

English Literature: An Inspector Calls & A Christmas Carol

GCSE English Literature Exam Dates: 25th May/8th June



Introduction

This pack has been together to help and guide you through Literature Paper 2 so you perform to the best of your ability.

You should use this guide:

- **During revision in lessons**
- **During period 6**
- **At home revision**

This pack has key quotes, plot summaries, exam techniques, helpful vocabulary, past papers, sample answers and more. It is very important that you practice exam questions as this is the best way to revise for English.

Allow yourself 45 minutes to complete one exam question. Please email any of your teachers to ask for help.

Exam Overview for Literature Paper 1

Exam Date: May 25th

Exam length: 1 hour and 45 mins

Exam marks: 64

Exam Sections: A – Macbeth. B – A Christmas Carol

Section A: An extract from Macbeth and a question.

34 marks available: 30 (content) + 4 (SPAG)

Section B: An extract from A Christmas Carol and a question.

30 marks available.

Exam Overview for Literature Paper 2

Exam Date: June 8th

Exam length: 1 hour and 45 mins (45 mins on each question and 15 mins to plan both questions)

Exam marks: 62

Exam Sections: A – An Inspector Calls. B – Unseen Poetry (Analytical Essay and Comparison – Two questions).

Section A: A choice of two questions on An Inspector Calls usually focusing on a theme and character. 34 marks available: 30 (content) + 4 (SPAG)

Section B:

- One question exploring an unseen poem. 24 marks (content).
- One comparison question using two unseen poems. 8 marks (content).

Grade Boundaries

These are the most recent grade boundaries available. Grade boundaries change each year so use this as a guide but not as a certainty.

YEAR	Total	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
%	100	86.3	76.8	68.1	58.1	48.1	38.1	26.9	16.3	5.6

Assessment Objectives and Mark Schemes

AO1 12 MARKS	Read, understand and respond to texts. Students should be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• maintain a critical style and develop an informed personal response• use textual references, including quotations, to support and illustrate interpretations.
AO2 12 MARKS	Analyse the language, form and structure used by a writer to create meanings and effects, using relevant subject terminology where appropriate.
AO3 6 MARKS	Show understanding of the relationships between texts and the contexts in which they were written.
AO4 4 MARKS Only for Macbeth & AIC	Use a range of vocabulary and sentence structures for clarity, purpose and effect, with accurate spelling and punctuation.

For An Inspector Calls and A Christmas Carol:

Level 6 (26-30) Convincing, critical analysis and exploration:

AO1: Critical, exploratory conceptualised response to task and text.

- Judicious use of precise references to support interpretation(s).

AO2

- Analysis of writer's methods with subject terminology used judiciously.
- Exploration of effects of writer's methods to create meanings.

AO3: Exploration of ideas/perspectives/contextual factors shown by specific, detailed links between context/text/task.

Level 5 (21-25) Thoughtful, developed consideration:

AO1 - Thoughtful, developed response to task and text.

- Apt references integrated into interpretation(s).

AO2 • Examination of writer's methods with subject terminology used effectively to support consideration of methods.

- Examination of effects of writer's methods to create meanings.

AO3 - Thoughtful consideration of ideas/perspectives/contextual factors shown by examination of detailed links between context/text/task.

Level 4 (16-20) Clear understanding:

AO1 - Clear, explained response to task and text. • Effective use of references to support explanation.

AO2 - • Clear explanation of writer's methods with appropriate use of relevant subject terminology.

- Understanding of effects of writer's method to create meanings.

AO3 - Clear understanding of ideas/perspectives/ contextual factors shown by specific links between context/text/task.

Level 3 (11-15) Explained, structured comments

AO1 - Some explained response to task and text. • References used to support a range of relevant comments.

AO2 - • Explained/relevant comments on writer's methods with some relevant use of subject terminology. • Identification of effects of writer's methods to create meanings.

AO3 - Some understanding of implicit ideas/ perspectives/contextual factors shown by links between context/text/task.

Level 2 (6-10) Supported, relevant comments:

AO1 - Supported response to task and text.

- Comments on references.

AO2 - Identification of writers' methods.

- Some reference to subject terminology.

AO3 - Some awareness of implicit ideas/contextual factors.

Level 1 (1 – 5) Simple, explicit comments:

AO1 - • Simple comments relevant to task and text.

- Reference to relevant details.

AO2 - Awareness of writer making choices. • Possible reference to subject terminology

AO3 - Simple comment on explicit ideas/contextual factors

To structure a response, think about WHAT? HOW? WHY?

AQA have stated that the use of sentence starters do not help students, so you have freedom with how you order your ideas, as long as you include the key parts of the AOs. However, you should:

WHAT?

