ASTON ACADEMY
PAPER 2 ENGLISH LITERATURE TRIAL EXAM REVISION

These revision resources have been put together to help you revise for ‘An Inspector Calls’ and ‘A Christmas Carol’.

‘AN INSPECTOR CALLS REVISION’ – ENGLISH LITERATURE PAPER 2 – 60% OF YOUR GCSE

PLOT – LEARN THIS AND MAKE SURE YOU KNOW IT IN CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER!

ACT I - The Birling family celebrate their daughter Sheila’s engagement. Inspector Goole arrives to investigate the death of a young woman named Eva Smith who has taken her own life. Mr Birling fired Eva Smith from his factory because she wanted higher wages. Sheila Birling used her influence to have Eva Smith sacked from Milward’s. The Inspector informs the family Eva Smith changed her name to Daisy Renton. Sheila notices immediately that her fiancé, Gerald Croft, reacts to the name.

ACT II - Gerald admits he had an affair with Eva/Daisy. He offered her a place to stay and gave her money. Sheila breaks off her engagement to Gerald. Mrs Birling eventually admits she used her influence to make sure Eva was refused help from the charity Mrs. Birling works for. Mrs Birling blames the father of Eva’s unborn child and wants to see him made an example of.

ACT III - Eric Birling is the father of Eva’s child. He gave her money stolen from his father’s business and offered to marry her, but she refused both. The Inspector’s final speech warns people to care of everyone or they will be taught to in a painful way. In a final plot twist, the family question whether the Inspector was real. The younger and older generation react differently when reflecting on their actions. Sheila and Eric change and show regret, their parents do not, and events repeat themselves.

CONTEXT TO LEARN AND INCLUDE IN YOUR ANSWER:

Priestley served in the army during WW1 1914-1918 and wrote ‘An Inspector Calls’ in the winter of 1944-1945 as the “world was suffering” at the end of WW2. The play is set in 1912 and exposes the “rottenness behind the façade” of the families like the Birlings. The play is a social criticism of “middle-class prosperity and apparent respectability”. Priestley exposes the irony of 1912 attitudes. The dramatic irony of Mr. Birling’s claims reflect his ignorance and pre-war complacency. Birling’s speech at the beginning of the play also dismisses the idea of community The idea that “a man has to make his own way” is interrupted by the Inspector’s arrival to counter this message. The Inspector’s final warning would resonate with the audience who had lived through two world wars. Priestley highlights the way Europe; society did not appreciate that “We are members of one body” responsible for each other. The concept of “Time” inspired this and other works by Priestley. ‘An Inspector Calls’ allows the characters to examine the consequences of their actions. They are given an opportunity to change and act differently to break this cycle. The final climax of the play shows that lessons have not been learned just as they were not from WW1 and repeated in WW2.

FORMAT OF ENGLISH LITERATURE PAPER 2:

ONE ESSAY QUESTION ON ‘AN INSPECTOR CALLS’ – EXTRACT ANALYSIS & EXPLORATION OF THE WHOLE PLAY; ONE ESSAY QUESTION ON ‘A CHRISTMAS CAROL’ - EXTRACT ANALYSIS & EXPLORATION OF THE WHOLE NOVELLA; UNSEEN POETRY – TWO QUESTIONS – ONE SINGLE POEM ANALYSIS OF AN UNSEEN POEM; ONE QUESTION COMPARING THE FIRST UNSEEN POEM WITH A SECOND UNSEEN POEM

How do I use this revision sheet? This sheet will help you to memorise the plot, context, and key quotations/what to say about them from the play. You could turn this into flash cards, voice notes, or a poster of your own.

