



A CHRISTMAS CAROL

Charles Dickens and the Boot Blacking Warehouse.

TEXT A

In 1824, the Dickens family had fallen into debt.

Two days after his twelfth birthday, Charles Dickens was sent to work in a factory in London, sticking labels onto bottles of shoe polish (known as boot-blackening).

Later in life he wrote about this experience and how it inspired him as a writer.

The blacking warehouse was the last house on the left-hand side of the way, at old Hungerford Stairs. It was a crazy, tumble-down old house, abutting of course on the river, and literally overrun with rats. Its wainscotted rooms and its rotten floors and staircase, and the old grey rats swarming down in the cellars, and the sound of their squeaking and scuffling coming up the stairs at all times, and the dirt and decay of the place, rise up visibly before me, as if I were there again. The counting-house was on the first floor, looking over the coal-barges and the river. There was a recess in it, in which I was to sit and work. My work was to cover the pots of paste-blackening: first with a piece of oil-paper, and then with a piece of blue paper, to tie them round with a string; and then to clip the paper close and neat all round, until it looked as smart as a pot of ointment from an apothecary's shop. When a certain number of grosses of pots had attained this pitch of perfection, I was to paste on each a printed label; and then go on again with more pots. Two or three other boys were kept at similar duty downstairs on similar wages. One of them came up, in a ragged apron and a paper cap, on the first Monday morning, to show me the trick of using the string and tying the knot. His name was Bob Fagin; and I took the liberty of using his name long afterwards, in *Oliver Twist*.

No words can express the secret agony of my soul as I sunk into this companionship; compared these everyday associates with those of my happier childhood; and felt my early hopes of growing up to be a learned and distinguished man crushed in my breast. The deep remembrance of the sense I had of being utterly neglected and hopeless; of the shame I felt in my position; of the misery it was to my young heart to believe that, day by day, what I had learned, and thought, and delighted in, and raised my fancy and my emulation up by, was passing away from me, never to be brought back any more; cannot be written. My whole nature was so penetrated with the grief and humiliation of such considerations, that even now, famous and caressed and happy, I often forget in my dreams that I have a dear wife and children; even that I am a man; and wander desolately back to that time of my life.

Glossary:

wainscotted - wood panelled

Recess—corner

Apothecary—chemist

Emulation—desire to be like something

Desolately—sadly, without company



Letter to his youngest son on his departure for America 1848.

MY DEAREST PLORN,

I write this note to-day because your going away is much upon my mind, and because I want you to have a few parting words from me to think of now and then at quiet times. I need not tell you that I love you dearly, and am very, very sorry in my heart to part with you. But this life is half made up of partings, and these pains must be borne. It is my comfort and my sincere conviction that you are going to try the life for which you are best fitted. I think its freedom and wildness more suited to you than any experiment in a study or office would ever have been; and without that training, you could have followed no other suitable occupation.

What you have already wanted until now has been a set, steady, constant purpose. I therefore exhort you to persevere in a thorough determination to do whatever you have to do as well as you can do it. I was not so old as you are now when I first had to win my food, and do this out of this determination, and I have never slackened in it since.

Never take a mean advantage of anyone in any transaction, and never be hard upon people who are in your power. Try to do to others, as you would have them do to you, and do not be discouraged if they fail sometimes.

I hope you will always be able to say in after life, that you had a kind father. You cannot show your affection for him so well, or make him so happy, as by doing your duty.

Your affectionate Father.

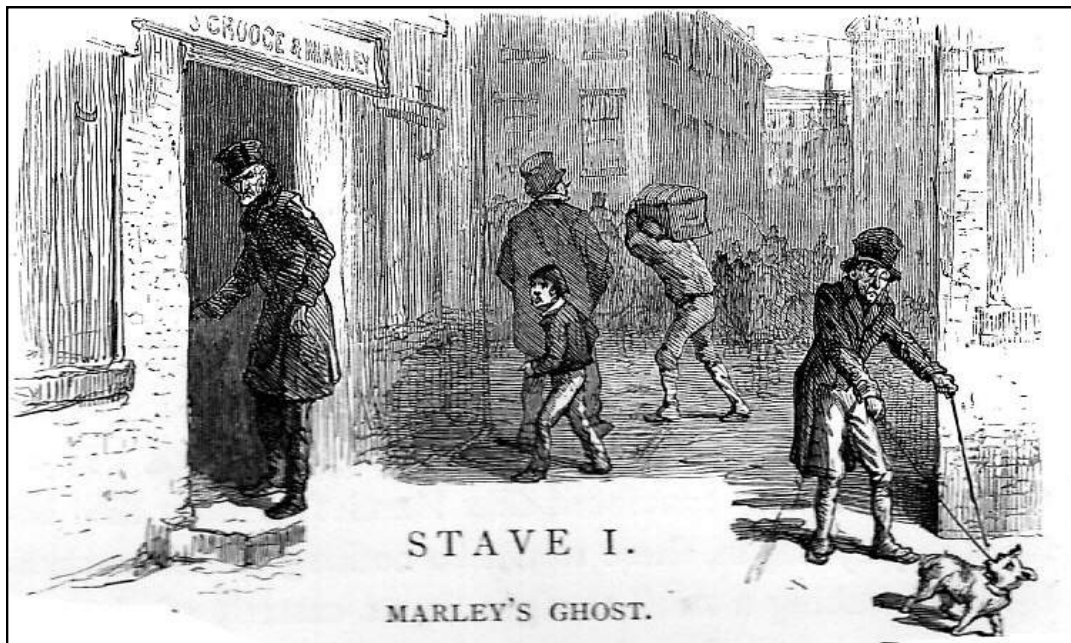
Glossary:

| | |
|--------------|-----------|
| Borne - | tolerated |
| Conviction - | belief |
| Occupation - | job |
| Exhort - | plead |
| Mean - | unfair |
| Affection - | love |

These two texts present different events in Dickens' life.

Use details from both texts to write a summary of the different thoughts and feelings that Dickens has at different times in his life.





Stave 1—Description of Scrooge

Oh! But he was a tight-fisted hand at the grind-stone, 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, shriveled 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 dogdays; and didn't thaw it one degree at Christmas.

External heat and cold had little influence on Scrooge. No warmth could warm, no wintry weather chill him. No wind that blew was bitterer than he, no falling snow was more intent upon its purpose, no pelting rain less open to entreaty. Foul weather didn't know where to have him. The heaviest rain, and snow, and hail, and sleet, could boast of the advantage over him in only one respect. They often "came down" handsomely, and Scrooge never did.

Stave 1—Fred

"There are many things from which I might have derived good, by which I have not profited, I dare say," returned the nephew. "Christmas among the rest. But I am sure I have always thought of Christmas time, when it has come round -- apart from the veneration due to its sacred name and origin, if anything belonging to it can be apart from that -- as a good time: a kind, forgiving, charitable, pleasant time: the only time I know of, in the long calendar of the year, when men and women seem by one consent to open their shut-up hearts freely, and to think of people below them as if they really were fellow-passengers to the grave, and not another race of creatures bound on other journeys. And therefore, uncle, though it has never put a scrap of gold or silver in my pocket, I believe that it *has* done me good, and *will* do me good; and I say, God bless it!"

Glossary

Dog-days—the warmest days of summer

Rime—a layer of frost

Derived- taken from

Veneration—respect

Tremulous—shaking

Stave 1—Setting

Meanwhile the fog and darkness thickened so, that people ran about with flaring links, proffering their services to go before horses in carriages, and conduct them on their way. The ancient tower of a church, whose gruff old bell was always peeping slyly down at Scrooge out of a Gothic window in the wall, became invisible, and struck the hours and quarters in the clouds, with tremulous vibrations afterwards as if its teeth were chattering in its frozen head up there.

Q: How does Dickens use language to create a supernatural atmosphere in this section?

Stave 1 – The Charity Collectors

"At this festive season of the year, Mr. Scrooge," said the gentleman, taking up a pen, "it is more than usually desirable that we should make some slight provision for the Poor and Destitute, who suffer greatly at the present time. Many thousands are in want of common necessities; hundreds of thousands are in want of common comforts, sir."

"Are there no prisons?" asked Scrooge.

"Plenty of prisons," said the gentleman, laying down the pen again.

"And the Union workhouses?" demanded Scrooge. "Are they still in operation?"

"They are. Still," returned the gentleman, "I wish I could say they were not."

"The Treadmill and the Poor Law are in full vigour, then?" said Scrooge.

"Both very busy, sir."

"Oh! I was afraid, from what you said at first, that something had occurred to stop them in their useful course," said Scrooge. "I'm very glad to hear it."

"Under the impression that they scarcely furnish Christian cheer of mind or body to the multitude," returned the gentleman, "a few of us are endeavouring to raise a fund to buy the Poor some meat and drink and means of warmth. We choose this time, because it is a time, of all others, when Want is keenly felt, and Abundance rejoices. What shall I put you down for?"

"Nothing!" Scrooge replied.

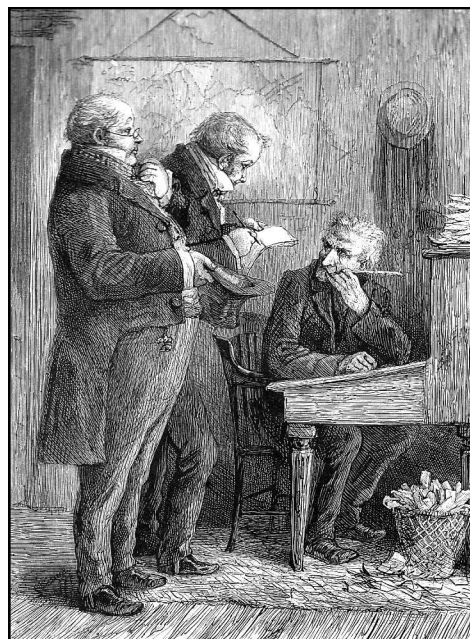
"You wish to be anonymous?"

