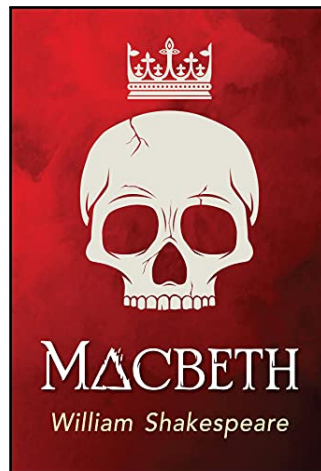
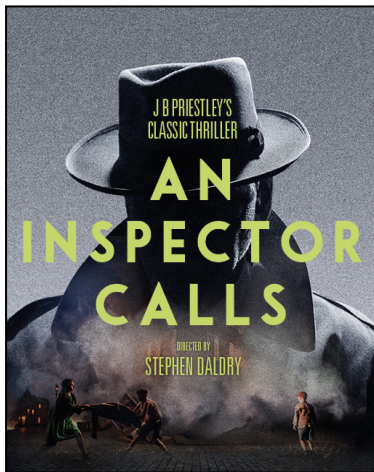




**Year 11**

**English Revision Booklet**

**October Half Term**



**Student Name:**

# 'An Inspector Calls' Knowledge Organiser

## Brief Plot Summary

The play takes place in the comfortable dining room of the Birlings, a middle class family from the Midlands. The year is 1912.

**Act One:** The Birling family are celebrating the engagement of Sheila Birling to Gerald Croft. A police inspector arrives and announces that a girl has died. The audience discovers that Arthur Birling (the patriarch of the family) sacked the girl (Eva Smith) from her job because she was striking for better pay and working conditions. Sheila Birling then got her sacked from her next job because she felt the girl laughed at her when Sheila was trying on clothes in a shop. The audience then learns that Eva Smith changed her name to Daisy Renton. It becomes clear that Gerald Croft knew her and was seeing her romantically at the same time as Sheila.

**Act Two:** The audience discovers that Daisy was Gerald's mistress for a time. However, he broke it off when she fell in love with him. Sheila breaks off her engagement to Gerald. Sybil Birling then finds that she knew the girl. Daisy/Eva had come to Sybil's charity asking for help because she had fallen pregnant. Sybil Birling refused to help her because Daisy used the Birling name when she visited the charity. Mrs Birling refuses to take any responsibility for what happened to the girl. She says it is the fault of the man Daisy was seeing. Sheila realises that this man is most likely Eric (her brother).

**Act Three:** Eric confesses to having an affair with Daisy. She told him that she was pregnant and he tried to help her by stealing money. She eventually refused his help when she realised that the money he was giving her was stolen. The Birlings and Gerald Croft begin to reflect on their feelings of responsibility for what happened to the girl. The younger generation (Sheila and Eric) feel much more responsible than the older members of the group. The family then begin to suspect that the inspector was not genuine. Gerald phones the infirmary and finds out that no girl has recently died there. The family begins to rejoice but soon the phone rings. The police are calling to say that a young woman has died in the infirmary and that a police inspector is on his way to visit the family.

## Characters

**Arthur Birling:** Head of the household. Birling is a wealthy business owner. He is rich but still wishes for a higher standing in the community. He strives for acceptance by the upper middle class and wishes for a knighthood.

**Sybil Birling:** She is the mother of Sheila and Eric. Sybil Birling is quite snobbish and cold-hearted and cares about her position in society above all other considerations.

**Sheila Birling:** She is in her early to mid-twenties and has become engaged to Gerald Croft at the beginning of the play. She is attractive but insecure and is more easily shocked than the rest of the family. She becomes one of the most moral characters in the play.

**Eric Birling:** He is the younger brother of Sheila and the family worries about his tendency to drink. He clearly seems to be a lost soul at the beginning of the play. He becomes, like Sheila, one of the moral spokespersons in the play.

**Gerald Croft:** Slightly older than Sheila, he is from a socially and financially secure background (one Arthur Birling strives towards). He is successful in business but also a liar and it is soon discovered that he has been unfaithful to Sheila.

**Eva Smith/Daisy Renton:** The audience never meets this character – she is the focus of most of the conversation in the play but is never seen. Eva was a worker in Arthur Birling's factory before being sacked from this and another job. She falls on hard times and, by the time the play begins, has died by her own hand.

**Inspector Goole:** The Inspector is shown to be a 'fake' inspector by the end of the play. He is purposeful and moral and holds nothing back in trying to get the family to confess their sins. When we learn that he is not a real inspector, we are left to wonder who, or indeed what, he is.



## Context

The play is set in 1912 but was written in 1945 (just after the Second World War). J. B. Priestley is therefore looking back over the bloody history of both World Wars and the Russian Revolution. He seems to be warning the characters of the consequences of caring solely for oneself.

The setting, in 1912, also allows for Priestley to look back on a social class system he did not agree with. The character of the Inspector is outside this class system and so able to attack its values.

The Titanic is mentioned in the opening moments of the play as a feat of modern engineering. The audience watching the play would be aware of the fate of the Titanic and so laugh or cringe at the comments made by Arthur Birling and Gerald Croft.