LINE/METHOD	WHO/WHEN/WHO TO?	WHAT’S SUGGESTED?
“Unsinkable, absolutely unsinkable” - Dramatic irony	Mr. Birling/ play’s exposition at the engagement party/ to the family	Birling is immediately depicted as foolish, parroting what he has heard about the Titanic; darkly comic to a 1945 audience; makes Birling appear conceited & sets up the rest of his dialogue as appearing ill-informed
“As if we’re all mixed up together like bees in a hive – community and all that nonsense” – Simile	Mr. Birling/ play’s exposition at the engagement party/ to the family	Birling rejects Socialist ideology in favour of looking after his own; delivers Priestley’s message about the middle and upper classes uniting to exclude the working classes; Birling views himself as distinct/separate to the working classes & believes they shouldn’t mix
“It’s better to ask for the earth than to take it” – Emotive language	Inspector Goole/after the family learnt Mr. Birling sacked Smith/ to the family	Goole implies it is socially irresponsible and reckless to take things from another without their permission; reflects how Birling took Smith’s job for her with no regard for the potential consequence and effect it would have on her life
“But these girls aren’t cheap labour. They’re people” – Emotive language	Sheila/ after finding out what her father has done/ to the family	Sheila begins to challenge the views and ideologies held by her parents, acknowledging that we must respect and value the individual rather than treating them as just workers who generate profit; shows Sheila has the capacity to change and reject her privileged upbringing
“I felt rotten about it at the time and now I feel a lot worse” – Dialogue	Sheila/ after learning of her involvement/ to the family	Unlike her father, Sheila is immediately remorseful for her actions and realises the gravity of the situation; the fact she has already felt guilt for her behaviour conveys how she has a conscience and again, can change
“We often do on the young ones. They’re more impressionable” – Dialogue	Inspector Goole/ after Mrs. Birling becomes frustrated with Goole/ to Mrs. Birling	Goole hints that it is the older members of society who are stuck in their ways, while the younger members of society – Sheila/Eric (the dynamic characters) are the ones who will rebuild society with collaboration and community
“Girls of that class” – Dialogue	Mrs. Birling/ when learning that Smith died by suicide/ to the family/Goole	Mrs. Birling tries to justify the treatment of Smith by implying that female members of the working class were morally corrupt and incapable of being dignified/having human emotions; highlights her classist attitudes and foreshadows her treatment of Smith when she visits her for help
“I didn’t install her there so I could make love to her” – Dialogue	Gerald/ when confessing his disloyalty to Sheila/ to the family/Goole	Gerald protests, arguing that his motives were innocent when giving Smith/Renton a place to stay at his friend’s flat; uses objectifying language here which highlights sexist attitudes of the time; the fact he had free run of a friend’s house while Renton struggled to eat highlights the class and wealth divide at the time
“I didn’t feel about her as she felt about me” – Dialogue	Gerald/ when confessing his disloyalty to Sheila/ to the family/Goole	Despite being with her for several months, Gerald admits his feelings were not that strong for Renton, conveying how she was, essentially, disposable to him; reinforces his previously objectifying language and how, again, she is discarded by a member of the upper classes
“I didn’t like her manner – she’d impertinently made use of our name” - Dialogue	Mrs. Birling/ when explaining how Renton visited the charity for help/ to the family/Goole	Mrs. Birling’s defence is that Smith had lied about her real name; Mrs. Birling, despite knowing that Smith died by suicide, continues to defend her rejection of Smith down to what she claims was rudeness
“I did nothing I’m ashamed of” - Dialogue	Mrs. Birling/ when explaining how Renton visited the charity for help/ to the family/Goole	Despite working for a charity dedicated to the welfare of young women, Mrs. Birling chooses to deflect and reject and responsibility for her part in turning Smith away; no remorse is shown, reflecting Priestley’s views that the older generation were resistant to change
“I blame the young man. He ought to be dealt with very severely” – Dramatic irony	Mrs. Birling/ when explaining how Renton visited the charity for help/ to the family/Goole	In the final moments of Act II, Priestley sets the scene for Mrs. Birling to unwittingly blame her own son, Eric, for the death of Smith; he conveys his views on how easily the upper classes turn on one another here and how the culture of deflection and refusal to accept responsibility is why society is falling apart
“You’re not the kind of father a chap could go to when he’s in trouble” - Dialogue	Eric/ after confessing his actions/ to Mr. Birling	Following his admission of guilt linked to his behaviour, Eric turns on his father, illustrating how the family are at breaking point now the audience knows how each impacted Smith’s life; illustrates how Eric cannot speak with his father and how Birling has rejected his duties as both a father and employer
“We are members of one body” – Emotive language	Goole/after putting a stop to the family’s argument/to the family	One of Goole’s final messages depicts the importance of community; it is a warning to the Birlings that their actions have consequences; perfectly summarises Priestley’s view on society also
“…the time will soon come when if man won’t learn that lesson he will be taught it in fire and blood and anguish” - Tripling	Goole/after putting a stop to the family’s argument/to the family	Goole hints at the potentially catastrophic consequences of the family, and those like them, not learning their lesson; if society doesn’t change, the result will be pain, death, and loss – likely a strong nod towards the First World War and subsequent loss/pain
“millions and millions and millions of Eva Smiths and John Smiths left with us” - Repetition	Goole/after putting a stop to the family’s argument/to the family	Goole reminds the audience and the family that they must look after the most vulnerable members of society; Smith was just one of the many millions of women who suffered in Edwardian England – the 1945 audience must also reflect on their own behaviour and ensure they don’t repeat the mistakes of the Birlings
“You’re beginning to pretend as if nothing’s really happened at all” - Dialogue	Eric/ after Mr and Mrs Birling try to defend their actions/ to his parents	Angered by his parents’ behaviour, Eric’s line reminds the audience that he truly has changed; meanwhile, his parents have reverted to type as a means of trying to return to normal; Eric has learnt lessons but his parents have not
“by jingo! A fake!” - Dialogue	Mr Birling/ after discovering Goole is a ‘fake’/ to the family	Birling’s enthusiastic dialogue reveals his pleasure and excitement in finding out that Goole ‘isn’t real’ – he has missed the point – regardless of if Goole truly exists, he, and his family, have all treated a young woman terribly; he fails to learn the message that Goole has tried to impart
“It frightens me the way you talk” - Dialogue	Sheila/ after hearing her parents laugh at the evening’s events/ to her parents	Like her brother, Sheila reflects the younger generation’s concern that the older generation were the ones damaging society; she has made a staggering transition across the course of the evening – naïve and immature to informed and defiant, showing that change IS possible
“Look at them – the famous younger generation who know it all and can’t take a joke” - Imperative	Mr Birling/ after finding out the Smith ‘didn’t die’ and that Goole ‘isn’t real’/ to Eric and Sheila	In stark contrast to his children, Mr. Birling finds the situation amusing as he believes he is ‘off the hook’; he fails to recognise what each of his family members has done, including some particularly serious crimes, and instead revels in mocking his children for their genuine emotional reactions; this line is delivered just before the phone rings at the end of the play – a deserved conclusion for Mr. Birling who is then informed that a girl has died of suicide and a police inspector is on his way to interview the family.