"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 the establishments I have mentioned -- they cost enough; and those who are badly off must go there."

"Many can't go there; and many would rather die."

"If they would rather die," said Scrooge, "they had better do it, and decrease the surplus population."

Question: How does Dickens present Scrooge's character and views in this extract?



Glossary

In want of – lacking

Vigour – power

Furnish – give

The multitude – many people

Surplus - extra

Stave 1—Marley’s Ghost

Scrooge fell upon his knees, and clasped his hands before his face.

“Mercy!” he said. “Dreadful apparition, why do you trouble me?”

“Man of the worldly mind!” replied the Ghost, “do you believe in me or not?”

“I do,” said Scrooge. “I must. But why do spirits walk the earth, and why do they come to me?”

“It is required of every man,” the Ghost returned, “that the spirit within him should walk abroad among his fellowmen, and travel far and wide; and if that spirit goes not forth in life, it is condemned to do so after death. It is doomed to wander through the world—oh, woe is me!—and witness what it cannot share, but might have shared on earth, and turned to happiness!”

Again the spectre raised a cry, and shook its chain and wrung its shadowy hands.

“You are fettered,” said Scrooge, trembling. “Tell me why?”

“I wear the chain I forged in life,” replied the Ghost. “I made it link by link, and yard by yard; I girded it on of my own free will, and of my own free will I wore it. Is its pattern strange to *you*?”

Scrooge trembled more and more.

“Or would you know,” pursued the Ghost, “the weight and length of the strong coil you bear yourself? It was full as heavy and as long as this, seven Christmas Eves ago. You have laboured on it, since. It is a ponderous chain!”

Scrooge glanced about him on the floor, in the expectation of finding himself surrounded by some fifty or sixty fathoms of iron cable: but he could see nothing.

Question: How does Dickens present Marley’s Ghost in this extract?



Glossary

| | |
|-----------|---|
| Fettered | tied up |
| Forged | made (of metal) |
| Girded | wrapped around |
| Ponderous | heavy, awkward |
| Fathom | a length (about the height of a person) |

The Hoop Nuisance

TEXT A

A letter to the Times Newspaper, October 1st, 1842

Sir,

I have not for many years read a paragraph in The Times which has afforded me greater pleasure than that which heads your “Police” report of this day, conveying Mr. Hardwick’s just complaint of, and directions to Inspector Baker, on the hoop nuisance.

As a daily passenger along the crowded thoroughfares of London-bridge and Thames-street, where boys and even girls, drive their hoops as deliberately as if upon a clear and open common, I can bear witness to its danger and inconvenience. I have at this moment a large scar on one of my shins, the legacy of a severe wound, which festered, and was very painful for an entire month, inflicted a year ago by the iron hoop of a whey-faced, cadaverous charity-boy from Tower-hill, who on my remonstrating with him on his carelessness, added impudence to the injury, by significantly advancing his extended fingers and thumb to his nose and scampering off. Aware that I had no redress, that the police would not interfere, I was compelled to grin and bear it while I hobbled away.

The nuisance calls loudly for the interference of the Police Commissioners.

Your daily reader,

A PEDESTRIAN.

Glossary

Conveying—communicating

Whey-faced—pale

Cadaverous—looking like a corpse

Remonstrating - arguing with

Impudence - rudeness

Redress—way of getting back at someone



Sights of the Streets

TEXT B

I have seen little children, fat enough for the spit, wrapped in woolpacks of fleecy hosiery, seated in their little carriages, drawn by goats, careering over the sward of Hyde Park; and at the same moment, crawling from the hollow trunks of old trees, where they had found refuge for the night, other children, their nakedness hardly concealed by a few greasy rags flapping against the mottled limbs of the creatures, heirs of shame and sorrow, and heritors of misery and its necessary crime. I have seen a poor family, ragged and hungry, the children running after an ugly pug-dog with a velvet jacket on, who was taking the air, led by an attendant footman with gold-headed staff. I have seen an old woman of eighty, painted, periwigged, bejewelled, and brocaded taking an airing in a gorgeous coach, three footmen hanging on behind, her ladyships companion a cynical faced pug, probably the only friend she had in the world; and I have seen another old woman of eighty, up to her mid-leg in the Thames, raking and scraping the mud and water of rags, bits of sticks, ginger beer bottles, scraps of iron, or whatever she could recover from the waters, by which she might earn a few pence to keep from starving.

John Fisher Murray, *The Physiology of London Life*, 1844

Glossary:

hosiery: clothing
careering: moving quickly or recklessly
sward: a stretch of grass
refuge: shelter
mottled: blotchy
heirs: people who expect to inherit something
heritors: people who have inherited something

Questions:

1. Use details from both texts to write a summary of the different sights that could be seen on a London street in the 1840s.
2. In 'Sights of the Streets', how does the writer use language to describe different children?

Stave 2

The Ghost of Christmas Past

It was a strange figure -- like a child: yet not so like a child as like an old man, viewed through some supernatural medium, which gave him the appearance of having receded from the view, and being diminished to a child's proportions. Its hair, which hung about its neck and down its back, was white as if with age; and yet the face had not a wrinkle in it, and the tenderest bloom was on the skin. The arms were very long and muscular; the hands the same, as if its hold were of uncommon strength. Its legs and feet, most delicately formed, were, like those upper members, bare. It wore a tunic of the purest white, and round its waist was bound a lustrous belt, the sheen of which was beautiful. It held a branch of fresh green holly in its hand; and, in singular contradiction of that wintry emblem, had its dress trimmed with summer flowers. But the strangest thing about it was, that from the crown of its head there sprung a bright clear jet of light, by which all this was visible; and which was doubtless the occasion of its using, in its duller moments, a great extinguisher for a cap, which it now held under its arm.

Even this, though, when Scrooge looked at it with increasing steadiness, was not its strangest quality. For as its belt sparkled and glittered now in one part and now in another, and what was light one instant, at another time was dark, so the figure itself fluctuated in its distinctness: being now a thing with one arm, now with one leg, now with twenty legs, now a pair of legs without a head, now a head without a body: of which dissolving parts, no outline would be visible in the dense gloom wherein they melted away. And in the very wonder of this, it would be itself again; distinct and clear as ever.



Stave 2—Fezziwig

“Hilli-ho!” cried old Fezziwig, skipping down from the high desk, with wonderful agility. “Clear away, my lads, and let’s have lots of room here! Hilli-ho, Dick! Chirrup, Ebenezer!”

Clear away! There was nothing they wouldn’t have cleared away, or couldn’t have cleared away, with old Fezziwig looking on. It was done in a minute. Every movable was packed off, as if it were dis-

missed from public life for evermore; the floor was swept and watered, the lamps were trimmed, fuel was heaped upon the fire; and the warehouse was as snug, and warm, and dry, and bright a ball-room, as you would desire to see upon a winter’s night.

In came a fiddler with a music-book, and went up to the lofty desk, and made an orchestra of it, and tuned like fifty stomach-aches. In came Mrs. Fezziwig, one vast substantial smile. In came the three Miss Fezziwigs, beaming and lovable. In came the six young followers whose hearts they broke. In came all the young men and women employed in the business. In came the housemaid, with her cousin, the baker. In came the cook, with her brother’s particular friend, the milkman. In came the boy from over the way, who was suspected of not having board enough from his master; trying to hide himself behind the girl from next door but one, who was proved to have had her ears pulled by her mistress. In they all came, one after another; some shyly, some boldly, some gracefully, some awkwardly, some pushing, some pulling; in they all came, anyhow and anyhow.



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1. How does Dickens use **language** in this extract to create an excited tone?
 2. Starting with this extract, explain how Dickens presents **different attitudes to Christmas** in Staves 1 and 2 of *A Christmas Carol*.

You might consider how the following characters represent different attitudes:

- Fred, The Charity Collectors, Fezziwig, Scrooge

Stave 2—Scrooge and Belle

Belle breaks her engagement to Scrooge...

"Another idol has displaced me; and if it can cheer and comfort you in time to come, as I would have tried to do, I have no just cause to grieve."

"What Idol has displaced you?" he rejoined.

"A golden one."

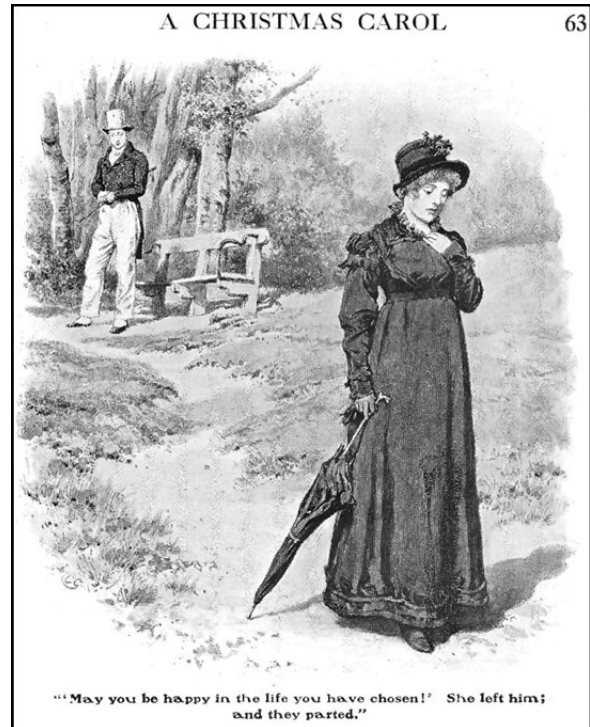
"What then?" he retorted. "Even if I have grown so much wiser, what then? I am not changed towards you."