J.B. Priestley's politics and beliefs strongly mirrored those he wrote for his character, Inspector Goole.

The finished play was sent originally to Moscow, the home of Communism. It was here that it had its world premiere. Communism was a political movement that fought for the social and political equality for all that Priestley believed in.

Priestley had fought in the trenches in the First World War and was deeply aware of the depths of human suffering.

## Key Vocabulary and Techniques:

Act

Setting

Characters

Simile

Dramatic irony

Stage directions

Emotive language

Staging

Play

Playwright

Scene

**Themes**

**Social Class**

- The Birlings are comfortably middle class but strive for more.
- The working classes are shown as having little autonomy in the system. They have little opportunity to work for something better. Eva/Daisy represents this class.
- The Inspector is outside of the class system and seeks to attack it by showing its faults.

**Conflict between Generations**

- Sheila and Eric begin to find their parents old-fashioned and rigid throughout the play.
- The older Birlings still treat Sheila and Eric as children, even though they are grown up.
- Eric and, to a greater extent, Sheila begin to hate their parents' attitudes about society towards the end of the play.

**Judgement**

- The play functions like a medieval morality play – holding a mirror up to the characters and showing what they have done wrong.
- The judgment here is secular (rather than religious) in keeping with Priestley's socialist interests. The Inspector is from the police – not God.
- Sheila and Eric seem to learn more from the lesson than the other characters. Arthur, Sybil and even Gerald prefer to consider the entire thing a hoax that they can easily forget.

**Loss of Innocence**

- There is a certain innocence (or lack of understanding) in the Birlings at the beginning of the play. They seem completely oblivious to their actions having any consequences.
- The older generation is seen as rigid and lacking in ability to learn from mistakes. Sheila and Eric are younger and begin to question their own decisions.

**Deception**

- At one point or another, most of the characters deceive others about their knowledge of Eva/Daisy.
- Sybil Birling is honest about her dealings with Eva/Daisy but deceives herself into thinking that she is not in some way responsible for Eva's fate.
- Some of the characters (Arthur, Gerald and Sybil) continue to deceive themselves about their involvement throughout the play.
- We are never certain of the depth of the Inspector's deception throughout the play. Is Eva/Daisy really dead? Is he really an inspector? Are Eva and Daisy the same person?

**Symbols and Motifs:**

The following can be seen as symbols in the play: the Inspector; Eva/Daisy; the photograph; the 'Titanic'; the engagement ring; the port; golf. The following motifs recur throughout the play: guilt; uncertainty; deception and truth; secrets; class; possession and greed; ambition.

**Key Vocabulary:**

cheap labour	gender	provincial
class	Goole/ghoul	respectability
confession	hierarchy	snobbish
confidence	immoral/moral	socialist
deception	inquiry	submissive
emancipation	inter-generational	superficial
engagement	judgement	vulgar
exploitation	male-dominated	

**Key Quotations:**

'In fact, I insist upon being one of the family now. I've been trying long enough, haven't I?'  
**Gerald, Act One**

'Gerald, I'm going to tell you frankly, without any pretences, that your engagement to Sheila means a tremendous lot to me ... You're just the kind of son-in-law I've always wanted.'  
**Arthur, Act One**

'Why, a friend of mine went over this new liner last week – the Titanic – she sails next week – forty-six thousand eight hundred tons – forty-six thousand eight hundred tons – New York in five days – and every luxury – and unsinkable, absolutely unsinkable.'  
**Arthur, Act One**

'You seem to be a very well-behaved family to me –' 'We think we are' **Gerald and Arthur, Act One**  
'It's the way I like to go to work. One person and one line of inquiry at a time. Otherwise there's a muddle.'  
**The Inspector, Act One**

'Still, I can't accept any responsibility. If we were all responsible for everything that happened to everybody we'd had anything to do with, it would be very awkward, wouldn't it?' **Arthur, Act One**

'But these girls aren't cheap labour – they're people.'  
**Sheila, Act One**

'Why – you fool – he knows! Of course he knows. And I hate to think how much he knows that we don't know yet. You'll see. You'll see.'  
**Sheila, Act One**

'You mustn't try to build up a kind of wall between us and that girl. If you do, then the Inspector will just break it down. And it'll be all the worse when he does.'  
**Sheila, Act Two**

'I suppose it was inevitable. She was young and pretty and warm-hearted – and intensely grateful. I became at once the most important person in her life – you understand?' **Gerald, Act Two**

'If you think you can bring any pressure to bear upon me, Inspector, you're quite mistaken. Unlike the other three, I did nothing I'm ashamed of or that won't bear investigation.'  
**Sybil, Act Two**

'But just remember this. One Eva Smith has gone – but there are millions and millions and millions of Eva Smiths and John Smiths still left with us, with their lives, their hopes and fears, their suffering, and chance of happiness, all intertwined with our lives, with what we think and say and do. We don't live alone. We are members of one body. We are responsible for each other. And I tell you that the time will soon come when, if men will not learn that lesson, then they will be taught it in fire and blood and anguish.'  
**The Inspector, Act Three**

'That fellow obviously didn't like us. He was prejudiced from the start. Probably a Socialist or some sort of crank – he talked like one.'  
**Arthur, Act Three**

