical – 'You don't mean that, I am sure?' – rather than contradicting his uncle's blatant attack on Christmas more emphatically immediately suggests Fred's tactful nature and inclines the reader to be sympathetic towards him.

Our sympathy grows as Fred adopts a light-hearted approach to his bad-tempered uncle, meeting Scrooge's insulting remark about Fred being 'poor enough' with a humorous reply, exactly mirroring the structure of his uncle's comment, insisting that Scrooge is 'rich enough' not to be 'morose'.

This witty banter between the pair initially strikes the reader as evidence of a close family relationship between Scrooge and Fred. This first impression is gradually destroyed, as the two are shown to hold completely opposite views on the significance of Christmas. Fred sees it as a blessing and 'a good time', while Scrooge considers it a curse, celebrated by 'fools'.

While Scrooge declares Christmas to be a financially unprofitable time, Fred turns Scrooge's argument on its head. While Fred admits that he has never profited financially from Christmas he declares enthusiastically that 'though it has never put a scrap of gold or silver in my pocket, I believe that it *has* done me good, and *will* do me good; and I say, God bless it!'

Fred shows himself to be uninterested in monetary wealth but to be fully appreciative of the spiritual wealth of generosity, kindness and charity. In ending his praise of Christmas with a heartfelt 'God bless it!' Fred earns the approval and sympathy of the reader.

Though Scrooge churlishly refuses Fred's invitation to dinner in this first chapter, Dickens does not let the reader lose sight of this kindly character. Whenever Fred appears, or is spoken of by other characters, he is always presented in a positive light.

In Chapter 3 we hear Fred entertaining his Christmas Day guests with recollections of what Scrooge had to say about Christmas. Almost in disbelief, Fred explains 'He said that Christmas was a humbug, as I live!' and 'He believed it too!' Despite this, Fred is never unkind about his uncle, insisting that he has 'nothing to say against him', that he is 'sorry for him' and that he 'couldn't be angry with him if I tried'. Fred's words are unfailingly charitable and reveal his great empathy.

In Chapter 4, Fred's sympathetic qualities are emphasised by Dickens once again. Bob Cratchit speaks of Fred's 'extraordinary kindness' and his offer 'to be of service to you in any way', after the death of Tiny Tim.

Fred represents Christian virtues of forgiveness and charity which he puts into practice in the final chapter when welcoming Scrooge into his Christmas party with complete sincerity, which, as readers, we find admirable but unsurprising, so consistent is Dickens' sympathetic presentation of Fred.

Dickens presents Fred sympathetically throughout the novel, by comparing him with his uncharitable uncle Scrooge, by showing his acts of kindness to others and by sharing with us one of Fred's most appealing sympathetic qualities: his capacity for laughter. Dickens describes Fred's way of laughing – 'holding his sides, rolling his head, and twisting his face into the most extravagant contortions' – as completely contagious making all around him roar out in equal laughter.

Though Dickens presents Fred sympathetically through his kind actions, generous thoughts and fair sentiments, he chooses to embody these qualities in a youthful, fun-loving yet sincere young man, who believes in family and in Christmas and in good will to all.

## Page 104 Question 3

### Indicative content

*Relevant content may include:*

#### AO1

- Marley's insistence on the importance of charity and 'working kindly' to others rather than being what Scrooge describes as 'a good man of business'
- examples of acts of kindness throughout the novel, as shown by, for example, Mr Fezziwig, the Cratchit family and Fred
- examples of the effects of kindness on individuals such as Bob Cratchit
- contrasting acts of kindness with acts of selfishness, shown, for example, by the laundress and the charwoman, who were both willing to rob the dead
- consideration of the 'reformed' Scrooge and his immediate series of acts of kindness

## AO2

- Marley's frequent allusions in the extract to the endlessness of his suffering caused by his lack of charity and kindness in life
- his repeated use of negatives: 'cannot', 'never', 'no rest', 'no peace'
- his positive references to 'usefulness' and 'life's opportunities' to do good
- the listing of the good qualities more important than 'trade': 'charity, mercy, forbearance, and benevolence'
- Dickens' use of language to reflect the effect of Marley's words on Scrooge: 'observed in a business-like manner', 'mused', 'faltered'

## AO3

- ideas about individual responsibility to others
- effects of social inequality
- materialism
- Ideas about moral values

## Example answer

*The answer given below is a full, high-mark answer.*

In this extract, Dickens presents ideas about charity and kindness both implicitly, as Marley recounts his miserable experiences of the 'afterlife', and explicitly, when he shows Marley's strong reaction to Scrooge's suggestion that he was 'always a good man of business'.

At first, Dickens shows the results of a life without charity and kindness in the physical appearance of Marley. Dickens presents Marley encased in a chain made of 'cashboxes' and other symbols of 'trade', representing the many years that Marley lived without being kind, without being good, and without being charitable.

