

ENGLISH



PRACTICE QUESTIONS

A CHRISTMAS CAROL: 16 PRACTICE QUESTIONS

SCORE

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PERCENTAGE

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STEMUP

Charles Dickens: A Christmas Carol

Read the following extract from Stave One of *A Christmas Carol* and then answer both parts of the question.

At this point in the novel, Scrooge, a miserly moneylender, has just been introduced to the reader on Christmas Eve.

Oh! But he was a tight-fisted hand at the grind-stone, Scrooge! a squeezing, wrenching, grasping, scraping, clutching, covetous, old sinner! Hard and sharp as flint, from which no steel had ever struck out generous fire; secret, and self-contained, and solitary as an oyster. The cold within him froze his old features, nipped his pointed nose, shrivelled his cheek, stiffened his gait; made his eyes red, his thin lips blue; and spoke out shrewdly in his grating voice. A frosty rime was on his head, and on his eyebrows, and his wiry chin. He carried his own low temperature always about with him; he iced his office in the dog-days; and didn't thaw it one degree at Christmas.

External heat and cold had little influence on Scrooge. No warmth could warm, no wintry weather chill him. No wind that blew was bitterer than he, no falling snow was more intent upon its purpose, no pelting rain less open to entreaty. Foul weather didn't know where to have him.

(a) Explore how Dickens presents the character of Scrooge in this extract.
Give examples from the extract to support your ideas.

(20)

(b) In this extract, Dickens describes Scrooge as hard, solitary and unaffected even by the weather.

Explain the importance of greed and isolation elsewhere in the novel.

In your answer, you must consider:

- how greed and isolation is presented
- the effects greed and isolation has within the novel

(20)

(Total for this question = 40 marks)

Charles Dickens: A Christmas Carol

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- how Scrooge is presented
- the effects Scrooge has within the novel

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(Total for this question = 40 marks)

Charles Dickens: A Christmas Carol

Read the following extract from Stave One of *A Christmas Carol* and then answer both parts of the question.

At this point in the novel, two gentlemen have visited Scrooge's counting-house on Christmas Eve to ask for a donation for the poor.

"At this festive season of the year, Mr. Scrooge," said the gentleman, taking up a pen, "it is more than usually desirable that we should make some slight provision for the Poor and destitute, who suffer greatly at the present time. Many thousands are in want of common necessities; hundreds of thousands are in want of common comforts, sir."

"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."

"Oh! I was afraid, from what you said at first, that something had occurred to stop them in their useful course," said Scrooge. "I'm very glad to hear it."

"Under the impression that they scarcely furnish Christian cheer of mind or body to the multitude," returned the gentleman, "a few of us are endeavouring to raise a fund to buy the Poor some meat and drink, and means of warmth. We choose this time, because it is a time, of all others, when Want is keenly felt, and Abundance rejoices. What shall I put you down for?"

"Nothing!" Scrooge replied.

(a) Explore how Dickens presents the character of Scrooge in this extract.
Give examples from the extract to support your ideas.

(20)

(b) In this extract, Scrooge refuses to give to charity and says the poor should go to the prisons and workhouses.

Explain the importance of social responsibility elsewhere in the novel.

In your answer, you must consider:

- how social responsibility is presented
- the effects social responsibility has within the novel

(20)

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Give examples from the extract to support your ideas.

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- how Scrooge is presented
- the effects Scrooge has within the novel

(20)

(Total for this question = 40 marks)

Charles Dickens: A Christmas Carol

Read the following extract from Stave Two of *A Christmas Carol* and then answer both parts of the question.

At this point in the novel, the Ghost of Christmas Past has taken Scrooge back to the boarding school where he spent his lonely childhood.

They left the high-road, by a well-remembered lane, and soon approached a mansion of dull red brick, with a little weathercock-surmounted cupola, on the roof, and a bell hanging in it. It was a large house, but one of broken fortunes; for the spacious offices were little used, their walls were damp and mossy, their windows broken, and their gates decayed. Fowls clucked and strutted in the stables; and the coach-houses and sheds were over-run with grass. Nor was it more retentive of its ancient state, within; for entering the dreary hall, and glancing through the open doors of many rooms, they found them poorly furnished, cold, and vast. There was an earthy savour in the air, a chilly bareness in the place, which associated itself somehow with too much getting up by candle-light, and not too much to eat.

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

(a) Explore how Dickens presents the character of Scrooge in this extract. Give examples from the extract to support your ideas.

(20)

(b) In this extract, Scrooge weeps as he sees his younger self left alone at school at Christmas.

Explain the importance of memory and regret elsewhere in the novel.

In your answer, you must consider:

- how memory and regret is presented
- the effects memory and regret has within the novel

(20)

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Give examples from the extract to support your ideas.

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In your answer, you must consider:

- how Scrooge is presented
- the effects Scrooge has within the novel

(20)

(Total for this question = 40 marks)

Charles Dickens: A Christmas Carol

Read the following extract from Stave Three of *A Christmas Carol* and then answer both parts of the question.

At this point in the novel, the Ghost of Christmas Present is about to vanish and shows Scrooge two ragged children hidden beneath its robe.

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

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

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

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

(a) Explore how Dickens presents The Ghost of Christmas Present in this extract. Give examples from the extract to support your ideas.