She shook her head.

"Am I?"

"Our contract is an old one. It was made when we were both poor and content to be so, until, in good season, we could improve our worldly fortune by our patient industry. You *are* changed. When it was made, you were another man."

"I was a boy," he said impatiently.



Years later, Belle discusses Scrooge with her husband...

"Who was it?"

"Guess!"

"How can I? Tut, don't I know," she added in the same breath, laughing as he laughed.

"Mr. Scrooge."

"Mr. Scrooge it was. I passed his office window; and as it was not shut up, and he had a candle inside, I could scarcely help seeing him. His partner lies upon the point of death, I hear; and there he sat alone. Quite alone in the world, I do believe."

"Spirit!" said Scrooge in a broken voice, "remove me from this place."

"I told you these were shadows of the things that have been," said the Ghost. "That they are what they are, do not blame me!"

"Remove me!" Scrooge exclaimed, "I cannot bear it!"

Q: How does Dickens use Belle to reveal Scrooge's character?

THE LADIES' BOOK OF ETIQUETTE AND MANUAL OF POLITENESS

CHAPTER II - DRESS.

"A lady is never so well dressed as when you cannot remember what she wears."

GENERAL RULES.

FASHION—Do not be too submissive to the dictates of fashion; at the same time avoid oddity or eccentricity in your dress. There are some persons who will follow, in defiance of taste and judgment, the fashion to its most extreme point; this is a sure mark of vulgarity. Not only good taste, but health is often sacrificed to the silly error of dressing in the extreme of fashion. Be careful to have your dress comfortable and becoming, and let the prevailing mode come into secondary consideration; avoiding, always, the other extreme of oddity or eccentricity in costume.

FLORENCE HARTLEY (1860)

ETIQUETTE OF HANDSHAKING.

An authority upon this subject says: "The etiquette of handshaking is simple. A man has no right to take a lady's hand until it is offered. He has even less right to pinch or retain it. Two young ladies shake hands gently and softly. A young lady gives her hand, but does not shake a gentleman's unless she is his friend. A lady should always rise to give her hand; a gentleman, of course, never dares to do so seated. On introduction in a room, a married lady generally offers her hand; a young lady, not. In a ball-room, where the introduction is to dancing, not to friendship, you never shake hands; and as a general rule, an introduction is not followed by shaking hands, only by a bow. It may perhaps be laid down that the more public the place of introduction, the less handshaking takes place. But if the introduction be particular, if it be accompanied by personal recommendation, such as, 'I want you to know my friend Jones,' or if Jones comes with a letter of presentation, then you give Jones your hand, and warmly, too. Lastly, it is the privilege of a superior to offer or withhold his or her hand, so that an inferior should never put his forward first."

KISSING IN PUBLIC.

The custom which has become quite prevalent of women kissing each other whenever they meet in public, is regarded as vulgar, and by ladies of delicacy and refinement is entirely avoided.

Our Deportment—John H. Young 1881

EXTRACTS FROM VICTORIAN SCHOOL LOG BOOKS

1880 Feb 19 Very wet this morning. Many children from Bepton & Linch were so wet on reaching school that they were sent home again.

1880 Feb 27 Several of the children have been sent home this week as they were suffering from whooping cough.

1880 April 30 Poor attendance this afternoon. Several children away getting flowers for May-day.

1881 June 27 - July 1 The Haymaking season keeps a great many children away from school.

1881 Aug 8 As not more than a dozen of the elder children came to school this morning, harvesting being now very general, the school was closed for harvest & hopping vacation.

1884 June 23 The attendance very poor this morning, there being 45 boys absent, chiefly owing to the Small Pox scare; it having broken out in one of the families at the Bridges.

1884 Sept 15 -19 Blackberries being unusually abundant this year, several children are absent from school blackberry gathering.

1885 Jan 26 Received the answer to a number of enquiries as to the cause of irregular attendances of a number of the boys and the excuses given are chiefly illness, beating, minding the baby, going errands & chillblains.

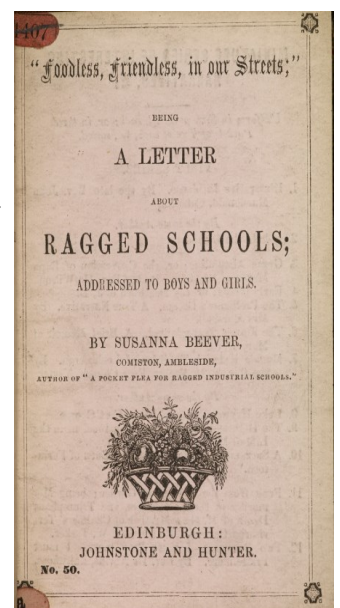
1885 Oct 30 Some of the girls attend very badly. The excuse is 'Wanted at home'.

1887 Feb 18 Several of the big girls have left school & gone out as servants.

**From “Foodless, Friendless, in our streets;” being a letter about Ragged Schools’
by Susanna Beever, 1853**

I remember that when I was a little girl, I was taken to see a number of wild beasts, and that was a great treat too; but the poor animals, instead of being and better or any happier, from having been taken out of their dens and forests, were very unhappy, and wanted much to be at liberty again. So seeing them thus shut up only gratified my curiosity. It ought to have made me feel very sorry for them, but I was too young then to think of anything but the pleasure of seeing them, and I forgot how sad it must be to be shut up in such small dirty places, after having been accustomed to roam about at pleasure among the beautiful flowery plains, or by lakes and mountains. But when you go to a Ragged School, you feel quite the opposite of all this, for the poor miserable boys and girls who are brought there are far happier than they were while running wild about the streets, and it is the very best thing that could have happened to them. Ask your friends to take you to a Ragged School. There you will find poor children who have nobody at home to take care of them, or to teach them any thing that is good, boys and girls whose wicked parents teach them to lie and steal, and to do everything that is bad, and who beat them if they come home without having stolen something. How would you like to be treated thus? Or to be turned out of doors on a bitterly cold night, when the nipping frost benumbed you, or when pitiless snowstorms or pelting rain fell upon you? You would, I hope, be sorry if even your dog had to stay out on such a night! ...

Now, Ragged Schools have been set on foot by kind and Christian people on purpose to do good to these unhappy children. They are brought to these schools, and there they have their torn, dirty clothes taken off, and after being washed, and made nice and clean, they have others put on to wear all day, but at night they are obliged to have their dirty ones put on again, because their parents are so wicked, that if they went home in good clothes they would take them from them and sell them, and spend the money on something to drink.



19th Century Perspectives on Child Labour

Mary Barrett, aged 14. June 15.

I have worked down in pit five years; father is working in next pit; I have 12 brothers and sisters — all of them but one live at home; they weave, and wind, and hurry, and one is a counter, one of them can read, none of the rest can, or write; they never went to day-school, but three of them go to Sunday-school; I hurry for my brother John, and come down at seven o'clock about; I go up at six, sometimes seven; I do not like working in pit, but I am obliged to get a living; I work always without stockings, or shoes, or trousers; I wear nothing but my chemise; I have to go up to the headings with the men; they are all naked there; I am got well used to that, and don't care now much about it; I was afraid at first, and did not like it; they never behave rudely to me; I cannot read or write.

Hannah Goode:

"I work at Mr. Wilson's mill. I think the youngest child is about 7. I daresay there are 20 under 9 years. It is about half past five by our clock at home when we go in.... We come out at seven by the mill. We never stop to take our meals, except at dinner.

William Crookes is overlooker in our room. He is cross-tempered sometimes. He does not beat me; he beats the little children if they do not do their work right.... I have sometimes seen the little children drop asleep or so, but not lately. If they are caught asleep they get the strap. They are always very tired at night.... I can read a little; I can't write. I used to go to school before I went to the mill; I have since I am sixteen."

William James MP, speech, House of Commons (16th March, 1832)

Undoubtedly the system which is pursued in these manufactories relating to the working of young children is a great evil; but it appears to me that the remedy which the honourable gentleman proposes to apply is worse than the disease. There appears to me to be only a choice of evils - the children must either work or starve. If the manufacturer is prevented working his mill for more than a certain number of hours together, he will often be unable to execute the orders which he may receive, and consequently, the purchaser must go to foreign countries for a supply. The result will be that you will drive the English capitalist to foreign countries, where there is no restrictions upon the employment of labour and capital.

Sarah Gooder, aged 8 years.

"I'm a trapper in the Gawber pit. It does not tire me, but I have to trap without a light and I'm scared. I go at four and sometimes half past three in the morning, and come out at five and half past. I never go to sleep. Sometimes I sing when I've light, but not in the dark; I dare not sing then. I don't like being in the pit. I am very sleepy when I go sometimes in the morning. I go to Sunday-schools and read 'Reading made Easy'

She knows her letters, and can read little words.

"They teach me to pray."