How do I Answer the Essay Question on 'An Inspector Calls'?

You'll be asked how Priestley presents either a character, theme, or idea across the play. You'll be given an extract first to help you get started. You need to write an introduction, giving an overview of the character or the theme, and then you need to comment on two quotations from the extract. You then need to write about a minimum of five other key moments from the play, using quotations you have memorised. You need to write in depth, following the Comment + evidence + development structure.

Example 'An Inspector Calls' Essay Question Answer – Write about the theme of responsibility in An Inspector Calls and how it is presented at different points in the play.

In your response you should:

• refer to the extract and the play as a whole

• show your understanding of characters and events in the play.

Spend 45 minutes on this question.

This essay would score highly in the exam.

Responsibility is central to 'An Inspector Calls' because the play revolves around the death of a young woman, Eva Smith, and to what extent the Birling family and Gerald Croft are responsible for this. Priestley also emphasises the tragic consequences of the Birlings' actions because "we are responsible for each other" and yet Eva Smith became so desperate, she took her own life. The play is set in 1912 and exposes the "rottenness behind the façade" of the families like the Birlings. The play is a criticism of "middle-class prosperity and apparent respectability", while also exploring the tragic consequences of individuals refusing to accept responsibility for their immoral acts.

We first encounter the theme of responsibility directly when Mr. Birling gives a speech to his family as they celebrate his daughter's engagement. Mr. Birling states, in his lengthy monologue, that a man "has to look after himself" and dismisses ideas of community as "nonsense" encouraged by "cranks". It is at this point that Inspector Goole arrives to challenge Mr. Birling's ideas and investigate Eva Smith's death. This initial introduction to Birling is structurally significant as it immediately depicts him as lacking any social awareness and failing to recognise the hardships of those around him, including the working-class people he employs. Priestley uses Birling as a microcosm for the middle-class businessmen in Edwardian England whose ignorance only exacerbated the hardship faced by the poor.