Death has brought knowledge to Marley, who is condemned to everlasting wandering. Marley cannot be released from his heavy penalty for selfishness but, by his example, Dickens suggests that Marley can (and does) save Scrooge from following in his painful footsteps.

Dickens gives Marley negative vocabulary to show that by 'never' walking beyond the 'counting-house' and 'never' allowing his spirit to leave the 'money-changing hole' that Scrooge now inhabits, he can 'never' be free.

Here, the 'counting-house' and 'money-changing hole' represent the opposite of charity and kindness – the proper way to live, as Marley has discovered, to his eternal cost.

Marley scoffs at Scrooge's 'compliment' that he was 'always a good man of business', a phrase Marley would now consider to be a contradiction in terms. By insisting that 'Mankind was my business. The



common welfare was my business; charity, mercy, forbearance, and benevolence were, all, my business', Marley shares his lessons of seven years spent in limbo, unable to make any positive contribution to 'mankind'.

Dickens uses some features of the genre of 'horror' through the descriptions of Marley's appearance and experience, to preach the benefits of charity, mercy, forbearance, and kindness.

Elsewhere in the novel, charity and kindness are presented as both good for the receivers and for the givers.

The two 'portly gentlemen' who visit Scrooge in his office are described as 'pleasant to behold'. Their concern for the 'poor and destitute' is sincere and their shock at Scrooge's refusal to contribute to their fund for the poor suggests that Scrooge is uniquely tight-fisted, in their experience.

At the end of the novel, Scrooge experiences the sheer joy of giving, as he sends a prize turkey to the Cratchits for Christmas, is generous with the boy who fetches it, and is delighted to make a hefty contribution to the fund for the poor and destitute.

Scrooge begins to remember what it was like to be touched by kindness through the visits of the Spirits. The Ghost of Christmas Past causes Scrooge to pity his young self, admire the generosity of Fezziwig, and regret his loss of Belle who accuses him of choosing 'gain' over love.

Scrooge experiences his own surge of kindness in his impulse to give 'something' to the carol singer that he chased from his office door, and to speak to his clerk after being reminded of the generosity of Fezziwig. Scrooge recognises kindness personified in his visit to Fezziwig's Christmas party, telling the Ghost of Christmas Past that an employer 'has the power to render us happy or unhappy; to make our service light or burdensome; a pleasure or a toil'.

In Chapter 3, the Ghost of Christmas Present shows Scrooge how a poor man like Bob Cratchit may taste the joys of Christmas to the full, despite the smallness of the Christmas goose and pudding. Dickens teaches that a good life is not about money or possessions but about love and family, and consideration for others, promoting the importance of charity and kindness.

Chapter 4 reveals the consequences of a life devoid of charity and kindness when the Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come shows Scrooge an unsettling vision of himself lying 'dead'; uncared for, on a bed without curtains, stolen from and disregarded by employees and financial colleagues alike.

The Spirit shows him the degradation of life lived purely for profit and gain, and this is compared with the sad but utterly touching sight of the worthy Cratchit family mourning their loss of Tiny Tim – worth more than all the gold in the world to the Cratchits.

## Page 106 Question 4

### Indicative content

*Relevant content may include:*

#### AO1

- the Cratchits appear as a model of family values, contented with what they have, despite relative poverty and Tiny Tim's physical affliction
- the Cratchits work as a team preparing Christmas lunch, showing love, mutual support and respect
- Tiny Tim is shown to be courageous in the face of his disability and is linked with Christian teaching

#### AO2

- Dickens uses elevated and everyday language side by side to show the contrast between how the Cratchits viewed their Christmas lunch and its reality: 'black swan', 'a feathered phenomenon' – a goose
- repeated use of visual and auditory language brings the family scene to life
- Tiny Tim's disability is shown to give him special status within the family
- the narrative voice is both sympathetic and ironic at times

#### AO3

- prevalence of large families in nineteenth-century Britain
- religious beliefs/Christian context
- lack of access to cheap or free medical care
- attitudes towards Christmas

## Page 107 Question 5

### Indicative content

*Relevant content may include:*

#### AO1

- Scrooge regrets throwing away his chance of happiness with Belle
- he regrets not having a child to be his 'spring-time' in his old age
- he appears to regret all the lost opportunities that the Ghost of Christmas Past has revealed to him
- he comes to regret having spent his time pursuing wealth at the expense of family and social relations

#### AO2

- Dickens uses the figurative language of spring-time and winter to signify the optimism of youth and its absence in old age – described as 'haggard'
- there are several references to light and darkness to support the contrast between youth and age
- Dickens uses the dialogue between Belle and her husband (questions and answers) to show their familiarity with one another and their mutual reaction to Scrooge's solitary existence
- the Spirit has aroused such intense feelings in Scrooge that Scrooge seems to see him as an 'adversary'; the words 'wrestle', 'struggle', 'seized' and 'pressed' suggest a degree of violence

