

-Y11 English Practice Questions

A Christmas Carol

In this part of the novella, the Ghost of Christmas Present takes Scrooge to visit Bob Cratchit's house.

Then up rose Mrs Cratchit, Cratchit's wife, dressed out but poorly in a twice-turned gown, but brave in ribbons, which are cheap and make a goodly show for sixpence; and she laid the cloth, assisted by Belinda Cratchit, second of her daughters, also brave in ribbons; while Master Peter Cratchit plunged a fork into the saucepan of potatoes, and getting the corners of his monstrous shirt collar (Bob's private property, conferred upon his son and heir in honour of the day) into his mouth, rejoiced to find himself so gallantly attired, and yearned to show his linen in the fashionable Parks. And now two smaller Cratchits, boy and girl, came tearing in, screaming that outside the baker's they had smelt the goose, and known it for their own; and basking in luxurious thoughts of sage and onion, these young Cratchits danced about the table, and exalted Master Peter Cratchit to the skies, while he (not proud, although his collars nearly choked him) blew the fire, until the slow potatoes bubbling up, knocked loudly at the saucepan-lid to be let out and peeled.

"What has ever got your precious father then?" said Mrs Cratchit. "And your brother, Tiny Tim; And Martha warn't as late last Christmas Day by half-an-hour."

"Here's Martha, mother," said a girl, appearing as she spoke.

"Here's Martha, mother!" cried the two young Cratchits. "Hurrah! There's such a goose, Martha!"

"Why, bless your heart alive, my dear, how late you are!" said Mrs Cratchit, kissing her a dozen times, and taking off her shawl and bonnet for her with officious zeal.

"We'd a deal of work to finish up last night," replied the girl, "and had to clear away this morning, mother."

"Well. Never mind so long as you are come," said Mrs Cratchit. "Sit ye down before the fire, my dear, and have a warm, Lord bless ye."

Starting with this extract, how does Dickens present the importance of family?

Write about:

- how Dickens presents family in this extract
- how Dickens presents family in the novel as a whole.

[30 marks]

In this extract, the Ghost of Christmas Past shows Scrooge Belle's home.

They were in another scene and place; a room, not very large or handsome, but full of comfort. Near to the winter fire sat a beautiful young girl, so like that last that Scrooge believed it was the same, until he saw *her*, now a comely matron, sitting opposite her daughter. The noise in this room was perfectly tumultuous, for there were more children there, than Scrooge in his agitated state of mind could count; and, unlike the celebrated herd in the poem, they were not forty children conducting themselves like one, but every child was conducting itself like forty. The consequences were uproarious beyond belief; but no one seemed to care; on the contrary, the mother and daughter laughed heartily, and enjoyed it very much; and the latter, soon beginning to mingle in the sports, got pillaged by the young brigands most ruthlessly. What would I not have given to one of them. Though I never could have been so rude, no, no! I wouldn't for the wealth of all the world have crushed that braided hair, and torn it down; and for the precious little shoe, I wouldn't have plucked it off, God bless my soul! to save my life. As to measuring her waist in sport, as they did, bold young brood, I couldn't have done it; I should have expected my arm to have grown round it for a punishment, and never come straight again. And yet I should have dearly liked, I own, to have touched her lips; to have questioned her, that she might have opened them; to have looked upon the lashes of her downcast eyes, and never raised a blush; to have let loose waves of hair, an inch of which would be a keepsake beyond price: in short, I should have liked, I do confess, to have had the lightest licence of a child, and yet to have been man enough to know its value.

