

**GCSE**

English Homework



*A Christmas Carol by Charles Dickens*

AQA GCSE English Language

AQA GCSE English Literature

Name	
Teacher	

# *A Christmas Carol by Charles Dickens*

*The exam:*

You will answer one question on a nineteenth century novel during GCSE English Literature Paper 1.

The question will give you a short extract from the text to read and ask you to analyse a:

- Character;
- Theme;
- Attitude;
- Idea;



in that extract and across the novel as a whole.

You write your answer using **PEEE(L)**.

The question is worth **30 marks** with an additional **4 marks** for spelling, punctuation and grammar.

*Revision:*

To be prepared for the exam, you will need to make sure that you know:

- The plot – what happens, when, where and why;
- The characters – who they are, how they behave and what they do;
- The themes and ideas – what Dickens was exploring;
- Dickens' perspective – his viewpoint on events;
- Links to the history – Victorian England.

Try to learn quotations that you can include in your answer.

*Getting help:*

There are a variety of different websites with revision materials. Try:

[BBC Bitesize](#) – has information on the plot, characters and themes.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/education/topics/zcs8qty>

[York Notes](#) – have some free revision cards that you can download.

[https://www.yorknotes.com/gcse/a-christmas-carol-2017/revision-cards/01\\_characters](https://www.yorknotes.com/gcse/a-christmas-carol-2017/revision-cards/01_characters)

[Universal Teacher](#) – has comprehensive summaries.

<http://www.universalteacher.org.uk/gcse/xmascarol.htm>

[Sparknotes](#) – very good for quotes and more detail

<http://www.sparknotes.com/lit/christmascarol/>

## *Did you know?*

The whole text of the play is available [online](#) – use it to revise at home and find your key quotations!

<http://literature.org/authors/dickens-charles/christmas-carol/>

*Films:*

Why not try re-watching the film versions?



## TASK ONE: QUOTATIONS

SKILL – English Literature AO1 ‘Judicious use of precise references to support interpretations’

Scrooge is the *protagonist*<sup>1</sup> of the story but his behaviour is frequently *antagonistic*<sup>2</sup>. The novella explores Scrooge’s redemption and how he changes as a result of understanding Christmas and family.

Using the mindmap below, collect key quotations that explore Scrooge’s character and his role in the novella.

“Oh! but he was a tight-fisted hand  
at the grindstone Scrooge! a  
squeezing, wrenching, grasping,  
scraping, covetous old sinner.”

Chapter 1: Marley's Ghost



<sup>1</sup> Protagonist (noun) – the hero or main character of a story.

<sup>2</sup> Antagonistic (adjective) – showing hostility or aggression to something or someone.

## TASK TWO: ANALYSIS

SKILL – English Literature AO2 ‘Analysis of the writer’s methods with subject terminology used judiciously’

When you have learnt your key quotations, you will need to analyse them using the **PEEE(L)** structure during the exam. Consider what words the writer has chosen and what effect they are designed to have on the audience. How do they present the character to the audience?

Look at the example annotated quotation below, then analyse the other two quotations and three of your own from your mindmap.

IDEAS BOX – use these analytical terms to help you.						
Connotations	Positive Pronoun	Negative Phrase	Noun Clause	Verb Rhyme	Adjective Rhythm	Adverb

This phrase has negative connotations suggesting that Scrooge does not like to spend any money – he is a miser and skinflint. This makes him out to be an antagonist

This phrase shows that Scrooge is obsessed with work and links to his miserly nature – he only cares about work.

A list of powerful verbs with negative connotations suggesting that Scrooge is mean – he will grab any amount of money ‘grasping’.

“Oh! but he was a **tight-fisted** **hand at the grindstone** Scrooge! a **squeezing, wrenching, grasping, scraping, covetous** **old sinner**.” Chapter 1: Marley's Ghost

A negative adjective which means a great desire to own things – for Scrooge it is money

The noun ‘sinner’ has negative connotations suggesting he acts against the teaching of the Bible. A serious insult in the Victorian times.

This phrase shows Scrooge has reformed and that he will celebrate Christmas. The verb ‘honour’ has positive connotations of keeping an agreement.

“I will **honour Christmas in my heart**, and try to keep it all year. I will **live** in the **Past, Present, and the Future**. The Spirits of all Three shall **strive within me**.”

Chapter 4: The Last of the Spirits

"If they would rather die' said Scrooge, 'they had better do it, and decrease  
the surplus population." Chapter 1: Marley's Ghost

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## TASK THREE: ANSWERING EXAM QUESTIONS

SKILL – English Literature Paper 1

The exam question will provide you with a short extract from the novel and then ask you to analyse it looking at a specific theme, character or attitude.

To get the top mark, you need to:

Mark	AO	Features Assessed	Meaning
<b>Level 6</b>  <i>Convincing, critical analysis and exploration</i>  26-30 marks	AO1	Critical, exploratory, conceptualised response to task and whole text	You clearly understand the question and the play. You take your ideas from the extract and also from the whole play. You don't just re-tell the story as you are critical by analysing your choices of quotation.
		Judicious use of precise references to support interpretation(s)	You back up everything you say with a quotation from the text, either from the extract or quotations you know from the play. These can be stage directions or individual words and phrases.
	AO2	Analysis of writer's methods with subject terminology used judiciously	You analyse the writer's language in depth, commenting on word classes, connotations, effect on the reader and perspective/context. You use subject key words in your analysis for all things.
	AO3	Exploration of ideas/perspectives/contextual factors shown by specific, detailed links between context/text/task	Discuss the writer's viewpoint (main ideas) they want you to think about. Make links to the history e.g. when the text was written and what was important at the time. Link this to your quotation and the question.

