A Christmas Carol – Knowledge Organiser

1 Scrooge is in his counting-house on Christmas Eve. Scrooge is rude to Fred, refuses the charity collectors and reluctantly allows his clerk to take Christmas Day off.

2 The chain-wearing ghost of Jacob Marley visits to warn Scrooge that he will be visited by three spirits. The Ghost of Christmas Past takes him to his old schoolhouse. They visit young Scrooge at a Christmas party thrown by Mr Fezziwig.

3 We see Scrooge's fiancée, Belle, leaving him. Scrooge cannot bear anymore and trues to extinguishes the ghost's light. They visit nephew Fred's house. The Ghost of Christmas Present takes him to Bob Cratchit's home to show how the poor can still be happy. Scrooge spots two impoverished children under the ghost's cloak.

4 The tone of the novella shifts with the arrival of the deathly Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come, who shows Scrooge a dark future where he has died a lonely man. Scrooge sees his name on a grave and begs for salvation. The ghost relents and saves him.

5 Scrooge wakes on Christmas morning and is enlightened and transformed. Scrooge is forgiven: he goes for dinner at Fred's house. He is the saviour of himself and also of Tiny Tim (who now lives).

Stave	Key Quote	How does this quote convey ideas about…
One: Marley's Ghost visits Scrooge	Oh! But he was a tight-fisted hand at the grindstone, Scrooge! A squeezing, wrenching, grasping, scraping, clutching, covetous, old sinner!	A biased narrator
	Hard and sharp as flint (Flint = hard rock used to make tools)	Scrooge
	solitary as an oyster	Isolation
	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 on its purpose…"	Scrooge
Two: Ghost of Christmas Past	"Your reclamation, then. Take heed!" *Ghost of Christmas Past*	Transformation
	"Your lip is trembling," said the Ghost. "And what is that upon your cheek?"	Transformation and emotions
	"He has the power to render us happy or unhappy […] The happiness he gives is quite as much as if it cost a fortune."	Generosity and leadership
	"Remove me!" Scrooge exclaimed. "I cannot bear it!"	Truth and reflection
Three: Ghost of Christmas Present	Scrooge entered timidly, and hung his head before this Spirit	Transformation
	With an interest he had never felt before…"No,no…Oh no, kind Spirit! Say he will be spared'	Transformation and empathy
Four: Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come	plundered and bereft, unwatched, unwept, uncared for, was the body of this man	Isolation
	"Are these the shadows of the things that Will be, or are they the shadows of the things that May be only?"	Transformation
	The kind hand trembled.	Forgiveness
Five: Scrooge is transformed	"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"	Transformation and childhood
	Scrooge regarded everyone with a delighted smile.	Transformation
	His own heart laughed: and that was quite enough for him	Wealth

Key Themes

Transformation
The novella contains many examples of transformation: the transformation of young Scrooge into an embittered old man; his transformation to a benevolent man; transformation of Marley from selfish human to eternally-suffering ghost; the transformation of the future – to save Scrooge and Tiny Tim. Dickens' basic message may have been that it is never too late to change; people can take control of their own destiny.

Compassion and Forgiveness
Dickens uses different characters to demonstrate compassion and forgiveness (Fred and Bob who feel pity for him, and then forgive him) and how these people lead happy lives. In contrast, he shows the selfish nature of mankind in the dark and sinister Stave Four. Scrooge's reform is a result of his newfound capacity for compassion and kindness.

Isolation We quickly learn that Scrooge ('solitary as an oyster') and Marley are isolated, and unhappy, characters.

Form and Structure

- It is a **parable**: a moral story with a strong message; it is a simple didactic tale.
- It's arranged in **five staves** (not chapters) as a **metaphor** for an actual Christmas carol. It contains musical imagery throughout (eg. church bells)
- **Circular structure**: Scrooge's change is emphasised. In Stave 5 he makes amends with all those he rejected in Stave 1: charity collectors, caroller in first stave to boy in Sunday clothes, Bob Cratchit (haggling over coal to giving him a raise)

Key Vocabulary

Isolated	Dynamic	Transformation	Enlightenment
Compassion	Forgiveness	Deterministic	Greedy

Point:
From the extract the reader learns…
The writer tries to…
The writer uses language to create the effect that…

Evidence: (remember to use quotation marks '_____')
The evidence that shows this is…
The quote that supports my point is…
The word/s that show this is…
This is revealed when [*character*] says, '_____'

Analysis:
The author creates a sense of…
The result of the language used by the author is…
The use of the word/s _____ shows/produces…
This creates the impression that…
This quote shows…
The effect upon the reader is…
This shows/implies/reveals etc.

Connectives:

However	therefore	in contrast
Thus	Whereas	because
Furthermore	also	Then
at first	on the other hand	

Synonyms for shows:

reveals	implies
Exemplifies	indicates
suggests	infers
portrays	conveys
demonstrates	

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