But now a knocking at the door was heard, and such a rush immediately ensued that she with laughing face and plundered dress was borne towards it the centre of a flushed and boisterous group, just in time to greet the father, who came home attended by a man laden with Christmas toys and presents. Then the shouting and the struggling, and the onslaught that was made on the defenceless porter. The scaling him with chairs for ladders to dive into his pockets, despoil him of brown-paper parcels, hold on tight by his cravat, hug him round his neck, pommel his back, and kick his legs in irrepressible affection. The shouts of wonder and delight with which the development of every package was received. The terrible announcement that the baby had been taken in the act of putting a doll's frying-pan into his mouth, and was more than suspected of having swallowed a fictitious turkey, glued on a wooden platter. The immense relief of finding this a false alarm. The joy, and gratitude, and ecstasy. They are all indescribable alike. It is enough that by degrees the children and their emotions got out of the parlour, and by one stair at a time, up to the top of the house; where they went to bed, and so subsided.

And now Scrooge looked on more attentively than ever, when the master of the house, having his daughter leaning fondly on him, sat down with her and her mother at his own fireside; and when he thought that such another creature, quite as graceful and as full of promise, might have called him father, and been a spring-time in the haggard winter of his life, his sight grew very dim indeed.

Starting with this extract, how does Dickens present the theme of regret in A Christmas Carol?

Write about:

- **how Dickens presents the theme of regret in this extract**
- **how Dickens presents the theme of regret in the novel as a whole.**

[30 marks]

This extract is taken from the very end of the novel.

"Hallo," growled Scrooge, in his accustomed voice, as near as he could feign it. "What do you mean by coming here at this time of day?"

"I'm very sorry, sir," said Bob. "I *am* behind my time."

"You are?" repeated Scrooge. "Yes. I think you are. Step this way, if you please."

"It's only once a year, sir," pleaded Bob, appearing from the Tank. "It shall not be repeated. I was making rather merry yesterday, sir."

"Now, I'll tell you what, my friend," said Scrooge, "I am not going to stand this sort of thing any longer. And therefore," he continued, leaping from his stool, and giving Bob such a dig in the waistcoat that he staggered back into the Tank again; "and therefore I am about to raise your salary."

Bob trembled, and got a little nearer to the ruler. He had a momentary idea of knocking Scrooge down with it, holding him, and calling to the people in the court for help and a strait-waistcoat.

"A merry Christmas, Bob," said Scrooge, with an earnestness that could not be mistaken, as he clapped him on the back. "A merrier Christmas, Bob, my good fellow, than I have given you for many a year. I'll raise your salary, and endeavour to assist your struggling family, and we will discuss your affairs this very afternoon, over a Christmas bowl of [smoking bishop](#), Bob. Make up the fires, and buy another coal-scuttle before you dot another *i*, Bob Cratchit!"

Scrooge was better than his word. He did it all, and infinitely more; and to Tiny Tim, who did not die, he was a second father. He became as good a friend, as good a master, and as good a man, as the good old city knew, or any other good old city, town, or borough, in the good old world. Some people laughed to see the alteration in him, but he let them laugh, and little heeded them; for he was wise enough to know that nothing ever happened on this globe, for good, at which some people did not have their fill of laughter in the outset; and knowing that such as these would be blind anyway, he thought it quite as well that they should wrinkle up their eyes in grins, as have the malady in less attractive forms. His own heart laughed: and that was quite enough for him.

He had no further intercourse with Spirits, but lived upon the Total Abstinence Principle, ever afterwards; and it was always said of him, that he knew how to keep Christmas well, if any man alive possessed the knowledge. May that be truly said of us, and all of us! And so, as Tiny Tim observed, God Bless Us, Every One!

Starting with this extract, how does Dickens show the transformation of Scrooge's character in A Christmas Carol?

Write about:

- how Dickens show the transformation in this extract
- how Dickens show the transformation in the novel as a whole.

[30 marks]

Macbeth



Read the following extract from Act 1 Scene 2 and answer the question that follows.

At this point in the play, the Scottish army, led by Macbeth and Banquo are fighting a Norwegian invasion and a rebel army led by Macdonald.