'It's what happened to the girl and what we all did to her that matters. And I still feel the same about it, and that's why I don't feel like sitting down and having a nice cosy talk.'  
**Eric, Act Three**

'That was the police. A girl has just died – on her way to the Infirmary – after swallowing some disinfectant. And a police inspector is on his way here – to ask some questions.'  
**Birling, Act Three**

## An Inspector Calls

**Read the overview of the play to remind yourself of the plot.**

**Then, have a go at the 'check my knowledge' questions.**

An Inspector Calls is a three-act play with one setting: the dining room of the Birling family. The play is set in 1912 in the fictional city of Brumley, in the north of England. Arthur and Sybil Birling, their two children Sheila and Eric, and their visitor, Gerald Croft, have just finished a celebratory dinner following Sheila's engagement to Gerald.

A police inspector arrives at the Birlings' house and informs them that a young girl, Eva Smith, has committed suicide after having swallowed disinfectant. It is revealed that Eva used to work in Arthur Birling's factory and had subsequently been dismissed for her participation in a pay strike. The Inspector further reveals that Sheila was also responsible for having Eva dismissed from her next job as an assistant in a dress shop, after making a complaint about Eva's conduct towards her. When the Inspector reveals that Eva had changed her name to Daisy Renton, Gerald confesses to having had an affair with her. Sheila returns her engagement ring to him.

Sybil Birling is also forced to confess to having known Eva. Sybil had refused Eva's application for aid from her charitable organisation after she discovered the girl was pregnant. Eva had refused to marry the father of the child, who is revealed to have been Eric. Eric admits to having got Eva pregnant and having stolen money from his father in order to help her. The Inspector rebukes the Birling family and Gerald for their involvement with Eva and how their actions have led to her death. The Inspector leaves.

Gerald learns that the Inspector appears to have been a fraud, prompting Arthur to ring the Chief Constable who confirms their suspicion. Mr. and Mrs. Birling and Gerald rejoice on having avoided a public scandal regarding Eva, while Sheila and Eric are distraught over their poor behaviour toward the girl. Arthur rings the Infirmary and is informed there are no recent admission records of a girl who has died from suicide. As Gerald attempts to return the engagement ring to Sheila, the telephone rings. A police inspector is on his way to the house to make inquiries about a girl who has just died on her way to the Infirmary, having swallowed disinfectant.

The play ends.

### **Check My Knowledge:**

1. Who has committed suicide at the start of the play?
2. Where and when was the play set?
3. Why did Eva lose her job at Mr Birling's factory?
4. Why did Eva lose her job as an assistant in a dress shop?
5. What new name did Eva give herself and why does this link to Gerald?
6. How is Mrs Birling involved in the story of Eva?
7. What do we find out about Eric that Mrs Birling was unaware of?
8. How does the play end?

### **Stretch yourself**

#### **Can you answer these?**

1. What is socialism?
2. Whose ideas is it based on?
3. Which social class had the most power when the play was set?
4. What is capitalism?
5. What were Priestley's views on capitalism?

### **Quotation Explosions:**

Here are some recognisable quotations from *An Inspector Calls*. Can you do a quotation explosion on some or all of them? Consider the following:

- Language
  - Priestley's intentions
  - Zooming in to word choices
- 1) "as if we were all mixed up together like bees in a hive – community and all that nonsense" Mr Birling
  - 2) "If we were all responsible for everything that happened to everybody we'd had anything to do with, it would be very awkward, wouldn't it?" Mr Birling
  - 3) "But I accept no blame for it at all" Mrs Birling
  - 4) "But these girls aren't cheap labour – they're people" Sheila
  - 5) "We are all members of one body" Inspector





# Macbeth – Knowledge Organiser

## Plot summary

Act I scene i – The three witches gather to in a thunder storm to meet Macbeth  
 Act I scene ii – Duncan hears reports of the battle in which Macbeth proves himself a hero and also of the treachery of the Thane of Cawdor.  
 Act I scene iii – Macbeth & Banquo meet the witches and hear the predictions that he will be Thane of Cawdor and the next king. Ross arrives to confirm that Macbeth is the new Thane of Cawdor.  
 Act I scene iv – Duncan decides to make his son Malcolm the heir to his throne and tells Macbeth that he will visit his castle.  
 Act I scene v – Lady Macbeth reads a letter from her husband about the events so far and makes up her mind to murder Duncan.  
 Act I scene vi – Duncan arrives at Macbeth's castle and is welcomed by Lady Macbeth.  
 Act I scene vii – Macbeth decides he cannot go through with the plot but Lady Macbeth persuades him to change his mind.  
 Act II scene i – Banquo feels uneasy about what might happen in the night. Macbeth makes his way to Duncan's room to kill him and sees a ghostly dagger floating in the air before him.  
 Act II scene ii – Macbeth forgets to leave the bloody daggers in Duncan's room after the murder and Lady Macbeth is forced to take charge and put them back.  
 Act II scene iii – The next morning Duncan's body is discovered by Macduff; Macbeth conveniently kills the servants in pretend rage; Duncan's sons, Malcolm & Donalbain, flee the castle.  
 Act II scene iv – Macduff reports that suspicion for the murder has fallen on the kin's sons; Macbeth has travelled to Scone to be crowned.  
 Act III scene i – Macbeth is now king, but Banquo is suspicious about how the witch's predictions have come true. Macbeth arranges to have him murdered.  
 Act III scene ii – Lady Macbeth tries to get her husband to talk to her about his plans but he refuses.