When you are writing you PEEEL(L) answers, make sure you consider the key points above.

Use this checklist to help structure your answer:

Feature to include	✓
A quotation from the text that is relevant	
Analysing 2-3 key words or phrases	
Use of English subject words in analysis	
Links to the historical context	
Links to the writer's perspective	

**Point**

Your answer to the question/statement

**Evidence**

An embedded quotation or phrase using “ ” or ‘ ‘

**Explain**

What the quotation means, how it answers the question and the effect on the audience

**Explore**

Analysis of the key words/phrases in the quotation using subject specific terms

**Link**

To the historical context/writer's perspective

Starting with this extract, Source A, how does Dickens present the importance of charity in *A Christmas Carol*.

Write about:

- How Dickens presents attitudes towards charity in this extract
- How Dickens presents attitudes towards charity in the novella as a whole

[30 marks]

AO4 [4 marks]

**Source A**

‘At this festive season of the year, Mr Scrooge,’ said the gentleman, taking up a pen, ‘it is more than usually desirable that we should make some slight provision for the poor and destitute, who suffer greatly at the present time. Many thousands are in want of common necessities; hundreds of thousands are in want of common comforts, sir.’

‘Are there no prisons?’ asked Scrooge.

‘Plenty of prisons,’ said the gentleman, laying down the pen again.

‘And the Union workhouses?’ demanded Scrooge. ‘Are they still in operation?’

‘They are. Still,’ returned the gentleman, ‘I wish I could say they were not.’

‘The Treadmill and the Poor Law are in full vigour, then?’ said Scrooge.

‘Both very busy.’

‘Oh! I was afraid, from what you said at first, that something had occurred to stop them in their useful course,’ said Scrooge. ‘I’m very glad to hear it.’

‘Under the impression that they scarcely furnish Christian cheer of mind or body to the multitude,’ returned the gentlemen, ‘a few of us are endeavouring to raise a fund to buy the Poor some meat and drink, and means of warmth. We choose this time because it is a time, of all others, when Want is keenly felt, and Abundance rejoices. What shall I put you down for?’

‘Nothing!’ Scrooge replied.

‘You wish to be anonymous?’

‘I wish to be left alone,’ said Scrooge. ‘Since you ask me what I wish, gentlemen, that is my answer. I don’t make merry myself at Christmas, and I can’t afford to make idle people merry. I help to support the establishments I have mentioned: they cost enough: and those who are badly off must go there.’

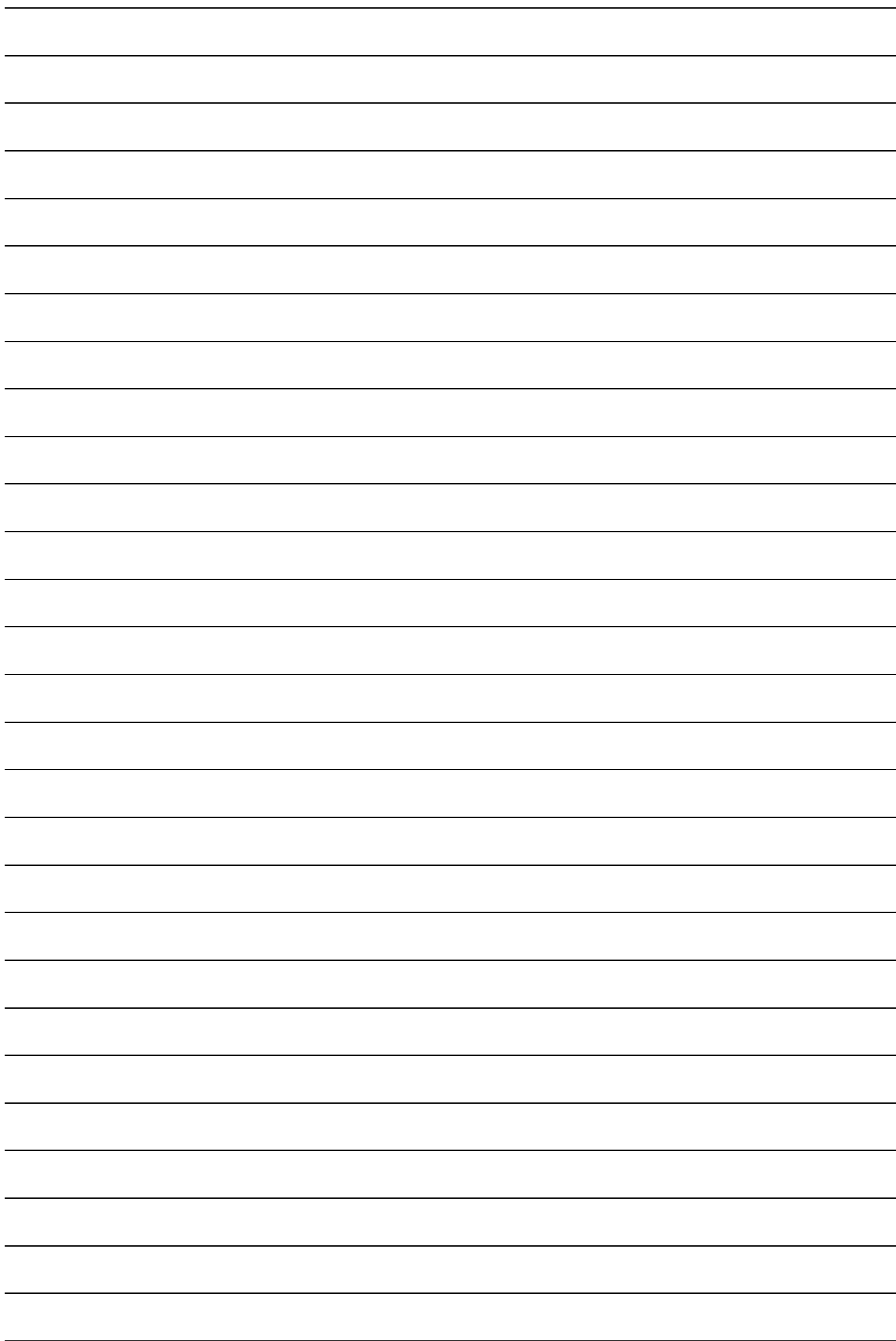
‘Many can’t go there; and many would rather die.’