- Begin with a thesis. This is a brief introduction that outlines the key arguments that you will make in your essay. This will show the examiner that you have planned and structured your answer, as well as keep you on track as you write.

- Start with a topic sentence. This will connect directly to the question and outline the key point/argument for your paragraph. Examples of topic sentences include:

Priestley constructs the Inspector to successfully make the Birling's and the audience aware of their role in developing a society which is egalitarian. Priestley constructs Eric to highlight the excesses of the spoilt upper class youth and how they can be successfully challenged to become empathetic and conscientious members of society. Priestley constructs Arthur to display the undesirable qualities of typical capitalist business owners and their destructive practices, and how they desire the status quo in which they benefit from many privileges.

- Follow with a textual reference or quotation that proves that your point is accurate. Embed quotations where possible.

HOW?

- Include reference to language AND structural terminology. The exam board want to see that you understand HOW an author presents their points. Avoid vague terms such as 'The noun 'chain' shows that Marley's ghost has committed sin.' Whilst you are including a term, you aren't considering how Dickens is using different devices to present his idea. Instead, you could write; 'Dickens uses the symbolism of a 'chain' wound around Marley's ghost to represent the sins that he has committed in his life. Through this symbol, the reader understands the metaphorical weight that these sins carry.' Here, the response uses subject terminology in order to further analysis, rather than 'featuring spotting'.

WHY?

- Include alternative interpretations. Use tentative language such as: alternatively, possibly, maybe, might, on the other hand, potentially etc. This will allow you to expand on your thoughts and explore key ideas further.

- Refer to the writer's intentions.

AN INSPECTOR CALLS by J.B. Priestley

ANALYSIS	EVALUATION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Suggests - Implies - -Infers - -Evokes - -Indicates - -Conveys - Examines - Demonstrates - -Affirms - Reveals that... - Makes the reader think - is concerned with ... - deals with ... - speaks about ... - discusses ... - expresses his point of view concerning ... - holds the view that ... - gives an exact analysis of ... - gives a personal interpretation of ... - puts forward an argument/arguments against/for ... - provides/gives evidence in support of ... - assumes that ... - supposes that ... - refers to an example ... 	<p>The author/ writer/ poet('s)...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - influences -Persuades the reader.... -Convinces... -impresses the reader with... -Informs the reader... -Entertains ... the reader - <u>train</u> of thought/line of argument is (not) convincing. - <u>opinion</u> is based on ... /(not) acceptable/(not) questionable. - is successful in portraying.... - successfully creates...(tone/mood/emotion/atmosphere) - gives his opinion on the problem/question of ... - To a greater/lesser extent, the writer..... - criticises.... - makes the reader think -Makes the reader question... -Makes the reader react to... -Successfully makes the reader understand... - Makes the reader consider/contrast/ believe -Comments on... -draws/comes to the conclusion that ...

What has come up before?

2019 Questions:

How does Priestley present selfishness and its effects in An Inspector Calls?

Write about:

- examples of selfish behaviour in the play
- how Priestley presents selfishness and its effects.

OR

How does Priestley present Sheila as a character who learns important lessons about herself and society?

Write about:

- some of the things Sheila learns in the play
- how Priestley presents Sheila as a character who learns important lessons about herself and society.

2018 Questions:

How far does Priestley present Eric as a character who changes his attitudes towards himself and others during the play?

Write about:

- What Eric says and does throughout the play
- How far Priestley presents Eric as a character who changes his attitudes.

OR

How does Priestley explore the importance of social class in An Inspector Calls

Write about:

- Some ideas about social class in the play
- How Priestley presents the importance of social class

2017 Questions:

An Inspector Calls:

How far does Priestley present Mrs Birling as an unlikeable character?

Write about:

- what Mrs Birling says and does in the play
- how Priestley presents her by the ways he writes

OR

How does Priestley use the character of the Inspector to suggest ways that society could be improved?

Write about:

- what society is shown to be like in the play and how it might be improved
- how Priestley presents society through what the Inspector says and does.

An Inspector Calls Overview, Quotes and Vocab

AN INSPECTOR CALLS

Inspector	Priestley's mouthpiece; advocates social justice
Mr Birling	Businessman, capitalist, against social equality
Mrs Birling	Husband's social superior, believes in personal responsibility
Sheila	Young girl, comes to change views and pities Eva, feels regret
Eric	Young man, drinks too much, rapes Eva, regrets actions
Gerald	Businessman, engaged to Sheila, politically closest to Birling
Eva	Unseen in play, comes to stand for victims of social injustice

Summary:

