A CHRISTMAS CAROL · YEAR 10 · LESSON 1

Welcome to A Christmas Carol

The exam, the assessment objectives and why Dickens chose Christmas

- Know what Paper 1, Section B asks of you
- Explain why Dickens wrote a ghost story for Christmas
- Infer his intentions from the Preface

AO1 · AO2 · AO3

STARTER · 5 MINUTES · RETRIEVAL

Quick-fire recall

1. Who wrote A Christmas Carol?
2. In which month and year was it published?
3. How many staves does the novella have?
4. Name the three spirits who visit Scrooge.
5. Which ghost warns Scrooge first?

Type each answer in the chat on “send”, or write them in your book. Score out of 5.

CHECK YOUR ANSWERS

Did you get them?

1. Who wrote A Christmas Carol? **Charles Dickens**
2. In which month and year was it published? **December 1843 (19 December)**
3. How many staves does the novella have? **Five**
4. Name the three spirits who visit Scrooge. **Past, Present and Yet to Come**
5. Which ghost warns Scrooge first? **Jacob Marley**

Tally your score. Anything missed becomes a revision target.

THE BIG QUESTION

Why are we studying A Christmas Carol?

Aim

Know what Paper 1, Section B asks of you

Aim

Explain why Dickens wrote a ghost story for Christmas

Aim

Infer his intentions from the Preface

Success: I can support a clear argument with short quotations, analyse word choices and link to context.

THE EXAM

Paper 1, Section B

The paper

1 hour 45 minutes · 64 marks · 40% of GCSE · closed book

Your question

One question, **30 marks**. You get an extract, then write about the extract **and** the whole novella.

Marks

AO1 12 · **AO2** 12 · **AO3** 6. No separate marks for spelling in this section.

Timing

About **45 minutes**: 5 plan · 35 write · 5 check

AO1 = ideas and quotations · AO2 = language, form and structure · AO3 = context.

EXTRACT · PREFACE

The Preface (December 1843)

I have endeavoured in this Ghostly little book, to raise the Ghost of an Idea, which shall not put my readers out of humour with themselves, with each other, with the season, or with me. May it haunt their houses pleasantly, and no one wish to lay it.

Their faithful Friend and Servant,

C.D.

December, 1843.

TASK 1 · ANNOTATE

Read again and annotate

1. Highlight the **semantic field** of the supernatural.
2. Why “**Ghost of an Idea**”? Think about the double meaning.
3. What tone does “haunt their houses **pleasantly**” create?
4. Who does Dickens say he does **not** want to put “out of humour”?
5. What does the sign-off “faithful Friend and Servant” suggest about how he sees his readers?

Post your best quotation and one word of analysis in the chat.

TASK 2 · ZOOM IN

Key quotation

> “May it haunt their houses pleasantly, and no one wish to lay it.”
>
> Preface, 1843

1. **Word:** what is surprising about “haunt” and “pleasantly” together?
2. **Technique:** the ghost is a metaphor. For what?
3. **Context:** why would a story be shared in homes at Christmas?
4. **Intention:** what does Dickens want an idea to do inside readers’ lives?

TASK 3 · MODEL

Model: Dickens’s purpose in the Preface

Point	Dickens uses the Preface to present the novella as a gentle but lasting moral influence.
Evidence	He hopes the “Ghost of an Idea” will “haunt their houses pleasantly”.
Analysis	The oxymoron of “haunt” and “pleasantly” suggests the story will linger in the mind without frightening the reader. The metaphorical “Ghost of an Idea” implies that a thought can keep returning until it changes behaviour.
Context	Ghost stories were told at Christmas in Victorian homes, so Dickens can use a familiar tradition to spread a social message.
Link	This foreshadows how the ghosts “haunt” Scrooge into compassion.

TASK 4 · WRITE (10 MINUTES)

Why did Dickens write the novella?

Write **one paragraph**: What does the Preface suggest about Dickens’s intentions for his readers? Use one quotation.

Check yourself, then paste your paragraph into the chat

- Clear point in the first sentence
- One short quotation, embedded
- One comment on a single word or phrase
- One link to Victorian Christmas or society

TASK 5 · WHOLE NOVEL · ONE LINKING SENTENCE FOR EACH

Link it to the rest of the novella

“Marley was dead: to begin with.”
Stave 1 · opening line: a ghost story begins at once

“I will honour Christmas in my heart, and try to keep it all the year.”
Stave 4 · Scrooge’s promise: the “idea” has taken hold

“God bless Us, Every One!”
Stave 5 · the closing words aim at every reader

“Mankind was my business.”
Stave 1 · Marley’s warning: the message of social responsibility

EXIT TICKET

3-2-1

1. **3** facts about the exam
2. **2** reasons Dickens chose a ghost story at Christmas
3. **1** question about the novella you want answered

Type your 3-2-1 in the chat.