

Plans:

Extract 1: Explore how Dickens presents attitudes towards poverty in 'A Christmas Carol'

Thesis Statement- how poverty is presented through the ignorance of the affluent in society and societies actions towards the poor

Paragraph 1- Extract - Scrooge and the portly gentlemen- Malthusian theory

Paragraph 2- The Cratchits and how they stay content with life despite living in poverty.

Paragraph 3- Ignorance and Want - their symbolism of Victorian society

Extract 2- Explore how Dickens presents the theme of Christmas in 'A Christmas Carol'

Thesis Statement- Dickens utilises the Ghost of Christmas Present to personify Christmas itself. ... in 'A Christmas Carol' Dickens reinforces the theme of Christmas spirit through the Cratchit family.

Paragraph 1- The extract- Ghost of Christmas Present who symbolises christmas traditions and spirit

Paragraph 2- Fred and his family whom enjoy Christmas together as a family

Paragraph 3 - The Cratchit family who doesn't have much wealth but still love Christmas for the spirit and spending time together as a family.

Extract 3- Explore how Dickens presents the importance of family in 'A Christmas Carol'

Thesis Statement- Dickens highlights the importance of family and how it is a source of happiness, comfort and strength. He uses the Cratchits to symbolise the perfect family. Scrooge doesn't see why he needs family and only looks at the financial burden of family.

Paragraph 1- Scrooge's childhood and his relationship with his family (fan, his father) and how those relationships shaped his future self

Paragraph 2 - Fred and his significance in the importance of family in order to achieve happiness and comfort

Paragraph 3- The extract- The Cratchits love and support for each other in mourning Tiny Tim's death- link to other moments of the Cratchits

Extract 4- Explore how Dickens presents Scrooge's transformation as a character in 'A Christmas Carol'

Thesis Statement- Dickens utilises Scrooge in order to illustrate how self-centred, ignorant people can be converted into liberal, compassionate and socially conscious individuals.

Benevolence and generosity overcome Scrooge's hostile apathy as he realises his responsibility to look after the less fortunate.

Paragraph 1- Scrooge at the start of the novel- callous and inconsiderate towards everyone

Paragraph 2- The journey of his transformation through the ghosts- past, present and yet to come

Paragraph 3- The extract and his behaviour and outlook on life in stave 5

Essay Practice- Explore how Dickens presents attitudes towards poverty in 'A Christmas Carol'.

Dickens has a very sympathetic attitude towards the poor in A Christmas Carol. He views them as victims of circumstance, not as lazy people who refuse to work. He advocates this to help exemplify the ignorance of affluent members of society and their outlook on poverty. Dickens also recognises that poverty stretches further in society and is heavily affecting young people, demonstrated through Ignorance and Want.

This theme of poverty is introduced from the very offset of 'A Christmas Carol' through the charity collectors, who come to visit Scrooge. They immediately make the readers aware of the "poor and destitute" in society who are suffering "greatly", setting the tone for the remainder of the novella. The portly gentlemen heavily contrast Scrooge and his views at the start of the novel. They represent the socialist and upper class members of society who spend their time and money for good and don't perceive charity as a financial burden like Scrooge does. Scrooge chooses to refuse to be charitable; the two men are also wealthy yet take their time out to ridicule the system placed in society to become a mouthpiece of the actions society needs to take.

Scrooge would rather have people die than throw away even a little of his "golden idol". Scrooge responds with a series of questions that immediately highlight his uncharitable and inconsiderate nature towards the poor. The rhetorical questions "Are there no prisons?" "And union workhouses?" are used to show where Scrooge believes the poor people belong, suggesting that he believes his status suggests that poverty is not directly relevant to him, and that nothing to do with the poor matters, which refers articulately to the Malthusian Theory. This theory was

created by Thomas Malthus, who believed that the population needed to be prevented from growing by disease and famine and so thought no help should be provided to the ill and starving. Dickens contradicted this idea and believed in the use of 'A Christmas Carol' to convey ethical and political statements. The most prominent way in which Dickens conveys this theme is through the exploration of Scrooge's response to charity and how this ignites a response and clear link to his ignorance and extent of poverty. This allows readers to become more receptive to Dickens' message and learn from his characters, provoking internal change and a need for improvement in societies standards and treatment of the poor.

The theme of poverty is also employed through the Cratchit family, who in spite of their poverty, are unfailingly grateful for one another's company and devotion. Their poorness is after all only financial, because they are wealthy in human kindness, a factor that Scrooge hugely lacks. The conditions Bob Cratchit is forced to work in under Scrooge highlights the poor working conditions and treatment towards those of the working class, and how they are mistreated by the ignorant upper class. This is demonstrated through Dickens' description of Bob's working conditions, in a "dismal little cell." The adjective 'dismal' connotes to a gloomy and sombre atmosphere that Bob is forced to work in. Alternatively, it could represent the repetitive long-hour shifts, accustomed to Victorian men and children. Contextually, it gives insight to the attitudes of Dickens towards working-conditions, who experienced this in a factory as a child. "Little" suggests that he is trapped and perhaps abused by the legislation put in place by the government. This is reinforced by "cell", which denotes that Bob is trapped; he is a victim/prisoner of capitalism and the lust for wealth by the social-elite. Furthermore the fact that "the clerk's fire was so very much smaller that it looked like one coal", implies that Bob suffers in silence for his family's sake. Although Scrooge's fire was small, the fact Bob's was 'so very much smaller' exemplifies the extent to which Bob's rights as an employee are stripped away. Here, Dickens is aiming to illustrate how the lives of many people were in the hands of the wealthy: Scrooge had the ability to help change the lives of the Cratchit's and at first was oblivious to this. It was only when Scrooge saw the exploitation of the poor in society that he decided to change his way, further emphasising the complete unawareness of poverty at the time and the desire for change.