Sergeant

Doubtful it stood;
As two spent swimmers, that do cling together
And choke their art. The merciless Macdonwald--
Worthy to be a rebel, for to that
The multiplying villanies of nature
Do swarm upon him--from the western isles
Of kerns and gallowglasses is supplied;
And fortune, on his damned quarrel smiling,
Show'd like a rebel's whore: but all's too weak:
For brave Macbeth--well he deserves that name--
Disdaining fortune, with his brandish'd steel,
Which smoked with bloody execution,
Like valour's minion carved out his passage
Till he faced the slave;
Which ne'er shook hands, nor bade farewell to him,
Till he unseam'd him from the nave to the chaps,
And fix'd his head upon our battlements.

DUNCAN

O valiant cousin! worthy gentleman!

Starting with this extract, how does Shakespeare present Macbeth as a powerful character?

Write about:

- how Shakespeare presents Macbeth as a powerful character in this extract
- how Shakespeare presents Macbeth as a powerful character in the play as a whole

[30 marks]

[AO4 4 marks]

Read the following extract from Act 1 Scene 7 and answer the question that follows.

At this point in the play, Macbeth is considering whether to kill Duncan.

Macbeth

If it were done when 'tis done, then 'twere well
It were done quickly: if the assassination
Could trammel up the consequence, and catch
With his surcease success; that but this blow
Might be the be-all and the end-all here,
But here, upon this bank and shoal of time,
We'd jump the life to come. But in these cases
We still have judgment here; that we but teach
Bloody instructions, which, being taught, return
To plague the inventor: this even-handed justice
Commends the ingredients of our poison'd chalice
To our own lips. He's here in double trust;
First, as I am his kinsman and his subject,
Strong both against the deed; then, as his host,
Who should against his murderer shut the door,
Not bear the knife myself. Besides, this Duncan
Hath borne his faculties so meek, hath been
So clear in his great office, that his virtues
Will plead like angels, trumpet-tongued, against
The deep damnation of his taking-off;
And pity, like a naked new-born babe,
Striding the blast, or heaven's cherubim, horsed
Upon the sightless couriers of the air,
Shall blow the horrid deed in every eye,
That tears shall drown the wind. I have no spur
To prick the sides of my intent, but only
Vaulting ambition, which o'erleaps itself
And falls on the other.

Starting with this extract, how does Shakespeare the issue of morality?

Write about:

- how Shakespeare presents the theme of morality in this extract
- how Shakespeare presents the theme of morality in the play as a whole

[30 marks]
[AO4 4 marks]

Read the following extract from Act 5 Scene 1 and answer the question that follows.

At this point in the play, a doctor has been called to see Lady Macbeth.

LADY MACBETH

Out, damned spot! out, I say!--One: two: why,
then, 'tis time to do't.--Hell is murky!--Fie, my
lord, fie! a soldier, and afeard? What need we
fear who knows it, when none can call our power to
account?--Yet who would have thought the old man
to have had so much blood in him.

Doctor

Do you mark that?

LADY MACBETH

The thane of Fife had a wife: where is she now?--
What, will these hands ne'er be clean?--No more o'
that, my lord, no more o' that: you mar all with
this starting.

...

LADY MACBETH

Here's the smell of the blood still: all the
perfumes of Arabia will not sweeten this little
hand. Oh, oh, oh!

Doctor

What a sigh is there! The heart is sorely charged.

Gentlewoman

I would not have such a heart in my bosom for the
dignity of the whole body.

Doctor

This disease is beyond my practise: yet I have known
those which have walked in their sleep who have died
holily in their beds.

...

LADY MACBETH

To bed, to bed! there's knocking at the gate:
come, come, come, give me your hand. What's
done cannot be undone.--To bed, to bed, to bed!

Exit

Starting with this extract, how does Shakespeare present the theme of guilt?