‘If they would rather die,’ said Scrooge, ‘they had better do it, and decrease the surplus population. Besides – excuse me – I don’t know that.’

‘But you might know it,’ observed the gentleman.

‘It’s not my business,’ Scrooge returned. ‘It’s enough for a man to understand his own business, and not to interfere with other people’s. Mine occupies me constantly. Good afternoon, gentlemen!’

Seeing clearly that it would be useless to pursue their point, the gentlemen withdrew. Scrooge resumed his labours with an improved opinion of himself, and in a more facetious temper than was usual with him.



[illegible]

Targets and reflection:

★ Star	
★ Star	
✎ Wish	

## TASK FOUR: PERSPECTIVE

SKILL – English Language AO3 ‘Compare writers’ ideas and perspectives, as well as how those are conveyed, across two or more texts.’

English Language, Paper 2, Question 4 asks you to compare and examine the writer’s *perspective* which is also known as *viewpoint*.

### PERSPECTIVE: (noun)

A particular attitude towards a point of view.

The writer’s *opinion* about something.



When you are identifying perspective, ask yourself the following questions:

- What is the writer’s *opinion*?
- Are they *positive* or *negative* about the topic?
- What sorts of language have they chosen – are the *connotations* of key words positive or negative?
- Is there a clear *argument*?

Look at the extract below, **Source B**, from the Oxfam website – what is their perspective on poverty?



One in five people in the UK today are struggling to put food on the table and heat their homes. More than half a million people had to rely on food banks to feed themselves and their families in the past year. Oxfam won't live with the injustice of poverty, whatever it looks like, wherever it exists and that includes poverty in our own backyard.

Oxfam tackles poverty wherever we find it, including in the UK - one of the richest countries in the world. We are using our network of high street shops to build people's life chances- by supporting them to volunteer there, and gain valuable skills and confidence to enable them to take the next step in their lives. In our work on food poverty, we are working collaboratively with other organisations to establish a measure in the UK that will help us tackle the root causes more effectively. And we continue to campaign for decision makers to take action to tackle economic inequality and focus on reducing poverty.

We consult communities, and influence policy makers and the general public to create change for people living in poverty and narrow the growing gap between the richest and the poorest. Our vision is of a fairer country where no one lives with poverty, where women and men are treated equally and everyone has the chance to influence decisions that affect their lives.

Now thinking about the extract from the novella you have read, how are Scrooge and the charity collector’s *perspectives* on the poor different?

Complete the table with a quotation to support your idea.

Scrooge		Charity Collector	
			
Perspective/viewpoint	Evidence	Perspective/viewpoint	Evidence
<i>Scrooge believes that the poor should die if they can't afford to live or want to get help.</i>		<i>The charity collector is opposed to the workhouses. He wishes they didn't exist.</i>	<i>'They are. Still,' returned the gentleman, 'I wish I could say they were not.'</i>

Overall, what do you think Dickens’ perspective on the poor is?

Consider:

- What you have read in the extract;
- How Scrooge’s behaviour changes in the novella;
- How the poor are portrayed in the novella.

Dickens’ perspective on the poor is:

For this question, you need to refer to the **whole of source A**, the interaction between Scrooge and the charity collectors, together with **source B**, the extract from the Oxfam website.

Compare how the two writers **convey** (show) their attitudes towards poverty.

In your answer, you ~~should~~ must:

- Compare their different attitudes;
- Compare the **methods** (way) they use to convey their attitudes;
- Support your ideas with **references** (quotations) to both texts.