## Key characters

**Macbeth** Thane of Glamis  
**Lady Macbeth** his wife  
**Banquo** Macbeth's best friend  
**Fleance** Banquo's son  
**Duncan** King of Scotland  
**Malcolm** Duncan's eldest son  
**Macduff** – Thane of Fife  
**Lady Macduff** his wife  
**Donalbain** Duncan's younger son  
**Ross, Lennox, Angus** Scottish nobles  
**The witches** – supernatural beings who predict events in the play.  
**Hecate** ruler of the witches

## Key themes

**Ambition** seen as a purely negative quality.  
**Guilt** - the play shows the terrible consequences of murdering a king.  
**Kingship vs tyranny** – Duncan and Macbeth embody the qualities of a good king and a tyrant respectively.  
**Order vs chaos** Natural order is disrupted then re-established.  
**Fate**  
**Masculinity/femininity**

## Historical context

- *Macbeth* was most likely written in 1606, early in the reign of James I, who had been James VI of Scotland before he succeeded to the English throne in 1603.
- Only a century earlier, England had suffered under the massive disorder of the **Wars of the Roses**. Civil disorder was now seen as the ultimate disaster, and also as an ungodly state.
- The play pays homage to the king's Scottish lineage. Additionally, the witches' prophecy that Banquo will found a line of kings is a clear nod to James's family's claim to have descended from the historical Banquo.
- The theme of bad versus good kingship, embodied by Macbeth and Duncan, respectively, would have resonated at the royal court, where James was busy developing his English version of the theory of the **divine right of kings**.
- The play was first performed not long after the **Gunpowder Plot**. Shakespeare shows the murderers of a king tormented by their own guilt and driven to their doom.
- It was believed that kings were appointed by 'divine right' and were anointed by God. To kill a king was considered the worst sin and a terrible crime.
- *Macbeth* is a **tragedy** and the character of Macbeth is a **tragic hero**

## Stylistic features and symbols

**Blood** – a symbol of guilt and violence  
**The supernatural** – belief in witchcraft was widespread and Shakespeare uses prophecy, hallucinations, ghosts and magic to give the play a menacing, unnatural feel.  
**Oxymoron** – opposites & contradiction recur throughout the play  
**Pathetic fallacy** – unnatural events are usually echoed by unnatural weather  
 Alliteration  
**Blank verse** – non rhyming lines written in **iambic pentameter** (iam= a beat *du duh*; pent = five)  
**Soliloquy** – where a character speaks their thoughts aloud to the audience  
**Monologue** – a long speech by a single character  
**Dramatic irony** – when the audience knows more than a character or characters do

Act III scene iii – Banquo is murdered but his son, Fleance, escapes.  
 Act III scene iv – At a feast that night, Macbeth sees the ghost of Banquo. Lady Macbeth tries to calm him down but when this fails cancels the feasts and sends the courtiers away.  
 Act III scene v – The witches discuss events so far; Hecate, the ruler of the witches, predicts his downfall.  
 Act III scene vi – suspicion of Macbeth is growing; Macduff has left for England to rouse support against him.  
 Act IV scene i – The witches tell Macbeth he cannot be harmed by anyone 'born of a woman' and that he will be safe until Birnam Wood moves to the castle at Dunsinane. Macbeth decides to murder Macduff's family.  
 Act IV scene ii – Macbeth's murderers kill Lady Macduff and her children.  
 Act IV scene iii – Macduff discovers his family's murder and, with Malcolm, leads an army to attack Macbeth.  
 Act V scene i – Lady Macbeth is sleep walking and trying to wash an imaginary blood spot from her hands.  
 Act V scene ii – Malcolm's army is at Birnam Wood and hear reports that Macbeth's supporters are deserting him.  
 Act V scene iii – Macbeth is besieged but puts his trust in the witches' prophecy.  
 Act V scene iv – Malcolm orders his army to cut down branches from Birnam Wood to disguise the number of soldiers.  
 Act V scene v – Macbeth is told of his wife's death and about the news that Birnam Wood seems to be approaching. He resolves to die fighting.  
 Act V scene vi - ix – Macbeth is killed by Macduff (who reveals he was delivered by caesarean and so not properly 'born'). Malcolm becomes the new king of Scotland and order is restored.

