

between the lines

A lesson written for every student in the room

FREE LESSON SAMPLER

A Christmas Carol: Meet Scrooge

How does Dickens make us dislike Scrooge, and why does he want us to?

Lesson 3 of 24 from the scheme of learning

Teacher notes, slides and student pages at all three levels

Written for the AQA specification

What is in this sampler

This is one complete lesson from our A Christmas Carol scheme for Literature Paper 1, Section B. It comes exactly as it appears in the full scheme, so you can teach it next week and see how our lessons work.

Teacher notes	Timings with slide numbers, Do Now answers, the exploded quotation, the hinge question and what each answer tells you, the task at three levels, a model paragraph and notes on misconceptions and adapting the lesson (next pages).
Slides	The editable PowerPoint deck for Lesson 3, with teacher notes on every slide (separate file).
Student pages	The lesson's pages from the Securing, Strengthening and Soaring student packs: one question, three levels of support (at the end of this document).

How every lesson works

Know	Do Now from memory, vocabulary, then the reading.
Apply	Explode one quotation together; a hinge question checks understanding.
Master	One shared question answered as a What-How-Why paragraph, with Securing, Strengthening and Soaring support; then a model paragraph and an exit ticket.

In the full scheme

- 24 lessons like this one, with editable slides and a teacher handbook
- Student packs at three levels for every lesson
- Six weeks of deliberate practice homework at three levels
- Four Feedback Loop mini assessments with whole-class feedback sheets and improvement tasks
- An exam-style end-of-unit essay with level guidance and three annotated model answers

Lesson 3: Meet Scrooge

SEQUENCE 1: CONTEXT AND STAVE 1 • 60 MINUTES

How does Dickens make us dislike Scrooge, and why does he want us to?

By the end of the lesson, students can

- Explain three methods Dickens uses to introduce Scrooge
- Link Scrooge's coldness to Dickens's purpose
- Write a What-How-Why paragraph on the opening of Stave 1

Lesson at a glance

Time	Phase	What happens	Slides
0–8	Know	Do Now: five quick questions on Lessons 1 and 2. Students self-mark from the answer slide.	2–3
8–18	Know	Pre-teach covetous, flint and solitary. Read the extract aloud while students follow.	4–5
18–28	Apply	Explode the quotation together. Think aloud about the simile, then students annotate their copy.	6
28–33	Apply	Hinge question on mini-whiteboards. Use the answers to decide who starts on which level of support.	7–8
33–53	Master	Students write one What-How-Why paragraph using the student pack at their level. Share the model paragraph in the last five minutes.	9–10
53–60	Master	Exit ticket. Collect and sort into three piles to plan the start of Lesson 4.	11

Do Now answers

1	In which year was A Christmas Carol published?	1843
2	What did the 1834 Poor Law make the main form of help for poor people?	The workhouse
3	Which thinker argued that population grows faster than the food supply?	Thomas Malthus
4	The novella is divided into five sections called _____.	Staves (a stave is a verse of a song, which links to the idea of a carol)
5	Name one thing Dickens saw or read in 1843 that made him want to write about poverty.	Any one of: the government report on children's working conditions; his visit to the Field Lane Ragged School; the poverty he saw in Manchester

Vocabulary

covetous	greedy for things that belong to other people
flint	a very hard grey stone that makes sparks when struck with steel
solitary	alone, without company

self-contained

keeping your thoughts and feelings to yourself; needing no one else

Reading**Stave 1: Dickens introduces Scrooge***The narrator describes Scrooge for the first time.*

Oh! But he was a tight-fisted hand at the grindstone, 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 dog-days; and didn't thaw it one degree at Christmas.

Charles Dickens, A Christmas Carol (1843), Stave 1

Word help **grindstone:** a stone wheel for sharpening tools; here, hard work that never stops • **rime:** frost • **dog-days:** the hottest days of summer

Explode the quotation**Method**

A simile that compares Scrooge to a shellfish.

Zoom in

“solitary” means alone. Dickens shows that Scrooge chooses to shut people out.

“solitary as an oyster”**Effect**

An oyster is clamped shut and hard to open, so readers see Scrooge as closed off and cold.

