A CHRISTMAS CAROL · YEAR 10 · LESSON 6

Stave 2: The Ghost of Christmas Past

Memory, isolation and the lonely child

- Analyse the arrival of the first spirit
- Explore how Dickens makes us sympathise with young Scrooge
- Link childhood to later behaviour

AO1 · AO2 · AO3

STARTER · 5 MINUTES · RETRIEVAL

Quick-fire recall

1. What does Marley wear?
2. Complete: I wear the chain I _____ in life.
3. What are the three emotions the spirits arouse?
4. What is redemption?
5. Where does Scrooge live?

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. What does Marley wear? **A chain**
2. Complete: I wear the chain I _____ in life. **forged**
3. What are the three emotions the spirits arouse? **Nostalgia, pity and fear**
4. What is redemption? **Being saved from sin or error**
5. Where does Scrooge live? **Marley’s old chambers**

Tally your score. Anything missed becomes a revision target.

THE BIG QUESTION

How does Dickens encourage the reader to feel sympathy for Scrooge in Stave 2?

Aim

Analyse the arrival of the first spirit

Aim

Explore how Dickens makes us sympathise with young Scrooge

Aim

Link childhood to later behaviour

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

CRAFT

Time, memory and the countryside

Time

Dickens uses **time**: the clock chimes build suspense, and the spirit takes Scrooge back.

Memory

The ghost makes Scrooge relive his past, so he sees what he lost.

The countryside

A contrast to the foggy city. Victorian readers often saw the countryside as a lost, purer past.

Isolation

Young Scrooge is “solitary” and “neglected”. This explains his later coldness.

EXTRACT · STAVE 2 · PART 1 OF 4

The start of Stave Two

When Scrooge awoke, it was so dark, that looking out of bed, he could scarcely distinguish the transparent window from the opaque walls of his chamber. He was endeavouring to pierce the darkness with his ferret eyes, when the chimes of a neighbouring church struck the four quarters. So he listened for the hour.

To his great astonishment the heavy bell went on from six to seven, and from seven to eight, and regularly up to twelve; then stopped. Twelve! It was past two when he went to bed. The clock was wrong. An icicle must have got into the works. Twelve!

He touched the spring of his repeater, to correct this most preposterous clock. Its rapid little pulse beat twelve: and stopped.

“Why, it isn’t possible,” said Scrooge, “that I can have slept through a whole day and far into another night. It isn’t possible that anything has happened to the sun, and this is twelve at noon!”

EXTRACT · STAVE 2 · PART 2 OF 4

The start of Stave Two

The idea being an alarming one, he scrambled out of bed, and groped his way to the window. He was obliged to rub the frost off with the sleeve of his dressing-gown before he could see anything; and could see very little then. All he could make out was, that it was still very foggy and extremely cold, and that there was no noise of people running to and fro, and making a great stir, as there unquestionably would have been if night had beaten off bright day, and taken possession of the world. This was a great relief, because “three days after sight of this First of Exchange pay to Mr. Ebenezer Scrooge or his order,” and so forth, would have become a mere United States’ security if there were no days to count by.

Scrooge went to bed again, and thought, and thought, and thought it over and over and over, and could make nothing of it. The more he thought, the more perplexed he was; and the more he endeavoured not to think, the more he thought.

EXTRACT · STAVE 2 · PART 3 OF 4

The start of Stave Two

Marley’s Ghost bothered him exceedingly. Every time he resolved within himself, after mature inquiry, that it was all a dream, his mind flew back again, like a strong spring released, to its first position, and presented the same problem to be worked all through, “Was it a dream or not?”

Scrooge lay in this state until the chime had gone three quarters more, when he remembered, on a sudden, that the Ghost had warned him of a visitation when the bell tolled one. He resolved to lie awake until the hour was passed; and, considering that he could no more go to sleep than go to Heaven, this was perhaps the wisest resolution in his power.

The quarter was so long, that he was more than once convinced he must have sunk into a doze unconsciously, and missed the clock. At length it broke upon his listening ear.

“Ding, dong!”

“A quarter past,” said Scrooge, counting.

“Ding, dong!”

“Half-past!” said Scrooge.

“Ding, dong!”

“A quarter to it,” said Scrooge.

“Ding, dong!”

EXTRACT · STAVE 2 · PART 4 OF 4

The start of Stave Two

“The hour itself,” said Scrooge, triumphantly, “and nothing else!”

He spoke before the hour bell sounded, which it now did with a deep, dull, hollow, melancholy One. Light flashed up in the room upon the instant, and the curtains of his bed were drawn.

The curtains of his bed were drawn aside, I tell you, by a hand. Not the curtains at his feet, nor the curtains at his back, but those to which his face was addressed. The curtains of his bed were drawn aside; and Scrooge, starting up into a half-recumbent attitude, found himself face to face with the unearthly visitor who drew them: as close to it as I am now to you, and I am standing in the spirit at your elbow.

TASK 1 · ANNOTATE

Read again and annotate

1. Find language that shows Scrooge’s **anxiety** about time.
2. Underline the effect of repeated “Ding, dong!”. What does it build?
3. Highlight the phrase “**face to face**”. Why does Dickens end the extract here?
4. Which words suggest Scrooge is **trying to rationalise**?
5. How does the narrator’s voice (“I tell you”) affect the reader?

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

TASK 2 · ZOOM IN

Key quotation

> “A solitary child, neglected by his friends, is left there still.”
>
> Stave 2 · the Ghost shows young Scrooge

1. **Words:** compare “solitary” and “neglected”.
2. **Structure:** what does “still” suggest about time and memory?
3. **Reader:** how are we encouraged to feel about Scrooge here?
4. **Context:** link to Dickens’s own childhood.

TASK 3 · MODEL

Model: sympathy for young Scrooge

Point	Dickens invites sympathy for Scrooge by revealing the loneliness that shaped him.
Evidence	He is “a solitary child, neglected by his friends”.
Analysis	“Solitary” suggests he is alone by circumstance, while “neglected” implies others failed him. The word “still” suggests his loneliness continues even in memory.
Reader / writer	The reader pities him, which complicates our dislike from Stave 1.
Context	Dickens’s own sense of being “neglected” as a child may inspire this.

TASK 4 · WRITE (12 MINUTES)

Write: how Dickens creates sympathy

Write **one paragraph** exploring how the Ghost of Christmas Past makes us sympathise with Scrooge. Use one quotation from the extract and one from the novella.

Check yourself, then paste your paragraph into the chat

- Point focused on sympathy
- Embedded quotations
- Word-level analysis
- Effect on the reader
- Link to Stave 1

TASK 5 · WHOLE NOVEL · ONE LINKING SENTENCE FOR EACH

Link it to the rest of the novella

“Remember it!” cried Scrooge with fervour; “I could walk it blindfold.”
Stave 2 · his emotion at returning to school

“It matters little,” she said, softly.
Stave 2 · Belle, the lost love (see next lesson)

“I should like to be able to say a word or two to my clerk just now.”
Stave 2 · the first stirring of conscience

“Spirit! remove me from this place.”
Stave 2 · he cannot bear his memories

EXIT TICKET

3-2-1

1. **3** reasons we feel for young Scrooge
2. **2** pieces of evidence of isolation
3. **1** way Dickens uses the clock to build suspense

Type your 3-2-1 in the chat.