#### AO3

- the importance of family
- the belief in the need for social relationships
- notions of individual responsibility for one's actions
- consequences of materialism

## Page 108 Question 6

### Indicative content

*Relevant content may include:*

#### AO1

- Scrooge's relationship with his clerk is initially presented as a formal business relationship where the employer is all-powerful, and the employee is powerless
- Scrooge's indifference to Bob's family life and personal struggles is disrupted by seeing the reality of Bob's home life; Scrooge begins to feel an interest in Bob's family, especially in Tiny Tim's welfare, in the company of the Ghost of Christmas Present
- Scrooge warms to Bob for his unexpected/unwarranted loyalty to him as 'the Founder of the Feast'; he is moved by the prospect of Tiny Tim's death and the family's fortitude
- Bob is completely unprepared for Scrooge's new benevolent feelings towards him

#### AO2

- Dickens' use of internal monologue to convey Scrooge's excitement at the prospect of surprising Bob with his new-found concern for him
- the references to time passing, waiting for Bob to arrive late, creates tension for the reader
- the representation of Scrooge imitating his 'old self' is made humorous by Bob's reaction to the 'new' Scrooge – whom he believes to be mad
- the dramatisation of Scrooge's 'reveal' is vividly achieved and contrasted with the return of the steady 'voice' of the narrator

#### AO3

- Scrooge finally accepts individual responsibility to others
- sense of social integration where the rich look out for the poor in society
- ideas about moral values and the possibility of rehabilitation into society

## Example answer

*The answer given below is a full, high-mark answer.*

In *A Christmas Carol* the relationship between Scrooge and Bob is the first relationship Dickens presents. It is strictly a 'business' relationship, in which Scrooge holds all the power.

The extract shows us the 'new' Scrooge, softened and shaped by the events he has witnessed in the company of the Spirits. Now, Scrooge is intent on making up for all the time he has wasted making money rather than making the most of life and making others happy. Scrooge's resolution to live a better life is linked to his determination to reset his relationship with his clerk, Bob, whom he has learned is a thoroughly, decent man. He has already, anonymously, sent the Cratchit family the prize turkey for their Christmas dinner, but he means to do more for them yet.

In the extract, Dickens shows us how Scrooge, who previously gave no thought for his 'clerk', now takes pleasure in the thought of teasing Bob Cratchit. Dickens first shows Scrooge's inner monologue as he anticipates Bob's arrival, creating suspense for the reader: 'If he could only be there first, and catch Bob Cratchit coming late! That was the thing he had set his heart upon.'

Then, as Scrooge impersonates his growling 'old' self, and bullies Bob for being late, Dickens is reminding us of the 'old' Scrooge from the opening chapter. Where once Scrooge was indifferent to the thoughts and feelings of Bob – whom he saw purely as an employee – now he sees him as a potential friend, for whom he intends to do much to improve his situation.

Bob thinks he is finally going to be sacked, and Dickens tells us that Bob 'trembled' and suspects that Scrooge may have gone mad. The language that Scrooge uses in the extract then marks a shift in the relationship between employer and employee. After seeing Bob tremble, Scrooge immediately changes his manner. Scrooge is warm and friendly with Bob, in a way he had never been before. Scrooge addresses Bob by name and 'clapped him on the back'. He wishes Bob 'A merry Christmas' – a phrase previously all but 'banned by' Scrooge.

Dickens also refers to the previous relationship between Scrooge and Bob – the relationship of only two days previously – where Scrooge's power over Bob was shown by the pitiful single coal 'warming' Bob's dismal cell and the threat of dismissal if he asked for more. In this extract, Scrooge's instruction to Bob is very different: 'Make up the fires and buy another coal-scuttle before you dot another i, Bob Cratchit!'

At the beginning of the novel, Dickens shows the reader that the relationship between Scrooge and Bob is strictly hierarchical. At a time when regular employment was hard to come by, wages were low and labour was cheap, Bob considers himself lucky to have a steady job to support himself, his wife and five children, and is not in a position to challenge Scrooge's harsh style as an employer.

In the opening chapter, when Bob breaks out into applause at Fred's heartfelt praise of Christmas, Scrooge's response is to threaten to dismiss him. Scrooge is exasperated at Bob's folly, to imagine a 'merry Christmas' on 'fifteen shillings a-week', yet does not see (yet) how he could make a difference to Bob's life.