Dickens' further illustrates the extent of poverty in Victorian London through the use of both Ignorance and Want. This can be signified through the ghost's words of "And they cling to me, appealing from their fathers". The fact they 'cling' to the ghost ensures to us that this is happening in the present moment rather than to the past or future. The verb 'cling' could also be highlighting hope for the children, they are in despair and further represent the state of society but as a reader we can recognise hope and perhaps the foreshadowing of redemption by not only Scrooge and his attitudes to poverty, but society as a whole. Dickens is emphasizing that there are children living in poverty right now as the reader is perusing Scrooge's story and there is no room for regret or waiting. Around this time, the poor law was introduced which meant many people had no choice but to seek refuge and go to workhouses, where the conditions were abhorrent. This is supported by the ghost repeating Scrooge's former words as "are there no prisons?, are there no workhouses"? Here, we see the symbolism of the ignorance of the wealthy and how that affects the poor. The wealthy are so oblivious to the deprivation and famine that surrounds them. Dickens' is emphasising the affects his words have on society; with no charity the poor have nothing to 'cling' to. Ignorance and Want remain the prime movers behind so many of the world's ills in society at that time. Dickens was having a go at his complacent readers and was chastising them about their own ignorance - an ignorance that was in many cases was blatantly ignoring the happenings of society and especially the poor's desperation for refuge. Ignorance and Want represent the ruined youth of Industrial capitalism of the Victorian era. Moreover, their faces are 'scowling' and they are described as 'monsters' which suggests that they have become evil because they are treated so badly, and could reflect the fear that people have of the poor. Dickens' may be seeking to blame this towards the wealthy and symbolise their wrong-doings that have been happening for many years with no drastic developments or changes and his preach for one before it is too late.

A Christmas Carol revision:

Scrooge

Ebenezer Scrooge is the protagonist of 'A Christmas Carol'. In the opening of the novella, Scrooge is presented as a miserly and misanthropic businessman with a strong aversion to Christmas and the society around him in general. Dickens follows his journey of redemption as his character evolves into a "good" man who "knew how to keep Christmas well". This is an

impressive character development which becomes a defining feature of both the novella and Scrooge's character.

It could be argued that this serves two main purposes: firstly to highlight to the reader that anyone is capable of change and that they should actively try to alter any of their weaknesses, and secondly that Christmas is a time of compassion and charity so should be celebrated as such. Dickens achieves these goals by presenting Scrooge as an idealised man in the final stave, subtly informing readers on what he believed to be the model way of celebrating Christmas. This is a suggestion which evidently worked, as Dickens is often credited with playing a major role in shaping Christmas celebrations due to his altruistic (selfless concern for others) and emotional approach, emphasised through the character of Scrooge.

Stave One: In the opening Stave the narrator is unsympathetic in his dealings with Scrooge, presenting him as wholly unlikeable through the use of an extended metaphor (a metaphor which is repeated) where Scrooge is likened to the weather.

- Dickens writes that “a frosty rime was on his head” and that it was the “cold within him” rather than external temperatures which “froze his old features”. This presents him as a cold, hostile and unappealing character.
- This description in some ways presents him as an archetypal villain (the classic and conventional portrayal of a villain).
- “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, shriveled his cheek, stiffened his gait; made his eyes red, his thin lips blue; and spoke out shrewdly in his grating voice”.
- Scrooge's character is synonymous with the cold, frigid environment, and his features seem to highlight his miserable, unfriendly demeanor. Dickens further characterizes Scrooge as a bitter, callous man by revealing how the citizens of London go out of their way to avoid him in the street. Even animals purposely avoid Scrooge and never make eye contact with him.

- Scrooge chooses to refuse to be charitable; the two men are also wealthy yet take their time out to ridicule the system placed in society to become a mouthpiece of the actions society needs to take. Scrooge would rather have people die than throw away even a little of his “golden idol”. Scrooge responds with a series of questions that immediately highlight his uncharitable and inconsiderate nature towards the poor. The rhetorical questions “Are there no prisons?” “And union workhouses?” are used to show where Scrooge believes the poor people belong, suggesting that he believes his status suggests that poverty is not directly relevant to him, and that nothing to do with the poor matters, which refers articulately to the Malthusian Theory. This theory was created by Thomas Malthus, who believed that the population needed to be prevented from growing by disease and famine and so thought no help should be provided to the ill and starving. Dickens contradicted this idea and believed in the use of ‘A Christmas Carol’ to convey ethical and political statements. The most prominent way in which Dickens conveys this theme is through the exploration of Scrooge’s response to charity and how this ignites a response and clear link to his ignorance and extent of poverty. This allows readers to become more receptive to Dickens’ message and learn from his characters, provoking internal change

Stave Two: The Ghost of Christmas Past teaches Scrooge the value of reflection and causes the reader to sympathise with him, as we see the emergence of regret and a desire to change.

