

What do I need to cover to be successful in my Literature exams?

English Literature Paper 1 exam

Section B: A Christmas Carol by Charles Dickens You need to revise and remember:

- The **KEY characters** of the text - what do they represent about the time of the novel? Scrooge. Fred. Tiny Tim. Bob Cratchit. The three spirits. Jacob Marley
- **Key quotations – what do they suggest/convey/show etc...**
- The **KEY themes** of the novel. Charity. Greed. Christmas. Family. Wealth. Love. Poverty.
- **Context** - Dickens' novella *A Christmas Carol* was written in 1843, with the intention of drawing readers' attention to the plight of England's poor. In the tale, Dickens combines a somewhat indirect description of hardships faced by the poor with a heart-rending, sentimental celebration of the Christmas season.
- **How** Dickens uses the characters to show **different ideas / meanings and concepts** e.g. Tiny Tim/The Ghosts - the possible catalyst that leads to Scrooge's metamorphosis. Tiny Tim allegorically represents the Dickensian poor and disabled.

How to write your answer

Dickens uses the word.....to convey..... Perhaps Dickens does this to reflect the..... Dickens' use of the adjective could present the.....

Key words for *A Christmas Carol*

Antithesis – the direct opposite. Scrooge is the antithesis of his nephew, Fred.

Plight of the poor – the difficult and sometimes impossible situation the Victorian poor found themselves in.

Thomas Malthus - Scrooge allegorically represents Thomas Malthus and the middle/upper classes who believed that if the poor could not sustain themselves then they should die and 'reduce the surplus population'.

Eschatological beliefs – Scrooge's motivation to change is his new belief in the concept of life after death.

Catalyst – increases a reaction or change. Tiny Tim/The Ghosts are the possible catalyst that leads to Scrooge's metamorphosis.

Juxtaposition – structural device where a writer places two unusual or different things next to each other.

Metamorphosis – Scrooge goes through a dramatic metamorphosis (change) at the end of the novel.

Allegorically – a character who represents someone or something in society at the time the novel was written. Tiny Tim allegorically represents the deprived and disabled of Dickensian England.

Social injustice – **Social injustice in two ways:** as the denial or violation of economic or human rights of specific populations or groups in a society based on the perception of their inferiority by those with more power or influence.

Philanthropic - seeking to promote the welfare of others; generous and benevolent.

Misanthropic - a distrustful and uncharitable person.

Religious epiphany – Scrooge wakes on Christmas morning a changed man who now lives out the values of Christianity, including justice, fairness and charity.

Pathetic fallacy – Dickens uses the 'cold' and 'biting' weather to personify Scrooge as a cold and callous character with little or no empathy or regard for the wellbeing of others. At the end of the novel, the 'fog' clears as a metaphor for Scrooge's change.

Key Quotations

Scrooge **before** his change

"Hard and sharp as flint"

"Solitary as an oyster"

"He carried his own low temperature around with him"

"Nobody stopped him in the street to say.. 'My dear Scrooge, how are you?'"

"Bah! Humbug"

"Every idiot who goes around with Merry Xmas on his lips... should be buried with a stake of holly through his heart"

"Are there no prisons? Are there no workhouses?"

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

Scrooge **after** his change

"I will honour Christmas in my heart. I will live in the Past, the Present, and the Future."

"I am light as a feather, I am as happy as an angel, I am as merry as a schoolboy, I am giddy as a drunken man. " "I don't know anything. I'm quite a baby."

"Not a farthing less. A great many back payments are included in it."

"I have come to dinner. Will you let me in Fred?" "Therefore I am about to raise your salary!"

"Scrooge was better than his word. He became a second father to Tiny Tim".

The Cratchit Family

"The clerk's fire was so very much smaller that it looked like only one coal"

"Dingy little cell". "He warmed himself on one candle".

"Tiny Tim hoped the people saw him in the church, because he was a cripple, and remember upon Christmas day, who made lame beggars walk, and blind men see."

"I see a vacant seat. The child will die"

"God bless us everyone"

Jacob Marley

"I wear the chain I forged in life...The chain was made up of cash boxes..ledgers..heavy purses" "You may be an undigested bit of beef"

"My spirit never roved beyond the narrow limits of our money changing hole"

Fred (Scrooge's nephew)

"What reason have you to be morose? You're rich enough."