## Key Quotations

The witches: Fair is foul, and foul is fair, Hover through the fog an filthy air. *(Act I, Scene i)*

The witches: When the battle's lost and won. *(Act I, Scene i)*

The witches: When shall we three meet again in thunder, lightning, or in rain? When the hurlyburly's done, When the battle's lost and won. *(Act I, Scene i)*

Captain: For brave Macbeth—well he deserves that name— Disdaining fortune, with his brandished steel, Which smoked with bloody execution, Like valour's minion carved out his passage *(Act I, Scene ii)*

Macbeth: So foul and fair a day I have not seen *(Act I, Scene III)*

Banquo: And oftentimes, to win us to our harm, the instruments of darkness tell us truths *(Act I scene iii)*

Macbeth: If chance will have me king, why, chance may crown me. *(Act I, Scene III)*

Malcolm: Nothing in his life became him like the leaving it; he died as one that had been studied in his death to throw away the dearest thing he owed, as 't were a careless trifle. *(Act I, Scene IV)*

Macbeth: Stars hide your fires let not light see my black and deep desires. *(Act I, Scene IV)*

Lady Macbeth: Yet do I fear thy nature; it is too full o' the milk of human kindness. *(Act I, Scene V)*

Lady Macbeth: Look like the innocent flower, but be the serpent under't. *(Act I, Scene V)*

Lady Macbeth: Come, you spirits That tend on mortal thoughts, un-sex me here And fill me from the crown to the toe topfull Of direst cruelty *(Act I, Scene v)*

Duncan: This castle hath a pleasant seat; the air Nimbly and sweetly recommends itself Unto our gentle senses. *(Act I, Scene vi)*

Macbeth: If it were done, when 'tis done, then 'twere well it were done quickly. *(Act I, Scene vii)*

Macbeth: I have no spur To prick the sides of my intent, but only Vaulting ambition which o'erleaps itself And falls on th' other. *(Act I, Scene vii)*

Macbeth: I dare do all that may become a man; Who dares do more is none. *(Act I, Scene vii)*

Lady Macbeth: Screw your courage to the sticking-place, and we'll not fail. *(Act I, Scene vii)*

Macbeth: False face must hide what the false heart doth know. *(Act I, scene vii)*

Macbeth: I have no spur to prick the sides of my intent, but only vaulting ambition, which o'erleaps itself, and falls on the other. *(Act I, Scene vii)*

Macbeth: Is this a dagger which I see before me, The handle toward my hand? *(Act II, Scene i)*

Macbeth: Will all great Neptune's ocean wash this blood clean from my hand? No, this my hand will rather the multitudinous seas incarnadine, making the green one red. *(Act II, Scene ii)*

Donalbain: Where we are there's daggers in men's smiles. The near in blood, The nearer bloody. *(Act II, Scene iii)*

Banquo: Thou hast it now, King, Cawdor, Glamis, all, as the weird sisters promis'd, and I fear Thou hast play'd most foully for't *(Act III scene i)*

Macbeth: Only for them, and mine eternal jewel Given to the common enemy of man, To make them kings, the seed of Banquo kings! *(Act III, Scene i)*

Lady Macbeth: What's done is done. Macbeth: We have scorch'd the snake, not kill'd it. *(Act III, Scene ii)*

Macbeth: O full of scorpions is my mind, dear wife! *(Act III, Scene ii)*

Macbeth: Duncan is in his grave; After life's fitful fever he sleeps well *(Act III, Scene iii)*

Macbeth: I am cabin'd, cribb'd, confin'd, bound in saucy doubts and fears. *(Act III, scene iv)*

Macbeth: Thou canst not say I did it; never shake thy gory locks at me! *(Act III, scene iv)*

The witches: By the pricking of my thumbs, Something wicked this way comes. *(Act IV, Scene i)*

The witches: Double, double toil and trouble; Fire burn, and cauldron bubble. *(Act IV, Scene i)*

Malcolm: Angels are bright still, though the brightest fell. Though all things foul would wear the brows of grace, Yet grace must still look so. *(Act IV, Scene iii)*

Lady Macbeth: Out, damned spot! out, I say! *(Act V, Scene i)*

Lady Macbeth: Here's the smell of blood still; all the perfumes of Arabia will not sweeten this little hand. *(Act V, Scene i)*

Macbeth: I have lived long enough. My way of life is fallen into the sear, the yellow leaf, And that which should accompany old age, As honour, love, obedience, troops of friends, I must not look to have; but in their stead Curses, not loud but deep *(Act V, Scene iii)*

Macbeth: To-morrow, and to-morrow, and to-morrow, Creeps in this petty pace from day to day, To the last syllable of recorded time; And all our yesterdays have lighted fools The way to dusty death. Out, out, brief candle! Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player, That struts and frets his hour upon the stage, And then is heard no more. It is a tale Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, Signifying nothing. *(Act V, Scene v)*

Macbeth: I bear a charmed life which must not yield To one of woman born. Macduff: Macduff was from his mother's womb untimely ripp'd. *(Act V, Scene viii)*

Malcolm: Of this dead butcher and his fiend-like queen *(Act V, Scene ix)*

## **Macbeth**

**Read the overview of the play to remind yourself of the plot.**

**Then, have a go at the 'check my knowledge' questions.**

King Duncan's generals, Macbeth and Banquo, encounter three strange women on a bleak Scottish moorland on their way home from quelling a rebellion. The women prophesy that Macbeth will be given the title of Thane of Cawdor and then become King of Scotland, while Banquo's heirs shall be kings. The generals want to hear more but the weird sisters disappear. Duncan creates Macbeth Thane of Cawdor in thanks for his success in the recent battles and then proposes to make a brief visit to Macbeth's castle.