As the first Act continues, Priestley presents the lack of responsibility evident in Capitalist values as Mr. Birling claims it is his responsibility to keep profits high and labour costs down. He is also keen to ensure his daughter's marriage to Gerald Croft in order to secure a merger for his business and avoid any potential scandal. He is, however, reminded by the Inspector that public men "have responsibilities as well as privileges". Sheila's sense of responsibility is clear in her guilt for turning Eva "out of a job" is in direct contrast to her father's lack of responsibility and capitalist solution, offering "thousands" to end the matter. While Birling's behaviour was based on a desire to maintain profit, Sheila's reckless behaviour, where she threatened to close the family's account if Smith wasn't sacked, reveals that her lack of responsibility is driven by jealousy and the fact she has been brought up to believe that her only worth as a woman is her appearance and social status.

Priestley goes on to highlight the lack of responsibility for others as the Inspector reveals how Gerald tries to avoid responsibility for his affair with Eva by at first denying he knew her, while then claiming he "didn't install her there" to "make love to her", which, arguably, is exactly what he did. Through his depiction of Gerald, Priestley highlights how the typical upper-class Edwardian man could use and exploit working-class women, particularly since Gerald associates with people who are so wealthy that they can leave property empty for months at a time. The theme is highlighted most cruelly in Act 2 by Mrs. Birling who admits her prejudice against "girls of that class." Mrs. Birling is reminded "masterfully" by the Inspector that she used her position and influence to deny an unemployed, pregnant Eva "even the pitiable little bit of organized charity". Mrs. Birling's refusal to accept any responsibility also leads to the dramatic irony of her demand to hold the "father" responsible and make an "example" of him.

In Act 3, the theme builds to its peak. The Inspector's imperative "Stop!" brings a distinct focus to the key message on this theme as the focus of responsibility shifts from the Birling family to a general message to society. Priestley uses the Inspector as a mouthpiece for a more Socialist reminder that all our lives are "intertwined". Priestley emphasizes the number of working-class, ordinary people in need of support from the more advantaged in society by repeating the enormous number "millions and millions and millions of Eva Smiths and John Smiths". The Inspector's speech warns of "fire and blood and anguish" if society does not take responsibility for "each other". Overall, the younger generation take responsibility for their actions, learn the Inspector's lesson and provide hope for the future. The older generation, however, refuse to acknowledge their responsibilities or adapt which results in the final plot twist where events repeat themselves.

Practice Paper:

0 8 ***An Inspector Calls***

You are advised to spend about 45 minutes on this question.

You should use the extract on the opposite page and your knowledge of the whole play to answer this question.

In *An Inspector Calls* characters react to the discovery of truths in different ways. Write about **some** of these reactions and how they are presented at different points in the play.

In your response you should:

- refer to the extract and the play as a whole
- show your understanding of characters and events in the play. [40]

5 of this question's marks are allocated for accuracy in spelling, punctuation and the use of vocabulary and sentence structures.

INSPECTOR	And if her story is true – that he was stealing money –
MRS BIRLING	[*rather agitated now*] There's no point in assuming that –
INSPECTOR	But suppose we do, what then?
MRS BIRLING	Then he'd be entirely responsible – because the girl wouldn't have come to us, and have been refused assistance, if it hadn't been for him –
INSPECTOR	So he's the chief culprit anyhow.
MRS BIRLING	Certainly. And he ought to be dealt with very severely –
SHEILA	[*with sudden alarm*] Mother – stop – stop!
BIRLING	Be quiet, Sheila!
SHEILA	But don't you see –
MRS BIRLING	[*severely*] You're behaving like an hysterical child tonight.
	[SHEILA *begins crying quietly.* MRS BIRLING *turns to* INSPECTOR.]
	And if you'd take some steps to find this young man and then make sure that he's compelled to confess in public his responsibility – instead of staying here asking quite unnecessary questions – then you really would be doing your duty.
INSPECTOR	[*grimly*] Don't worry, Mrs Birling. I shall do my duty. [*He looks at his watch.*]
MRS BIRLING	[*triumphantly*] I'm glad to hear it.
INSPECTOR	No hushing up, eh? Make an example of the young man, eh? Public confession of responsibility – um?
MRS BIRLING	Certainly. I consider it your duty. And now no doubt you'd like to say good night.
INSPECTOR:	Not yet. I'm waiting.
MRS BIRLING	Waiting for what?
INSPECTOR	To do my duty.
SHEILA	[*distressed*] Now, Mother – don't you see?
MRS BIRLING	[*understanding now*] But surely… I mean… it's ridiculous…
	[*She stops, and exchanges a frightened glance with her husband.*]
BIRLING	[*terrified now*] Look, Inspector, you're not trying to tell us that – that my boy – is mixed up in this –?
INSPECTOR	[*sternly*] If he is, then we know what to do, don't we? Mrs Birling has just told us.
BIRLING	[*thunderstruck*] My God! But – look here –
MRS BIRLING	[*agitated*] I don't believe it. I *won't* believe it …
SHEILA	Mother – I begged you and begged you to stop –