At the start, Scrooge treats Bob badly; he begrudges him taking a whole day's holiday on Christmas Day – and feels cheated of a day's pay by Bob. And yet, at the end of the novel, everything about

the relationship between Scrooge and Bob has changed. What Bob cannot, nor ever will, know is that his relationship with Scrooge has been transformed ‘overnight’ – and without his active participation – thanks to the Spirits.

Dickens shows us how Scrooge’s relationship with Bob is affected by the ‘visit’ he makes to Old Fezziwig, in the company of the Ghost of Christmas Past. Scrooge recognises the contrast between the Fezziwigs’ genuine concern for their employees, all of whom they greet by name, and his own begrudging treatment of his single employee whom he refers to simply as ‘my clerk’. Happy memories of his own apprenticeship stir Scrooge’s conscience, and he confesses to the Spirit that ‘I should like to be able to say a word or two to my clerk just now. That’s all.’

The Spirits show Scrooge that Bob Cratchit is a good family man; praising his wife, encouraging his children and tenderly loving Tiny Tim. Scrooge hears his poorly-paid clerk raise a toast to Scrooge as ‘the Founder of the Feast’ in front of a frankly disapproving family and Scrooge is affected by Bob’s display of gratitude.

Despite Scrooge’s lack of concern for Bob as a person, Bob appreciates that, since Scrooge pays his wages, and effectively finances his family’s way of life, Scrooge deserves his respect and his loyalty.

Scrooge is also shown Bob braving the death of his beloved Tiny Tim and sees that all that Bob does is with sincerity and kindness. These experiences bring about a change in Scrooge’s attitude towards his humble clerk, altering the relationship without Bob being any the wiser.

Dickens uses Scrooge’s changing relationships with Bob, and with his nephew Fred, to mark the making of a new man as he awakens on Christmas morning to begin afresh.

On Christmas Eve, Scrooge and Bob leave the office separately. The extract brings the story ‘full-circle’; now, Scrooge promises that they will leave together to share a ‘Christmas bowl of smoking bishop’. Scrooge sets out to define their new relationship, where Scrooge will be both a ‘good master’ and a ‘good friend’ to ‘good’ Bob Cratchit.

## Page 109 Question 7

### Indicative content

*Relevant content may include:*

#### AO1

- Scrooge appears transformed by the sight of his ‘child-self’ and his memories of his favourite story books
- Dickens shows a more emotional Scrooge than we have previously seen
- Scrooge’s sympathy for his former self stirs his conscience and he regrets chasing away the poor carol singer from his office
- this is the episode that marks the beginning of Scrooge’s change from miser to benefactor

## AO2

- Dickens uses Scrooge's own voice, filled first with enthusiasm and then with regret, to mark a change in his character
- the words 'solitary' and 'alone' signify both Scrooge's childhood, as imposed upon him, and the adult life that he has chosen; vivid exclamations such as 'Halloa! Hoop! Halloo' indicate Scrooge's potential for happiness and change
- Scrooge's voice is described as being 'most extraordinary between laughing and crying' while Dickens has previously presented his emotions to be indifference or irritation

## AO3

- attitudes towards Christmas
- social conscience
- the negative effects of materialism

# Page 110 Question 8

## Indicative content

*Relevant content may include:*

## AO1

- the division of the novel into separate 'staves' or chapters, each devoted to a specific 'time' – present, past or future
- the role taken in the novel by the three Spirits who guide Scrooge through the past, present and potential future times
- time as a medium for Scrooge's transformation from 'misanthrope' to 'philanthrope'
- how Dickens creates a story that transcends both time and space

## AO2

- Dickens' repeated use of time-related vocabulary: time, past, present, future, yet to come, was, am, will, shall
- repeated use of present participles to emphasise Scrooge's new 'reality': 'glowing', 'laughing', 'crying'

- presentation of Scrooge's restless activity as he tries to adjust to his new present and potential future

### AO3

- ideas about individual responsibility to others
- the effect of Scrooge's 're-education' on his attitudes towards society
- ideas about Scrooge 're-joining' the society that he had once shunned

### Example answer

*The answer given below is a full, high-mark answer.*

Time is a very important theme in *A Christmas Carol* but it is more than a theme. Time is the medium for the story that begins and ends in the present, but which takes the reader and the protagonist, Scrooge, into the distant past and the nearer past, into parts of the present that involve other people, and into a future where things do happen or might happen or will never happen.

In this extract, Scrooge wakes up in his own bed, in his own room and in his 'present' time. However, Dickens tells us that, 'the Time before him was his own, to make amends in!' which alerts us to the fact that Scrooge has been changed by the visits of the Spirits, and that he knows that, until now, he has messed up. Scrooge now wants to use his time to put things right; this is the beginning of the rest of Scrooge's life.

It is significant also that this 'present' time is very specific – it is Christmas Day, the day that was once 'humbug!' to Scrooge but that is now bursting with opportunities for Scrooge to do good.