Act One

The Birling family and Gerald Croft are celebrating Sheila's engagement to Gerald. Although there are a few signs that not *everything* is perfect (Mr Birling is too anxious to impress Gerald, Eric seems nervous and Sheila mentions that Gerald did not come near her the previous summer) there is a happy, light-hearted atmosphere. Mr Birling makes arrogant speeches, telling the other characters his views on science, the Titanic and the relationship between bosses and workers, saying that a man 'has to mind his own business and look after himself'. His speech is interrupted by the arrival of a police inspector, named Goole. Inspector Goole is investigating the suicide of a young woman named Eva Smith. The Inspector shows Mr Birling a photograph of Eva Smith. Mr Birling admits he employed her in his factory but sacked her for demanding higher wages. Sheila is shown the photograph and realises that she had Eva Smith sacked from her next job as a shop assistant, because she thought Eva Smith laughed at her. The Inspector reveals that Eva Smith changed her name to Daisy Renton. Gerald's reaction makes it obvious that he also knew the girl. The Inspector suggests that many people share responsibility for the misery which prompted Eva Smith / Daisy Renton to end her life.

Act Two

Gerald admits he met Daisy Renton in the spring of the previous year and that she was his mistress. Sheila is hurt and angry, yet she praises Gerald for at least being honest. Mrs Birling tries to bully the Inspector and control events. While Eric is out of the room, Mrs Birling is forced to admit that Eva / Daisy asked for the help of her charity, but that Mrs Birling refused to help her. She was offended

because Eva Smith called herself 'Mrs Birling'. It is revealed that the girl was pregnant. Mrs Birling lays the blame for the girl's death on the father of the unborn child. At this moment, Eric enters the room again.

Act Three

Eric confesses that he got Eva Smith pregnant and that he stole money from his father's firm to support her. Eric learns that his mother had refused to help Eva Smith. He blames his mother for Eva's death. The Birling family begin to accuse one another angrily. The family atmosphere has changed completely from the polite scene at the start of the play. The Inspector takes charge and makes a dramatic speech about the importance of social responsibility. He leaves. Gerald and Mr Birling begin to suspect the Inspector. They gradually prove that the man who called on them was not a real police inspector. A telephone call to the Infirmary (hospital) reveals that there has been no recent suicide. Eric and Sheila still feel guilty, but the others now shrug off guilt. Mr Birling answers the telephone: a young woman has just died and an inspector is on his way to make enquires. The play ends here, leaving the audience wondering who the original Inspector was and why history seems to be repeating itself...

Quotes

Inspector:

- 'It's better to ask for the earth than to take it.' (14)
- 'There are a lot of young women... if there weren't the factories and warehouses wouldn't know where to look for cheap labour. Ask your father.' (19)
- 'Sometimes, there isn't as much difference as you think ... I wouldn't know where to draw the line.' (22)
- 'You were annoyed with yourself and passed the annoyance onto her.' (25)
- 'She wanted to keep this youngster out of any more trouble – isn't that so?' (47)
- 'You're offering the money at the wrong time, Mr Birling.' (56)
- 'One Eva Smith has gone... but there are millions... of Eva Smiths... all intertwined with our lives... if men will not learn that lesson, then they will be taught it in fire and blood and anguish.' (56)

Birling

- 'look forward to a time when Croft's and Birling's are no longer competing but working together – for lower costs and higher prices.' (4)
- 'The Germans don't want war... the Titanic, she sails next week... and unsinkable, absolutely unsinkable.' (7)
- 'The way some of these cranks talk now, you'd think everybody has to look after everybody else.' (10)
- 'But it doesn't convey anything to me.' (12)
- 'Public men, Mr Birling, have responsibilities as well as privileges.' (41)

Sheila

- 'She was a very pretty girl too... and that didn't make it any better.' 'I couldn't be sorry for her.' (24)
- '...talked about building up a wall that's sure to be knocked flat.' (32)
- 'I don't care about that, the point is that you don't seem to have learnt anything.' (58)
- 'I suppose we're all nice people now.' (63)

Eric

- 'She wouldn't take any more and she didn't want to see me again.' (54)
- 'and the child she'd had too – my child – your own grandchild – you killed them both – damn you-' (55)
- 'The money's not the important thing. It's what happened to the girl and what we all did to her that matters.' (65)

Gerald

- 'And I've told you – I was awfully busy at the works all that time.' (3)
- 'I didn't install her there so I could make love to her... I was sorry for her.' (37)
- 'She told me she'd been happier than she'd ever been before.' (39)

Mrs Birling

- 'Girls of that class...' (30)
- 'Alderman Meggarty... we are learning something tonight.' (35)
- 'She seemed to me to be not a good case – and so I used my influence to have it refused.' (44)
- 'Some drunken young idler, then that's all the more reason why he shouldn't escape.' (48)

Key Themes / Vocab:

- Class
- Age
- Responsibility
- Gender
- Love
- Society
- Dramatic irony
- Stage directions
- Tension
- Setting
- Cliff-hanger

Priestley's intentions

An Inspector Calls.