STAVE 1 – Scrooge treats his employee, Bob, his cousin, Fred, and others with contempt. He only cares for money and this is shown through his treatment of these characters at his counting house. He returns home that Christmas Eve and is visited by Marley's Ghost, his ex-business partner. He warns Scrooge that he must change and that he will be visited by three spirits.

STAVE 2 – The Ghost of Christmas Past visits and shows Scrooge scenes from his past such as when he was a young school boy, his sister, Fan, visiting, and when he was an apprentice at Fezziwig's. He then shows him his fiancée, Belle, breaking up with him due to his obsession with money. He then shows him the life he could have had by showing Scrooge Belle with her husband. Scrooge begins to reflect on how he has treated others.

STAVE 3 – The Ghost of Christmas Present visits and takes Scrooge to see people from all walks of life celebrating Christmas. This includes solitary places such as miners, but also includes a tight-knit family – the Cratchits. He sees how ill Tiny Tim is. He also sees Fred's family having a joyous Christmas. He is introduced to two terrifying children who represent the problems in a greedy society – Ignorance and Want.

STAVE 4 – The Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come visits Scrooge and shows him how others react to his death. It takes Scrooge until the end of the Stave to work out that the reactions are in response to his death. He sees that Tiny Tim has died and is then showed his own grave.

STAVE 5 – Scrooge wakes up on Christmas morning, relieved to be alive and overjoyed at the prospect of making amends. He puts right his wrongs – he buys the Cratchits a turkey for Christmas dinner, gives Bob a pay rise, visits Fred's house for Christmas, and acts like a father to Tiny Tim.

A CHRISTMAS CAROL – ENGLISH LITERATURE PAPER 2 – 60% OF YOUR GCSE

FORMAT OF ENGLISH LITERATURE PAPER 2:

ONE ESSAY QUESTION ON 'AN INSPECTOR CALLS' – EXTRACT ANALYSIS & EXPLORATION OF THE WHOLE PLAY

ONE ESSAY QUESTION ON 'A CHRISTMAS CAROL' - EXTRACT ANALYSIS & EXPLORATION OF THE WHOLE NOVELLA

UNSEEN POETRY – TWO QUESTIONS – ONE SINGLE POEM ANALYSIS OF AN UNSEEN POEM; ONE QUESTION COMPARING THE FIRST UNSEEN POEM WITH A SECOND UNSEEN POEM

CONTEXT: Written by Dickens in 1843 as a direct comment on the conditions endured by the poor (particularly children) during the 'Hungry Forties'. Initially intending to write a pamphlet on the subject, Dickens felt the novel would have more impact and be a "sledgehammer blow" on behalf of the poor.

Having known periods of poverty and hardship in his own childhood, Dickens was a fierce opponent of the Poor Law, which advocated workhouses and prisons as a solution to the problem of social inequality. Dickens saw a need for the wealthy to share their fortunes and help the most vulnerable in society. He directly references the views of Thomas Malthus, who saw poverty as inevitable and a need to 'decrease the surplus population'.