Children and school 1895

A PLAYGROUND IN THE EAST OF LONDON, with its throng of children whirling in and out, and jostling one another in their uproarious merri-ment. It is a scene of constant mo-tion; but with just a little of sadness running through the whole. We seem to look through their merry play and see beyond into the home-life of many of these poor little ones. We, who revel in our cosy nurseries and play-rooms, who tread with slippered feet on soft carpeted floors, who feast our eyes with bright pictures and cheerful books, and who lie snugly tucked in with warm blankets on downy beds, know and feel the full meaning of the word 'Home.' But how different it is with many of these poor little ones of outcast London! To them 'home' is often full of bitterness. Shoeless feet, bare boards, perhaps a few shavings or bits of straw for bed, and rags for coverlets, are their home comforts. They are more used to kicks than kisses, to blows than fond embraces, to angry words and horrible oaths than gentle voices of love and prayer.

Some of you whose friends bring you so many grand toys, would not look at the things that bring these poor children such enjoyment. A paper Windmill bought for a farthing, which mother has squeezed out of her hard earnings, delights that little three-year-old boy as lie holds it tightly in his chubby fist. His clothes are ragged and torn, yet I'm sure his mother is kind to him. He has found out that by holding the mill straight in front of him, the wind catches the bright-coloured sails and spins them round till the colours run one into the other and he sees only a rainbow-coloured ring in front of him. So, forgetting the big boots shaking about on his feet, he trots up and down, laughing so merrily.

How admiringly one ragged little fellow looks on at the toy! He, poor boy, never had such a toy to make him happy. He likes to see the whizzing wheel; but rougher games amongst the courts and alleys suit him best. He is one of those little urchins who in the dark days of winter startle us so with their shrill calls, or who so suddenly appear at our sides begging a 'copper.' If we speak to him, he will call us 'general' or 'captain,' at the same time saluting us while his eyes twinkle roguishly. Poor little chap! Of course he gets his copper; for his life is a hard one. He dares not creep in to rest at night until the gin palaces are shut, and lie knows his parents are sleeping their drunken sleep. Still he looks for a bit of play in this playground. Bits of string picked from the shop sweep

ings and tied together, serve to start him: and in a twinkling he is the happy driver of a couple of boys who prance about as only carriage horses can; or the furious driver of a fire-engine; or managing the swift steeds in a race, just as fancy suits him.

Here, with pale faces and wasted limbs, are the cripples, limping painfully along on crutches, admiring the lovely flowers; or seated to watch the joyous games of their companions. Breathing the air made sweet by the flowers, and drinking in the enjoyment of the others, their cheeks lose their paleness, their eyes their heaviness, and the sadness of their sufferings is forgotten in the glad-ness of the hour spent in the playground.

Here, too, come the little mothers carrying babies, and looking after brothers and sisters with as much care and anxiety as though they were real mothers. And the little workers with busy fingers stitch and knit and crochet the articles which mother gets from the warehouse, and which must be worked at early and late to earn money enough to live.

And so we leave this happy scene, glad that the poor children have this fine place of enjoyment. And when we romp about in our comfortable homes and play with our toys, we will think kindly of these poor little ones, and, when opportunity comes, will help them as best we can.



THE COURT CASE: JONES VERSUS SHAW

The trial, Jones versus Shaw, took place at the Court of Common Pleas, London, on October 30th, 1823.

William Jones, one of the boys who had been at defendant's school, was a witness, and he gave such a description of his treatment, as, for the honour of human nature, we must hope is exaggerated. He said, the first week they treated him well, and gave him toast for breakfast; then they turned him among the other boys, and gave him hasty pudding. There were nearly 300 boys in the school. They had meat three times a week, and on the other days potatoes and bread and cheese. The boys were frequently 4 or 5 days without jacket or trousers, while they were mending. The boys washed in a long trough, similar to what the horses drink from; they had only two towels, and the great boys used to take advantage of the little boys, and use the towels first. They had no supper, and had warm water, milk, and dry bread for tea. They had hay and straw beds, and one sheet and one quilt to each bed, in which 4 or 5 boys slept; there were about 30 beds in one room, and a large tub in the middle. There were only 3 or 4 boys in some of the beds. They had quills furnished them to flea the beds every other morning, and caught a good beating if they did not fill them with fleas.

They had the skimmings of the pot every Sunday afternoon; it often had maggots; the usher offered a penny for every maggot, and the boys found more than a quart full, but he did not give them the money. They had soap every Saturday, but that was always used by the great boys, and the little ones had no soap but what they bought.

'On one occasion in October, I felt a weakness in my eyes, and could not write my copy; Mr. Shaw said he would beat me; on the next day I could not see at all, and I told Mr. Shaw, who sent me and 3 others to the wash-house. I staid in the wash-house about a month; the number of boys when I left it was 18. I was then put into a room; there were 9 boys totally blind'.

Glossary:

| | |
|---------------|--|
| defendant | the person accused of a crime |
| hasty pudding | food made from old crusts of bread |
| trough | a stone or metal tub for animals to drink from |
| great | big |
| quilt | similar to a duvet |
| quills | pens made of long goose feathers |
| furnished | given |
| skimmings | the often fatty liquid that floats on top of soups and stews |
| quart | about 1.25 litres |
| copy | the words he had to copy into his school book |

UN unveils plans to eliminate child labour by 2020

Randeep Ramesh, social affairs editor
The Guardian, Monday 29 October 2012

The United Nations is to announce ambitious plans to eliminate child labour by 2020. Warning that “current trends are ... of great concern” the UN says there will still be about 190 million child labourers in eight years’ time. Even worse is that in the poorest parts of the world, the numbers will rise: child labourers in sub-Saharan Africa will jump by around 15 million over the next decade, reaching 65 million by 2020.

The research says the “sheer scale of child labour is not widely recognised”. About 60 million under-17-year-olds are involved in agriculture. Mining, it says, is a magnet for child labour, with children as young as six digging shafts and scuttling around mounds of rock with little more than a hammer and chisel. Around half of the workforce in Afghanistan’s brick kilns is aged under 14.

In Ethiopia almost 60% of children work. Multinational companies also come under fire. The report points out that in China, underage labour, recruited by networks of agents from poor rural areas, has been found in factories supplying companies such as Apple, Samsung and Google.

The UN says that the first step would be to make education compulsory for all children, and perhaps go as far as paying families to send their children to school, an approach that has worked in Brazil.

Many children are forced to combine education and employment, and are consequently more likely to drop out, to complete fewer years in school and to achieve lower test scores. The UN warns that child labourers suffer a 17% achievement gap with non-working children in language and maths. Despite a host of international treaties and domestic laws prohibiting child labour in poorer nations, authorities rarely have the will – or the money – to enforce them.

Gordon Brown told *The Guardian* that child labour was the “new slavery” for



STREET INDUSTRY OF LONDON CHILDREN.

NOW let us see what the little busy bees of the streets are doing in this great hive of London. These are the children of the poor who have to earn their own living. And for some of them cruel beatings await them if they cannot gather together, honestly or wickedly, a certain sum of money for their parents. Sometimes amongst these workers we see a child who has been driven from home, turned into the streets to fight his own way through life; or, as he says, to 'fish for himself.' Uncared for, in fear of almost everybody, in terror of the police, alone in the world, what wonder that he should go wrong!

If we went to Covent Garden Market at about five or six o'clock one morning, we should find many of these boys and girls waiting to purchase their stock in trade. There are the flower-girls, choosing and buying their bunches of flowers and fern-leaves, which they will carry to their homes. Arranging them there, and making them into neat little 'button-holes,' they will sally forth after their meagre meal, to the various railway stations from which the streams of City people are pouring into the streets. The sweet scent of their daintily arranged flowers, and their cry of 'Sweet Violets,' soon bring customers. For busy City people like a flower, to remind them of what is beautiful outside the smoky town. Another early bird is the water-cress girl. She goes to market for the fresh young water-cress that is brought from the country in the early hours of the morning. Tying them into bunches as she goes along, her cries of 'Water-cree-sue' will sometimes let us know it is time that we, too, were up.

The telegraph-boy is a busy, active lad. Watch him as he goes along, carrying important messages. There is no idling, no stopping to play. He strides along, legs and arms moving in active swing, as though he were walking a race.

The road scavenger boy is busily at work all day in the crowded streets of the City, and seems to have a special providence protecting him from harm. His daily life is spent continually within a few inches of horses' hooves and cart wheels. He may be seen just in front of the horses, running, with the help of his scraper and brush, on all-fours, in monkey fashion, and, like a monkey, twisting and turning about out of one danger after another.

But there are those who find their busiest time when you are asleep. The little match-seller, with ragged clothes and with his bare little feet pattering along at our sides, begs us in piteous tones to buy ‘a box o’ matches, Sir: two hundred and fifty wax-uns for a penny!’ ‘or two boxes of flamers, the best a-goin’.’ And the little orange-girl is sure to be seen quite late at night, standing outside the places of amusement, and offering her ‘sweet oranges; three a penny, sweet oranges!’



Not all these lads and lasses are good. Many of them see so much vice at home, and live amid such wicked surroundings, that the wonder is they can be honest at all. But these industries help to make them honest, and keep most of them from a life of crime. And good men and women are at work in and around their homes, and are trying to make them really good. Let us try to help them a little, if we can!

Uncle Jonathan, Walks in and Around London, 1895

BIG WRITE

“The School leaving age should be reduced back to 14, so that children who want to work can do so.”

Write a letter to your local MP in which you **argue for or against** this statement.



Stave 3

"Come in!" exclaimed the Ghost. "Come in, and know me better, man."

Scrooge entered timidly, and hung his head before this Spirit. He was not the dogged Scrooge he had been; and though the Spirit's eyes were clear and kind, he did not like to meet them.