- to criticise the selfish morals of the upper class.
- to promote the benefits of Socialism.
- to encourage audience to take responsibility for own actions
- to highlight the abuse of power oppressing and affecting the working class.
- to highlight the negative aspects of a patriarchal society (abuse of power)

An Inspector Calls Sample Questions

Section A: Modern prose or drama

Answer one question from this section on your chosen text.

JB Priestley: An Inspector Calls

EITHER

01 How important is the character of Eric in demonstrating Priestley's ideas?

Write about:

- How Eric responds to his family and the Inspector
- How Priestley presents Eric's actions

OR:

02 How successfully is the idea of collective responsibility explored in this play, through the use of the Inspector?

Write about:

- Priestley's ideas about collective responsibility in *An Inspector Calls*
- How Priestley uses the Inspector to present these views

[30 marks]

AO4 [4 marks]

EITHER

01 How does Priestley use Gerald Croft's status to show his ideas about society?

Write about:

- How the Birling family react to Gerald Croft
- How Priestley presents Gerald Croft

OR:

02 How successfully does Priestley present the different attitudes between the older and younger generations in *An Inspector Calls*?

Write about:

- How Priestley presents the older generation and the younger generation
- How Priestley shows his and their attitudes in the way he writes

[30 marks]
AO4 [4 marks]

EITHER

01 Why did Priestley create the Birling family as the central characters in *An Inspector Calls*?

Write about:

- How Priestley presents the Birlings
- What the Birling family represent and how they demonstrate Priestley's views

OR:

02 How does Priestley explore guilt in *An Inspector Calls*?

Write about:

- How Priestley presents guilt by the way he writes
- How Priestley presents different characters' reactions to guilt

[30 marks]
AO4 [4 marks]

EITHER

01 How does Priestley use Mr Birling to present his ideas about employers' responsibility?

Write about:

- Priestley's ideas about employers
- How Priestley presents Mr Birling

OR:

02 How does Priestley present his ideas about social class in *An Inspector Calls*?

Write about:

- Priestley's ideas about social class
- How Priestley presents these ideas through his characters and the way he writes

[30 marks]
AO4 [4 marks]

Grade 9 Model Answer

An Inspector Calls Essay: How does Priestley present some of the differences between the older and younger generations in an inspector calls?

Write about:

- 1) How the different generations respond to events and to each other
- 2) How Priestley presents the different generations in the play.

[30 marks]

AO4[4 marks]

Throughout the play, Priestley dramatically contrasts the older and younger generations. The older generation are conveyed as being intransigent, prejudiced and extremely judgmental. Whereas the younger generation are conveyed as being open-minded, perceptive and empathetic. One way in which this is shown is through the way that they respond to different events, specifically Eva's death. The younger generation, specifically Sheila, responds to Eva's death in an empathetic way, she responds to Eva's death as "Oh how horrible". She wishes "that you wouldn't have told me" as she was "-so happy tonight". The adjective "horrible" establishes Sheila's empathetic nature, she cares greatly about Eva even though at that particular time she was a stranger to her. The adjective "horrible" also connotes to unfortunate, dreadful and upsetting events which further emphasises the genuine empathy that Sheila has for Eva, presenting her as the moral superior to her parents. Although, even though she acts so maturely her parents still act patronisingly towards her, telling her to stop acting so "childish" even though she's about to get married. Furthermore, the fact that Eva's death also ruined her night highlights just how much she cares as she claims that she "was so happy". The use of the past tense implies to the audience that she is no longer happy as all that she can think about is Eva and her devastating death. I believe that Priestley may have caused Sheila to react to Eva's death in such a heartbreaking way in order to show that times were changing. Society was becoming more accepting of the working class and is now completely different to how it was in 1912 (when the play was set). This links to how society truly was at the time as the labour party had won a landslide election, women were fighting for rights and people were gradually turning to socialism over capitalism. Sheila's reaction to Eva's death may cause the audience to understand that they shouldn't cover things up in order to protect themselves, but should react as they feel, possibly viewing Sheila as a great role model.

