

between the lines

A lesson written for every student in the room

FREE SAMPLE

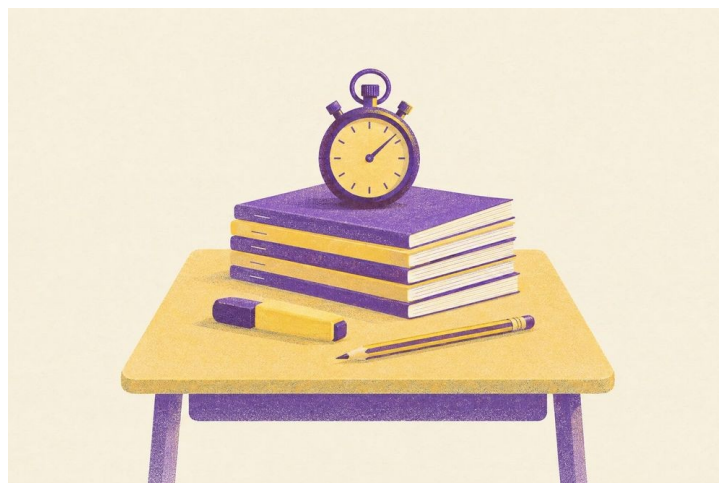
A Christmas Carol: Raising Achievement

Free drill: teacher guide

1 drills of about 27 minutes

Slides, a student sheet and answers for every drill

Written for the AQA specification

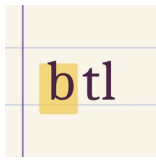


How the drills work

Thirty short Raising Achievement drills for AQA Literature Paper 1, Section B (A Christmas Carol), each built for an intervention session of about 25 to 30 minutes. Every drill takes one extract from the novella, explodes one quotation through AO1, AO2 and AO3 questions, then has students plan an answer or write the introduction to an exam-style question, compare it with a model and improve it in green pen. The drills are grouped into six topics, so you can follow the novella's order or pick the topic your students need most.

Do Now	Five quick retrieval questions, answered in silence and self-marked.
Focus reminder	What the skill or exam question asks for, in three or four plain points.
Read and check	The extract with line numbers, then quick questions to make sure everyone has understood it.
Quotation explosion	One quotation, exploded with AO1, AO2 and AO3 questions.
Technique	One method or sentence skill, modelled on the extract.
The question	An exam-style question in AQA's wording. Students plan an answer or write the introduction, never a full essay, then compare with a model.
Have a go	A second short task on a new moment or extract.
Green pen	A checklist to improve the answer before the sheets are collected.

Each drill comes as an editable slide deck with notes on every slide and a printable student sheet. Run them weekly in intervention sessions, in any order within a topic.



Topics

Scrooge

These drills follow Scrooge from the miser of Stave 1 to the generous man of Stave 5, one moment at a time. The most common error is writing about him as a real person ('Scrooge is mean') when students should treat him as Dickens's creation ('Dickens presents Scrooge as...'). Students also retell the plot; push them to zoom in on one word and say what it suggests. Every plan or introduction should say where Scrooge starts and where he ends, because the change is the point of the book.

Drills: 1 (Boiled with his own pudding)

Drill 1: Boiled with his own pudding

Scrooge · How Dickens presents Scrooge's attitude to Christmas

Do Now	Focus reminder and extract	Quotation Explosion	Technique	The Question: plan	Green pen	Have a go
3 min	4 min	4 min	2 min	9 min	2 min	3 min

- Read the extract aloud, giving Fred's lines warmth and Scrooge's a snap, so students hear the contrast.
- Common error: retelling the scene. Push students to name a method (hyperbole, rhetorical question) for each point.
- If time is short, set Have a go as home learning.

Do Now answers

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.**

Check your understanding

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

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.

Technique: Rhetorical question

A question asked for effect. Scrooge's questions show he thinks he is obviously right. Task: Write one sentence explaining what this rhetorical question shows about how Scrooge sees Christmas.

The question

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.

Model plan

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.

- The thesis covers the whole novel and says why.
- Each point has a short quotation and a method (hyperbole, cyclical structure).
- The points move through the novel in order: Staves 1, 2 and 5.
- Context is tied to Dickens's purpose.

Have a go

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.

Scrooge says "I don't make merry myself at Christmas and I can't afford to make idle people merry." His hatred of Christmas is joined to his view of the poor as "idle", so his attitude to Christmas and his attitude to the poor come from the same meanness.