Lady Macbeth receives news from her husband of the prophecy and his new title and she vows to help him become king by any means she can. Macbeth's return is followed almost at once by Duncan's arrival. The Macbeths plot together and later that night, while all are sleeping and after his wife has given the guards drugged wine, Macbeth kills the King and his guards. Lady Macbeth leaves the bloody daggers beside the dead king. Macduff arrives and when the murder is discovered Duncan's sons, Malcolm and Donalbain flee, fearing for their lives, but they are nevertheless blamed for the murder.

Macbeth is elected King of Scotland but is plagued by feelings of guilt and insecurity. He arranges for Banquo and his son, Fleance to be killed, but the boy escapes the murderers. At a celebratory banquet, Macbeth sees the ghost of Banquo and disconcerts the courtiers with his strange manner. Lady Macbeth tries to calm him but is rejected.

Macbeth seeks out the witches and learns from them that he will be safe until Birnam Wood comes to his castle, Dunsinane. They tell him that he need fear no-one born of woman, but also that the Scottish succession will come from Banquo's son. Macbeth embarks on a reign of terror and many, including Macduff's family, are murdered, while Macduff himself has gone to join Malcolm at the court of the English king, Edward. Malcolm and Macduff decide to lead an army against Macbeth.

Macbeth feels safe in his remote castle at Dunsinane until he is told that Birnam Wood is moving towards him. The situation is that Malcolm's army is carrying branches from the forest as camouflage for their assault on the castle. Meanwhile, Lady Macbeth, paralysed with guilt, walks in her sleep and gives away her secrets to a listening doctor. She kills herself as the final battle commences.

Macduff challenges Macbeth who, on learning his adversary is the child of a Caesarian birth, realises he is doomed. Macduff triumphs and brings the head of the traitor to Malcolm who declares peace and is crowned king.

### Check My Knowledge:

1. After the battle at the start of the play, who sees the witches/strange women?
2. What do the witches predict at the start that later comes true?
3. What do the Macbeths plot and why?
4. Who discovers King Duncan's body? Who flees?
5. Why does Macbeth plan for Banquo to be killed once he is king?
6. What do the witches say to Macbeth when he later revisits them?
7. Macbeth feels unsafe; who else does he order for to be killed?
8. Which army decide to attack Macbeth?
9. What happens to Lady Macbeth and why?
10. What happens at the end of the play?

### Stretch yourself

#### Can you answer these?

1. What era was the play set?
2. Who was on the throne when the play was written?
3. How were witches perceived at this time?
4. What is the Great Chain of Being and why is it important?

### Quotation Explosions:

Here are some recognisable quotations from Macbeth. Can you do a quotation explosion on some or all of them? Consider the following:

- Language
  - Shakespeare's intentions
  - Zooming into word choices
1. "Come you spirits that tend on mortal thoughts, unsex me here" Lady Macbeth
  2. "Out, out, brief candle! Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player that struts and frets his hour upon the stage" Macbeth
  3. "Thou has it no king, Cawdor, Glamis, all as the weird women promised, and I fear thou played'st most foully for 't." Banquo





# A Christmas Carol Knowledge Organiser

## Very Brief Plot Summary

**Stave 1:** Scrooge is introduced; he refuses to make a charity donation; refuses to eat Christmas dinner with Fred; sees Marley's ghost who warns him he will be visited by three spirits to make him change his miserly ways.

**Stave 2:** The Ghost of Christmas Past takes Scrooge back in time to show him: his village; him alone at school; his sister collecting him from school; a party at Fezziwig's; Belle breaking off their engagement and Belle celebrating Christmas with her family.

**Stave 3:** The Ghost of Christmas Present shows Scrooge: Christmas morning in London; The Cratchit family celebrating Christmas; various celebrations around the country; Fred's Christmas party; Ignorance and Want.

**Stave 4:** The Ghost of Christmas yet to come shows Scrooge: a group of businessmen discussing a dead man; a pawn shop where people are selling the possessions of a dead man; a couple expressing relief that the man they owe money to is dead; the Cratchit family grieving for Tiny Tim; a grave with the name Ebenezer Scrooge written on it.

**Stave 5:** Scrooge is transformed! He sends a turkey to the Cratchit family, makes a huge charity donation and attends Fred's Christmas party. He also gives Bob a raise and becomes a second father to Tiny Tim who does not die.

## Characters

**Ebenezer Scrooge:** The main character. A mean old loner who hates Christmas.

**Fred:** Scrooge's patient, jovial nephew. The son of his beloved sister, Fan. Literally the complete opposite of Scrooge.

**Bob Cratchit:** Scrooge's hard-working and underpaid clerk.

**Tiny Tim:** Bob's ill and vulnerable son.

**Belle:** Scrooge's former fiancée who breaks off their engagement because he values money more than their relationship.

**Fezziwig:** Scrooge's generous former employer.

**Marley:** Scrooge's deceased business partner, who appears as a ghost warning Scrooge to change his ways.

**Little Fan:** Scrooge's deceased younger sister, the mother of Fred.

**The Ghost of Christmas Past:** a shape changing spirit who has light streaming from the top of its head. Represents memory.

