

RAISING ACHIEVEMENT • A CHRISTMAS CAROL • DRILL 1

Boiled with his own pudding

Scrooge

Today: how Dickens presents Scrooge's attitude to Christmas

27 minutes

Do Now

Know

- 1 What is Scrooge's business?
- 2 How long has Marley been dead when the story begins?
- 3 What is the name of Scrooge's clerk?
- 4 What does 'humbug' mean?
- 5 Why did Dickens call his chapters 'staves'?

Do Now: answers

Know

1

What is Scrooge's business?

He runs a counting-house, the firm of Scrooge and Marley, dealing in money and debts.

2

How long has Marley been dead when the story begins?

Seven years, to the night.

3

What is the name of Scrooge's clerk?

Bob Cratchit

4

What does 'humbug' mean?

Nonsense, or a fraud or trick.

5

Why did Dickens call his chapters 'staves'?

A stave is the set of lines music is written on, so the book is laid out like a carol, a Christmas song.

Focus reminder

Know

What the A Christmas Carol question asks you to do

Start with the extract. Pick short quotations and zoom in on one word or method.

Write 'Dickens presents Scrooge as...'. Scrooge is a character Dickens built to teach his readers.

Move to the novel as a whole: how is Scrooge different in Stave 1 and Stave 5?

Say why: what did Dickens want his readers in 1843 to think, feel or do?

Scrooge argues with Fred

[Read](#)

Charles Dickens • 1843 • Stave 1

- 1 “What else can I be,” returned the uncle, “when I live in such a world of fools as this? Merry Christmas! Out upon merry Christmas! What’s Christmas time to you but a time for paying bills without
- 5 money; a time for finding yourself a year older, but not an hour richer; a time for balancing your books and having every item in ’em through a round dozen of months presented dead against you? If I could work my will,” said Scrooge indignantly, “every idiot
- 10 who goes about with ‘Merry Christmas’ on his lips, should be boiled with his own pudding, and buried with a stake of holly through his heart. He should!”

Check your understanding

Know

1

What does Scrooge say Christmas is for poor people like Fred?

2

What would Scrooge do to anyone who goes about saying 'Merry Christmas'?

3

What does Scrooge tell Fred to do?

Check your understanding: answers

Know

1

What does Scrooge say Christmas is for poor people like Fred?

“a time for paying bills without money”, and for growing a year older but no richer.

2

What would Scrooge do to anyone who goes about saying ‘Merry Christmas’?

Boil them with their own pudding and bury them with a stake of holly through the heart.

3

What does Scrooge tell Fred to do?

“keep Christmas in your own way, and let me keep it in mine”

Quotation explosion

Apply

**"should be boiled with his own pudding,
and buried with a stake of holly through his
heart"**

Copy the quotation into the middle of your page. Explode it: answer each question around it.

Explode it

Apply

AO1

What does Scrooge want done to people who say 'Merry Christmas'? What does it show?

AO2

What is the effect of the hyperbole in "boiled with his own pudding"?

AO2

Why does Dickens choose "a stake of holly through his heart"?

AO3

Why would Dickens want readers to judge Scrooge's view of Christmas?

Explosion: answers

Apply

AO1

What does Scrooge want done to people who say 'Merry Christmas'? What does it show?

He wants them killed in a ridiculous way. It shows how angry he is that anyone could enjoy Christmas, and how cut off he is from other people.

AO2

What is the effect of the hyperbole in "boiled with his own pudding"?

The exaggeration is so extreme that it is comic. Dickens makes Scrooge a figure of fun, so readers laugh at his meanness instead of fearing it.

AO2

Why does Dickens choose "a stake of holly through his heart"?

In old stories a stake through the heart was used to kill vampires. Holly, a symbol of Christmas, becomes a weapon, so Scrooge turns Christmas into something to destroy.

AO3

Why would Dickens want readers to judge Scrooge's view of Christmas?

Dickens wrote for middle-class readers, many of them employers. Scrooge judges Christmas only by money, the attitude Dickens wanted them to see as cold and foolish.

Rhetorical question

Technique

A question asked for effect. Scrooge's questions show he thinks he is obviously right.

"What's Christmas time to you but a time for paying bills without money"

Your task Write one sentence explaining what this rhetorical question shows about how Scrooge sees Christmas.

The question

Plan

Read the following extract from Chapter 1 of *A Christmas Carol* and then answer the question that follows.

In this extract, Scrooge's nephew, Fred, has come to wish him a merry Christmas.

Starting with this extract, how does Dickens present Scrooge's attitude to Christmas?

Write about:

- how Dickens presents Scrooge's attitude to Christmas in this extract
- how Dickens presents Scrooge's attitude to Christmas in the novel as a whole.

Today: plan your answer. No essay. About 9 minutes.

Plan it

Plan

Plan

1. Today: plan your answer in 9 minutes. No essay.
2. Thesis: how does Scrooge's attitude change, and why does Dickens show it?
3. Point 1 from the extract (the hyperbole). Points 2 and 3 from Stave 2 and Stave 5.
4. Context: what Dickens wanted his readers to feel about Christmas and money.

Top tips

- A plan is notes: short phrases, not full sentences.
- Every point needs a quotation of a few words and a named method.
- AQA's paper calls the staves chapters: Stave 1 is Chapter 1.

Your turn

9 minutes

Today: plan your answer in 9 minutes. No essay.

Model plan

Master

Thesis: Dickens presents Scrooge's hatred of Christmas as foolish and comic at first, then reverses it, so readers see that keeping Christmas means caring for others.

Point 1 (extract): hyperbole, "boiled with his own pudding": Scrooge is a figure of fun who judges Christmas only by money ("paying bills without money").

Point 2: Stave 2, Fezziwig's ball. Scrooge remembers the joy of Christmas: "The happiness he gives, is quite as great as if it cost a fortune." His younger self loved it.

Point 3: Stave 5, cyclical structure. "A merry Christmas to everybody!" His words now echo Fred's, and he goes to Fred's dinner.

Context: Dickens wrote in 1843 for comfortable readers; Fred's "fellow-passengers to the grave" gives Dickens's view that Christmas is a time to remember the poor.

Have a go: Scrooge and the charity collectors

[Read](#)

Charles Dickens · Stave 1

- 1 “I wish to be left alone,” said Scrooge. “Since you ask me what I wish, gentlemen, that is my answer. I don’t make merry myself at Christmas and I can’t afford to make idle people merry. I help to support
- 5 the establishments I have mentioned – they cost enough; and those who are badly off must go there.”

Have a go

Practise

Read Scrooge's words to the charity collectors. Answer in two or three sentences.

What does this add to your view of Scrooge's attitude? Use one quotation.

Green pen

Check your work and improve it in green pen.



My thesis says how Scrooge's attitude changes and why Dickens shows it.



Each point has a short quotation and a named method.



At least one point goes beyond the extract to another stave.