Scrooge is presented in this passage as almost hysterical with relief that he has been granted another chance at life, promising that 'I will live in the Past, the Present, and the Future!' Dickens gives a clear hint to the reader of the importance of grasping time and making the most of it.

For once, Dickens presents Scrooge as sincerely grateful to others for his new chance at life, thanking the Spirits as well as Jacob Marley who Scrooge quite rightly credits with his new lease of life. 'Oh, Jacob Marley! Heaven and the Christmas Time be praised for this! I say it on my knees, old Jacob; on my knees!'

Dickens presents time in the extract by showing us that the future suggested by the Spirit of Christmas Yet to Come is not coming for Scrooge. He has avoided a miserable death – he rejoices at the sight of his bed curtains, 'not torn down'. Scrooge revels in the evidence around him that everything that he thinks he has experienced was real. He does not have to fear the prospects shown him by the Spirit of Christmas Yet to Come – that dangerous future has been avoided by his change of heart.

Scrooge notes the saucepan that held his gruel, the night before; the door where the ghost of Marley entered; and the window where he watched the chained spirits congregating, in the past. Having travelled through time with the Spirits, Scrooge is consoled by the knowledge that this all took place, as promised, in the space of a night.



In the novel as a whole, Dickens continues to play with the notion of time. Scrooge visits the home of the Cratchits twice. The first time is with the Spirit of Christmas Present where he is shown the meaning of a family Christmas in the home of his humble clerk, Bob. He sees how the family have looked forward to this joyous time of being together with both Martha and Bob free from work, and how all the Cratchits pitch in to make the day special.

Scrooge's second visit to Bob's home is with the Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come, who presents a very different scene. Scrooge and the readers see a sombre household, grieving after the death of Tiny Tim, yet still managing to bear their suffering as a family, united in grief and love. As Dickens plays with time in this novel, he is able to make his message about the value of family very clearly. The fact that Scrooge's visits each take place in the course of one night, whereas the Cratchits experience a period of days or weeks, show how time is manipulated by the Spirits.

Fred is Scrooge's only surviving family member and Scrooge has been reminded of this by the Spirits. Scrooge's two visits to Fred's home are slightly different. In the visit with the Ghost of Christmas Present, Scrooge is an invisible observer of a jolly Christmas party. The second visit comes in the final chapter where Scrooge, emboldened by the goodwill that Fred has repeatedly shown to him, visits Fred's home, in person, to take up the invitation to dine there, on Christmas Day.

*A Christmas Carol* may reflect a bygone era, but Dickens manages to transcend time and continues to reach successive generations of readers with this much-loved story of a man transformed forever in the space of a single night.

## Page 112 Question 9

### Indicative content

*Relevant content may include:*

#### AO1

- the plot traces Scrooge's changing attitude to Christmas from his belief that it is 'humbug' to fully embracing the Christmas spirit
- characters – major and minor – are partly defined in relation to their attitudes towards Christmas and all it represents; the Fezziwigs epitomise the Christmas spirit in terms of their generosity and inclusiveness
- the theme of the Christmas spirit is explored through gatherings at Fred's home and at the Cratchit's home as well as at sea, in a lighthouse, at a miner's cottage, in hospitals and alms houses

**AO2**

- Dickens gives this endearing character a ridiculous name which makes him sound approachable and comical
- time is mentioned here, as it was at the end of business on Christmas Eve at Scrooge's office, but with an entirely different set of circumstances
- Dickens describes Old Fezziwig's voice in great detail, referring to it as his 'organ of benevolence'
- the scene is described as one of great energy and purpose using 'active' verbs, nouns and adverbs, all used in the service of Christmas-time

**AO3**

- ideas about social responsibility and community
- the employer/employee relationship
- attitudes towards Christmas

**Page 113 Question 10****Indicative content**

*Relevant content may include:*

**AO1**

- Scrooge is shown to be grief stricken and penitent when he hears his own callous words about decreasing the surplus population quoted back at him
- he does not argue with the Spirit but accepts his rebuke about those who think they are fit to judge others
- Dickens shows us – and Scrooge – that though Bob is loyal to his employer, the rest of the family view Scrooge as an 'ogre'

**AO2**

- Dickens allows Mrs Cratchit to characterise Scrooge as an 'odious, stingy, hard, unfeeling man'
- Scrooge is associated with 'a dark shadow' here; once redeemed he is associated with 'golden sunshine'
- Dickens gives the Spirit a sermonising tone when he warns Scrooge about how he may appear to the sight of 'Heaven'

### AO3

- social inequalities
- the employer/employee relationship
- access to healthcare in nineteenth century society
- religious beliefs