"I have always thought of Christmas as a good time, a kind, forgiving, charitable, pleasant time"

"He was ruddy and all a glow"

<https://sites.google.com/huishepiscopi.net/huishenglish/a-christmas-carol>

<https://www.henry-cort.hants.sch.uk/attachments/download.asp?file=1021&type=pdf>

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLqGFsWf-P-cBhNFidX59nQmTodoDmDQsh>

What do I need to cover to be successful in my Literature exams?

English Literature Paper 1 exam

Section A: Macbeth by William Shakespeare. You need to revise and remember:

- The **KEY characters** of the play – Macbeth. Lady Macbeth. The Witches. King Duncan. MacDuff.
- Key quotations** – what do they suggest/show/convey?
- The **KEY themes** of the play. Trust and betrayal. Power and status. Ambition. Guilt. Kingship and Tyranny.
- Context** – The Gunpowder Plot — King James I was the intended victim of Guy Fawkes' Gunpowder plot. This made him nervous of future regicide attempts. Shakespeare's 'Macbeth' would have been popular with King James because it shows that those who commit regicide are greatly punished / mentally tortured. The message of Shakespeare's play acts as a deterrent to anyone thinking of committing regicide. **Divine Right** — The belief that the King was chosen by God. Thus, to commit regicide meant disobeying the will of God. A Jacobean audience believed people who committed regicide would be punished by God. The mental decline of both Macbeth and Lady Macbeth, having been plagued with guilt, is Shakespeare's way of showing that regicide does not go without punishment. **Religion** — A Jacobean audience were extremely religious, believing life to be sacred and God to be the creator of everything. Thus, when Macbeth claims life is 'a tale told by an idiot...signifying nothing' a Jacobean audience would have been greatly shocked. This nihilistic language (rejecting all religious and moral principles in the belief that life is meaningless) solidifies Macbeth's 'tyrant' and 'hellhound' status towards the end of the play. **Witchcraft** - Shakespeare's portrayal of the Witches shows them to cast spells and use familiars. The Witches' conspiracy against the state (monarchy) was something that would have instilled great fear amongst the audience. Moreover, the 'spot' on Lady Macbeth's hand is also a reference to what was known as 'the devil's mark' (something that would condemn any suspected Witch to death).
- How** Shakespeare uses characters and themes to convey ideas in society.
- How to write your answer** - Shakespeare uses the word.....to convey..... Perhaps Shakespeare does this to reflect the..... Shakespeare's use of the rhyming couplet could present the.....

Motifs in the play

Hallucinations - Visions and hallucinations recur throughout the play and serve as reminders of Macbeth and Lady Macbeth's joint accountability for the growing body count. When he is about to kill Duncan, Macbeth sees a dagger floating in the air. Covered with blood and pointed toward the king's chamber, the dagger represents the bloody course on which Macbeth is about to embark.

Violence - Macbeth is a famously violent play. Interestingly, most of the killings take place offstage, but throughout the play the characters provide the audience with gory descriptions of the damage, from the opening scene where the captain describes Macbeth and Banquo wading in blood on the battlefield, to the endless references to the bloodstained hands of Macbeth and his wife.

Prophecy - Prophecy sets Macbeth's plot in motion — namely, the witches' prophecy that Macbeth will become first thane of Cawdor and then king. Apart from the prophecy about Banquo's heirs, all of the predictions are fulfilled within the course of the play. It is left deliberately ambiguous whether some of them are self-fulfilling — for example, whether Macbeth will himself be king or is fated to be king.

Blood - Blood is everywhere in Macbeth, beginning with the opening battle between the Scots and the Norwegian invaders. Once Macbeth and Lady Macbeth embark upon their murderous journey, blood comes to symbolize their guilt, and they begin to feel that their crimes have stained them in a way that cannot be washed clean.

The Weather - Macbeth's grotesque murder spree is accompanied by a number of unnatural occurrences in nature. From the thunder and lightning that accompany the witches' appearances to the terrible storms that rage on the night of Duncan's murder, these violations of the natural order reflect corruption in the moral and political orders.