**[16 marks]**

[illegible]

Mark	AO	Skills Descriptors	Example
<b>Level 4</b>  <i>Perceptive, detailed</i>  13-16 marks	AO3	Compare ideas and perspectives in a perceptive way	<i>Dickens view on poverty is ____ and is shown when _____. Whereas, Oxfam's view on poverty is _____.</i>
		Analyses how writers' methods are used	<i>Dickens uses a range of emotive language and powerful verbs with negative connotations to show Scrooge's views are _____.</i>
		Selects a range of judicious supporting detail from both texts	<i>Embed your quotations into your answer. 'The powerful verb 'die' has _____.'</i>
		Showing a detailed understanding of the different ideas and perspectives in both texts	<i>Dickens wants the reader to empathise with the poor and he feels _____. Similarly, Oxfam are a charity and want donations from the public, so they also want empathy because _____.</i>

## TASK FIVE: SUMMARY

SKILL – English Language AO1 ‘Identify and interpret explicit information and ideas. Select and synthesise evidence from different texts.’

In GCSE English Language, Paper 2, Question 2 you are tasked with producing a *summary*. This means that you need to identify all the main points of a text.

The mark scheme tells us:



Mark	AO	Skills Descriptors	Example
<b>Level 4</b>  <i>Perceptive, summary</i>  7-8 marks	AO1	Shows perceptive synthesis and interpretation of both texts	Source A shows that Scrooge discriminates against the poor when he claims he ‘can’t afford’ to support them and denigrates them as ‘idle’ as he thinks they are lazy. He then gives a variety of unpleasant suggestions of what to do instead of charity, including ‘prison’ and the ‘workhouses... The Treadmill and the Poor Law...’ This shocks the charity collector, who claims the poor would ‘rather die’ than go there. Scrooge is characterised as heartless as he claims if they would ‘rather die’ then ‘they should do it’ as he feels there are too many poor people ‘decrease the surplus population.’ Overall, Scrooge is shown to be an antagonist who doesn’t care about poor people.
		Makes perceptive inferences from both texts	
		Makes judicious references/use of textual detail relevant to the focus of the question	
		Statements show perceptive differences between texts	

In the exam, you will need to *compare* between two sources. This means you will need to use comparative discourse markers to show how the texts are similar and different.

Why not try:

Adding	Comparing	Contrasting
<i>also</i> <i>furthermore</i> <i>moreover</i> <i>additionally</i>	<i>similarly</i> <i>equally</i> <i>likewise</i> <i>as with</i>	<i>whereas</i> <i>instead</i> <i>alternatively</i> <i>conversely</i>

You need to refer to **Source A** and **Source C** for this question.

Both sources show how Scrooge’s attitude affects the poor.

Use details from both sources to write a summary of the different ways Scrooges attitude affects the poor.

- Consider your own impressions of Mercutio;
- Evaluate how the writer creates sympathy for Mercutio;
- Support your response with references to the text.

**[8 marks]**

## Source C

"A Merry Christmas to us all, my dears. God bless us!"

Which all the family re-echoed.

"God bless us every one!" said Tiny Tim, the last of all.

He sat very close to his father's side upon his little stool. Bob held his withered little hand in his, as if he loved the child, and wished to keep him by his side, and dreaded that he might be taken from him.

"Spirit," said Scrooge, with an interest he had never felt before, "tell me if Tiny Tim will live."

"I see a vacant seat," replied the Ghost, "in the poor chimney-corner, and a crutch without an owner, carefully preserved. If these shadows remain unaltered by the Future, the child will die."

"No, no," said Scrooge. "Oh, no, kind Spirit! say he will be spared."

"If these shadows remain unaltered by the Future, none other of my race," returned the Ghost, "will find him here. What then? If he be like to die, he had better do it, and decrease the surplus population."

Scrooge hung his head to hear his own words quoted by the Spirit, and was overcome with penitence and grief.

"Man," said the Ghost, "if man you be in heart, not adamant, forbear that wicked cant until you have discovered What the surplus is, and Where it is. Will you decide what men shall live, what men shall die? It may be, that in the sight of Heaven, you are more worthless and less fit to live than millions like this poor man's child. Oh God! to hear the Insect on the leaf pronouncing on the too much life among his hungry brothers in the dust!"

Scrooge bent before the Ghost's rebuke, and trembling cast his eyes upon the ground. But he raised them speedily, on hearing his own name.

"Mr. Scrooge!" said Bob; "I'll give you Mr. Scrooge, the Founder of the Feast!"

"The Founder of the Feast indeed!" cried Mrs. Cratchit, reddening. "I wish I had him here. I'd give him a piece of my mind to feast upon, and I hope he'd have a good appetite for it."

"My dear," said Bob, "the children! Christmas Day."