"I am the Ghost of Christmas Present," said the Spirit. "Look upon me."

Scrooge reverently did so. It was clothed in one simple green robe, or mantle, bordered with white fur. This garment hung so loosely on the figure, that its capacious breast was bare, as if disdaining to be warded or concealed by any artifice. Its feet, observable beneath the ample folds of the garment, were also bare; and on its head it wore no other covering than a holly wreath, set here and there with shining icicles. Its dark brown curls were long and free; free as its genial face, its sparkling eye, its open hand, its cheery voice, its unconstrained demeanour, and its joyful air. Girded round its middle was an antique scabbard; but no sword was in it, and the ancient sheath was eaten up with rust.

"You have never seen the like of me before!" exclaimed the Spirit.



“ I am the Ghost of Christmas Present,” said the spirit. “ Look upon me !”

Glossary:

Capacious—large

Disdaining—refusing

Artifice—trick, covering

Ample—large or significant in number

Genial—friendly

Unconstrained—confident

Q: How does Dickens present the Ghost of Christmas Present and Scrooge as contrasting characters in this extract?

Stave 3—Setting

Holly, mistletoe, red berries, ivy, turkeys, geese, game, poultry, brawn, meat, pigs, sausages, oysters, pies, puddings, fruit, and punch, all vanished instantly. So did the room, the fire, the ruddy glow, the hour of night, and they stood in the city streets on Christmas morning, where (for the weather was severe) the people made a rough, but brisk and not unpleasant kind of music, in scraping the snow from the pavement in front of their dwellings, and from the tops of their houses, whence it was mad delight to the boys to see it come plumping down into the road below, and splitting into artificial little snow-storms.

Stave 3—Christmas Dinners

Hallo! A great deal of steam! The pudding was out of the copper. A smell like a washing-day. That was the cloth. A smell like an eating-house and a pastrycook's next door to each other, with a laundress's next door to that. That was the pudding. In half a minute Mrs Cratchit entered -- flushed, but smiling proudly -- with the pudding, like a speckled cannon-ball, so hard and firm, blazing in half of half-a-quarter of ignited brandy, and bedight with Christmas holly stuck into the top.

Oh, a wonderful pudding! Bob Cratchit said, and calmly too, that he regarded it as the greatest success achieved by Mrs Cratchit since their marriage.



In came little Bob . . . and Tiny Tim upon his shoulder.



At every fresh question Scrooge's nephew burst into a fresh roar of laughter.

"I have no patience with him," observed Scrooge's niece. Scrooge's niece's sisters, and all the other ladies, expressed the same opinion.

"Oh, I have," said Scrooge's nephew. "I am sorry for him; I couldn't be angry with him if I tried. Who suffers by his ill whims? Himself, always. Here, he takes it into his head to dislike us, and he won't come and dine with us. What's the consequence? He don't lose much of a dinner."

"Indeed, I think he loses a very good dinner," interrupted Scrooge's niece. Everybody else said the same, and they must be allowed to have been competent judges, because they had just had dinner; and, with the dessert upon the table, were clustered round the fire, by lamplight.

Christmas at the Cratchits'

These held the hot stuff from the jug, however, as well as golden goblets would have done; and Bob served it out with beaming looks, while the chestnuts on the fire sputtered and cracked noisily. Then Bob proposed:

“A Merry Christmas to us all, my dears. God bless us!”

Which all the family re-echoed.

“God bless us every one!” said Tiny Tim, the last of all.

He sat very close to his father’s side upon his little stool. Bob held his withered little hand in his, as if he loved the child, and wished to keep him by his side, and dreaded that he might be taken from him.

“Spirit,” said Scrooge, with an interest he had never felt before, “tell me if Tiny Tim will live.”

“I see a vacant seat,” replied the Ghost, “in the poor chimney-corner, and a crutch without an owner, carefully preserved. If these shadows remain unaltered by the Future, the child will die.”

“No, no,” said Scrooge. “Oh, no, kind Spirit! say he will be spared.”

“If these shadows remain unaltered by the Future, none other of my race,” returned the Ghost, “will find him here. What then? If he be like to die, he had better do it, and decrease the surplus population.”

Scrooge hung his head to hear his own words quoted by the Spirit, and was overcome with penitence and grief.

Glossary:

Vacant – empty

Penitence - regret

Starting with this extract, explore how Dickens presents the **importance of kindness** in A Christmas Carol.

Consider:

How Dickens presents the importance of kindness in this extract

How Dickens presents the importance of kindness in the whole of the novel

Stave 3— Christmas Scenes

The Ghost of Christmas Present takes Scrooge on a supernatural journey to see Christmas across different places and walks of life...

Christmas in the City

“Holly, mistletoe, red berries, ivy, turkeys, geese, game, poultry, brawn, meat, pigs, sausages, oysters, pies, puddings, fruit, and punch, all vanished instantly. So did the room, the fire, the ruddy glow, the hour of night, and they stood in the city streets on Christmas morning, where (for the weather was severe) the people made a rough, but brisk and not unpleasant kind of music, in scraping the snow from the pavement in front of their dwellings, and from the tops of their houses, whence it was mad delight to the boys to see it come plumping down into the road below, and splitting into artificial little snow-storms.

Christmas at Sea

“Again the Ghost sped on, above the black and heaving sea -- on, on -- until, being far away, as he told Scrooge, from any shore, they lighted on a ship. They stood beside the helmsman at the wheel, the look-out in the bow, the officers who had the watch; dark, ghostly figures in their several stations; but every man among them hummed a Christmas tune, or had a Christmas thought, or spoke below his breath to his companion of some bygone Christmas Day, with homeward hopes belonging to it. And every man on board, waking or sleeping, good or bad, had had a kinder word for another on that day than on any day in the year; and had shared to some extent in its festivities; and had remembered those he cared for at a distance, and had known that they delighted to remember him.

Christmas for the Poor

“Much they saw, and far they went, and many homes they visited, but always with a happy end. The Spirit stood beside sick beds, and they were cheerful; on foreign lands, and they were close at home; by struggling men, and they were patient in their greater hope; by poverty, and it was rich. In almshouse, hospital, and jail, in misery's every refuge, where vain man in his little brief authority had not made fast the door and barred the Spirit out, he left his blessing, and taught Scrooge his precepts.”

Stave 3—Ignorance and Want

From the foldings of its robe, it brought two children; wretched, abject, frightful, hideous, miserable. They knelt down at its feet, and clung upon the outside of its garment.

“Oh, Man! look here. Look, look, down here!” exclaimed the Ghost.

They were a boy and girl. Yellow, meagre, ragged, scowling, wolfish; but prostrate, too, in their humility. Where graceful youth should have filled their features out, and touched them with its freshest tints, a stale and shrivelled hand, like that of age, had pinched, and twisted them, and pulled them into shreds. Where angels might have sat enthroned, devils lurked, and glared out menacing. No change, no degradation, no perversion of humanity, in any grade, through all the mysteries of wonderful creation, has monsters half so horrible and dread.

Scrooge started back, appalled. Having them shown to him in this way, he tried to say they were fine children, but the words choked themselves, rather than be parties to a lie of such enormous magnitude.

“Spirit!are they yours?” Scrooge could say no more.

“They are Man’s,” said the Spirit, looking down upon them.

“And they cling to me, appealing from their fathers. This boy is Ignorance. This girl is Want. Beware them both, and all of their degree, but most of all beware this boy, for on his brow I see that written which is Doom, unless the writing be erased. Deny it!” cried the Spirit, stretching out its hand towards the city.

BIG READ

Starting with this extract, explore how Dickens presents **attitudes to poverty** in *A Christmas Carol*.

Consider:

How Dickens presents attitudes to poverty in this extract

How Dickens presents attitudes to poverty in the whole of the novel

Friday, 22 July.

Passed through S. James's Park at 4.30, & there were the outcasts again, though not quite so many of them, the day being damp & cool.

A mass of broken hoops and frowsy crape and velvet lay huddled on the grass where I passed. I spoke to it: no answer. Spoke again: a movement ran through the heap, as of one tormented before the time, and anxious to be let alone. Said once more 'Is anything the matter with you?' Then she lifted her face a little: for it was a young woman. A soiled, gloomy-eyed young woman: a kind of female Jack Sheppard to look at: for under her tawdry bonnet you saw that *her head was shaven*. And yet, for all her rags and desolation, she had tried to conceal in part the loss of her hair, by wearing the usual net-bag behind her neck, and stuffing it with horsehair. What is your trade? I asked. Have no trade Sir - only *cleaning*: am a charwoman out of work, in fact. Am going to see my sister, if she've got anythink to eat. Have had a fever: not been in prison-oh no, never was'. She, too, asked for nothing, relapsed into deadness at the first pause. And why not die?

Glossary:

Frowsy—messy

crape - thin fabric

Jack Sheppard—a well-known 19th Century criminal

Charwoman—cleaning lady

Relapsed—fell back

Compare how these texts convey different perspectives and feelings about poverty.

- Compare the different perspectives
- Compare the methods used to convey these perspectives
- Support your ideas with quotes from both texts

An interview with a Watercress Girl

TEXT B

I go about the streets with water-cresses, crying, 'Four bunches a penny, water-cresses.' I am just eight years old - that's all, and I've a big sister, and a brother and a sister younger than I am. On and off, I've been very near a twelvemonth in the streets. Before that, I had to take care of a baby for my aunt. No, it wasn't heavy - it was only two months old; but I minded it for ever such a time - till it could walk. It was a very nice little baby, not a very pretty one; but, if I touched it under the chin, it would laugh.