- For example, Scrooge reveals that there “was a boy singing a Christmas Carol” at his door and he regrets not giving him anything, highlighting the first stage of his repentance and therefore development.
- This furthered when he tells the Spirit that he wishes “to say a word or two” to Bob Cratchit, highlighting that he actively wants to make a change which establishes the start of his reformation.

Stave Three: The Ghost of Christmas Present builds on the concept of change. He does this through showing Scrooge the Cratchit family on Christmas day.

- Here, the reader sees Scrooge develop empathy and display compassion towards Tiny Tim, an interest “he had never felt before”. This signposts the extent to which he has changed, as even he himself can recognise the change within.

Stave Four: The final Spirit teaches Scrooge that his actions have consequences, causing him to put his material obsessions into perspective as he realises that his wealth will not keep him company in the event of his death.

- The stave ends with Scrooge repenting profusely, promising that he will remember “the lessons” that the Spirits had taught him and change for the better.

Stave Five: The narrator reveals that Scrooge was “better than his word”, highlighting to the reader that his character has indeed transformed. Dickens emphasises this by drawing direct contrasts between Scrooge’s behaviour in the final and opening staves.

- He shows how Scrooge donated money to one of the “portly gentlemen” despite his refusal in the first stave.
- Furthermore, in the opening stave Bob was sure that if he tried to “replenish” the coal Scrooge would have fired him, but in the final stave Scrooge instructs Bob to “make up the fires”, again making his transformation clear.

Key Themes

Poverty and suffering:

Dickens believed that society needed to come together in order to help stop the spread of poverty and so included this idea within the novella. He highlights this viewpoint by using a disapproving tone when describing Scrooge’s views on the poor in the opening stave. This is seen when Scrooge makes no distinction between the lower class and criminals - asking the charity collectors if there are any “prisons” they can send the poor to. Dickens later mocks this

statement when Scrooge asks the Ghost of Christmas Present if there is any “refuge” for the children clutching at his robe, to which the Spirit echoes “are there no prisons?” evidently parodying his views. The theme of poverty is also employed through the Cratchit family, who in spite of their poverty, are unfailingly grateful for one another's company and devotion. Their poorness is after all only financial, because they are wealthy in human kindness, a factor that Scrooge hugely lacks. The conditions Bob Cratchit is forced to work in under Scrooge highlights the poor working conditions and treatment towards those of the working class, and how they are mistreated by the ignorant upper class. Dickens’ further illustrates the extent of poverty in Victorian London through the use of both Ignorance and Want. This can be signified through the ghost’s words of “And they cling to me, appealing from their fathers”. The fact they ‘cling’ to the ghost ensures to us that this is happening in the present moment rather than to the past or future. The verb ‘cling’ could also be highlighting hope for the children, they are in despair and further represent the state of society but as a reader we can recognise hope and perhaps the foreshadowing of redemption by not only Scrooge and his attitudes to poverty, but society as a whole. Dickens is emphasizing that there are children living in poverty right now as the reader is perusing Scrooge's story and there is no room for regret or waiting. Around this time, the poor law was introduced which meant many people had no choice but to seek refuge and go to workhouses, where the conditions were abhorrent. This is supported by the ghost repeating Scrooge’s former words as “are there no prisons?, are there no workhouses”? Here, we see the symbolism of the ignorance of the wealthy and how that affects the poor. The wealthy are so oblivious to the deprivation and famine that surrounds them. Dickens’ is emphasising the affects his words have on society; with no charity the poor have nothing to ‘cling’ to. Ignorance and Want remain the prime movers behind so many of the world's ills in society at that time. Dickens was having a go at his complacent readers and was chastising them about their own ignorance an ignorance that was in many cases was blatantly ignoring the happenings of society and especially the poor’s desperation for refuge. Ignorance and Want represent the ruined youth of Industrial capitalism of the Victorian era. Moreover, their faces are ‘scowling’ and they are described as ‘monsters’ which suggests that they have become evil because they are treated so badly, and could reflect the fear that people have of the poor. Dickens’ may be seeking to blame this towards the wealthy and symbolise their wrong-doings that have been happening for many years with no drastic developments or changes and his preach for one before it is too late.

Fear:

In 'A Christmas Carol', Dickens articulates how Scrooge's desire for change and transformation by the end of the novella stems from the confrontation of his deepest fears, and how this exacerbates his journey to redemption. By being obliged to face his fear of welcoming others into his life and exposing his vulnerability, Dickens emphasises the extent of Scrooge's terrors that demonstrated throughout, although we as readers perhaps don't recognise this until we see this exposition.