## Page 114 Question 11

### Indicative content

*Relevant content may include:*

### AO1

- the Cratchits appear in a very changed state as representatives of family grief
- Dickens shows the consequences of poverty, as Tiny Tim dies for lack of proper medical care
- Dickens shows how, even in grief, the family is strong and united
- the positive personal attributes of Bob are further displayed in the face of grief

### AO2

- Dickens calls Mrs Cratchit 'The mother'; this suggests that she has become a symbol of motherly love and loss
- repeated use of language associated with the face and body humanises the grief of the Cratchit family through references to hand, face, eyes, shoulder, cheek, knees
- Dickens shows how the family deal with the loss of Tiny Tim by talking about him and agreeing with each other
- the narrative voice comments directly and sympathetically on characters in the course of the extract, for example of Bob he remarks 'poor fellow'

### AO3

- prevalence of child mortality in nineteenth-century Britain
- religious beliefs in nineteenth-century Britain
- lack of access to cheap or free medical attention in the nineteenth century
- attitudes towards death and conventions of burial

## Example answer

*The answer given below is a full, high-mark answer.*

This extract presents the Cratchit family in a new light, both to the reader and to Scrooge. In the company of the Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come, Scrooge is witnessing the sad spectacle of a family in grief. The context of this 'vision' is important, since Scrooge has just experienced the complete absence of anything resembling emotion, in response to the news of his own 'death'.

Scrooge begs the Spirit of Christmas Yet to Come to let him see 'some tenderness connected with a death'. The scene depicted in the extract is the Spirit's response to Scrooge's request, as the Cratchits, as a family, embody 'tenderness' in their relations with one another.

The presentation of the family scene is slightly unusual in this extract, in that the narrator first refers to Mrs Cratchit as 'The mother' which suggests that she is perhaps a symbol for all mothers, throughout the ages, who have had to bear the loss of one of their children. The narrator then refers to her as 'Cratchit's wife', making the reader consider her in her two main family roles – mother and wife – rather than as a person in her own right.

We have seen Mrs Cratchit, earlier in the novel, to be both independently minded and quite fiery in her views, for example, when she objects to Bob's toast to Mr Scrooge as 'the Founder of the Feast' and states her determination to 'give him a piece of my mind to feast upon'. Now she is passive, focused on her task of sewing her dead child's funeral clothes and supported by her other children.

As before, we see the solidarity of the family unit, their relief when Bob arrives and the outpouring of love towards both father and mother who the children see to be in need of comfort themselves.

When we first meet the Cratchit family, in Chapter 3, Scrooge witnesses a large and happy family working together to make Christmas Day special; Mrs Cratchit 'made the gravy', Peter 'mashed the potatoes', Belinda 'sweetened up the apple-sauce', Martha dealt with the 'hot plates', the young Cratchits 'set chairs for everybody', while Bob 'took Tiny Tim beside him in a tiny corner'. In short, we see a family completely united and engrossed in a family event. The scene described brings to mind a home buzzing with happy activity.

Now, in this extract, the family is gathered for Tiny Tim's funeral, a sombre affair and notably 'very quiet'. Dickens presents the family grieving here, where before he had presented them in high spirits. Yet the family is still focused on working together in stillness and quiet contemplation. Mrs Cratchit and her daughters are sewing, Peter is reading.

In a mirror image of the earlier visit, Dickens presents the family as waiting for Bob to arrive, but not, this time, with Tiny Tim upon his back. The young Cratchits take it upon themselves to help Bob to his tea and to wordlessly comfort him by each laying 'a little cheek, against his face'.

Like his wife, who tries to stay cheerful for the children, speaking to them 'in a steady, cheerful voice, that only faltered once', Bob also hides his grief from the children. Dickens tells us that 'Bob was very cheerful with them, and spoke pleasantly to all the family'. As always, he encourages his family for all their efforts, and he speaks enthusiastically about 'how green a place' Tiny Tim is to be buried in. But Bob's repetition of the promise he made to his dead little son is haunting and causes Bob to break down: "My little, little child", cried Bob. "My little child!"

In each appearance of the Cratchit family in the novel, Scrooge is an invisible and a silent witness to their communion. His first visit to the Cratchit family had caused Scrooge to ask the Ghost of Christmas Present, 'with an interest he had never felt before, "tell me if Tiny Tim will live."' -Dickens only presents the Cratchits when Scrooge is there to witness them; the Cratchits are presented as instrumental in Scrooge's journey to redemption.

In a way, the 'death' of Tiny Tim and the bravery of the Cratchit family, in facing their grief, is the final spur to Scrooge's transformation. When he wakes on Christmas morning, giddy with joy, the Cratchits are in his thoughts. He will become 'a second father' to Tiny Tim and earn the toast of Bob Cratchit as 'founder' of the family's future security.