In contrast to this, the older generation don't seem to be as bothered by Eva's death as they should be, they act closed-mindedly, selfishly and arrogantly as they only care about themselves. Both Mr and Mrs Birling act in such a way; they view Eva as a "wretched girl" and surprisingly don't seem to care that an innocent woman has died- only wondering how it involved them. The pronoun "girl" establishes that the older generation aren't giving Eva any

respect whatsoever, possibly because she's a working class woman, they can't even refer to her by her name. This conveys that they view her as disposable and replaceable, the working class don't even deserve identities to them due to this. Furthermore, they describe Eva using the adjective "wretched", which connotes to annoying, being in the way of things and showing that they view her as the epitome of a waste of time, also developing the idea that they are the moral inferior to their children. I believe that Priestley may have done this to expose the hypocrisy which was the middle and upper class, also using their foolishness as a way to convince society to agree with his socialist views. The older generation's reaction to Eva's death will cause the reader to view them as impertinent, foolish and prejudiced-causing them to doubt everything else that they say throughout the play.

Priestley also contrasts the older and younger generation through the way they are presented. The older generation are materialistic and show great avarice, specifically Mr Birling through his capitalist views. He only cares about money, that "-the interests of the capital are properly protected". The phrase used links back to his belief upon "-silly little war scares". This conveys to the reader that Mr Birling cares about money more than his own family as he's expected to be graciously celebrating his daughter's engagement-yet he only cares about business and protecting his wealth. The adjective "silly" further emphasises Mr Birling's injudicious nature as the audience know that he's wrong, considering that when it was shown to the public two world wars had occurred. Mr Birling always believes that he's right, in both his materialistic manner and his views upon the future. I believe that Priestley may have done this to expose the older generation's foolish and materialistic nature-further causing a sense of distrust throughout the audience who would laugh at Mr Birling's grand mistakes, as he couldn't be more wrong.

In contrast to this, the younger generation are presented as perceptive, intuitive and as having more socialist ideologies. Eric "doesn't give a damn now whether I stay or not" and claims that "I don't care" about a public scandal while arguing with Mr Birling who wants to kick his only son out of the house, as all he cares about is the "fifty pounds" that he stole (which further shows the patronising nature of the older generation towards their children). This completely contrasts to Mr Birling, the adjective "care" and the fact that Eric simply doesn't care about either staying at home nor the public scandals, establishes his non-materialistic and socialist views as capitalists would care massively about scandals-it would ruin their reputation which was their prized possession. Although, Eric is so mortified by his involvement in Eva's death that he may never return to his capitalist views. This is further established by the blasphemy of "damn" as it shows that Eric truly means what he's claiming. Priestley is almost putting a spotlight on Eric and his conversion from capitalism to socialism, using him as a mouthpiece for the change that anybody can achieve if they only turn to socialism-this further sets him apart from his parents while making the audience wholly trust Eric, they know that he will change and the minority of capitalists in the audience may also turn to socialism due to the way that the younger generation is presented; as being the moral superior to the older generation.

A CHRISTMAS CAROL by Charles Dickens

What has come up before?

2019 Paper

ACC: Starting with this extract, explore how Dickens uses the ghosts to help Scrooge change his attitudes and behaviour.

Extract: Scrooge is visited by Marley's ghost 'I wear the chain....'

2018 Paper

ACC: Starting with this extract, explore how Dickens presents Scrooge's fears in A Christmas Carol.

Extract: Scrooge meets the ghost of Xmas to Come 'The Phantom gravely.....'

2017 Question:

ACC: Starting with this extract, explore how Dickens uses the Cratchit family to show the struggles of the poor.

Extract: Chpt 3 - Cratchit family dinner 'God bless us everyone....'

A Christmas Carol Overview and Quotes

1. Ebenezer Scrooge is at work in his counting house. Despite the Christmas Eve cold, he refuses to spend money on coals for the fire. Scrooge turns down his nephew, Fred's, invitation to his Christmas party and the request of two men who want money for charity.
2. 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. Marley tries to stop Scrooge from doing the same. He tells Scrooge that three spirits will visit him during the next three nights. Scrooge falls asleep.
3. 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.
4. 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 crippled son, Tiny Tim, whose kindness and humility warm Scrooge's heart. The spectre shows Scrooge his nephew's Christmas party. Scrooge asks the spirit to stay until the very end. 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.
5. 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.
6. 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.