Scrooge visiting the ghost of Christmas Yet to come in stave 4, can be seen as a turning point in his final despair for redemption. The ghost creates an immediate gothic atmosphere through the literary device of triple, as the ghost's movement is described as "slowly, gravely, silently". This movement and initial description is far different from the other spirits, who were described as a "jolly giant". The adverb choice of 'gravely' highlights the solemn nature of the ghost who seeks to create tension. This 'silence' may be implied to allow Scrooge to deeply think about his actions and his future, which can heighten his distress even further. Even when approached by the spirit, Scrooge shrouds with terror and he "bent down upon his knee". In this moment we see Scrooge as vulnerable and even inferior to the spirit, something that may not have bothered him earlier on in the novella. This gothic atmosphere created by Scrooge is further emphasised by the field of words relating to terror and ghosts, such as 'gloom', 'mystery' and 'darkness'. Although this may agitate Scrooge, a Victorian audience may have perceived this in a lighter manner: ghost story telling was very popular in the Victorian Era, especially around Christmas time. The spirit's presence in itself may unsettle Scrooge, and his forthcoming fate is even more daunting in his consideration of redemption. The 'dread' created by the ghost illustrates the trepidation of his future, which is being mapped out by the spirit. The extent of Scrooge's fear by the ghost is further highlighted by the fact that the spirit is that who Scrooge "fears the most". This demonstrates the impact this final phantom will have on his redemption, a factor we as a reader pay close attention to in the later transformation.

This dismay and worry is also portrayed in other moments of the novella, despite its extent and impact on Scrooge. His first encounter with Jacob Marley in Stave 1 causes some panic for Scrooge as the initial description of his fate is demonstrated. Dickens' description of Marley acts

as a warning to Scrooge, with the “chains (I) forged in life” representing the ‘deeds, padlocks and cash-boxes’ rendering the fate of Scrooge which is similar to his late business partner, as greed and his callous nature could depicted his fate unless a change is made. It is palpable that this image startles Scrooge into seeing how the apparent ‘golden idol’ doesn’t create a worthy afterlife. Here, Dickens' purpose is to show the terrifying consequences of greed and ignorance in the Victorian Era, which can lead to isolation and ignorance in society, and the blindness to the poor. Marley’s ghost expresses the religious belief that everyone has the capacity to change their ways for the better, whether that be through charity or family.

In conclusion , this fear created throughout the novella is demonstrated to give the wealthy in society a sense of social responsibility, at a time where society was fragmented and the class gap between the rich and poor was widening rapidly. The novella is an allegory, and Scrooge is a key example of an upper class member of society who transformed from callous and a “greedy old miser”, into someone who cherished and ‘honoured Christmas’. If this change did not occur, the moral and central focus of the novella would have been futile, which is why the fear painted throughout emphasises both the need for change and the change itself, not only in Scrooge but in Victorian society.

Loneliness:

“Solitary as an oyster”

The oyster represents how there is something precious inside, with a hard shell against the tough world

Scrooge is trapping himself inside a shell of stubbornness to remain ‘solitary’

Juxtaposes Scrooge being greedy, for when you are greedy you want a lot of items but when you’re solitary you want nothing or to be surrounded by nothingness

“External heat and cold had little influence on Scrooge. No warmth could warm, not wintry weather chill him” he lives an entirely self-contained life. Not even the cold weather affects him, because

metaphorically, he has a cold heart.

Scrooge made the decision, over a lifetime, not to allow external forces to influence his feelings or behavior. If atmospheric conditions don't alter him, mere people certainly won't influence him.

His coldness rebuffs people, which suits him fine.

“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.”

He is perceived as an outsider

No one is ever glad to see Scrooge. No one ever asks him over or asks after his health. Neither do the destitute even try to ask him for a penny.

Scrooge wants nothing to do with the community in which he lives, except to get money from it.

Scrooge is also seen as isolated when he was left at his boarding school as a child

“A lonely boy was reading near a feeble fire” *Childhood:*

‘All these boys were in great spirits, and shouted to each other, until the broad fields were so full of merry music, that the crisp air laughed to hear it’. - The ‘crisp air’ gives an impression of a fresh, healthy environment while the pathetic fallacy of ‘laughed’ helps create the sense of nature rejoicing and delighting in the happy cheer of the children. Childhood is seen as delightful and innocent, a time of joy and celebration.

‘Then all the Cratchit family drew round the hearth’ - Dickens presents to the reader the happiness, unity and camaraderie of the Cratchit family at Christmas: the loving care of the parents, the happiness the children find in their family unit.

Context: The Industrial Revolution led to fragmentation of families as workers moved from rural areas to the city in search of employment. Dickens himself had a large family and was keen to remind readers of the importance and support of the family unit and how children form a crucial part of this.

Tiny Tim is romanticised by Dickens to symbolise the beauty and goodness of working-class children who deserve society's love and charity. Children in the novel such as Tiny Tim are used to dispel the myth that the poor were immoral and deserved to be poor. “God bless us everyone”. Tiny Tim becomes a symbol of the abandonment of working-class children in Victorian society.

Too poor to afford medical care, he dies, leaving his family devastated with their grief. His death symbolises how the middle-class readers have the power to change his fate and that of thousands of other vulnerable children but fail to do so.

Redemption

The novella closely follows Scrooge's journey of redemption, a transformation which is made more impactful by Dickens' description of Scrooge's character in order to foreground this theme. Initially, Dickens presents Scrooge as a man who cannot change, alluding to his stubborn nature by clarifying that "No warmth could warm, no wintry weather chill him". However, as the novel progresses we see Scrooge learn a number of lessons and evolve as a character, eventually repenting for his behaviour. This is significant because Scrooge's redemption does not stop at simple repentance as he goes on and actively tries to recompense for his actions. For example, while he was rude to the charity collectors in the opening of the novella, in the final stave he whispers to the gentleman the amount he would like to donate, shocking the man and allowing for a complete redemption.