Christmas had fallen out of favour by 1843 and was not universally celebrated. Although a Christian holiday, celebrating the birth of Jesus Christ, it also encompassed pagan traditions around the winter solstice and looked ahead to the coming spring. In addition, Dickens saw Christmas as a time of sharing food, gifts and time. For Dickens, the 'Christmas spirit' is generosity and compassion for others. Dickens can be partially credited with cementing the popularity of the holiday. Ghost stories were traditional at Christmas. These were often read aloud, and the novella format allows for this. The story uses many tropes of the ghost genre and combines these with a morality tale.

QUOTE	WHO/WHEN/WHO TO?	WHAT'S SUGGESTED?
"Solitary as an oyster"	Description of Scrooge/start of novella/ to the reader	At the beginning of the novella, Scrooge is isolated, has a tough exterior, doesn't involve himself with society, but deep down there is some worth
"If they would rather die, they had better do it, and decrease the surplus population"	Scrooge/start of novella/to the charity collectors	Scrooge echoes the words of Thomas Malthus, suggesting that the poor would be better off dead if they don't want to go to work in the workhouses; shows his harsh outlook and lack of empathy early on
"darkness is cheap and Scrooge liked it"	Description of Scrooge/when he returns home/ to the reader	Scrooge even lived in the dark as it meant he didn't have to spend any money on light; shows the extent of his greed and avarice
"You may be an undigested bit of beef"	Scrooge/ when he's visited by Jacob Marley/ to Marley	Scrooge cannot comprehend being visited by a ghost and so tries to come up with a rationale – he suggests that he may have just eaten something 'off'
"I wear the chain I forged in life"	Marley/ when he visits Scrooge/ to Scrooge	Marley delivers this message as a stark warning to Scrooge; reflects religious belief that sins in life will be paid for in death; warning to Scrooge that he must change or suffer the same consequences
"mankind was my business"	Marley/ when he visits Scrooge/ to Scrooge	Marley admits he profited from the working classes, like Scrooge does now, and this reinforces the message that Scrooge must change
"I should like to be able to say a word or two to my clerk just now"	Scrooge/when he's taken to his past by the Ghost of Christmas Past/to the ghost	Scrooge shows signs of remorse after revisiting memories of Fezziwig's kindness and generosity; Scrooge realises he should be a better employee and that he has the opportunity to change and treat Cratchit with more respect
"may you be happy in the life you have chosen"	Belle/ when she's breaking up with Scrooge/ to Scrooge	Belle highlights Scrooge's money-obsession when she says her goodbyes; shows how Scrooge's life has been dominated by material wealth rather than love and happiness
"why do you delight to torture me?"	Scrooge/ after the ghost has shown him the break up/ to the Ghost of Christmas Past	Scrooge is hurt by what the ghost shows him and doesn't want to see any more; shows how with just a little reflection, Scrooge begins to change
"Scrooge could not hide the light"	Description of Scrooge/when he tries to extinguish the ghost's light/truth/ to the reader	The light represents the truth that the ghost shows Scrooge; Scrooge cannot extinguish this as the truth always prevails; Scrooge is desperate to see no more as it hurts him
"I see a crutch without an owner"	Scrooge/ when he realises Tiny Tim is at risk of death/ to the Ghost of Christmas Present	Scrooge begins to realise how hard the Cratchit's life is; he realises Bob's son is deeply unwell and that there is a great risk he will die – reflects the suffering of the poor, particularly working class children
"Say he will be spared"	Scrooge/ when he realises Tiny Tim is at risk of death/ to the Ghost of Christmas Present	Scrooge begins to change his views on the poor now that he has seen their hardship; he is desperate for Tiny Tim to live; his transformation is rapidly developing
"This boy is Ignorance. This girl is Want."	Ghost of Christmas Present/ when he shows Scrooge the two terrifying children/ to Scrooge	The ghost shows Scrooge these terrifying children to highlight the issues with society -ignorance to the struggles of the poor and society's need for having more and owning more, just like Scrooge
"Are these the shadows of the things that will be, or are they shadows of the things that may be only?"	Scrooge/ when the Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come shows Scrooge his potential future/to the ghost	Scrooge begins to realise that his future may have been decided so requests reassurance from the ghost – he wants to know if there's a possibility that he can redeem himself or if his future is decided
"I am not the man I was"	Scrooge/ when he realises he has changed over the course of the visits/ to the Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come	Scrooge declares this to show how he has truly changed after learning about society and the struggles of those around
"I will honour Christmas in my heart and keep is all the year"	Scrooge/ when he realises he has changed over the course of the visits/ to the Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come	This piece of dialogue reflects Scrooge's acknowledgement of the importance of the Christmas message – family, forgiveness, kindness and charity; he won't just behave with generosity at Christmas – he will do it for the rest of the year, too
"tell me I may sponge away the writing on this stone"	Scrooge/ when he realises he has changed over the course of the visits/ to the Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come	Scrooge fears that he is definitely going to die and asks if he can remove his name from the gravestone he is showed; he now has something to live for and wants to make amends
"I am about to raise your salary"	Scrooge/when he's woken up and has transformed/ to Bob Cratchit	Scrooge is a man of his word; his greedy ways are no more as he raises Bob's salary, meaning that Bob is now able to support his family better
"and to Tiny Time, who did not die, he was a second father"	Description of Scrooge/ when he's woken up and has transformed/ to the reader	Scrooge continues to stay true to his word; he realises the importance of community and supporting one another, rather than being isolated like 'an oyster'
"God bless us, everyone!"	Tiny Tim/ end of the novella/ to the reader	Tiny Tim has the last word as he embodies the religious message of Christmas and the idea that no one should be excluded from kindness and happiness.

