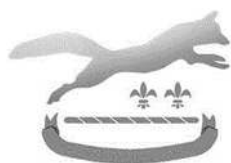


KS4 Knowledge Organiser – A Christmas Carol



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 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.

Characterisation

Scrooge

- ✓ A selfish business man who transforms into a charitable philanthropist. Our protagonist.

Fred

- ✓ Scrooge’s nephew whose party invitation he declines. Represents forgiveness and family.

Jacob Marley

- ✓ Scrooge’s dead partner who returns to warn Scrooge to change his ways.

Bob Cratchitt

- ✓ Scrooge’s clerk. He loves his family and is shown to be happy and morally upright. He has love but not wealth.

Tiny Tim

- ✓ Bob’s son whose story plays a part in inspiring Scrooge’s transformation. Represents the victims of poverty.

The Ghost of Christmas Past

- ✓ A strange combination of young and old, wearing white robes and looking like a candle.

The Ghost of Christmas Present

- ✓ A portly, jovial gentleman surrounded by a warm glow. He brings joy to the neediest.

The Ghost of Christmas Yet To Come

- ✓ A robed and hooded spirit who confronts Scrooge with his own tombstone.

Fezziwig

- ✓ Scrooge’s ex-employer. A representation of a good employer and generosity of spirit.

Belle

- ✓ Scrooge’s fiancé as a young man.

Fan

- ✓ Scrooge’s sister. Fred’s mother.

Key Quotes

“Hard and sharp as flint... As solitary as an oyster”

“Are there no prisons...are there no workhouses...”

“I will honour Christmas in my heart. I will live in the Past, the Present, and the Future. I will not shut out the lessons that they teach.”

“I have always thought of Christmas as a good time, a kind, forgiving, charitable, pleasant time”

“Scrooge’s offences carry their own punishment. Who suffers? Himself!”

“I wear the chain I forged in life”

“The chain was made up of cash boxes.. ledgers.. heavy purses”

“My spirit never roved beyond the narrow limits of our money changing hole”

“The clerk’s fire was so very much smaller that it looked like only one coal”

“Tiny Time rode upon his shoulder”

“I’ll give you Mr Scrooge, the founder of the feast”

“I think he’s walked a little slower than he used to” –

“He bore a little crutch, and had his limbs supported by an iron frame!”

“Tiny Tim hoped the people saw him in the church, because he was a cripple, and remember upon Christmas day, who made lame beggars walk, and blind men see.”

“God bless us every one”

“Would you (Scrooge) so soon put out he light I give?”

“A solitary child, neglected by his friends, is left there still – Scrooge sobbed.”

“Scrooge’s heart and soul were in the scene.. he remembered everything, enjoyed everything.”

“A jolly giant who bore a glowing torch with a cheery voice and a joyful air”

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

“They are Man’s. This boy is Ignorance. This girl is Want. Beware for I see that written which is Doom.”

“It was shrouded in a deep black garment which concealed its head, its face, its form and left nothing visible except one outstretched hand”

“Scrooge crept towards it, trembling, and following the finger, read upon the stone of the neglected grave his own name, Ebenezer Scrooge.”

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

“He has the power to render us happy or unhappy; to make our service light or burdensome. The happiness he gives, is as if it cost a fortune”

“Another idol has displaced me.. a golden one”

“I have come to bring you home dear brother.. home, home, home!”

Key Terms and ideas:

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

Key Concepts and Themes:

- ✓ Greed
- ✓ Avarice (an excessive desire for wealth – one of the 7 deadly sins)
- ✓ Ignorance & Want (lack of knowledge/education & need/poverty)
- ✓ Redemption (being saved from sin or evil)
- ✓ Predestination
- ✓ Free Will
- ✓ Poverty
- ✓ Class
- ✓ Isolation
- ✓ Transformation
- ✓ We observe Scrooge observing...
- ✓ The passage of time
- ✓ Family
- ✓ Guilt
- ✓ Generosity
- ✓ Social Responsibility
- ✓ Justice
- ✓ The supernatural
- ✓ Christmas
- ✓ Death

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.

KS4 Independent Study Tasks



Task 1: Context Leaflet

'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.'

Starting with the 'context' section in your Knowledge Organiser, **research** the times Dickens was writing about. **Design** a leaflet telling younger students about the background to 'A Christmas Carol'.

- You must **include** the following:
- 1) What is a Workhouse? Describe them and what the conditions were like.
 - 2) What were the Poor Laws? Where did the 1834 Poor Law say the poor had to go?
 - 3) What is the Treadmill that Scrooge mentions? Type into the search engine 'Treadmill punishment' to see what you can find out.
 - 4) Find out about Charles Dickens. What was his early life like? When did he write the book? Why did he write the book? When was he born? When did he die?

You need to set this out as a leaflet:- **include** bullet points, headings and pictures as well as facts you have found.

Grade 7-9 enrichment:
Include a section about Dickens' life as a child. You might want to include some of the experiences that inflected him such as his father's time in a debtors prison.

Include a section 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?

Deadline:

Task 2: 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.

Grade 7-9 enrichment: 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?

Deadline:

Task 3: Ignorance and Want

"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**."

Draw and label the characters of Ignorance and Want.

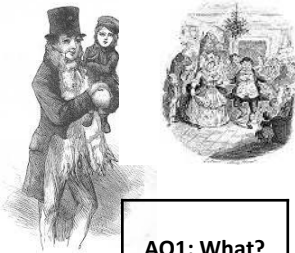
- ✓ Use a dictionary to find the meaning of the words in bold.
- ✓ Draw the 2 characters. Add labels from the description.
- ✓ How does Dickens' present the characters of Ignorance and Want, and what is his main purpose in doing so? What does he want Scrooge, and his audience, to consider?

Grade 7-9 enrichment:

"They are Man's," said the Spirit, looking down upon them.

Write to discuss Dickens' uncompromising statement that Ignorance and Want belong to us all. How important do you think he saw his role as novelist?

Deadline:



AO1: What?
Details and evidence

AO2: How?
Methods and effects

AO3: Why?
Contexts and meanings

Task 4: The Ghosts

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

Grade 7-9 enrichment:

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

Deadline:

Task 5: Scrooge's 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 One, at work, in the street and at home
- ✓ Scrooge in Stave Two observing his past
- ✓ Scrooge in Stave Three witnessing the reality of Victorian life at Christmas
- ✓ Scrooge in Stave Four listening in to people's conversations about a dead man, then seeing his own grave
- ✓ Scrooge in Stave Five waking up on Christmas morning.

Grade 7-9 enrichment:

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

Deadline:



Task 6: Timed essay – 1 hour

Choose one of the following essay titles. **Read, plan, prepare.** You will be asked to write this essay in class in exam conditions. You will need to cover AO1, 2 and 3 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?

Grade 7-9 enrichment:

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

Deadline: