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 34 from the scheme of learning**

**Teacher notes, slides and student pages at all three levels**

Written for the AQA specification



© 2026 Between the Lines. This sampler is free to use and print in your school. Please share the link to our website instead of the file.

# 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 student booklet: one question, with the Securing, Strengthening and Soaring support side by side (at the end of this document). |

## How every lesson works

| | |
|---|---|
| **Know** | Do Now from memory, vocabulary, then the reading. The five Do Now questions build on what students learned in Lessons 1 and 2 of the full scheme. |
| **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. |

## Three levels of support

Every student answers the same question in every lesson. What changes is the support on the page, so the whole class does the same lesson:

| | |
|---|---|
| **Securing** | The most support: a word bank, a choice of quotations, a worked example and sentence starters. For students working towards a grade 4. |
| **Strengthening** | Prompts for What, How and Why, a paragraph planner and a checklist. For students working at grades 5 and 6. |
| **Soaring** | A debatable statement, prompts to think further and an argument planner. For students aiming at grades 7 to 9. |

The names describe the support, never the student. The hinge question shows who might start where, and students move between levels from lesson to lesson.

## In the full scheme

- 34 lessons like this one, with editable slides and a teacher handbook (lesson notes, unit map, assessment guide and knowledge bank)
- A student booklet with every lesson and all three levels of support, plus the same lessons as one pack per level
- Six weeks of independent practice homework at three levels
- Four Feedback Loop progress checks with whole-class feedback sheets and improvement tasks

© 2026 Between the Lines · Free to use and print in your school

- An exam-style end-of-unit essay with a teacher guide, level guidance and annotated model answers
- A Soaring stretch booklet for students aiming at the top levels
- A catch-up sheet for every lesson, for students who missed it
- An inclusion guide: pre-teaching, SEND, EAL and pupil premium notes for every lesson
- The revision workbook and the model answer pack, to print for every student
- Every licence for the scheme also includes its 30 Raising Achievement drills for intervention sessions

© 2026 Between the Lines · Free to use and print in your school

# 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 Lesson 1 and the reading of Stave 1. Students self-mark from the answer slide. | 2–3 |
| 8–18 | Know | Pre-teach "covetous", "flint", "solitary" and "self-contained". Read the extract aloud while students follow. | 4–6 |
| 18–28 | Apply | Explode the quotation together. Think aloud about the simile, then students annotate their copy. Before you reveal any notes, students try the four empty boxes on the first explode slide, on their own or after you model one box. | 7 |
| 28–33 | Apply | Hinge question on mini-whiteboards. Use the answers to decide who starts on which level of support. | 8–9 |
| 33–53 | Master | Students write one What–How–Why paragraph using their level of support in the student booklet. Share the model paragraph in the last five minutes. | 10–11 |
| 53–60 | Master | Exit ticket. Collect and sort into three piles to plan the start of the next lesson. | 12 |

### Do Now answers

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | In which year was A Christmas Carol published? | 1843 |
| 2 | What did the 1834 Poor Law mean to make the main form of help for poor people? | The workhouse |
| 3 | Whose face does Scrooge see in his door knocker on Christmas Eve? | Jacob Marley's, his dead business partner |
| 4 | The novella is divided into five sections called _____. | Staves (a stave is a verse of a song, so each chapter is like a verse 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 |

© 2026 Between the Lines · Free to use and print in your school

## 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.

© 2026 Between the Lines · Free to use and print in your school

**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: these may be your students who start 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 ____ (adjective) ____ (word class) ____ 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".

## 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 relentless, repeated conjunction "and" piles up lonely adjectives, 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. "a squeezing, wrenching, grasping, scraping, clutching, covetous, old sinner" is asyndetic listing: the five -ing words pile up with no "and" between them, so the greed feels relentless. Point out the difference when Fred arrives: Dickens describes him with syndetic listing, joined by "and" ("his face was ruddy and handsome; his eyes sparkled, and his breath smoked again"), which gives a warmer, more relaxed rhythm. 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.

© 2026 Between the Lines · Free to use and print in your school