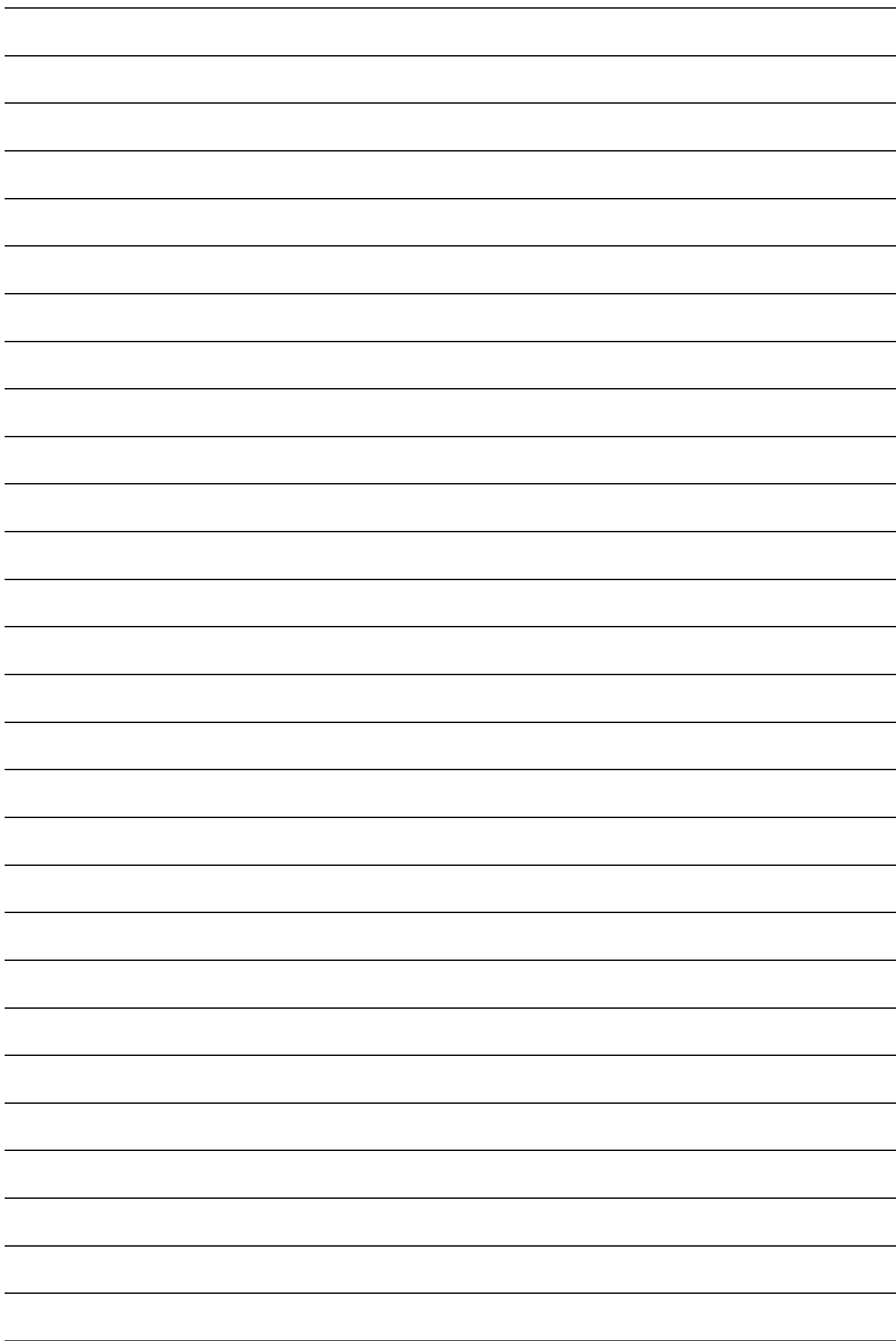
"It should be Christmas Day, I am sure," said she, "on which one drinks the health of such an odious, stingy, hard, unfeeling man as Mr. Scrooge. You know he is, Robert! Nobody knows it better than you do, poor fellow!"

"My dear," was Bob's mild answer, "Christmas Day."

"I'll drink his health for your sake and the Day's," said Mrs. Cratchit, "not for his. Long life to him! A merry Christmas and a happy new year! He'll be very merry and very happy, I have no doubt!"

The children drank the toast after her. It was the first of their proceedings which had no heartiness. Tiny Tim drank it last of all, but he didn't care twopence for it. Scrooge was the Ogre of the family. The mention of his name cast a dark shadow on the party, which was not dispelled for full five minutes.





[illegible]

## How do you think you did?

Targets and reflection:

★ Star	
★ Star	
✎ Wish	

## **TASK SIX: WRITING**

SKILL – English Language AO5 Content and Organisation ‘Communicate clearly, effectively and imaginatively, selecting and adapting tone, style and register for different forms, purposes and audiences. Organise information and ideas, using structural and grammatical features to support coherence and cohesion of texts.’

AO6 Technical Accuracy Students must use a range of vocabulary and sentence structures for clarity, purpose and effect, with accurate spelling and punctuation.

**REMEMBER! GCSE English Language Question 5 is worth  
25% of your GCSE!**



### **Section B: Writing**

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

Write in full sentences.

You are reminded of the need to plan your answer.

You should leave enough time to check your work at the end.

For Paper 2 Question 5 you will be asked to write in a specific *form*. This is the way something has been written and the specific rules that it follows.

You could be asked to write:

Form	Conventions/Rules
Newspaper article	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Headline;</li><li>• Subheadings.</li></ul>
Speech	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Inclusive pronouns;</li><li>• Direct address;</li><li>• Rhetorical features.</li></ul>
Letter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Date;</li><li>• Salutation/greeting ‘Dear Sir/Madam’;</li><li>• Sign-off e.g. <i>Yours sincerely/faithfully</i>.</li></ul>
Diary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Date;</li><li>• <i>Dear Diary</i>;</li><li>• Descriptive features.</li></ul>
Transcript	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Name of the speaker.</li></ul>

Question:

‘Teenagers always want what they cannot have. They should accept they can’t have everything they want.’