Purpose

An oyster can hide a pearl. Dickens hints that something precious is locked inside Scrooge, which prepares us for his change.

Hinge question

Dickens calls Scrooge “solitary as an oyster”. Which reading does the text best support?

- A. Scrooge is precious, like a pearl.
- B. Scrooge is closed off, but something good may be hidden inside. (the right answer)**
- C. Scrooge prefers to live by the sea.

What the answers tell you

A means the student is reading the image but missing “solitary”: recap the word before they write. C is a literal reading: start these students on Securing.

Why the answer is right

“solitary” tells us Scrooge shuts people out, and an oyster can hide a pearl, so Dickens hints that he could change.

Master task

How does Dickens present Scrooge as cut off from other people?

Securing aiming for a 4 Quotations to choose from “solitary as an oyster” “Hard and sharp as flint” “The cold within him froze his old features” Starters Dickens presents Scrooge as ____. Dickens writes _____. The word _____ suggests _____. Dickens wants his readers to _____ because _____.	Strengthening aiming for grades 5 to 6 Prompts What: Make a clear point that answers the question. How: Choose a quotation. Name the method (simile, list, imagery) and zoom in on one word. Why: What did Dickens want readers in 1843 to think about people like Scrooge? Use what you learned about the Poor Law in Lesson 1.	Soaring aiming for grades 7 to 9 The debate “Scrooge chose his isolation. How far do you agree?” Write two paragraphs. In the second, give an alternative reading that begins with Alternatively.
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Model paragraph

What	Dickens presents Scrooge as a man who has deliberately shut himself away from other people.
How	The narrator describes him as “secret, and self-contained, and solitary as an oyster”. The repeated “and” piles up words of isolation, while the simile compares Scrooge to a creature that clamps its shell tight against the world.
Why	Dickens makes the coldness come from “within him”, so readers understand that Scrooge’s loneliness is a choice. Yet an oyster can hold a pearl, so the image quietly suggests that a better man is locked inside, waiting to be opened by the spirits.

Exit ticket

Dickens makes Scrooge cold so that...

Teacher notes

Subject knowledge

The description is built on lists. In “a squeezing, wrenching, grasping, scraping, clutching, covetous, old sinner” the five -ing words pile up with no “and”, so the greed feels relentless. Flint makes a spark only when struck with steel: Scrooge has never been “struck” into generosity. The cold imagery is internal (“The cold within him”) and outlasts the weather, which matters later when warmth and light mark his change.

Common misconceptions

- Retelling what Scrooge does instead of how Dickens presents him.
- Naming a simile with no effect attached.
- Treating Scrooge as simply evil, when Dickens needs him to be capable of change.
- Adding context at the end instead of linking it to Dickens’s purpose.

Adapting the lesson

Everyone answers the same question on the same extract. Students who chose C in the hinge question, or who struggled with the Do Now, start on Securing. Move anyone who completes the Securing frame in ten minutes to the Strengthening prompts for a second paragraph. Students who can already build a thesis start on Soaring.

Meet Scrooge

How does Dickens make us dislike Scrooge, and why does he want us to?

Securing

aiming for a 4

Do Now: five quick questions

- 1 In which year was A Christmas Carol published?
- 2 What did the 1834 Poor Law make the main form of help for poor people?
- 3 Which thinker argued that population grows faster than the food supply?
- 4 The novella is divided into five sections called _____.
- 5 Name one thing Dickens saw or read in 1843 that made him want to write about poverty.

Vocabulary

covetous	greedy for things that belong to other people
flint	a very hard grey stone that makes sparks when struck with steel
solitary	alone, without company
self-contained	keeping your thoughts and feelings to yourself; needing no one else

Reading

Stave 1: Dickens introduces Scrooge

The narrator describes Scrooge for the first time.

Oh! But he was a tight-fisted hand at the grindstone, 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 dog-days; and didn't thaw it one degree at Christmas.

Charles Dickens, A Christmas Carol (1843), Stave 1

Word help **grindstone**: a stone wheel for sharpening tools; here, hard work that never stops • **rime**: frost • **dog-days**: the hottest days of summer

Explode the quotation

Annotate each box as your teacher explodes the quotation.