Key Quotes

1. 'Marley was dead to begin with.' Dickens
2. "I wear the chain I forged in life...The chain was made up of cash boxes..ledgers..heavy purses" Marley
3. "Hard and sharp as flint" "Solitary as an oyster" Scrooge
4. "Mr Scrooge. I'd give him a piece of my mind. An odious, stingy, hard, unfeeling man" Mrs Cratchit
5. "God bless us every one" Tiny Tim
6. "Another idol has displaced me.. a golden one" Belle
7. "Scrooge's offences carry their own punishment. Who suffers? Himself!" Fred
8. "A solitary child, neglected by his friends, is left there still – Scrooge sobbed." Ghost of Xmas Past
9. "A jolly giant who bore a glowing torch with a cheery voice and a joyful air" Ghost of Xmas Present
10. "They are Man's. This boy is Ignorance. This girl is Want. Beware for I see that written which is Doom." Ghost of Xmas Present
11. "Scrooge crept towards it, trembling, and following the finger, read upon the stone of the neglected grave his own name, Ebenezer Scrooge." Ghost of Xmas YTC
12. "I have come to bring you home dear brother.. home, home, home!" Fan
13. "He'd have had somebody to look after him when he was struck by Death, instead of lying gasping out his last there, alone by himself" Mrs Dilber
14. "I am light as a feather, I am as happy as an angel, I am as merry as a schoolboy, I am giddy as a drunken man." Scrooge
15. "Therefore I am about to raise your salary!" Scrooge

A Christmas Carol Key Vocab and Themes

Past, Present and Future – The Threat of Time: Three ghosts appear to Scrooge to show him how he is living sinfully and what the consequences will be if he doesn't choose to live a better life. The three-part ghost story shows the reader a clear path – sins in Scrooge's past leading to his present misery and the continuation of that sin leading in the future to death, symbolized by the hooded figure.

Family: The entrance of Scrooge's nephew Fred at the beginning of the story introduces another side to the miser. Scrooge is not unfortunate in the way of relatives – he has a family awaiting his presence, asking him to dinner, wanting to celebrate the season with him, yet he refuses. This is one of the important moral moments in the story that helps predict Scrooge's coming downfall.

Greed, Generosity and Forgiveness: Scrooge is a caricature of a miser, greedy and mean in every way. He spends all day in his counting house looking after his money but is so cheap that he keeps his house in darkness, his fire small and allows no extravagance even on Christmas day. But we soon learn that he is the most impoverished character – he is lacking love, warmth and the spirit of Christmas.

Christmas and Tradition: A Christmas Carol was published as a Christmas story, and takes the form of a Christian morality tale containing a moral lesson that the highly religious and traditional English population of Dickens' time would enjoy. Its structure, with five "staves" instead of chapters, is a metaphor for a simple song, with a beginning, middle and end. Dickens uses the idea of singing to connect the story to the joyful Christian traditions of the season.

Social Dissatisfaction and the Poor Laws: A Christmas Carol has attracted generations of readers with its clear parable-like structure and compelling ghost story. It's a moral tale that has proven timeless, but Dickens also wrote the story with a very present problem in mind, and his structure was designed to make the real issues of Victorian London stand out and provide greater awareness in the reading masses.

Key Vocabulary

Greed	Generosity	Predestination	Redemption	Free Will	Capitalism
Poverty	Social Responsibility	Class	Justice	Isolation	
The Supernatural	Time	Religion	Family	Guilt	

Dickens' Intentions

- Dickens was from a poorer background and felt troubled by the growing divide between the social classes during Victorian Britain.
- He was particularly concerned by the lack of compassion and understanding from the aristocracy and ruling government and therefore wrote, 'A Christmas Carol' to raise awareness of the cycle of poverty and reveal the harsh realities of living as part of the lower classes.
- Dickens wanted to encourage a more unified and empathetic society that supported, rather than vilifying, its most vulnerable members.
- Dickens was also keen to use the Christian celebration of Christmas as a vehicle for demonstrating the benefits of a fairer society.

A Christmas Carol Sample Questions

A) Read this extract from Chapter 1 and then answer the question that follows.

In this part of the novel the character of Ebenezer Scrooge is introduced.

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 dogdays; 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. The heaviest rain, and snow, and hail, and sleet, could boast of the advantage over him in only one respect. They often "came down" handsomely, and Scrooge never did.

Nobody ever stopped him in the street to say, with gladsome looks, "My dear Scrooge, how are you? When will you come to see me?" No beggars implored him to bestow a trifle, no children asked him what it was o'clock, no man or woman ever once in all his life inquired the way to such and such a place, of Scrooge. Even the blind men's dogs appeared to know him; and when they saw him coming on, would tug their owners into doorways and up courts; and then would wag their tails as though they said, "No eye at all is better than an evil eye, dark master!"

But what did Scrooge care? It was the very thing he liked. To edge his way along the crowded paths of life, warning all human sympathy to keep its distance, was what the knowing ones call "nuts" to Scrooge.

Starting with this extract, how does Dickens presents Scrooge and attitudes towards him?

Write about: -

How Dickens presents Scrooge and attitudes towards him in this extract.

How Dickens presents Scrooge and attitudes towards him in the novel as a whole.

Read this extract from Chapter 2 and then answer the question that follows.

In this part of the novel Scrooge is visited by the Ghost of Christmas Past.