## Page 115 Question 12

### Indicative content

*Relevant content may include:*

#### AO1

- the opening of the extract creates tension with reference to the 'phantom' spreading his robe 'like a wing' suggesting some unknown power
- Caroline's anxiety as she paces the room also creates tension
- the knock on the door raises the tension
- Caroline's husband's reticence adds to the tension

#### AO2

- use of dialogue allows the reader to understand the combination of elation, and guilt at their elation, felt by the couple
- the list of Caroline's activities, in the second paragraph, creates tension for the reader
- the contrast between the solemn nature of death and the suppressed elation of the couple is effective

#### AO3

- social responsibility and interdependence
- social inequality and financial hardship
- issues of morality

## Page 117 Question 13

### Indicative content

*Relevant content may include:*

#### AO1

- Dickens presents a family gathering at Christmas as a place of good humour and goodwill
- Fred's kindly attitude towards his cantankerous uncle is a credit to him and promotes the virtues of family ties
- Fred's family is one of many families that Dickens presents in the novel from the Cratchits to Belle and her family, to the miner's family, all celebrating Christmas together, or thinking of one another, if they are forced to spend Christmas apart
- Dickens extols family life throughout the novel contrasting its benefits to the drawbacks of a solitary life

#### AO2

- Dickens uses several terms, several times, to identify family relationships including: 'niece', 'sisters', 'nephew', 'uncle'
- Fred's passionate speech declaring his pity for his uncle and determination to persist in the relationship is a ringing endorsement of family
- the jolly atmosphere and lively conversation of the younger family members reflect an optimistic point of view which is echoed in the final chapter

#### AO3

- family values/blood ties
- attitudes towards Christmas
- social responsibilities

## Page 118 Question 14

### Indicative content

*Relevant content may include:*

#### AO1

- Dickens shows Scrooge's redemption in his manner of mingling with others when he goes out into the streets on Christmas day; no longer 'solitary as an oyster' he is sociable and pleasant
- in a clear sign of his redemption, he promises a large sum to the 'portly gentlemen' as a charitable donation for the poor and destitute
- the scene is a reversal of the opening of the novel where children and beggars feared Scrooge: now redeemed, he attracts pleasant words and looks wherever he goes

#### AO2

- Dickens uses sights and sounds to emphasise the change in Scrooge, for example, dressed 'all in his best', 'delighted smile', 'blithe sounds'
- he uses dialogue to emphasise the change in Scrooge who is now polite and courteous both in looks and speech
- the reactions of other towards Scrooge contrast vividly to the way he was described as being shunned in the first chapter

#### AO3

- attitudes towards Christmas
- attitudes towards redemption and forgiveness
- social responsibility

## Page 119 Question 15

### Indicative content

*Relevant content may include:*

#### AO1

- Scrooge's rude dismissal of the two 'portly gentlemen' collecting for charity; his horror of the word 'liberality'
- his self-satisfaction as he justifies his refusal to contribute
- his change of attitude when actually confronted by social needs embodied in Tiny Tim and in the allegorical figures of Want and Ignorance
- Dickens' graphic depiction of the area of London where the poor and criminal classes mingle

#### AO2

- reference to Marley and Scrooge as 'kindred spirits'
- the effect of the 'ominous' word 'liberality' on Scrooge
- the contrast between the 'want' endured by the poor and 'abundance' enjoyed by others
- contrast between the comfort and 'cheer' that the 'portly gentlemen' wish to give to the poor and the 'decrease' of them as advocated by Scrooge
- suggestion that Scrooge's attitudes represent a 'typical' view of the poor

#### AO3

- Scrooge's knowledge of and quotation of contemporary political thought
- the general apathy of the public to support the poor
- society's typically harsh attitudes towards the poor
- ideas about moral values

### Example answer

*The answer given below is a full, high-mark answer.*

In the extract, Dickens reveals Scrooge's complete lack of interest in the poor, both individually and collectively, when he refuses to contribute to a charity set up to help 'the poor and destitute' at Christmas.



Although the extract appears early in the novel, Dickens has already told us, directly, that Scrooge was the kind of man who liked ‘all human sympathy to keep its distance’ and has also shown us, through Scrooge’s exchange with Fred, that he considers Christmas to be a ‘humbug!’. We are unsurprised, therefore, when Scrooge pledges precisely ‘Nothing’ to the charity endorsed by the ‘portly gentlemen’.

However, Dickens elaborates on Scrooge’s justification for making no contribution to the fund. Citing the institutions and measures routinely used in the early nineteenth century to deal with destitute individuals, Scrooge facetiously asks the gentlemen, ‘Are there no prisons?’, going on to enquire about the operation of the ‘Union workhouses’, the ‘Treadmill’ and the ‘Poor Law’.