(20)

(b) In this extract, The Spirit reveals the children Ignorance and Want and warns Scrooge to fear them most of all.

Explain the importance of poverty and social responsibility elsewhere in the novel.

In your answer, you must consider:

- how poverty and social responsibility is presented
- the effects poverty and social responsibility has within the novel

(20)

(Total for this question = 40 marks)

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Explain the importance of The Ghost of Christmas Present elsewhere in the novel.

In your answer, you must consider:

- how The Ghost of Christmas Present is presented
- the effects The Ghost of Christmas Present has within the novel

(20)

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Charles Dickens: A Christmas Carol

Read the following extract from Stave Three of *A Christmas Carol* and then answer both parts of the question.

At this point in the novel, Scrooge is watching the Cratchit family at their Christmas dinner and has asked the Spirit whether Tiny Tim will live.

"God bless us every one!" said Tiny Tim, the last of all.

He sat very close to his father's side upon his little stool. Bob held his withered little hand in his, as if he loved the child, and wished to keep him by his side, and dreaded that he might be taken from him.

"Spirit," said Scrooge, with an interest he had never felt before, "tell me if Tiny Tim will live."

"I see a vacant seat," replied the Ghost, "in the poor chimney-corner, and a crutch without an owner, carefully preserved. If these shadows remain unaltered by the Future, the child will die."

"No, no," said Scrooge. "Oh, no, kind Spirit! say he will be spared."

"If these shadows remain unaltered by the Future, none other of my race," returned the Ghost, "will find him here. What then? If he be like to die, he had better do it, and decrease the surplus population."

Scrooge hung his head to hear his own words quoted by the Spirit, and was overcome with penitence and grief.

(a) Explore how Dickens presents the character of Scrooge in this extract.
Give examples from the extract to support your ideas.

(20)

(b) In this extract, The Spirit throws Scrooge's own cruel words back at him about the surplus population.

Explain the importance of compassion and redemption elsewhere in the novel.

In your answer, you must consider:

- how compassion and redemption is presented
- the effects compassion and redemption has within the novel

(20)

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In your answer, you must consider:

- how Scrooge is presented
- the effects Scrooge has within the novel

(20)

(Total for this question = 40 marks)

Charles Dickens: A Christmas Carol

Read the following extract from Stave Four of *A Christmas Carol* and then answer both parts of the question.

At this point in the novel, the silent Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come has led Scrooge to a neglected grave in a churchyard.

"Men's courses will foreshadow certain ends, to which, if persevered in, they must lead," said Scrooge. "But if the courses be departed from, the ends will change. Say it is thus with what you show me!"

The Spirit was immovable as ever.

Scrooge crept towards it, trembling as he went; and following the finger, read upon the stone of the neglected grave his own name, EBENEZER SCROOGE.

"Am I that man who lay upon the bed?" he cried, upon his knees.

The finger pointed from the grave to him, and back again.

"No, Spirit! Oh no, no!"

The finger still was there.

"Spirit!" he cried, tight clutching at its robe, "hear me! I am not the man I was. I will not be the man I must have been but for this intercourse. Why show me this, if I am past all hope!"

For the first time the hand appeared to shake.

"Good Spirit," he pursued, as down upon the ground he fell before it: "Your nature intercedes for me, and pities me. Assure me that I yet may change these shadows you have shown me, by an altered life!"

(a) Explore how Dickens presents the character of Scrooge in this extract.
Give examples from the extract to support your ideas.

(20)

(b) In this extract, Scrooge sees his own name on the gravestone and begs the Spirit for a chance to change.

Explain the importance of redemption and change elsewhere in the novel.

In your answer, you must consider:

- how redemption and change is presented
- the effects redemption and change has within the novel

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Give examples from the extract to support your ideas.

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Explain the importance of the character of Scrooge elsewhere in the novel.

In your answer, you must consider:

- how Scrooge is presented
- the effects Scrooge has within the novel

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(Total for this question = 40 marks)

Charles Dickens: A Christmas Carol

Read the following extract from Stave Five of *A Christmas Carol* and then answer both parts of the question.

At this point in the novel, Scrooge has woken on Christmas morning to find that he is still alive and has time to change.

His hands were busy with his garments all this time; turning them inside out, putting them on upside down, tearing them, mislaying them, making them parties to every kind of extravagance.

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

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

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

(a) Explore how Dickens presents the character of Scrooge in this extract.
Give examples from the extract to support your ideas.

(20)

(b) In this extract, Scrooge is overjoyed on Christmas morning and laughs for the first time in years.

Explain the importance of redemption and joy elsewhere in the novel.

In your answer, you must consider:

- how redemption and joy is presented
- the effects redemption and joy has within the novel

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- the effects Scrooge has within the novel

(20)

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Charles Dickens: A Christmas Carol

Read the following extract from Stave Five of *A Christmas Carol* and then answer both parts of the question.

At this point in the novel, which is the closing section, the narrator describes how Scrooge kept his promise to change.

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

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

(a) Explore how Dickens presents the character of Scrooge in this extract.
Give examples from the extract to support your ideas.

(20)

(b) In this extract, Scrooge becomes a second father to Tiny Tim and learns how to keep Christmas well.

Explain the importance of redemption and community elsewhere in the novel.

In your answer, you must consider:

- how redemption and community is presented
- the effects redemption and community has within the novel

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- how Scrooge is presented
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