It was a strange figure -- like a child: yet not so like a child as like an old man, viewed through some supernatural medium, which gave him the appearance of having receded from the view, and being diminished to a child's proportions. Its hair, which hung about its neck and down its back, was white as if with age; and yet the face had not a wrinkle in it, and the tenderest bloom was on the skin. The arms were very long and muscular; the hands the same, as if its hold were of uncommon strength. Its legs and feet, most delicately formed, were, like those upper members, bare. It wore a tunic of the purest white, and round its waist was bound a lustrous belt, the sheen of which was beautiful. It held a branch of fresh green holly in its hand; and, in singular contradiction of that wintry emblem, had its dress trimmed with summer flowers. But the strangest thing about it was, that from the crown of its head there sprung a bright clear jet of light, by which all this was visible; and which was doubtless the occasion of its using, in its duller moments, a great extinguisher for a cap, which it now held under its arm.

Even this, though, when Scrooge looked at it with increasing steadiness, was not its strangest quality. For as its belt sparkled and glittered now in one part and now in another, and what was light one instant, at another time was dark, so the figure itself fluctuated in its distinctness: being now a thing with one arm, now with one leg, now with twenty legs, now a pair of legs without a head, now a head without a body: of which dissolving parts, no outline would be visible in the dense gloom wherein they melted away. And in the very wonder of this, it would be itself again; distinct and clear as ever.

"Are you the Spirit, sir, whose coming was foretold to me?" asked Scrooge.

"I am."

The voice was soft and gentle. Singularly low, as if instead of being so close beside him, it were at a distance.

Starting with this extract, how does Dickens present the supernatural?

Write about: -

- How Dickens presents the supernatural in this extract.
- How Dickens presents the supernatural in the novel as a whole.

[30 marks]

Read the following extract from Chapter 3 and then answer the question that follows.

In this extract, the Ghost of Christmas Present introduces Scrooge to Ignorance and Want.

"My life upon this globe, is very brief," replied the Ghost. "It ends to-night."

"To-night!" cried Scrooge.

"To-night at midnight. Hark! The time is drawing near."

The chimes were ringing the three quarters past eleven at that moment.

"Forgive me if I am not justified in what I ask," said Scrooge, looking intently at the Spirit's robe, "but I see something strange, and not belonging to yourself, protruding from your skirts. Is it a foot or a claw?"

"It might be a claw, for the flesh there is upon it," was the Spirit's sorrowful reply. "Look here."

From the foldings of its robe, it brought two children; wretched, abject, frightful, hideous, miserable. They knelt down at its feet, and clung upon the outside of its garment.

"Oh, Man, look here! Look, look, down here!" exclaimed the Ghost.

They were a boy and a 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. "Slander those who tell it ye. Admit it for your factious purposes, and make it worse. And abide the end."

"Have they no refuge or resource?" cried Scrooge.

"Are there no prisons?" said the Spirit, turning on him for the last time with his own words.

"Are there no workhouses?"

The bell struck twelve.

Scrooge looked about him for the Ghost, and saw it not. As the last stroke ceased to vibrate, he remembered the prediction of old Jacob Marley, and lifting up his eyes, beheld a solemn Phantom, draped and hooded, coming, like a mist along the ground, towards him.

Starting with this extract, how does Dickens present social injustice?

Write about: -

- How Dickens presents social injustice in this extract
- How Dickens presents social injustice in the novel as a whole.

B) Read the following extract from Chapter 4 and then answer the question that follows.

In this extract, Scrooge witnesses thieves helping themselves to a dead man's belongings.

"And now undo my bundle, Joe," said the first woman.
Joe went down on his knees for the greater convenience of opening it, and having unfastened a great many knots, dragged out a large and heavy roll of some dark stuff.
"What do you call this?" said Joe. "Bed-curtains?"
"Ah!" returned the woman, laughing and leaning forward on her crossed arms. "Bed-curtains."
"You don't mean to say you took them down, rings and all, with him lying there?" said Joe.
"Yes I do," replied the woman. "Why not?"
"You were born to make your fortune," said Joe, "and you'll certainly do it."
"I certainly shan't hold my hand, when I can get anything in it by reaching it out, for the sake of such a man as he was, I promise you, Joe," returned the woman coolly. "Don't drop that oil upon the blankets, now."
"His blankets?" asked Joe.
"Whose else's do you think?" replied the woman. "He isn't likely to take cold without them, I dare say."
"I hope he didn't die of any thing catching. Eh?" said old Joe, stopping in his work, and looking up.
"Don't you be afraid of that," returned the woman. "I an't so fond of his company that I'd loiter about him for such things, if he did. Ah. you may look through that shirt till your eyes ache; but you won't find a hole in it, nor a threadbare place. It's the best he had, and a fine one too. They'd have wasted it, if it hadn't been for me."
"What do you call wasting of it?" asked old Joe.
"Putting it on him to be buried in, to be sure," replied the woman with a laugh. "Somebody was fool enough to do it, but I took it off again. If calico an't good enough for such a purpose, it isn't good enough for anything. It's quite as becoming to the body. He can't look uglier than he did in that one."
Scrooge listened to this dialogue in horror. As they sat grouped about their spoil, in the scanty light afforded by the old man's lamp, he viewed them with a detestation and disgust, which could hardly have been greater, though they demons, marketing the corpse itself.
"Ha, ha!" laughed the same woman, when old Joe, producing a flannel bag with money in it, told out their several gains upon the ground. "This is the end of it, you see. He frightened every one away from him when he was alive, to profit us when he was dead. Ha, ha, ha!"