Family

The importance of family is highlighted through the crucial role it plays in allowing for Scrooge's all important redemption. This is evident when he is with the Ghost of Christmas Present who shows him how Fred and his family celebrate Christmas. Scrooge realises that if he had spent time with his family he might have "cultivated the kindness of life", highlighting the crucial role that a person's family can play in their character.

Relationships:

Marley:

Dickens draws parallels between the two characters, likening them to such an extent that Scrooge "answered to both names". He pays close attention to Marley's isolation from society (which reflects similarly onto Scrooge) and shows that Scrooge was central to his life. He repeats that Scrooge was his "sole" executor, administrator, assign, residuary

legatee, friend and mourner, and even he was not “so dreadfully cut up by the sad event”.

Both characters are portrayed as unappealing by Dickens.

- This arguably causes the reader to feel an initial dislike towards Scrooge, as his lack of emotion towards the death of someone so central to his life characterises him as hard and unfeeling.
- In this way, his relationship with Marley helps the reader to gain a better understanding of his character, as they realise his isolation and apathetic nature.

Bob Cratchit:

It could be argued that Bob Cratchit has two main roles with regards to Scrooge: firstly to explain why Scrooge is hated by those around him and secondly to spotlight Scrooge’s changed nature to the reader.

- In the opening of the novella Dickens describes a “dismal” cell that Bob was made to work in, revealing that despite the cold conditions and small fire he could not “replenish” the coal for fear of being fired. This not only exemplifies the cruel working conditions that many lower-class workers faced in Victorian society but also acts as an example of Scrooge’s inhumanity, epitomising his cruelty.
- Towards the end of the novel, Scrooge’s newfound attitude is highlighted when he instructs Bob to “make up the fires” and buy “another coal scuttle” contrasting his earlier behaviour and so highlighting Scrooge’s changed nature to the reader.

Fan:

By choosing to include the character of Fan during Scrooge’s time with the Ghost of Christmas Past, Dickens allows the reader to sympathise with Scrooge and so form an important attachment with the protagonist. This causes them to remain interested in the narrative.

- Fan is used as a catalyst for Scrooge’s reformation. When the Spirit reminds Scrooge that although she has passed away, she left behind a child, he begins to feel “uneasy”, highlighting to the reader that he is beginning to reflect on his actions.

Tiny Tim:

Bob Cratchit's son, Tiny Tim, is introduced to the novella when Scrooge is with the Ghost of Christmas Present. His character is used to highlight Scrooge's developing empathy and so signpost the changes in his character.

- This is most apparent when the Spirit uses his own words against him - Scrooge asks about Tiny Tim's future but the Ghost simply replies that if he was going to die he had "better do it" and "decrease the surplus population". This prompts Scrooge to hang "his head" which shows his regret highlighting his regret, and so as an extension of this, the transformation of his character.

Comparisons:

It could be argued that both Fezziwig and Fred act as foils to Scrooge. Dickens uses these characters as a contrast to Scrooge's negative characteristics in order to highlight the drastic transformation he goes through within the text.

Fred:

Dickens carefully constructs a cold and hostile atmosphere in the opening of the novella through the semantic field (a group of words with a similar meaning or theme) of cold weather and the description of Bob Cratchit's misery.

- This undertone is immediately contrasted with the introduction of Fred who wished his uncle a "Merry Christmas" with a "cheerful voice". This makes Scrooge's misery appear increasingly bleak.
- Fred repeatedly responds to Scrooge's bitter comments with optimism, teasing Scrooge by saying that he has no reason to be "morose" as he is "rich enough". He then goes on to directly contrast Scrooge's miserly attitude saying that there are many things that he has benefited from even if he hasn't "profited from them", Christmas being one of them. By including a character with such optimism and appeal, Dickens furthers the effect of Scrooge's pessimism, making him appear even worse.

Fezziwig:

As an employer, Fezziwig directly contrasts Scrooge, seen most notably through his attitude and behaviour on Christmas Eve.

- While Fezziwig tells his apprentices that there will be “no more work to-night” as it is “Christmas Eve” Scrooge complains to Bob claiming that he is “ill-used” for having to pay “a day’s wages for no work”. This contrast highlights just how cruel Scrooge was as an employer, causing him to come to this realisation and change the way he acted with Bob. In some ways it could be argued that including Fezziwig as a foil to Scrooge plays a role in his transformation as it catalyses feelings of regret and a desire to change.

Key Quotes

- “A squeezing, wrenching, grasping, scraping, clutching, covetous old sinner!”. Dickens uses asyndetic listing (a list broken up by commas rather than conjunctions like ‘and’) in his description of Scrooge, perhaps to show the extent of his greed. The relentless verbs refer to him being miserly and selfish. In this way he is immediately and undeniably characterised as an unlikeable character. This makes it difficult for the reader to empathise with him while also drawing attention to the unsympathetic narration.
- “Solitary as an oyster”. This simile is interesting as Dickens describes Scrooge as “solitary”, highlighting his isolation and so presenting him as hostile. The choice of an oyster is significant as despite an oyster being dark and hard on the outside they can contain something beautiful and valued on the inside; Pearls. Here, Dickens is suggesting to the reader that there is something worth saving within Scrooge, implying that as the novel progresses the Spirits will destroy his hard exterior to reveal the ‘pearl’ within. - “I’m quite a baby.” This is interesting as it contrasts Dickens’ earlier description of Scrooge as a “covetous old sinner”. He instead presents Scrooge as innocent through the connotations associated with a baby, highlighting the extent of his change. It is also interesting to note that by ending the novel with reference to Scrooge being a baby Dickens alludes to the cycle of rebirth and, as an extension, his transformation.