Write about:

- how Shakespeare presents the theme of guilt in this extract
- how Shakespeare presents the theme of guilt in the play as a whole

[30 marks]

[AO4 4 marks]

An Inspector Calls



- How is responsibility explored in An Inspector Calls?
- How are ideas about morality presented in An Inspector Calls?
- How does Priestley show his ideas inequality in An Inspector Calls?
- How does Priestley use Sheila's change throughout the play to present his ideas?
- How does Priestley present Gerald's relationships with women in the play?
- How does Priestley present the character of the Inspector to suggest ways that society should be improved?
- "We are members of one body. We are responsible for each other". How far is this idea important in An Inspector Calls?
- How does Priestley present Eva Smith in An Inspector Calls?
- How does Priestley create tension in An Inspector Calls?

Power and Conflict Poetry



Compare the ways poets present the power of memory in 'Poppies' and in one other poem from 'Power and Conflict'. [30 marks]

Poppies

Three days before Armistice Sunday
and poppies had already been placed
on individual war graves. Before you left,
I pinned one onto your lapel, crimped petals,
spasms of paper red, disrupting a blockade
of yellow bias binding around your blazer. 5

Sellotape bandaged around my hand,
I rounded up as many white cat hairs
as I could, smoothed down your shirt's
upturned collar, steeled the softening
of my face. I wanted to graze my nose
across the tip of your nose, play at
being Eskimos like we did when
you were little. I resisted the impulse
to run my fingers through the gelled
blackthorns of your hair. All my words
flattened, rolled, turned into felt, 10 15

slowly melting. I was brave, as I walked
with you, to the front door, threw
it open, the world overflowing
like a treasure chest. A split second
and you were away, intoxicated. 20
After you'd gone I went into your bedroom,
released a song bird from its cage.
Later a single dove flew from the pear tree,
and this is where it has led me, 25
skirting the church yard walls, my stomach busy
making tucks, darts, pleats, hat-less, without
a winter coat or reinforcements of scarf, gloves.

On reaching the top of the hill I traced
the inscriptions on the war memorial,
leaned against it like a wishbone. 30
The dove pulled freely against the sky,
an ornamental stitch. I listened, hoping to hear
your playground voice catching on the wind. 35

Jane Weir

Compare the ways poets present the abuse of power in 'London' and in one other poem from 'Power and Conflict'.

[30 marks]

London

I wandered through each chartered street,
Near where the chartered Thames does flow,
A mark in every face I meet,
Marks of weakness, marks of woe.

In every cry of every man,
In every infant's cry of fear,
In every voice, in every ban,
The mind-forged manacles I hear:

How the chimney-sweeper's cry
Every blackening church appals,
And the hapless soldier's sigh
Runs in blood down palace-walls.

But most, through midnight streets I hear
How the youthful harlot's curse
Blasts the new-born infant's tear,
And blights with plagues the marriage-hearse.

Compare the ways poets present the power of the natural world in 'Storm on the Island' and in one other poem from 'Power and Conflict'. [30 marks]

Storm on the Island

We are prepared: we build our houses squat,
Sink walls in rock and roof them with good slate.
The wizened earth had never troubled us
With hay, so as you can see, there are no stacks
Or stooks that can be lost. Nor are there trees
Which might prove company when it blows full
Blast: you know what I mean - leaves and branches
Can raise a chorus in a gale
So that you can listen to the thing you fear
Forgetting that it pummels your house too.
But there are no trees, no natural shelter.
You might think that the sea is company,
Exploding comfortably down on the cliffs
But no: when it begins, the flung spray hits
The very windows, spits like a tame cat
Turned savage. We just sit tight while wind dives
And strafes invisibly. Space is a salvo.
We are bombarded by the empty air.
Strange, it is a huge nothing that we fear.

Compare the ways poets present military conflict in 'The Charge of the Light Brigade' and in one other poem from 'Power and Conflict'. [30 marks]

'The Charge of the Light Brigade'

Half a league, half a league,
Half a league onward,
All in the valley of Death
Rode the six hundred.
"Forward, the Light Brigade!
Charge for the guns!" he said:
Into the valley of Death
Rode the six hundred.