Starting with this extract, how does Dickens present morality?

Write about: -

- How Dickens presents morality in this extract.
- How Dickens presents morality in the novel as a whole

Grade 9 Sample Answer to A

Dickens uses a list to present Scrooge as a formidable, cold character at the beginning of the extract "no warmth...nor wintry..." which suggests is worse than the harsh weather conditions. The use of pathetic fallacy here portrays him as more powerful to foul weather giving the reader the impression that he is impenetrable to it and that he has the strength to be unfazed by such horrendous conditions. The use of the adjective "bitterer" suggests that he is an acrimonious hermit who does not emotively respond to anything – even the extremes of weather making the reader feel distant from this emotionally cold individual. This is demonstrated when Dickens says nobody stopped him with "gladsome looks," which implies that he managed to give off an aura of malevolence so that people left him alone. His mean spirit meant that even the destitute would not approach him when it says "no beggars implored him..." Dickens has done this to show that the poor who are desperate would not ask him for money highlighting how unkind he must be.

Dickens uses a metaphor to present Scrooge as someone who isolates himself "to edge his way along the crowded paths of life" which suggests that he does not involve himself with other people. The key verb "edge" highlights Scrooge's loneliness and could infer that he is not living his life fully – he is on the outer rim only looking in to the "crowds" which shows his need for isolation. This is a theme that permeates the beginning of the novella as Scrooge is described as being "solitary as an oyster," which although this simile seems negative due to oysters being hard, impenetrable and closed, there is often a pearl inside which is valuable. Dickens could be implying that even inside the harshest of individuals, there is still something special if we seek to bring this out. He is also shown to be isolated when the GOC past takes him to the boarding school and there was "a solitary child neglected by his friends." The key verb "neglected" suggests that Scrooge may have a reason for his lack of social skills as he was ignored by his friends and unwanted by his family. Here Dickens is criticizing the wealthy for sending their children to boarding school as Christmas should be a special time with family. The fact Scrooge did not have this as a child could account for how miserable he is when he is older.

In the novella, this need for isolation is shown when he rudely rejects Fred's invitation to "come to dinner," with a comment about his joy "what right have you to be merry, you're poor enough?" suggesting how Scrooge equates wealth with happiness. He ends his conversation sternly by repeating "good afternoon," to dismiss him showing that even when people try to engage him, he refuses their efforts in a mean, insulting way, which could be seen as an attempt to deter them for trying again showing how much he does not want company.

Dickens presents Scrooge's ignorance for the poor in society when he says "are there no prisons, are there no workhouses?" Which highlights his lack of empathy for people

in need. Dickens has presented Scrooge in such an uncaring way to allow the form of the novel to develop – the need for the ghosts to visit him so he can begin his journey of redemption. Scrooge could be a metaphor for the wealthy who would have read this as ghost stories were traditionally read at Christmas for entertainment. Dickens used the form of the novella so it could be read in one sitting – so hopefully the rich reading this at Christmas would reflect on their own attitudes to the poor and see that they avoid Scrooge’s fate by taking responsibility to help the poor. Dickens highlights the change in Scrooge when he asks “what can be done?” showing that he already wants to help before he has the unwelcome visit from the final ghost. This ghost turns on him with his own words, which highlight how ignorant they were at the start of the play and how much he now wants to help.

At the end of the novella, Dickens presents Scrooge as someone who has redeemed himself fully when it says “and buy the prize turkey,” which implies that now wants to help others. Moreover, he says to the boy, bring me back sooner and he will pay a shilling, suggesting he now wants to use his money to benefit the poor. By raising Bob’s wages he also shows that he no longer only cares for profit, and perhaps the most impressive change is the fact that he is “like a second father to Tiny Tim.” Dickens uses a comparison to a parental figure as the most important role you can have in someone’s life and now Scrooge has that powerful responsibility, to love and care for a child showing he has redeemed himself fully.