Each of these measures was infamous, at the time, in terms of their inhumane treatment of individuals who found themselves destitute and having to rely on their parish council to house and feed them.

In those days, sometimes, whole families were incarcerated and forced into hard labour to contribute to their upkeep. None of the measures cited by Scrooge were intended to care for the poor, only to punish them for their situation and to ‘criminalise’ poverty.

Dickens is revealing not only Scrooge’s attitude towards the poor, in this section of the extract, but also the attitude of many within so-called ‘respectable society’ who were lucky enough to have jobs or private means adequate to support themselves.

The ‘portly gentlemen’ represent a different type of mindset, with a more compassionate attitude towards the poor. They are horrified by Scrooge’s suggestion that if some of the poor ‘would rather die’ than go into a workhouse, they had better do so ‘and decrease the surplus population’.

This cold-heartedness of Scrooge’s attitude appals them. The gentlemen speak sincerely as representing a group of benefactors who wish to alleviate suffering, offering the poor, ‘some meat and drink, and means of warmth’. Dickens wants to acknowledge that there are good people in society who believe in helping others.

Elsewhere in the novel, Scrooge is reminded of his dismissive attitude towards the poor, during times when his hard heart is softening under the influence of the Spirits. The Ghost of Christmas Present confronts Scrooge with his earlier attitude when, moved by Tiny Tim’s plight to ask about his future, he is told ‘If he be like to die, he had better do it, and decrease the surplus population’. Dickens tells us, ‘Scrooge hung his head to hear his own words quoted by the Spirit, and was overcome with penitence and grief’, revealing his change in attitude.

Later, the same Spirit horrifies Scrooge by allowing him to see the ghastly childlike figures of ‘Want’ and ‘Ignorance’, described as ‘Yellow, meagre, ragged, scowling, wolfish’. When Scrooge asks if they have access to ‘refuge or resource’ he is met again with his own unfeeling words, ‘Are there no prisons?’ Dickens is keen to show that it is possible to change people’s attitudes towards the poor, even in one as apparently intransigent as Ebenezer Scrooge.

The Scrooge of the final chapter is a changed man, with changed attitudes towards the poor. He is now delighted to come upon one of the ‘portly gentlemen’ on his way to church. The sum that Scrooge intends to give to the charity for the poor is so generous that the gentleman is almost speechless. Scrooge has revised his view of society and his place within it. Rather than avoid people, Scrooge now goes out of his way to pat children on the head and to ask questions of beggars as he gradually reintegrates with the rest of the human race.

Although there must have been various shades of opinion about the poor in Dickens' time, in *A Christmas Carol* Dickens shows us the two extremes. He shows us people like the 'old' Scrooge who demonised the poor for no fault of their own and people like the portly gentlemen and their associates who use their wealth to benefit the poor and destitute and offer them some relief and comfort.

## Page 121 Question 16

### Indicative content

*Relevant content may include:*

#### AO1

- the Spirit confronts Scrooge with a physical representation of two of the attributes of poverty in society: Ignorance and Want
- Scrooge is appalled in a way he had never been when 'the poor and destitute' were spoken of in the abstract
- the Spirit shames Scrooge for his previous careless attitude towards those living in poverty, quoting his own words back to him about prisons and workhouses

#### AO2

- Dickens uses allegory to present the abstract notions of Ignorance and Want as wretched children
- the description of the children links them to animals/beasts and monsters
- Dickens uses the contrast of what healthy children should look like and the appearance of these wretched figures; angels and devils are another contrast
- Dickens uses dialogue to reveal Scrooge's increasing humanity towards those living in poverty

#### AO3

- the link between poverty and ignorance
- social responsibility to support the poor and destitute
- the harshness of society's attitudes towards those living in poverty
- ideas about moral values

## Page 122 Question 17

### Indicative content

*Relevant content may include:*

#### AO1

- Tim's disability is highlighted with reference to his 'withered little hand'
- Tim is presented as very dear to Bob and very fond of Bob by their proximity, as they sit 'very close' together
- the fact that Tiny Tim has aroused the interest of hard-hearted Scrooge suggests that he is appealing and/or pitiable
- Tiny Tim's toast and call for God's blessing show a purity and innocence given his situation

#### AO2

- use of dialogue to bring the scene to life
- emotive language used to describe/refer to Tiny Tim: 'withered little hand', 'a crutch without an owner, carefully preserved'
- language related to keeping and losing: 'wished to keep him', 'might be taken from him', 'vacant seat'
- Scrooge's words from the first chapter are repeated by the Spirit to shame Scrooge: 'decrease the surplus population'

#### AO3

- prevalence of child mortality in nineteenth-century Britain
- lack of access to cheap or free medical care in this era
- social responsibility of the rich to the poor
- Christian teachings