Stave 3

- The Ghost of Christmas Present is a jolly giant dressed in a green robe, surrounded by food relating to Christmas, family and being satisfied.
- The Ghost takes Scrooge to see how other people celebrate Christmas

- He takes Scrooge to see Bob Cratchit and his family, and to see Scrooge's nephew Fred
- The Ghost sprinkles water/incense to make people kinder to one another
- At the Cratchit's home, Scrooge witnesses love and kindness. Dickens presents this stave in an over emotional manner, to educate the upper classes against their ignorance of the plight of the poor in industrialised London through the Cratchit family
- The effect of Tiny Tim on Scrooge shows the naive view the upper classes have on the working class. Scrooge starts to feel guilty about what he said about the poor in Stave 1
- They then visit Fred's house, where he is having a Christmas Party. The people at the party demonise Scrooge's cold-heartedness but Fred defends his Uncle
- As the ghost begins to die, he reveals two Children, Ignorance and Want. The ghost tells them that these two children belong to man-kind.
- The overall effect of Stave 3 is to demonstrate the ignorance of the upper classes, to show the needs of the poor and bhutan end to the blindness of the rich

Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come:

- Described as a phantom and it 'scatters gloom and mystery'
- The repetition of words associated with dark and evil represent death (grim reaper)
- The silence of the phantom allows Scrooge to come to his own conclusions
- Provides an eerie and fearful atmosphere
- The ghost shows Scrooge the consequences of his actions which makes him increasingly more terrified
- Scrooge is taken to places he is not familiar with and listens to conversations he doesn't understand
- He is first taken to see a group a businessmen who are discussing the death of a man
- Scrooge is then taken to a very poor part of town, where he witnesses three people steal the items/personal possessions of the man's death: such as bed curtains, a pencil case
- Scrooge asked the ghost to see some emotion from this man's death

- They are taken to the home of a young couple, who owned the dead man some money. They are relieved at this news, as although the debt will be transferred to someone else, they couldn't be as merciless as he was
- Finally, they are taken to the Cratchit's home, where they prepare for the funeral of Tiny Tim
- Scrooge and the reader are horrified to see the grief caused by the death of Tiny Tim, and its contrast to the lack of respect/grief to the death of the unknown man
- Scrooge asks to see the identity of the unknown dead man, in which he is taken to a courtyard
- The grave has Scrooge's name upon it, and Scrooge is appalled
- He says how he will "honour Christmas"
- Scrooge touches the hand of the phantom and begins to pray. At this moment the phantom shrinks and Scrooge returns to his bed. This stave represents a religious theme through praying for a change.

	Definition	Sentence about 'A Christmas Carol'
Allegmy (allegorical)	a story that can be interpreted to reveal a hidden meaning, typically a moral or political one-	'A Christmas Carol' is an allegory because it features events and characters with a clear, fixed symbolic meaning.
Misanthropic	having or showing a dislike of other people; unsociable.	Scrooge can be seen as a misanthropic character because of the way he acts towards Fred and the Cratchits.
Avaricious	having or showing an extreme greed for wealth or material gain.	Scrooge is avaricious throughout the beginning of the novel as he flaunts his wealth and favours monetary value over family and loved ones.
Malthusian theory	The theory states that food production will not be able to keep up with in the human population, resulting in disease, famine, war, and calamity.	The character of Ebenezer Scrooge expressed Malthus' ideas when approached by two men collecting donations for the poor, Scrooge responded by suggesting that the poor should die and "decrease the surplus population".
Plight of the poor	The needs of the people that are vulnerable and unable to meet their social-economic needs independently or to support themselves and their families.	The Cratchits can be seen as the plight of the poor as they are unable to pay for necessities such as welfare for Tiny Tim.
Cautionary tale	A tale or story used to warn others and show consequences of actions that must be prevented.	'A Christmas Carol' is a cautionary tale as Dickens warns others of the consequences of greed and fate based on how you treat others, with the moral "wear the chains you forged in life", using Jacob Marley as a warning to Scrooge.
Political diatribe	A political and verbal attack on something.	'A Christmas Carol' is a political diatribe as Dickens is attacking the politics of the time, saying that the rich were not doing enough to help the poor.

Social critic	A form of academic or journalistic criticism focusing on sociological issues in society, particularly with respect to injustices and power relations.	Dickens is a social critic as he demonstrates the theme of social injustice through: Scrooge refusing to give money to the poor; the characters of Ignorance and Want and thieves dividing up Scrooge's belongings.
Affluent	Having lots of money, being wealthy.	Scrooge is affluent as he continues to exploit his wealth on others such as Fred,

state of living and were forced to work long hours. He disagreed with the conditions they were forced to live in to survive, and many still didn't. In a scene written from conditions in a Marylebone workhouse, Dickens 'exclaimed "Oh, the child that was found in the street, and she had brought up ever since, had died an hour ago, and see where the little creature lay, beneath this cloth!", demonstrating the horrible situation the poor were in.