**The Ghost of Christmas Present:** a jovial spirit (resembling a traditional 'Father Christmas') who represents generosity and Christmas spirit.

**The Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come:** a silent, sinister spirit in a black, hooded cloak who represents death.



## Key Quotations

### Stave 1:

'a squeezing, wrenching, grasping, scraping, clutching, covetous old sinner!'

'Hard and sharp as flint.'

'solitary as an oyster.'

"the cold within him froze his old features"

"'Bah!' said Scrooge, 'Humbug!'"

'What reason have you to be merry? You're poor enough.'

'A kind, forgiving, charitable, pleasant time.'

'I can't afford to make idle people merry.'

'Are there no prisons?'

"'And the Union workhouses?'" demanded Scrooge. 'Are they still in operation?'

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

'I wear the chain I forged in life,'

### Stave 2:

'A solitary child neglected by his friends.'

'Father is so much kinder than he used to be.'

'The happiness he gives, is quite as great as if it cost a fortune.'

'Another idol has displaced me'

### Stave 3:

'I see a vacant seat.'

'I'll give you Mr Scrooge, the founder of the feast.'

'The whole quarter reeked with crime, with filth, with misery.'

'This boy is Ignorance. This girl is Want. Beware them both, and all of their degree.'

### Stave 4:

'He frightened everyone away from us when he was alive, to profit us when he was dead.'

'I will honour Christmas in my heart, and try to keep it all the year. I will live in the Past, the Present, and the Future. The Spirits of all Three shall strive within me. I will not shut out the lessons that they teach.'

### Stave 5:

'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.'

Wonderful party, wonderful games, wonderful unanimity, won-der-ful happiness!

'I'll raise your salary and endeavour to assist your struggling family.'

Themes	Context	Key Vocabulary	Language and Techniques
<p><b>Christmas Spirit</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Scrooge learns the true meaning of Christmas is to spend time with your family and loved ones.</li> <li>He learns it's a time to be charitable and think about those less fortunate.</li> <li>Fezziwig's party shows him that small gestures at Christmas can make people feel valued and appreciated.</li> </ul> <p><b>Family</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Scrooge is miserable and lonely because he refuses to socialise with his family.</li> <li>He is reminded of how much he loved his sister and how hurt he was by his father's behaviour.</li> <li>Fred never gives up on Scrooge and is loyal and forgiving towards his uncle.</li> <li>The closeness of the Cratchit family demonstrates how being together and supporting each other is more important to them than anything else.</li> <li>Seeing Belle reminds Scrooge that he is lonely in his old age due to his own actions. He chose money over a family with Belle.</li> </ul> <p><b>Poverty and Social Injustice</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Scrooge learns that not all poor people are lazy.</li> <li>Scrooge learns that he can share some of his wealth to make other people's lives more comfortable.</li> <li>Tiny Tim shows how poverty can contribute to poor health.</li> <li>The Cratchits show how you can be poor but happy.</li> <li>Ignorance and Want remind Scrooge that turning a blind eye to the plight of the poor creates desperate people who turn to crime to support themselves.</li> </ul> <p><b>Transformation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Scrooge is cold, lonely and miserable at the start of the book.</li> <li>The spirits show him scenes that prompt his transformation.</li> <li>Memory reminds Scrooge of how he was once connected to other people.</li> <li>Empathy helps him to understand those less fortunate than himself.</li> <li>Being shown the reaction to the death frightens Scrooge into changing his personality to change his destiny.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Poverty:</b></p> <p>The 1834 Poor Law Amendment reduced the amount of help available to the poor, forcing them to seek help at the workhouse if they couldn't support themselves. Conditions there were incredibly harsh and designed to humiliate people into not wanting to go there.</p> <p><b>Ghosts and the supernatural:</b></p> <p>Whilst the Victorians made many technological advances thanks to their interest in science and medicine, they were also fascinated in the supernatural and things that couldn't be easily explained by science. Ghost stories became extremely popular, as did trying to contact the dead via séances.</p> <p><b>Christmas celebrations:</b></p> <p>Christmas was a fairly low key celebration at the start of the 19th century, but Queen Victoria's German husband, Albert helped to introduce some European traditions, like a decorated tree, into the traditional British Christmas celebration during the 1840s. During Victoria's reign, workers started to be given two days of holiday to celebrate Christmas. The invention of the train enabled people to travel home to celebrate with family. The traditional figure of Father Christmas, dressed in green to symbolise the returning spring, was familiar at this time, but not the gift-distributing Santa Claus we know today. Rich people would give each other hand-made gifts and toys, but stockings did not become popular until the 1870s. Turkey was only eaten by rich families as it was expensive, goose was a cheaper option.</p>	<p>Dickens</p> <p>Dickensian</p> <p>Victorian</p> <p>poverty</p> <p>workhouse</p> <p>ignorance</p> <p>miserly</p> <p>redemption</p> <p>transformation</p> <p>ghost</p> <p>spirit</p> <p>Christmas</p> <p>injustice</p> <p>inequality</p> <p>allegory</p> <p>stave</p> <p>novella</p>	<p>highly descriptive language</p> <p>simile</p> <p>metaphor</p> <p>personification</p> <p>pathetic fallacy</p> <p>imagery</p> <p>figurative language</p> <p>dialogue</p> <p>humour</p> <p>repetition</p> <p>symbolism</p> <p>allusion</p> <p>juxtaposition</p> <p><b>Symbolism/Motifs</b></p> <p>Light and dark; hot and cold; music, Scrooge's bed, Marley's chain; Ignorance and Want; Scrooge's gravestone; the three ghosts; fire;</p>



