

Worksheet 1 – Introduction

Recall

Answer these questions after watching the video lecture to check how much you remember.

1. How does Prof. McRae describe the storyline of *A Christmas Carol*? Find the odd one out.
a) Ghost story
b) Story of transformation
c) Christmas story
d) Romantic story
2. As what type of text does Prof. McRae categorise *A Christmas Carol*?
a) Novel
b) Play
c) Short story
d) Novella
3. Who narrates *A Christmas Carol*?
a) Charles Dickens
b) Ebenezer Scrooge
c) An unnamed persona
d) Jacob Marley

Analysis

4. Prof. McRae discusses the importance of names in Dickens's writing. Below are the names of some of the characters from *A Christmas Carol*. Make a mind map for each character, exploring the connotations of their name and what attributes you think that character will have.

Ebenezer Scrooge

Belle

I infer that he is frequently cold, because "neze" sounds like "sneeze".

Mr Fezziwig

Bob Cratchit

Evaluation

5. Reread the opening paragraph from *A Christmas Carol* and answer the question below.

Marley was dead: to begin with. There is no doubt whatever, about that. The register of his burial was signed by the clergyman, the clerk, the undertaker, and the chief mourner. Scrooge signed it; and Scrooge's name was good upon 'change, for anything he chose to put his hand to. Old Marley was as dead as a door-nail.

Mind! I don't mean to say that I know, of my own knowledge, what there is particularly dead about a door-nail. I might have been inclined, myself, to regard a coffin-nail as the deadest piece of Ironmongery in the trade. But the wisdom of our ancestors is in the simile; and my unhallowed hands shall not disturb it, or the country's done for. You will therefore permit me to repeat, emphatically, that Marley was as dead as a door-nail.

How does Dickens use language to engage his reader at the opening of *A Christmas Carol*?

You might consider:

- The effect of punctuation in the opening sentence.
- How Dickens uses other language features in his writing (e.g. alliteration, listing, short sentences, idiom, narrative voice).

You can use the sentence starters below to help you structure an analytical paragraph:

The opening of A Christmas Carol atmospherically sets the scene for the novel by...

Dickens uses...

For instance...

In particular, the key word _____ implies...

This makes the reader feel engaged, because...

Glossary

- **Bureaucracy** – a system of government in which most of the important decisions are taken by state officials rather than by elected representatives; excessively complicated administrative procedure.
- **Stock exchange** – a financial market in which securities (e.g. shares or bonds) are bought and sold.
- **Narratorial persona** – a character established by an author, in whose voice all or part of a narrative takes place.
- **Authorial** – belonging or relating to the author of a book or other text.