I used to go to school, too; but I wasn't there long. I've forgot all about it now, it's such a time ago; and mother took me away because the master whacked me, though the missus use'n't to never touch me. I didn't like him at all. What do you think? he hit me three times, ever so hard, across the face with his cane, and made me go dancing down stairs; and when mother saw the marks on my cheek, she went to blow him up, but she couldn't see him - he was afraid. That's why I left school.

It's very cold before winter comes on reg'lar - specially getting up of a morning. I gets up in the dark by the light of the lamp in the court. When the snow is on the ground, there's no cresses. I bears the cold - you must; so I puts my hands under my shawl, though it hurts 'em to take hold of the cresses, especially when we takes 'em to the pump to wash 'em. No; I never see any children crying - it's no use.

I always give mother my money, she's so very good to me. She don't often beat me; but, when she do, she don't play with me. She's very poor, and goes out cleaning rooms sometimes. I ain't got no father, he's a father-in-law. No; mother ain't married again - he's a father-in-law. He grinds scissors, and he's very good to me. No; I dont mean by that that he says kind things to me, for he never hardly speaks.

*Father-in-law – her grandfather

Stave 4

The Phantom slowly, gravely, silently approached. When it came, Scrooge bent down upon his knee; for in the very air through which this Spirit moved it seemed to scatter gloom and mystery.

It was shrouded in a deep black garment, which concealed its head, its face, its form, and left nothing of it visible save one outstretched hand. But for this it would have been difficult to detach its figure from the night, and separate it from the darkness by which it was surrounded.



He felt that it was tall and stately when it came beside him, and that its mysterious presence filled him with a solemn dread. He knew no more, for the Spirit neither spoke nor moved.

"I am in the presence of the Ghost of Christmas Yet To Come?" said Scrooge.

The Spirit answered not, but pointed downward with its hand.

"You are about to show me shadows of the things that have not happened, but will happen in the time before us," Scrooge pursued. "Is that so, Spirit?"

The upper portion of the garment was contracted for an instant in its folds, as if the Spirit had inclined its head. That was the only answer he received.

Although well used to ghostly company by this time, Scrooge feared the silent shape so much that his legs tremble beneath him, and he found that he could hardly stand when he prepared to follow it.

Stave 4—Perspectives on a Death

He knew these men, also, perfectly. They were men of aye business: very wealthy, and of great importance. He had made a point always of standing well in their esteem: in a business point of view, that is; strictly in a business point of view.

"How are you?" said one.

"How are you?" returned the other.

"Well!" said the first. "Old Scratch has got his own at last, hey."

"So I am told," returned the second.

"Cold, isn't it."



"Very well, then!" cried the woman. "That's enough. Who's the worse for the loss of a few things like these? Not a dead man, I suppose."

"No, indeed," said Mrs Dilber, laughing.



"If he wanted to keep them after he was dead, a wicked old screw," pursued the woman, "why wasn't he natural in his lifetime? If he had been, he'd have had somebody to look after him when he was struck with Death, instead of lying gasping out his last there, alone by himself."

Stave 4—A Neglected Grave

Scrooge crept towards it, trembling as he went; and following the finger, read upon the stone of the neglected grave his own name, EBENEZER SCROOGE.

“Am *I* that man who lay upon the bed?” he cried, upon his knees.

The finger pointed from the grave to him, and back again.

“No, Spirit! Oh no, no!”

The finger still was there.

“Spirit!” he cried, tight clutching at its robe, “hear me! I am not the man I was. I will not be the man I must have been but for this intercourse.

Why show me this, if I am past all hope!”

For the first time the hand appeared to shake.

“Good Spirit,” he pursued, as down upon the ground he fell before it: “Your nature intercedes for me, and pities me. Assure me that I yet may change these shadows you have shown me, by an altered life!”

The kind hand trembled.

“I will honour Christmas in my heart, and try to keep it all the year. I will live in the Past, the Present, and the Future. The Spirits of all Three shall strive within me. I will not shut out the lessons that they teach. Oh, tell me I may sponge away the writing on this stone!”



Starting with this extract, explore the idea that Dickens creates sympathy towards Scrooge in A Christmas Carol.

Consider:

How Dickens creates sympathy towards Scrooge in this extract

How Dickens creates sympathy towards Scrooge in the whole of the novel

Charles Dickens visits London's Churchyards

When I think I deserve particularly well of myself, and have earned the right to enjoy a little treat, I stroll from Covent-garden into the City of London, after business-hours there, on a Saturday, or – better yet – on a Sunday, and roam about its deserted nooks and corners. It is necessary to the full enjoyment of these journeys that they should be made in summer-time, for then the retired spots that I love to haunt, are at their idlest and dullest. A gentle fall of rain is not objectionable, and a warm mist sets off my favourite retreats to decided advantage.

Among these, City Churchyards hold a high place. Such strange churchyards hide in the City of London; churchyards sometimes so entirely detached from churches, always so pressed upon by houses; so small, so rank, so silent, so forgotten, except by the few people who ever look down into them from their smoky windows. As I stand peeping in through the iron gates and rails, I can peel the rusty metal off, like bark from an old tree. The illegible tombstones are all lop-sided, the grave-mounds lost their shape in the rains of a hundred years ago. Contagion of slow ruin overhangs the place. The discoloured tiled roofs of the environing buildings stand so awry, that they can hardly be proof against any stress of weather. Old crazy stacks of chimneys seem to look down as they overhang, dubiously calculating how far they will have to fall. In an angle of the walls, what was once the tool-house of the grave-digger rots away, encrusted with toadstools. Pipes and spouts for carrying off the rain from the encompassing gables, broken or feloniously cut for old lead long ago, now let the rain drip and splash as it list, upon the weedy earth. Sometimes there is a rusty pump somewhere near, and, as I look in at the rails and meditate, I hear it working under an unknown hand with a creaking protest: as though the departed in the churchyard urged, 'Let us lie here in peace; don't suck us up and drink us!'

– *The Uncommercial Traveller*, 'The City of the Absent'

Glossary:

| | | |
|----------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| Illegible—unreadable | Environing—nearby | Feloniously—in theft |
| Contagion—disease | Encompassing—surrounding | Meditate—think deeply |

Resuscitation
From the 'Terrific Register' - 1825



In the year 1728, Margaret Dickson was tried at Edinburgh for the murder of her child, supposed to have been born during the absence of her husband. After her condemnation, she behaved in the most penitent manner, acknowledged her infidelity, but constantly and steadily denied that she had murdered her child, or even formed an idea of so horrible a crime. At the place of execution, her behaviour was consistent with her former declaration, and she was hanged. After her execution, her body was cut down, and delivered to her friends, who put it into a cart, to be buried at her native place; but the weather being sultry, the persons who had the body in charge, stopped to drink at a village about two miles from Edinburgh. While they were refreshing themselves, one of them perceived the lid of the coffin move, and uncovering it, the woman immediately sat up, when most of the spectators

ran off with every sign of trepidation. A person who was drinking in the house, had recollection enough to bleed her; in about an hour she was put to bed, and next morning she so far recovered, as to be able to walk to her own house. By the Scottish law, which is partly founded on that of the Romans, a person against whom the judgment of the court has been executed, can suffer no more in future, but is thenceforth totally exculpated; and it is likewise held, that the marriage is dissolved by the execution of the convicted party. Mrs. Dickson having been thus convicted and executed, the king's advocate could prosecute her no farther, but he filed a bill in the High Court of Justiciary, against the Sheriff, for omitting to fulfil the law. The husband of this restored convict, married her publicly in a few days after she was hanged; and she lived about thirty years afterwards.

DREAMS OCCASIONED BY PERTURBED SPIRITS.

There are many instances in which perturbed spirits remain restless and unhappy till they have unburdened themselves of some worldly matter, in which they seek mortal assistance; and it would seem that in sleep they can often impress those who are susceptible to their influence more readily than in the waking state. It may be to effect the performance of some neglected duty, or the restitution of some wrong, to convey information of hidden treasure, to confess some undetected crime, or to reveal and to revenge some secret crime of which they were the victims. Our newspapers and criminal records present many relations of robberies traced through dreams,* as well as of more heinous offences so brought to light;—of

Unknown facts of guilty acts,
Revealed in dreams from God.

INSTANCES OF MURDER DISCOVERED BY DREAMS.

One of the most familiar instances of this is that of the murder of Maria Martin, commonly known as the murder in the Red Barn, and which was brought to light by means of a dream, which (as is often the case) was thrice repeated, to make it the more impressive. We quote a more recent instance of this kind.

Two men named Hawser and Bowser, were executed in America a few years ago for the murder of two women named Paull and Munday. Soon after the committal of the prisoners for trial, the mother of Miss Munday had a dream in which she plainly saw her daughter struggle with her murderer, and heard her cry "Help!" "Mother!" She could remember the features of the man whom she saw in the bloody act, and the dream made so deep an impression on her mind that she determined to visit the prisoners in the jail, and see if she could recognize the murderer of her daughter. The inmates were all placed in a row, and the old lady closely scrutinized them, one after another, until her eyes fell upon Bowser, when, starting back, she exclaimed, "You are the murderer of my child."

Glossary:

Perturbed—upset

Creative Writing

Write the opening chapter of a story inspired by this image.



OR—Write the opening chapter of a story in which a spirit returns to haunt the earth.

Gothic motifs

John Bowen

What does it mean to say a text is Gothic?

