

Write down one thing you know about each of these:

- Charles Dickens
- Scrooge
- Victorian England
- *A Christmas Carol*

Now share it with the person next to you.

- What is a stave?
- Why is this an appropriate name for the chapters in *A Christmas Carol*?

How does Dickens present the ghost of Marley?

Find quotations to support **one** of these bullet points:

- He uses physical description.
- He uses actions.
- He uses speech.

Sort the following quotations under these headings:

Scrooge at beginning of novel

Young Scrooge

'Dead Scrooge'

'A poor excuse for picking a man's pocket every twenty-fifth of December!'

'His wealth is no good to him. He doesn't do any good with it'

'If you were free today, tomorrow, yesterday, can even I believe that you would choose a dowerless girl?'

'Solitary as an oyster'

'A solitary child, neglected by his friends'

'On the neglected grave his own name, EBENEZER SCROOGE'

In groups of three discuss how successful you think the novel is. Did you enjoy reading it? How you would describe the novel to a friend who had never heard of it? Finally, can you sum the novel up in a single word or sentence?

In groups of three discuss this statement: 'One major problem with *A Christmas Carol* is that Scrooge relents (abandons his harsh attitude) too quickly: even after seeing Marley's ghost, the transformation has begun.' Do you agree? Why?

In pairs, discuss the importance of the various themes. Which do you think is the main/most important theme and why?

In pairs, discuss why Dickens chooses to end the novel with the focus on Tiny Tim.

In pairs, discuss who your favourite member of the Cratchit family is. Give a reason for your opinion.

In groups of three, discuss the following statement: 'The problem with the Cratchits is that Dickens has to make them counterbalance Scrooge. Therefore they end up being too good to be likeable. Their part of the story is sugary and unreal.'

Dickens uses the weather to describe Scrooge. Find examples of words associated with the weather. What is the effect of this pattern of words?

Find a quotation that shows what Scrooge thinks of Christmas.

Write down three words you would use to describe Scrooge.

Find three examples that show Scrooge is beginning to change.

In pairs, draw up a list of three questions to ask Scrooge about his childhood. For example, 'How did you feel about the other boys going home while you stayed at school?' Make sure you justify your answers with reference to the text.

List as many Christmas traditions as you can in one minute.

Write a couple of two-line epitaphs for Scrooge - one for before he changes and one for after he changes.

In pairs, think of one word to sum up each of the following characters:

- Bob Cratchit
- The Ghost of Christmas Past
- The Ghost of Christmas Present
- The Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come
- Fred
- Jacob Marley
- Tiny Tim

Decide which celebrities/actors/actresses would play the following characters in a new film version of *A Christmas Carol*.

- Bob Cratchit
- The Ghost of Christmas Past
- The Ghost of Christmas Present
- The Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come
- Fred
- Jacob Marley
- Tiny Tim

Think of a title to use instead of *A Christmas Carol*. Be ready to justify your choice.