4. Explain what Dickens seemed to think about the people who ran the workhouses.

Answer: Dickens portrays a sense of sarcasm to criticise the utilitarian men on the Poor law boards as they were determined that the old poor law system failed to encourage the work ethic. In its place 'they established the rule that all poor people should have the alternative of being starved by a gradual process in the house. Dickens' disliked the actions and beliefs of those who ran the workhouses as they were set on treating the poor in an inhumane way, stripping them from humanity and what should be their rights as citizens, despite the wealth or class and being content with killing many deprived people through extensive labour and starvation.

Charity in 'A Christmas Carol'

Task 1: Read the extract below and answer the questions.

Oh! But he was a tight-fisted hand at the grindstone, Scrooge! a squeezing, wrenching, grasping, scraping, clutching, covetous, old sinner! Hard and sham as flint, from which no steel had ever struck out generous fire; secret, and self-contained, and solitary as an oyster.

What does Dickens' first description of Scrooge suggest about his attitude towards helping those in need?

Scrooge represents the opposite of generous in every way imaginable. He always seeks to clutch money from people and has no care for others, and covets what he does not yet have. He has a completely self-contained and solitary lifestyle—he neither needs nor wants companionship or any other type of relationship with other people and this reflects on his charitable acts and lack of generosity.

"Dismal little cell" - The adjective 'dismal' connotes to a gloomy and sombre atmosphere that Bob is forced to work in. Alternatively, it could represent the repetitive long-hour shifts, accustomed

to Victorian men and children. Contextually, it gives insight to the attitudes of Dickens towards working-conditions, who experienced this in a factory as a child. "Little suggests that he is trapped and perhaps abused by the legislation put in place by the government. This is reinforced by "cell", which denotes that Bob is trapped; he is a victim/prisoner of capitalism and the lust for wealth by the social-elite.

"The clerk's fire was so very much smaller that it looked like one coal"- Bob knows that if he replenishes his fire, Scrooge will threaten to terminate his job. So he tries to warm himself as best he can without angering Scrooge. Despite the poor working conditions, Bob cannot afford to lose his job as he has a family to support. Bob suffers in silence for his family's sake. Although Scrooge's fire was small, the fact Bob's was 'so very much smaller' exemplifies the extent to which Bob's rights as an employee are stripped away.

1. How does Dickens present Fred as the **antithesis** of Scrooge? Include quotes and analysis in your

answer.

Scrooge's selfish, cold, melancholy nature is contrasted with Fred, with them both being complete opposites. Throughout the novel, Dickens uses Fred to show Scrooge's transformation from a cold, unfeeling man to a man of warmth and compassion. Fred doesn't idolise wealth or material possessions, despite him being of the middle class, unlike Scrooge who sees money as the only true value to life. Fred exclaims how there are "many things from which I might have derived good, by which I have not profited" highlighting his care for the life he has and being charitable to others. On the other hand, Scrooge immediately refuses to be charitable and questions the barbaric system put in place in order to hide the poor from society, questioning "are there no workhouses?"

2. How does Dickens use language in the dialogue above to help you to understand how he wants us to view Fred and Scrooge?

The dialogue highlights how Dickens wants us to view Fred as a character who stands by his morals. Fred insists that he will stay cheerful, despite his uncle's determined unpleasant manner. Through his dialogue we see his insistent cheeriness, and how, despite Scrooge's rudeness, Fred continues to stay positive, stating "Merry Christmas uncle". Dickens also demonstrates how it would be hard for the ghosts to persuade Scrooge to change his ways, through his consistent tone and rudeness towards his nephew, despite Fred's kindness and compassion.

What language and structural techniques are used here to show the difference between the attitudes here?

The portly gentlemen use many questions and considerate language to Scrooge, and are shocked to see that he refuses to donate any money despite his wealth. Scrooge uses cold language with

short replies, stating 'Care there no prisons?' "are there no workhouses?" This constant dialogue of questions may support and reflect Dickens' questioning society as to why they feel the need to hide and demonise the deprived families and individuals, even though they have more than enough money to donate.

What themes can you relate this extract to?

This extract can be related to the themes of injustice, ignorance and poverty as it highlights the upper classes' ignorance to the social injustice in society and how they are choosing to ignore such huge issues surrounding increasing poverty levels.

Can you link the exchange between Scrooge and the gentleman to attitudes towards the New Poor Law and Malthusian theory?

The two men raising money for the poor are capitalists and entrepreneurs. They are "portly" in a time when food was scarce and people starved on the streets and so the evil in society comes from indifference towards fellow people and a reliance on a governmental system that does more harm than good. Scrooge is similar to Thomas Malthus and echoes his theory through "if they'd rather die than do it and decrease the surplus population". Scrooge chooses to refuse to be charitable; the two men are also wealthy yet take their time out to ridicule the system placed in society to become a mouthpiece of the actions society needs to take. Scrooge would rather have people die than throw away even a little of his "golden idol".