Method	Zoom in
“solitary as an oyster”	
Effect	Purpose

Your task

How does Dickens present Scrooge as cut off from other people?

Word bank

covetous	greedy for what other people have
flint	a very hard stone
solitary	alone, without company
grindstone	hard work that never stops

Choose your quotations

- “solitary as an oyster”
- “Hard and sharp as flint”
- “The cold within him froze his old features”

Worked example

Dickens presents Scrooge as mean. He calls him a “tight-fisted hand at the grindstone”, which suggests he holds on to his money and never lets it go.

The example uses a different quotation. Choose one from the list above for your own paragraph.

Your task

How does Dickens present Scrooge as cut off from other people?

Write your paragraph

What: Dickens presents Scrooge as ____.

How: Dickens writes _____. The word _____ suggests _____.

Why: Dickens wants his readers to _____ because _____.

Exit ticket

Dickens makes Scrooge cold so that...

Meet Scrooge

How does Dickens make us dislike Scrooge, and why does he want us to?

Strengthening

aiming for grades 5 to 6

Do Now: five quick questions

- 1 In which year was A Christmas Carol published?
- 2 What did the 1834 Poor Law make the main form of help for poor people?
- 3 Which thinker argued that population grows faster than the food supply?
- 4 The novella is divided into five sections called _____.
- 5 Name one thing Dickens saw or read in 1843 that made him want to write about poverty.

Vocabulary

covetous	greedy for things that belong to other people
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Reading

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Oh! But he was a tight-fisted hand at the grindstone, 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 dog-days; and didn't thaw it one degree at Christmas.

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Word help **grindstone**: a stone wheel for sharpening tools; here, hard work that never stops • **rime**: frost • **dog-days**: the hottest days of summer

Explode the quotation

Annotate each box as your teacher explodes the quotation.

Method	Zoom in
“solitary as an oyster”	
Effect	Purpose

Your task

How does Dickens present Scrooge as cut off from other people?

What, How and Why

What	Make a clear point that answers the question.
How	Choose a quotation. Name the method (simile, list, imagery) and zoom in on one word.
Why	What did Dickens want readers in 1843 to think about people like Scrooge? Use what you learned about the Poor Law in Lesson 1.

Plan your paragraph

My point answers the question	
My quotation short and exact	
Method and zoom the method, and the one word I will explore	
Dickens's purpose what he wanted readers to think or do	

Your task

How does Dickens present Scrooge as cut off from other people?

Write your paragraph

Check your paragraph

- ☐ My point answers the question
- ☐ I use a short, embedded quotation
- ☐ I name a method and explain its effect
- ☐ I zoom in on one word
- ☐ I link to Dickens's purpose as well as Scrooge's personality

Exit ticket

Dickens makes Scrooge cold so that...

Meet Scrooge

How does Dickens make us dislike Scrooge, and why does he want us to?

Soaring

aiming for grades 7 to 9

Do Now: five quick questions

- 1 In which year was A Christmas Carol published?
- 2 What did the 1834 Poor Law make the main form of help for poor people?
- 3 Which thinker argued that population grows faster than the food supply?
- 4 The novella is divided into five sections called _____.
- 5 Name one thing Dickens saw or read in 1843 that made him want to write about poverty.

Vocabulary

covetous	greedy for things that belong to other people
flint	a very hard grey stone that makes sparks when struck with steel
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Reading

Stave 1: Dickens introduces Scrooge

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Effect	Purpose

Your task

How does Dickens present Scrooge as cut off from other people?

The debate

“Scrooge chose his isolation. How far do you agree?”

Write two paragraphs. In the second, give an alternative reading that begins with Alternatively.

Think about

- What an oyster can hide, and what that might foreshadow
- How the cold “within him” connects to weather that cannot touch him
- How Scrooge echoes Malthus later in Stave 1

Verbs to try

insinuates · *foreshadows* · *undercuts* · *intensifies*

Plan your argument

My argument	An alternative reading

Your task

How does Dickens present Scrooge as cut off from other people?

Write your answer

Exit ticket

Dickens makes Scrooge cold so that...