Conventions of a Greek Tragedy

- A tragedy is a play in which we see the **downfall** of the central character or the **Protagonist**. (Macbeth)
- The downfall is due (or partly due) to some flaw or weakness in the protagonist (**hamartia**) Pride or **hubris** (over reaching) was often seen as a flaw in Greek tragedy.
- The fall will involve suffering and a reversal of fortune. The protagonist will move from the highest point to the lowest – (**peripeteia**)
- A Tragedy is a play which inspires fear and pity in the audience to see the fall of the protagonist – (**catharsis**).

Key vocabulary

Regicide - The act of killing a king **Machiavellian** – Cunning and scheming **Ambition** -

A strong desire to achieve something **Patriarchal** - Male-controlled society

Foreshadowing – link to what happens later **Tyrannical leader** - Cruel and oppressive

ruler. **Usurp** - Take a position of power by force (from under) **Deception** - The act of

deceiving someone. **Dramatic foil** - a secondary character whose own character traits

are completely opposite of another character's. **Pathetic fallacy** - Using the weather

to create an ominous and foreboding atmosphere. **Duplicious** - Lady Macbeth is

dishonest and disloyal to Macbeth and King Duncan. **Soliloquy** – Macbeth and Lady

Macbeth speak their thoughts aloud to the audience.

Key Quotations

The witches

"When shall we three meet again? In thunder, lightning, or in rain?" – Ominous presence. Foreshadows...

Macbeth as honourable hero

"O valiant cousin! Worthy gentleman!"
"For brave Macbeth well he deserves that name"

The power of Lady Macbeth

"Glamis thou art, and Cawdor; and shalt be what thou art promised"

"...yet do I fear thy nature, / It is too full o' the milk of human kindness / To catch the nearest way"

"Come, you spirits / That tend on mortal thoughts, unsex me here! Make thick my blood... Take my milk for gall..."

"Look like the innocent flower / But be the serpent under't..."
"Give me the daggers."

Macbeth decides to kill Duncan

"Is this a dagger I see before me?"
"We will proceed no further in this business."
"I would, while it were smiling in my face, / Have plucked my nipple from his boneless gums, / And dashed the brains out!" (LM)
"Screw your courage to the sticking place..." (LM)
After Duncan is killed
"Methought I heard a voice cry 'Sleep no more! Macbeth does murder sleep'"

"Will all great Neptune's ocean wash this blood clean from my hand?"

"Go get some water and wash this filthy witness from your hand. " (LM to Macbeth)

"Why did you bring these daggers from the place? They must lie there:"

"My hands are of your colour; but I shame to wear a heart so white."

"A little water clears us of this deed: How easy is it, then!"

Macbeth's becomes the tyrant

"For Banquo...the gracious Duncan I have murdered."
"Upon my head they placed a fruitless crown. A barren scepter in my grip. We have scotch'd the snake, not kill'd it:"

"O, full of scorpions is my mind, dear wife!"

"All my Pretty ones. He has no children! (Macduff)"

"My soul is too much charged with the blood of thine already "

The Feast and the Ghost of Banquo

"Thou canst not say I did it: never shake thy gory locks at me."
.
"Avaunt and quit my sight! let the earth hide thee!"

Lady Macbeth's Guilt

"Out, damned spot! What, will these hands never be clean?" "To bed, to bed, to bed. There's knocking at the gate".

Macbeth's final battle

"Hang those that talk of fear. I will not be afraid of death..." (Macbeth about his own people)
"Turn, Hellhound!" (Macduff to Macbeth)
'Macduff was from his mother's womb Untimely ripp'd.' (Macduff to Macbeth)
"This dead butcher and his fiend like Queen" (Malcolm about Macbeth)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NmMAO82R8Cg&list=PLqGFsWf-P-cMpg89C0yaU5scvuYilKuL>
<https://www.norlington.net/assets/Uploads/Downloads/Macbeth-Revision-Booklet.pdf>
<https://sites.google.com/huishepiscopi.net/huishenglish/macbeth/macbeth-exam-questions>