I do agree that Scrooge acts as a mouthpiece as he represents all the values that are opposed to the idea of Christmas--greed, selfishness, and a lack of goodwill. Scrooge is also a mouthpiece to express the more callous justifications and excuses used to defend the harsh treatment of the poor and emphasise the blatant ignorance of the upper classes in society as they fail to see the flawed structure and treatment towards the poor.

Christmas Spirit

Christmas at the Cratchit's is employed as idyllic despite the family's situation. The perfect scene is created to evoke this sense of joy and cheer as Mr Cratchit, served dinner "with beaming looks, while the chestnuts on the fire sputtered and cracked noisily." The adjective 'beaming' creates a blissful setting full of happiness. The ideal of 'chestnuts on the fire' highlights a memorable and perfect Christmas. It emphasises how material values and money are insignificant when spending time with loved ones. This scene can also link to Christmas at Fred's house. Festive cheer and goodwill is constructed to emphasise the true value of Christmas. Dickens' may want to highlight this through the Cratchits: although they have little, their hearts are rich in love and that's what Dickens' favours the most. Bob exclaims "God bless (us)" as they toast to the day. He is still radiant and cheerful and perhaps hopes that the situation will improve, with the reference to God. Although Scrooge has the contentment of his "golden idol" being monetary value, this setting and description of family and laughter is something that he is yet to experience, though perhaps yearning for deep down. Dickens' emphasises to the reader that Christmas isn't about presents and wealth but regarding internal happiness and joy. Given the time period, with many families separated in workhouses due to recently introduced poor law; the fact the Cratchits are all together and cheery is a factor that would've been envied by many. This makes this scene all the more significant as it evokes emotion to both Scrooge and readers. Dickens' pleads for us to recognise the symbolism of Christmas, especially when living in a society riddled with crime, famine and poverty. This moment that could be "considered perfect" is a desire for many in the Victorian era.

Isolation and Family

Task 1: Explain what Dickens wanted to teach readers through each of these themes:

Childhood: Through the exploration of the theme of childhood, Dickens' aims to illustrate that wealth and class doesn't define your childhood. Ignorance and want were poor and represented the responsibility of mankind, they were miserable and ten-ified. Scrooge wasn't bom Into poverty yet he still had a traumatic childhood. Dickens is highlighting the salience of family that builds and stabilises one's younger years.

Charity: By using the theme of charity, Dickens' aims to teach the readers that we should help the poor rather than shun them for their lower social status

Poverty: Through the exploration of the theme charity, Dickens aims to illustrate the Importance of helping those less fortunate, whilst criticising the wealthy fro not doing more to help the poor.

Christrnas: Through the theme of Christmas Dickens uses key characters such as Fezziwig in order to present Christmas as a time to celebrate and bring family together regardless of their social class or background.

Isolation and family: The theme of Family is used in order to illustrate Scrooge's transformation from being: malice, misanthropic and cold to philanthropic and caring. The images of isolation from his family eventually disintegrate and form a new image of love and unity.

Redemption: By using the theme of redemption, Dickens aims to educate the readers that change is very possible even for the people that have fallen so low-

Task 2: Write down connotations of the words:

Fog: Isolation , obscurity, indistinction; mysterious, shrouding the truth, oblivious, unclear,
Lmcertainty Fire: destruction, sin, rage, spirituality, renewal, desire

Task 3: How does Dickens use the motifs of fog and fire to represent isolation and family?

Bob Cratchit's small fire shows he is isolated from wealth and the comforts of life. The fire at the Cratchit's house could represent their warmth and unity as a family. The thick fog at the start that Scrooge walks through could represent how Scrooge is morally lost and ignorant to the reality of society and his need to remove the fog in order to perceive the harsh reality, which is done through the ghosts.

Task 4: Explode four quotes from the passage on slide 4 which demonstrate his isolation:

"Solitary as an oyster"

The oyster represents how there is something precious Inside, with a hard shell against the tough world

Scrooge is trapping himself inside a shell of stubbornness to remain 'solitary'

Juxtaposes Scrooge being greedy, for when you are greedy you want a lot of items but when you're solitary you want nothing or to be surrounded by nothingness

"External heat and cold had little influence on Scrooge. No warmth could warm, not wintry weather chill him"

- he lives an entirely self-contained life. Not even the cold weather affects him, because metaphorically, he has a cold heart.

Scrooge made the decision, over a lifetime, not to allow external forces to influence his feelings or behavior. If atmospheric conditions don't alter him, mere people certainly won't influence him - His coldness rebuffs people, which suits him fine.

"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."

- He is perceived as an outsider

- No one is ever glad to see Scrooge. No one ever asks him over or asks after his health. Neither do the destitute even try to ask him for a penny.

Scrooge wants nothing to do with the community in which he lives, except to get money from it.

Task 6: What was Scrooge's family like when he was a boy? When Scrooge was a boy, his family lacked unity, they were broken and unhappy but reunited. Fan loves Scrooge and cared for him. His father's ways changed which could mirror Scrooge's transformation.

Throughout the extract the family is seen as paramount to the happiness of the Cratchit family. Bob exclaims how Tiny Tim was "as good as gold", which implies love, tenderness and a family bond towards his child. The word choice of 'gold', emphasises the significant value of family to the Cratchit's. Dickens may be showing the effects of poverty through the presentation of the Cratchit's and how their relationship is so strong despite their situation and how their bond is salient and impossible to tarnish. Further focus on the love and happiness