

YOUR **4-Step** CHECK-UP ON A CHRISTMAS CAROL

Step 1 PLOT AND CHARACTERS

Where are you in your *A Christmas Carol* studies? Start by answering these quiz-style questions to check your knowledge of the plot and characters.

1. Who is Scrooge's (ex) **business partner**?
2. Which **relative** visits Scrooge on **Christmas Eve**? **Why**?
3. **Why** have the **two men** who arrive after the relative come to see Scrooge?
4. What is **Marley's Ghost** wearing when he appears in front of Scrooge?
5. What **seasonal plant** is the **Ghost of Christmas Past** holding when it appears to Scrooge?
6. Which **significant place** from **Scrooge's childhood** does the Ghost of Christmas Past take him to **first**?
7. **Who** comes to this place to **rescue Scrooge** and take him home?
8. What was the **name** of Scrooge's **generous employer**?
9. What was **Belle's (Scrooge's fiancée's) reason** for ending their engagement?
10. **Who**, in the **Cratchit household**, '*bore a little crutch*' and was '*supported by an iron frame*'?
11. The **Ghost of Christmas Present** shows Scrooge several **isolated places** where people are celebrating Christmas. Name **two** of them.
12. **Whose party** does Scrooge observe and **take delight** in?
13. What are the names of the **two children** who have been hiding in the **Ghost of Christmas Present's cloak**?
14. **How** is the **Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come** dressed?
15. In **Stave Four**, the **Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come** takes Scrooge to a **sort of shop**. **Who is there** and **what are they doing**?
16. What **tragic fact** is revealed when the **Ghost** shows Scrooge the **Cratchits' home again**?
17. **Whose grave** does Scrooge see right at the end of **Stave Four**?
18. What does Scrooge **send to the Cratchits** in **Stave Five** to make up for his past cruelty?
19. **Where** does Scrooge go to **spend Christmas Day**?
20. What does **Scrooge tell Bob** he is going to do to **help him** the next morning?

Step 2 LANGUAGE AND THEMES

How much do you know about the language and themes of the novel?

- Here are **five quotations** from the story. Can you identify **who or what is being described**?
 - 'He carried his own low temperature always about with him' (Stave One)
 - 'It was a strange figure – like a child; yet not so like a child as like an old man.' (Stave Two)
 - 'Yellow, meagre, ragged, scowling, wolfish, but prostrate, too, in their humility' (Stave Three)
 - 'It was shrouded in a deep, black garment, which concealed its head, its face, its form and left nothing of it visible.' (Stave Four)
 - 'I am as light as a feather, I am as happy as an angel, I am as merry as a schoolboy' (Stave Five)
- Read these **further quotations**. What **theme(s)** do you think they are linked to, or explore, e.g. Avarice? Isolation? **Why**?
 - Fred (to Scrooge):** 'a good time; a kind, forgiving, charitable, pleasant time' (Stave One)
 - Charity collector (to Scrooge):** 'Many thousands are in want of common necessaries' (Stave One)
 - Marley (to Scrooge):** 'Mankind was my business. The common welfare was my business.' (Stave One)
 - Belle (to Scrooge):** 'I have seen your nobler aspirations fall off one by one until the master passion, Gain, engrosses you.' (Stave Two)
 - Scrooge (to the Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come):** 'Assure me that I yet may change these shadows you have shown me by an altered life?' (Stave Four)

Step 3 WRITING SKILLS

A student has drafted this paragraph about the character of Scrooge.

Dickens shows how Scrooge's greed drove away those he loved – for example when he is presented with a vision of the time Belle broke off their She observes that another idol has displaced her. In other words, that love of money now rules his heart. However, this scene makes him aware of

- Copy out the paragraph and add in the **missing detail** in the **first sentence**
- Put **quotation marks** around the quotation the student uses
- Finish** the paragraph, completing the **last sentence**

Step 4 CLOSE ANALYSIS

This scene comes from Stave Three of the novel. *The Ghost of Christmas Present* is showing Scrooge the Cratchits celebrating Christmas.

“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.

“Man,” said the Ghost, “if man you be in heart, not **adamant**, **forbear** that wicked **cant** until you have discovered what the surplus is, and where it is. Will you decide what men shall live, what men shall die? It may be that, in the sight of Heaven, you are more worthless and less fit to live than millions like this poor man’s child. Oh God! to hear the Insect on the leaf pronouncing on the too much life among his hungry brothers in the dust!”

Scrooge bent before the Ghost’s rebuke, and, trembling, cast his eyes upon the ground.



Glossary

adamant: a mythical, very hard stone or rock

forbear: hold back from

cant: hypocrisy

Why is this episode important? Write one to two paragraphs (between 75 to 100 words) about:

- What it tells us about the characters or relationships at this point
- Any themes or ideas which are suggested
- How the extract could link with other scenes or moments in the novel

Well done for completing your 4-Step Check-Up on A Christmas Carol!

You’ll find lots of help with studying and revising the novel, including revision cards and practice tests, on our website www.yorknotes.com