How do I Answer the Essay Question on 'A Christmas Carol'?

You'll be asked how Dickens presents either a character, theme, or idea across the novella. You'll be given an extract first to help you get started. You need to write an introduction, giving an overview of the character or the theme, and then you need to comment on two quotations from the extract. You then need to write about a minimum of five other key moments from the novella, using quotations you have memorised. You need to write in depth, following the Comment + evidence + development structure. You MUST mention historical context frequently for this question and how it is presented throughout the novella.

Example Answer - Q: A supernatural is full of ghostly happenings. Write about some of these ghostly happenings and how they are presented throughout the novel.

In your response, you should:

- **Refer to the extract and the novel as a whole**
- **Show your understanding of characters and events in the novel**
- **Refer to the contexts of the novel**

In A Christmas Carol, an allegorical tale, lots of supernatural events and ghostly happenings occur over the course of the novella. While this was typical of a Victorian Christmas story, it was also to convey fear and encourage Scrooge to stop being so miserly and full of greed, while also encouraging the Victorian reader to consider their own moral compass and adopt a more philanthropic approach to their every day lives, not just at Christmas.

In Stave 1, Marley appears in front of Scrooge covered in chains, 'Not a knocker, but Marley's face'. This is deeply disturbing to Scrooge, and since the reader is already aware that Marley passed away 'seven years' ago ('Marley was dead'), we are immediately introduced to the theme of the supernatural. Then when Scrooge sees Marley again, he explains to Scrooge that he wears 'the chains' he 'forged in life'. This metaphor exemplifies Marley trying to warn Scrooge that he needs to change, otherwise he will end up like him in a state of purgatory, burdened by the avaricious lifestyle he led when alive. This is important to the novel overall as Dickens' aim was to show that acting like Scrooge would lead to eternal suffering.

In Stave 2, we are shown ghostly happenings when the Ghost of Christmas Past appears before Scrooge, 'A child like figure' with a 'distinguisher cap' by its side. Dickens here describes the ghost as ephemeral. The ghost of Christmas past is important to the novel overall as it shows Scrooge his past, reminding him of the challenging events which have led to him becoming so isolated and unaccepting of love. For example, he is shown his time as a child, 'I know this place'. This brings back the excitement he felt when he was younger. In addition, he is shown his time with Belle. 'A golden idol has replaced me'. This reminds Scrooge of what his obsession with money has ruined. The aim of the Ghost of Christmas Past was to remind Scrooge of his earlier life to help him with his redemption and to also encourage the audience to face their own potential obsession with money over love, kindness, and family.