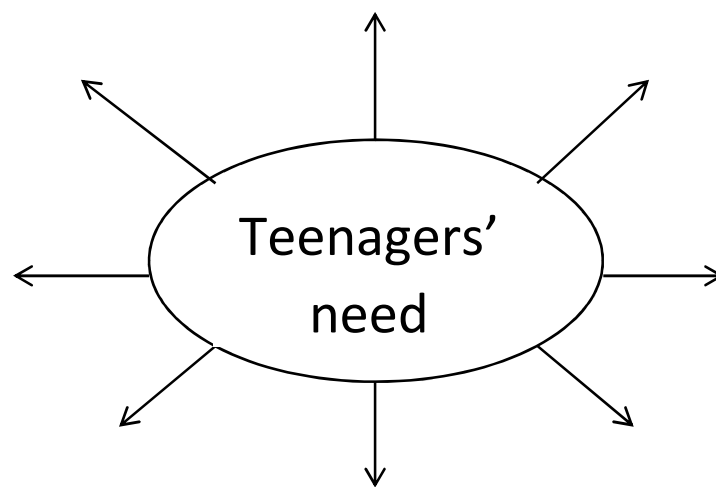
Write a newspaper article in which you explain your point of view on this issue.

(24 marks for content and organisation  
16 marks for accuracy)  
**[40 marks]**

Plan:

Sped your first ten minutes completing your mindmap plan. Use Power of 3 planning to give you enough ideas to write for thirty minutes.

Use the planning ideas below to help you:

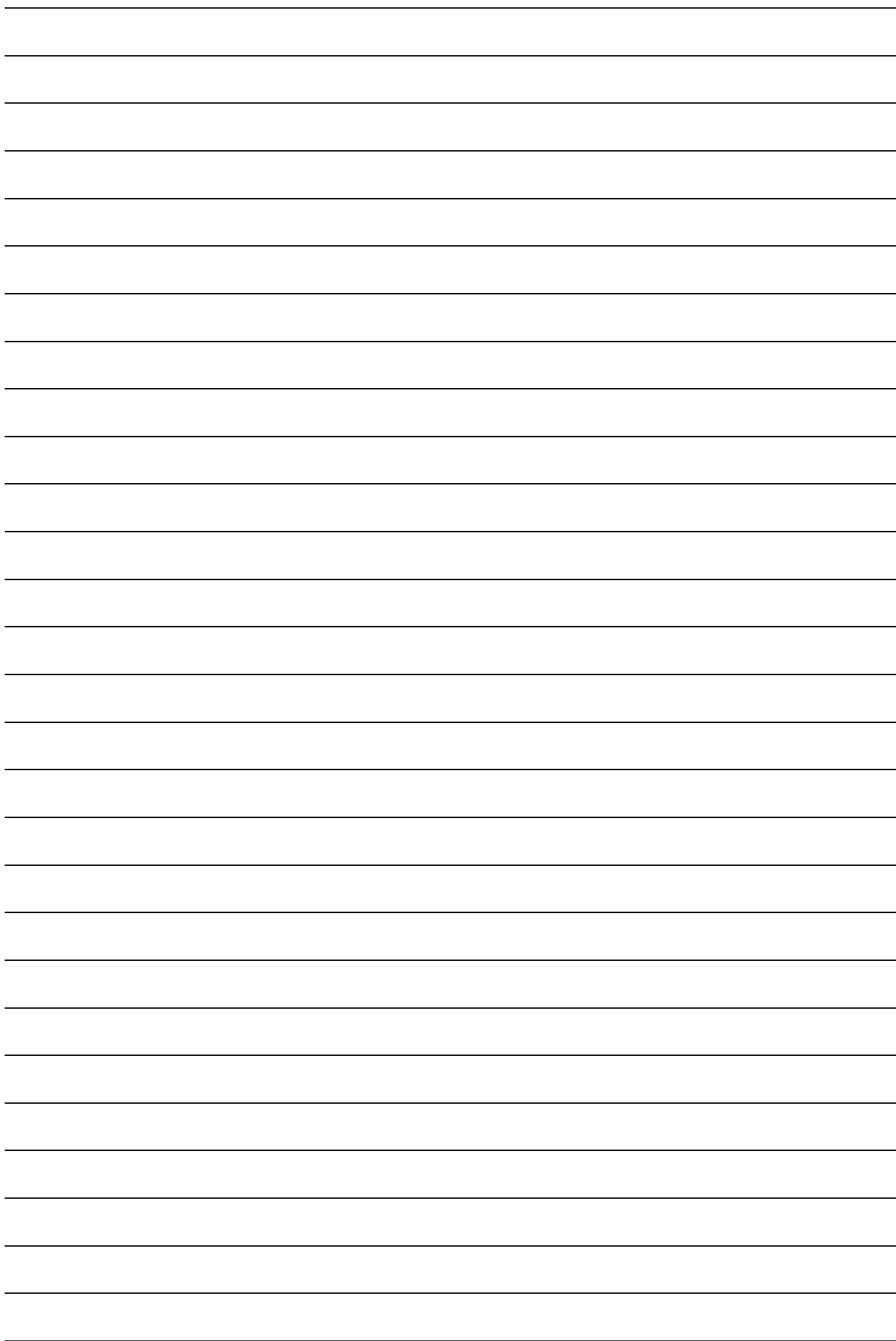


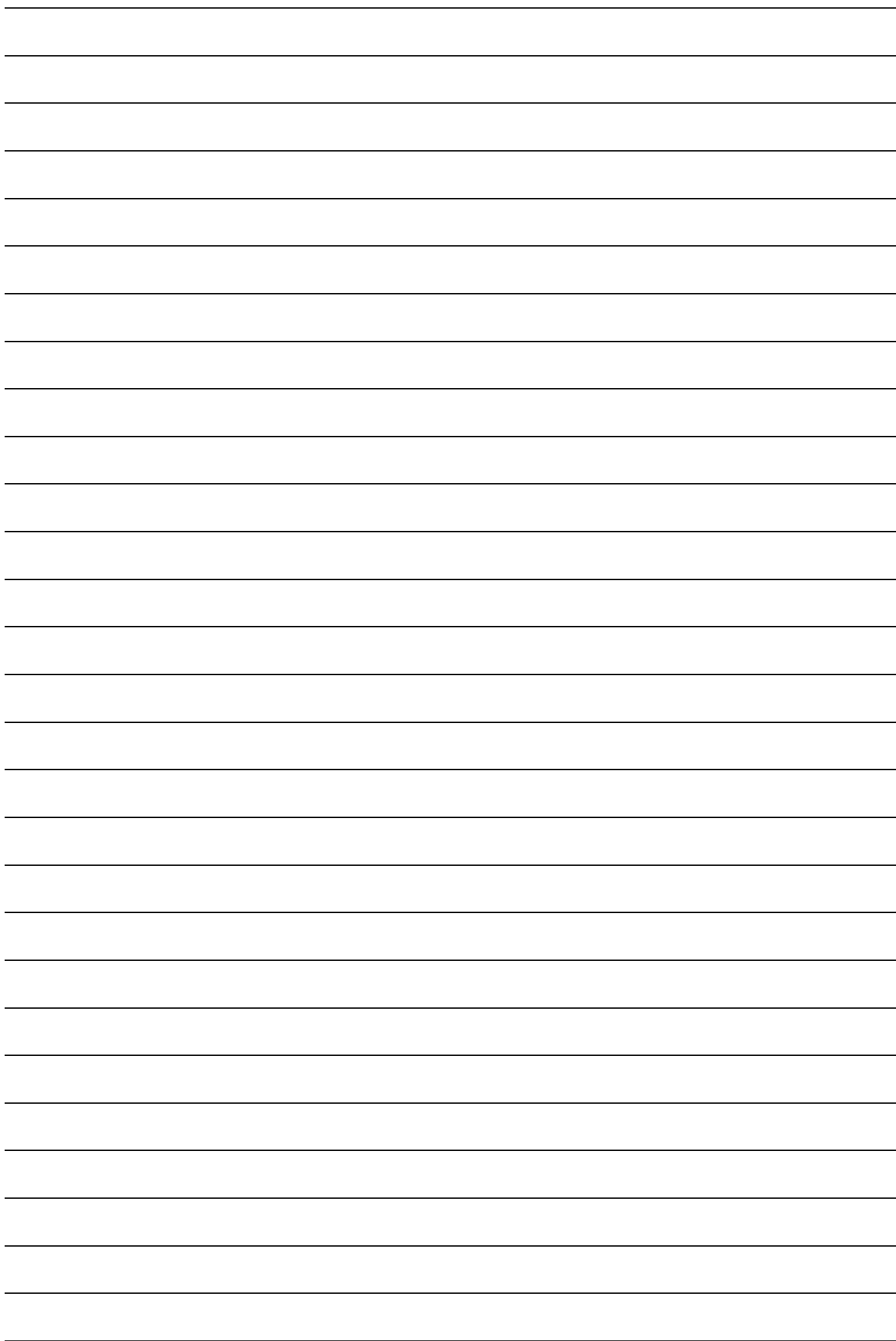
When you write, remember that you need to craft linguistic devices, use a variety of sentence lengths and structures and vary your punctuation. Use the checklist below – how many can you get?