The genre of Gothic is a particularly strange and perverse family of texts. It is never quite clear what is or is not a legitimate member of the now huge Gothic family, made up not just of novels, poems and stories but of films, music, video-games, opera, comics and fashion, all belonging – and not quite belonging – together. But they do have some important traits in common.

Strange places

It is usual for characters in Gothic fiction to find themselves in a strange place; somewhere other, different, mysterious. It is often threatening or violent, sometimes sexually enticing, often a prison.

Clashing time periods

Just as places are often mysterious, lost, dark or secret in Gothic fiction, so too are its characteristic *times*. Gothics often take place at moments of transition (between the medieval period and the Renaissance, for example) or bring together radically different times. There is a strong opposition (but also a mysterious affinity) in the Gothic between the very modern and the ancient or archaic, as everything that characters and readers think that they've safely left behind comes back with a vengeance.

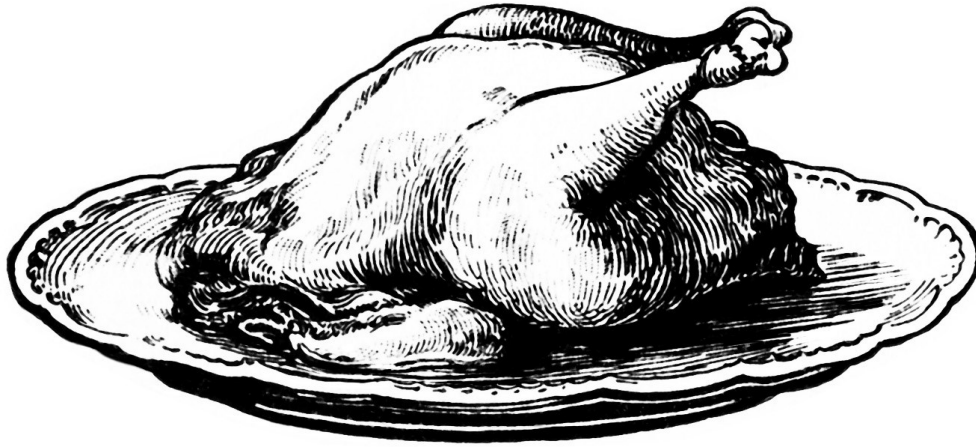
Power and constraint

The Gothic world is fascinated by violent differences in power, and its stories are full of constraint, entrapment and forced actions. Scenes of extreme threat and isolation – either physical or psychological – are always happening or about to happen.

A world of doubt

Gothic is thus a world of doubt, particularly doubt about the supernatural and the spiritual. It seeks to create in our minds the possibility that there may be things beyond human power, reason and knowledge. But that possibility is constantly accompanied by uncertainty.

Gothic, it is clear, is intended to shock us out of the limits of our everyday lives with the possibility of things beyond reason and explanation, in the shape of awesome and terrifying characters, and inexplicable and profound events.



Stave 5

Yes! and the bedpost was his own. The bed was his own, the room was his own. Best and happiest of all, the Time before him was his own, to make amends in!

"I will live in the Past, the Present, and the Future!" Scrooge repeated, as he scrambled out of bed. "The Spirits of all Three shall strive within me. Oh Jacob Marley! Heaven, and the Christmas Time be praised for this. I say it on my knees, old Jacob, on my knees!"

He was so fluttered and so glowing with his good intentions, that his broken voice would scarcely answer to his call. He had been sobbing violently in his conflict with the Spirit, and his face was wet with tears.

"They are not torn down!" cried Scrooge, folding one of his bed-curtains in his arms, "they are not torn down, rings and all. They are here -- I am here -- the shadows of the things that would have been, may be dispelled. They will be! I know they will."

His hands were busy with his garments all this time; turning them inside out, putting them on upside down, tearing them, mislaying them, making them parties to every kind of extravagance.

"I don't know what to do!" cried Scrooge, laughing and crying in the same breath; and making a perfect Laocoon of himself with his stockings. "I am as light as a feather, I am as happy as an angel, I am as merry as a schoolboy. I am as giddy as a drunken man. A merry Christmas to everybody! A happy New Year to all the world! Hallo here! Whoop! Hallo!"

Stave 5—Scrooge Visits Fred

He turned it gently, and sidled his face in, round the door. They were looking at the table (which was spread out in great array); for these young housekeepers are always nervous on such points, and like to see that everything is right.

"Fred!" said Scrooge.

Dear heart alive, how his niece by marriage started. Scrooge had forgotten, for the moment, about her sitting in the corner with the footstool, or he wouldn't have done it, on any account.

"Why bless my soul!" cried Fred, "who's that?"

"It's I. Your uncle Scrooge. I have come to dinner. Will you let me in, Fred?"

Let him in! It is a mercy he didn't shake his arm off. He was at home in five minutes. Nothing could be heartier. His niece looked just the same. So did Topper when he came. So did the plump sister when she came. So did every one when they came. Wonderful party, wonderful games, wonderful unanimity, won-der-ful happiness!



"IT'S I. YOUR UNCLE SCROOGE. I HAVE COME TO DINNER. WILL YOU LET ME IN, FRED?"

Stave 5—Bob is Late

The clock struck nine. No Bob. A quarter past. No Bob. He was full eighteen minutes and a half behind his time. Scrooge sat with his door wide open, that he might see him come into the Tank.

His hat was off, before he opened the door; his comforter too. He was on his stool in a jiffy; driving away with his pen, as if he were trying to overtake nine o'clock.

“Hallo!” growled Scrooge, in his accustomed voice, as near as he could feign it. “What do you mean by coming here at this time of day?”

“I am very sorry, sir,” said Bob. “I *am* behind my time.”

“You are?” repeated Scrooge. “Yes. I think you are. Step this way, sir, if you please.”

“It’s only once a year, sir,” pleaded Bob, appearing from the Tank. “It shall not be repeated. I was making rather merry yesterday, sir.”

“Now, I’ll tell you what, my friend,” said Scrooge, “I am not going to stand this sort of thing any longer. And therefore,” he continued, leaping from his stool, and giving Bob such a dig in the waistcoat that he staggered back into the Tank again; “and therefore I am about to raise your salary!”

Bob trembled, and got a little nearer to the ruler. He had a momentary idea of knocking Scrooge down with it, holding him, and calling to the people in the court for help and a strait-waistcoat.

“A merry Christmas, Bob!” said Scrooge, with an earnestness that could not be mistaken, as he clapped him on the back. “A merrier Christmas, Bob, my good fellow, than I have given you, for many a year! I’ll raise your salary, and endeavour to assist your struggling family, and we will discuss your affairs this very afternoon, over a Christmas bowl of smoking bishop, Bob! Make up the fires, and buy another coal-scuttle before you dot another i, Bob Cratchit!”

Starting with this extract, explain how Dickens presents Scrooge as a changed character in *A Christmas Carol*.

Consider:

How Dickens presents Scrooge as a changed character in this extract

How Dickens presents Scrooge as a changed character in the whole of the novel

Stave 5—The End Of It

Scrooge was better than his word. He did it all, and infinitely more; and to Tiny Tim, who did not die, he was a second father. He became as good a friend, as good a master, and as good a man, as the good old city knew, or any other good old city, town, or borough, in the good old world. Some people laughed to see the alteration in him, but he let them laugh, and little heeded them; for he was wise enough to know that nothing ever happened on this globe, for good, at which some people did not have their fill of laughter in the outset; and knowing that such as these would be blind anyway, he thought it quite as well that they should wrinkle up their eyes in grins, as have the malady in less attractive forms. His own heart laughed: and that was quite enough for him.

He had no further intercourse with Spirits, but lived upon the Total Abstinence Principle, ever afterwards; and it was always said of him, that he knew how to keep Christmas well, if any man alive possessed the knowledge. May that be truly said of us, and all of us! And so, as Tiny Tim observed,
God Bless Us, Every One!



History of Christmas

Christmas as we celebrate it today has its origins in Victorian Britain.

It's hard to imagine now, but at the beginning of the 19th century Christmas was hardly celebrated. Many businesses did not even consider it a holiday. However by the end of the century it had become the biggest annual celebration and took on the form that we recognise today.

The transformation happened quickly, and came from all sectors of society.

Queen Victoria and Prince Albert

Many attribute the change to Queen Victoria, and it was her marriage to the German-born Prince Albert that introduced some of the most prominent aspects of Christmas. In 1848 the Illustrated London News published a drawing of the royal family celebrating around a decorated Christmas tree, a tradition that was reminiscent of Prince Albert's childhood in Germany. Soon every home in Britain had a tree bedecked with candles, sweets, fruit, homemade decorations and small gifts.

In 1843 Henry Cole commissioned an artist to design a card for Christmas. The illustration showed a group of people around a dinner table and a Christmas message. At one shilling each, these were pricey for ordinary Victorians and so were not immediately accessible. However the sentiment caught on and many children - Queen Victoria's included - were encouraged to make their own Christmas cards. In this age of industrialisation colour printing technology quickly became more advanced, causing the price of card production to drop significantly. Together with the introduction of the halfpenny postage rate, the Christmas card industry took off. By the 1880s the sending of cards had become hugely popular, creating a lucrative industry that produced 11.5 million cards in 1880 alone. The commercialisation of Christmas was well on its way.

Traditional Victorian crackers

Another commercial Christmas industry was borne by Victorians in 1848 when a British confectioner, Tom Smith, invented a bold new way to sell sweets. Inspired by a trip to Paris where he saw bon bons - sugared almonds wrapped in twists of paper - he came up with the idea of the Christmas cracker: a simple package filled with sweets that snapped when pulled apart. The sweets were replaced by small gifts and paper hats in the late Victorian period, and remain in this form as an essential part of a modern Christmas.