The third ghostly encounter occurs in stave 3 with the Ghost of Christmas Present. He is depicted as a large figure with a 'scabbard' but no 'sword', representing his rejection of violence and war. His aim is to show Scrooge moments on Christmas Day, where the rest of society revels in the joy of Christmas and forgets their troubles temporarily. For example, the Cratchit family, one of whom was 'dressed poorly but brave in ribbons'. This shows to Scrooge that despite not having a lot of money, they are still happy and content with one another. In addition, Bob also toasts Scrooge. This shows that even though Scrooge shows Bob unkind treatment, he is still grateful for what he has been given. The aim of the Ghost of Christmas Present is to show Scrooge the Christmas joy and spirit he was missing out on because of his choices to be unkind and isolated.

The final ghost appears in Stave 4 and is depicted as the Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come. This was a 'dark figure' that 'did not speak' and made Scrooge's legs 'tremble' in fear. This ghost is crucial to the novella as it presents to Scrooge what was yet to come if he did not change. Ultimately, by including a range of different characters within the ghosts, Dickens highlights the hard exterior of Scrooge's character and how a range of supernatural interventions were required to encourage his redemption and transformation. This ghost evokes unbridled fear in Scrooge by showing him his 'grave' and how his workers and the people spoke about him.

Overall, Dickens used the ghosts in this novel to show the big gap between the poor and the rich in Victorian England. He wanted to educate people on the realities and help people to change.

Now, see if you can practise with this question. It is the same question answered above so have ago yourself to see how you would answer it:

Answer on **one** text only.

2 1 ***A Christmas Carol***

You are advised to spend about 45 minutes on this question.

You should use the extract below and your knowledge of the whole novel to answer this question.

A Christmas Carol is full of supernatural and ghostly happenings. Write about some of the supernatural events in *A Christmas Carol* and how they are important to the novel as a whole.

In your response you should:

- refer to the extract and the novel as a whole
- show your understanding of characters and events in the novel
- refer to the contexts of the novel. [40]

Now, it is a fact, that there was nothing at all particular about the knocker on the door, except that it was very large. It is also a fact, that Scrooge had seen it, night and morning, during his whole residence in that place; also that Scrooge had as little of what is called fancy about him as any man in the city of London, even including—which is a bold word—the corporation, aldermen, and livery. Let it also be borne in mind that Scrooge had not bestowed one thought on Marley, since his last mention of his seven years' dead partner that afternoon. And then let any man explain to me, if he can, how it happened that Scrooge, having his key in the lock of the door, saw in the knocker, without its undergoing any intermediate process of change: not a knocker, but Marley's face.

Marley's face. It was not in impenetrable shadow as the other objects in the yard were, but had a dismal light about it, like a bad lobster in a dark cellar. It was not angry or ferocious, but looked at Scrooge as Marley used to look: with ghostly spectacles turned up on its ghostly forehead. The hair was curiously stirred, as if by breath or hot air; and, though the eyes were wide open, they were perfectly motionless. That, and its livid colour, made it horrible; but its horror seemed to be in spite of the face and beyond its control, rather than a part of its own expression.

As Scrooge looked fixedly at this phenomenon, it was a knocker again.

To say that he was not startled, or that his blood was not conscious of a terrible sensation to which it had been a stranger from infancy, would be untrue. But he put his hand upon the key he had relinquished, turned it sturdily, walked in, and lighted his candle.

He *did* pause, with a moment's irresolution, before he shut the door; and he *did* look cautiously behind it first, as if he half expected to be terrified with the sight of Marley's pigtail sticking out into the hall. But there was nothing on the back of the door, except the screws and nuts that held the knocker on, so he said "Pooh, pooh!" and closed it with a bang.

Online Revision Resources for English Literature

Podcasts for *every* Literature text – Type these links into your web browser for some fantastic online resources.

https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/topics/zk3dmbk

A Christmas Carol:

https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/topics/zwhkxsg - Revision of plot, characters, and context

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e98F6whQUFM – Sophisticated analysis of the text

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w7V4tXuhbk8 – Social and Historical Context

An Inspector Calls:

https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/topics/zpr639q - Revision of plot, characters, and context

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-_nIZckXku0 – Key Quotes and their meaning

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3fXw8lWWtlA&t=313s – Social and Historical Context

What do I do with the videos and websites?

You need to turn the information you watch into something that makes sense to you.

Stop the videos at regular intervals and complete one of the following:

- Create a poster
- Create flashcards
- Create voice notes that you can listen back to
- Create a quiz that someone can test you on later
- Begin practising writing an essay using the information you've learnt or revised