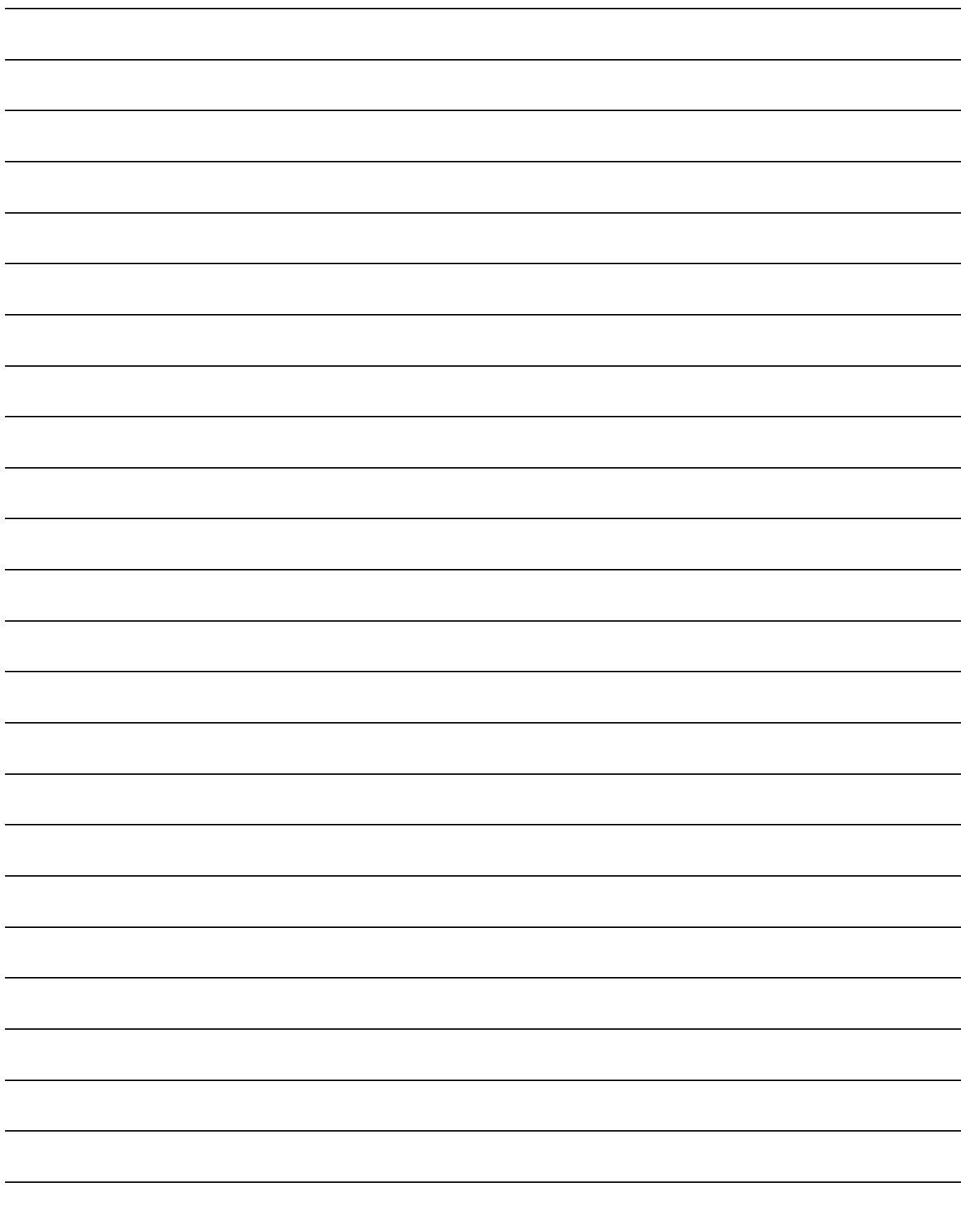
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## How do you think you did?

Look at the mark scheme below:

Level	Skill descriptor	What this means
<b>Level 4</b> <b>Compelling and Convincing</b> <b>19-24 marks</b>	Content:	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Register is convincing and compelling for audience</li> </ul>	You have used the right level of <i>formality</i> . Your text sounds 'right' for the intended audience. It is believable and makes the reader want to read on.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assuredly matched to purpose</li> </ul>	Your choice of language and features fits with the task and the target audience. You have written in the correct form
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Extensive and ambitious vocabulary</li> </ul>	You have used a wide range of interesting words (synonyms) and polysyllabic (long) words to show off your vocabulary.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sustained crafting of linguistic features</li> </ul>	You have used SPAMROD all the way through. You have deliberately chosen to create effects and used the language for key reasons. You have thought about each feature and why it should be used
	Organisation	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Varied and inventive use of structural features</li> </ul>	You have written in paragraphs (using TiPToP) and varied the length of your paragraphs for effect. You have varied your sentences using SCS1.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Writing is compelling, incorporating a range of convincing and complex ideas</li> </ul>	You planned thoroughly meaning that you had a lot to say. The reader wants to read on as your writing is believable and contains interesting and intelligent ideas.
<b>Level 4</b> <b>13-16 marks</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Sentence demarcation is consistently secure and consistently accurate</li> </ul>	You have used capital letters and full stops accurately. You have used commas where needed.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Wide range of punctuation is used with a high level of accuracy</li> </ul>	You have used a range of punctuation (... - ; : ) accurately.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Uses a full range of appropriate sentence forms for effect</li> </ul>	You have used all of the sentences from SCS1 and begun to create deliberate effects using them
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Uses Standard English consistently and appropriately with secure control of complex grammatical structures</li> </ul>	Your writing is always formal; you don't use slang or swear. You are able to write longer, more complicated subordinate sentences that make sense.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ High level of accuracy in spelling, including ambitious vocabulary</li> </ul>	You have checked your spelling for errors and there are very few, even in long or difficult words.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Extensive and ambitious use of vocabulary</li> </ul>	You have used a wide range of synonyms and polysyllabic words.

The mark I would give myself is:

/24	Content	/16	SPaG
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## Reflection:

Three key things I have learnt about *A Christmas Carol* are:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

I still feel that I need to work on...

When comparing perspective and summarising texts, I feel I have done well at:

- ✓
- ✓
- ✓

I can still improve by...



Please can I have more help with...