Decorating the home at Christmas also became a more elaborate affair. The medieval tradition of using evergreens continued, however the style and placement of these decorations became more important. The old custom of simply decking walls and windows with sprigs and twigs was sniffed at. Uniformity, order and elegance were encouraged. There were instructions on how to make elaborate synthetic decorations for those residing in towns.

In 1881 Cassell's Family Magazine gave strict directions to the lady of the house: "To bring about a general feeling of enjoyment, much depends on the surroundings... It is worth while to bestow some little trouble on the decoration of the rooms".

Gift giving had traditionally been at New Year but moved as Christmas became more important to the Victorians. Initially gifts were rather modest – fruit, nuts, sweets and small handmade trinkets. These were usually hung on the Christmas tree. However, as gift giving became more central to the festival, and the gifts became bigger and shop-bought, they moved under the tree.

Christmas feast

The Christmas feast has its roots from before the Middle Ages, but it's during the Victorian period that the dinner we now associate with Christmas began to take shape. Examination of early Victorian recipes shows that mince pies were initially made from meat, a tradition dating back to Tudor times. However, during the 19th century there was a revolution in the composition of this festive dish. Mixes without meat began to gain popularity within some of the higher echelons of society and became the mince pies we know today.

The roast turkey also has its beginnings in Victorian Britain. Previously other forms of roasted meat such as beef and goose were the centrepiece of the Christmas dinner. The turkey was added to this by the more wealthy sections of the community in the 19th century, but its perfect size for a middle class family gathering meant it became the dominant dish by the beginning of the 20th century.

Carols

While carols were not new to the Victorians, it was a tradition that they actively revived and popularised. The Victorians considered carols to be a delightful form of musical entertainment, and a pleasure well worth cultivating. Old words were put to new tunes and the first significant collection of carols was published in 1833 for all to enjoy.

Family

The Victorians also transformed the idea of Christmas so that it became centred around the family. The preparation and eating of the feast, decorations and gift giving, entertainments and parlour games - all were essential to the celebration of the festival and were to be shared by the whole family.

While Charles Dickens did not invent the Victorian Christmas, his book *A Christmas Carol* is credited with helping to popularise and spread the traditions of the festival. Its themes of family, charity, goodwill, peace and happiness encapsulate the spirit of the Victorian Christmas, and are very much a part of the Christmas we celebrate today.

CHRISTMAS AMONG THE LONDON POOR AND SICK.

A cheerful bustle betokens the welcome day. An extra polish is seen on workhouse shoes; here and there, a stray morsel of finery, or a special evidence of neatness, is visible in workhouse garments. The workhouse chapel has a spray or two of the green emblems of the season, and the sermon has an extra spice of geniality. The dining-room has quite an exhilarating polish. The white bare walls are warmed up with their sprigs of holly, and the tables—well scrubbed as usual—are graced by the promised feast. No skilly today—but beef! No hard dumplings, but plum-pudding! The plums are not stoned, and there's no brandy sauce; but the appetites are not epicurean.

From this chronicle of the pauper's Christmas, let us now trace a faint outline of the Christmas of the London sick. A dozen large Christmas dinners are eaten in the great general Hospitals of London, besides smaller feasts in minor institutions for special diseases. Three thousand three hundred beds are kept, all the year through, occupied by poor sick persons, too ill to attend as out-patients. This little army of invalids includes unhappy people suffering from all the severest ills to which humanity is subject. Frightful accidents; hideous deformities; fearful and dangerous operations, have been the lot of successive unfortunates who tenant these Hospital beds. To such, though Christmas may come, it can bring little festivity.

In a large Hospital like Bartholomew's it is always a question who is to be house surgeon on duty on Boxing Night; for so sure as the night shall come, it shall be no night of rest for him. Double the number of casualties are brought in as compared with the average of any other night in the year. Broken heads, "got in a scrimmage, your hanner, with Paddy Phelan;" broken legs, and sometimes thighs, from slipping down stairs after the feastings and drinkings; stabs given by folks who met and quarrelled "just in a friendly way;" insensible bundles of clothes and humanity, who had taken poison with their drink for jealousy sake; and cabs with men in a state which defies policemen and good-natured pedestrians to decide whether they be dead with drink or dying of an apoplectic fit. A dreary side of the Christmas picture is this, but a true one nevertheless; the shadow of the subject; the gloom that must exist, to contrast with brightness in all things human.

A Christmas Carol—Structure

Stave 1:

Marley was dead
Scrooge's Description
The Charity Collectors are treated rudely
Fred's invite
Bob gets a warning
The door knocker and the bells
Marley's Ghost

Stave 2

The Ghost of Christmas Past
A lonely boy at school
Fan comes to take Scrooge home
Fezziwig!
Belle dumps Scrooge
How Belle's life turned out

Stave 3

The Ghost of Christmas Present
Christmas day scenes Pt.1: The city
Christmas at Bob's
Christmas day scenes Pt.2: Christmas at work
Christmas at Fred's
Christmas day scenes Pt.3: Christmas for the poor
Ignorance and Want

Stave 4

A dreadful Phantom
Businessmen discuss a death
Mrs Dilber and Joe
A figure on the bed
Pleasure in death
Something missing in the Cratchit house
A gravestone

Stave 5

Alive!
Scrooge buys a turkey
The Charity Collectors - a generous donation
An unexpected but welcome guest at Fred's
Bob is late to work
Scrooge's happy future

Dickens' Favourite Language Techniques

Figurative language: simile, metaphor and personification

Listing, repetition and anaphora (repetition at the start of a clause)

Pathetic Fallacy and detailed description of setting

Dialogue that reveals character

Exclamations!

Symbolism:

Fire

Marley's chains

The light and cap (Past)

The torch (Present)

The pointing hand (Yet-to-come)

The turkey and goose (Bob)

Sensory language – imagery and synaesthesia

Dramatic Irony (where the reader and Scrooge hear the private conversations of others)

Narrative 'voice' and viewpoint

Dickens' Structural and Narrative Techniques

Balance of description, dialogue and narrative viewpoint

Contrasts that show change in Scrooge

Beginning, middle, end – chronological narrative (and narrative within the narrative)

Changes in time and place – managed by the Ghosts

5-Part Structure ('carol' and 'staves')

'Mirroring' structure of Stave 1 and Stave 5

False ending (Scrooge's 'death')

Foreshadowing to engage the reader

20 Top Quotes

Who said it?

About whom?

What does it show the reader?

Link to theme or context?

1. Old Marley was as dead as a door-nail.
2. "Are there no prisons?"
3. "I wear the chain I forged in life"
4. "Would you so soon put out, with worldly hands, the light I give?"
5. "I have come to bring you home, dear brother!"
6. "Another idol has displaced me."
7. "I cannot bear it!"
8. "Come in, and know me better, man."
9. "I'll give you Mr Scrooge, the Founder of the Feast!"
10. "I am sorry for him; I couldn't be angry with him if I tried."
11. "Oh, Man, look here! Look, look, down here!"
12. Its mysterious presence filled him with a solemn dread
13. "It's likely to be a very cheap funeral,"
14. Quiet. Very quiet.
15. "My little, little child!"
16. "I am not the man I was."
17. It was a splendid laugh
18. "A great many back-payments are included in it, I assure you. "
19. "I'll raise your salary "
20. "God bless us, every one!"

| | AO1 – Understanding Texts | AO2 – Understanding Language | AO3 – Understanding Context |
|-----------------------------------|---|--|---|
| 1 Simple comments | I can make simple comments relevant to task and text I can use some references | I can make simple comments on the effects of language or structure. I can use simple terminology to help me explain. | I can make simple comments about context and ideas. |
| 2 Relevant comments | I can give a supported response to task and text I can comment on relevant references | I can comment on the effect of language or structure. I can use some subject terminology but not always appropriately | I can show some awareness of the context and ideas and try to link this to the text |
| 3 Explained, structured | I can give some explained response to task and whole text I can support some explanations with references | I can explain the effect of language or structure with some accuracy I can use subject terminology with occasional errors | I can show some understanding of context and ideas with make some links to the text |
| 4 Clear explanation | I can give a clear, explained response to task and whole text I can securely support explanations with references | I can clearly explain the effect of language or structure. I can use subject terminology accurately | I can show clear understanding of the context and ideas, clearly linked to the text |
| 5 Developing explanation | I can give a developed explanation relevant to task and whole text I can effectively support explanations with references | I can analyse the effects of language or structure with clear and developed explanation. I can begin to use a wide range of subject terminology. | I can show clear and developed understanding of context and ideas, with developed links to the text. |
| 6 Thoughtful, developed | I can give a thoughtful, developed response to task and whole text I can integrate apt references that support my interpretation | I can analyse the effects of language or structure in a detailed and perceptive way. I can use a wide range of subject terminology. | I can thoughtfully consider the context and ideas and make detailed links to the text. |
| 7 Developing critical analysis | I can give an emerging critical analysis relevant to task and whole text I can integrate convincing references that support my interpretation | I can analyse the effect of language and structure with some sophistication. I am beginning to use terminology in a sophisticated way. | I can explore ideas and context in detail, with detailed links to the text. |
| 8 Critical, convincing | I can give a confident critical response to task and whole text I can support my interpretation with precise and judicious references. | I can show a sophisticated and analytical understanding of language or structure I can use a full range of sophisticated subject terminology. | I can critically explore context and ideas with convincing links to the text. |