"Forward, the Light Brigade!"
Was there a man dismay'd?
Not tho' the soldier knew
Some one had blunder'd:
Theirs not to make reply,
Theirs not to reason why,
Theirs but to do and die:
Into the valley of Death
Rode the six hundred.

Cannon to right of them,
Cannon to left of them,
Cannon in front of them
Volley'd and thunder'd;
Storm'd at with shot and shell,
Boldly they rode and well,
Into the jaws of Death,
Into the mouth of Hell
Rode the six hundred.

Flash'd all their sabres bare,
Flash'd as they turn'd in air
Sabring the gunners there,
Charging an army, while
All the world wonder'd:
Plunged in the battery-smoke
Right thro' the line they broke;
Cossack and Russian
Reel'd from the sabre-stroke
Shatter'd and Sunder'd.
Then they rode back, but not
Not the six hundred.

Cannon to right of them,
Cannon to left of them,
Cannon behind them
Volley'd and thunder'd;
Storm'd at with shot and shell,
While horse and hero fell,
They that had fought so well
Came thro' the jaws of Death,
Back from the mouth of Hell,
All that was left of them,
Left of six hundred.

When can their glory fade?
O the wild charge they made!
All the world wonder'd.
Honor the charge they made!
Honor the Light Brigade,
Noble six hundred!

Unseen Poetry

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Read the poem below and answer the question that follows.

To a Daughter Leaving Home

When I taught you
at eight to ride
a bicycle, loping along
beside you
as you wobbled away
on two round wheels,
my own mouth rounding
in surprise when you pulled
ahead down the curved
path of the park,
I kept waiting
for the thud
of your crash as I
sprinted to catch up,
while you grew
smaller, more breakable
with distance,
pumping, pumping
for your life, screaming
with laughter,
the hair flapping
behind you like a
handkerchief waving
goodbye.

Linda Pastan

What do you think the speaker feels about her daughter growing up **and** how does she present these feelings to the reader? (18 marks)

Symptoms

Although you have given me a stomach upset,
Weak knees, a lurching heart, a fuzzy brain,
A high-pitched laugh, a monumental phone bill,
A feeling of unworthiness, sharp pain
When you are somewhere else, a guilty conscience,
A longing, and a dread of what's in store,
A pulse rate for the Guinness Book of Records –
Life now is better than it was before.

Although you have given me a raging temper,
Insomnia, a rising sense of panic,
A hopeless challenge, bouts of introspection,
Raw, bitten nails, a voice that's strangely manic,
A selfish streak, a fear of isolation,
A silly smile, lips that are chapped and sore,
A running joke, a risk, an inspiration –
Life now is better than it was before.

Although you have given me a premonition,
Chattering teeth, a goal, a lot to lose,
A granted wish, mixed motives, superstitions,
Hang-ups and headaches, fear of awful news,
A bubble in my throat, a dare to swallow,
A crack of light under a closing door,
The crude, fantastic prospect of forever –
Life now is better than it was before.

Sophie Hannah

How does the poet present the speaker's feelings about being in love?

[18 marks]

How to Leave the World that Worships *Should*

Let faxes butter-curl on dusty shelves.
Let junkmail build its castles in the hush
of other people's halls. Let deadlines burst
and flash like glorious fireworks somewhere else.
As hours go softly by, let others curse
the roads where distant drivers queue like sheep.
Let e-mails fly like panicked, tiny birds.
Let phones, unanswered, ring themselves to sleep.

Above, the sky unrolls its telegram*,
immense and wordless, simply understood:
you've made your mark like birdtracks in the sand -
now make the air in your lungs your livelihood.
See how each wave arrives at last to heave
itself upon the beach and vanish. Breathe.

Ros Barber

* 'telegram' – an early form of urgent messaging

What do you think is the poet's attitude towards the way we live and work in the modern world **and** how does she present this attitude to the reader? (18 marks)