## A Christmas Carol

**Read the overview of the play to remind yourself of the plot.**

**Then, have a go at the 'check my knowledge' questions**

A mean-spirited, miserly old man named Ebenezer Scrooge sits in his counting-house on a frigid Christmas Eve. His clerk, Bob Cratchit, shivers in the anteroom because Scrooge refuses to spend money on heating coals for a fire. Scrooge's nephew, Fred, pays his uncle a visit and invites him to his annual Christmas party. Two portly gentlemen also drop by and ask Scrooge for a contribution to their charity. Scrooge reacts to the holiday visitors with bitterness and venom, spitting out an angry response to his nephew's "Merry Christmas!"

Later that evening, after returning to his dark, cold apartment, Scrooge receives a chilling visitation from the ghost of his dead partner, Jacob Marley. Marley, looking haggard and pallid, relates his unfortunate story. As punishment for his greedy and self-serving life his spirit has been condemned to wander the Earth weighted down with heavy chains. Marley hopes to save Scrooge from sharing the same fate. Marley informs Scrooge that three spirits will visit him during each of the next three nights. After the wraith disappears, Scrooge collapses into a deep sleep.

He wakes moments before the arrival of the Ghost of Christmas Past, a strange childlike phantom with a brightly glowing head. The spirit escorts Scrooge on a journey into the past to previous Christmases from the curmudgeon's earlier years. Invisible to those he watches, Scrooge revisits his childhood school days, his apprenticeship with a jolly merchant named Fezziwig, and his engagement to Belle, a woman who leaves Scrooge because his lust for money eclipses his ability to love another. Scrooge, deeply moved, sheds tears of regret before the phantom returns him to his bed.

The Ghost of Christmas Present, a majestic giant clad in a green fur robe, takes Scrooge through London to unveil Christmas as it will happen that year. Scrooge watches the large, bustling Cratchit family prepare a miniature feast in its meagre home. He discovers Bob Cratchit's crippled son, Tiny Tim, a courageous boy whose kindness and humility warms Scrooge's heart. The spectre then zips Scrooge to his nephew's to witness the Christmas party. Scrooge finds the jovial gathering delightful and pleads with the spirit to stay until the very end of the festivities. As the day passes, the spirit ages, becoming noticeably older. Toward the end of the day, he shows Scrooge two starved children, Ignorance and Want, living under his coat. He vanishes instantly as Scrooge notices a dark, hooded figure coming toward him.

The Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come leads Scrooge through a sequence of mysterious scenes relating to an unnamed man's recent death. Scrooge sees businessmen discussing the dead man's riches, some vagabonds trading his personal effects for cash, and a poor couple expressing relief at the death of their unforgiving creditor. Scrooge, anxious to learn the lesson of his latest visitor, begs to know the name of the dead man. After pleading with the ghost, Scrooge finds himself in a churchyard, the spirit pointing to a grave. Scrooge looks at the headstone and is shocked to read his own name. He desperately implores the spirit to alter his fate, promising to renounce his insensitive, avaricious ways and to honour Christmas with all his heart. Whoosh! He suddenly finds himself safely tucked in his bed.

Overwhelmed with joy by the chance to redeem himself and grateful that he has been returned to Christmas Day, Scrooge rushes out onto the street hoping to share his newfound Christmas spirit. He sends a giant Christmas turkey to the Cratchit house and attends Fred's party, to the stifled surprise of the other guests. As the years go by, he holds true to his promise and honours Christmas with all his heart: he treats Tiny Tim as if he were his own child, provides lavish gifts for the poor, and treats his fellow human beings with kindness, generosity, and warmth.

### **Check My Knowledge:**

1. What is Scrooge like at the start of the novella?
2. How does Scrooge react to the two portly gentlemen and Fred?
3. Who visits Scrooge first? What happens?
4. What does the ghost of Christmas Past show Scrooge?
5. What does the ghost of Christmas Present show Scrooge?
6. What do we learn about the Cratchit family?
7. What does the ghost of Christmas yet to Come look like?
8. What does the ghost of Christmas yet to Come show Scrooge?
9. What happens at the end of the novella?

### **Stretch yourself**

#### **Can you answer these?**

1. When was the novella set?
2. What do we learn about poverty at this time?
3. What is the meaning of Christmas?
4. What happened in Dickens' own life that influenced him to write this novella?

### **Quotation Explosions:**

Here are some recognisable quotations from A Christmas Carol. Can you do a quotation explosion on some or all of them? Consider the following:

- Language
  - Dickens's intentions
  - Zooming into word choices
1. - 'Hard and sharp as flint.' to describe Scrooge in stave 1
  2. "I wear the chain I forged in life." Jacob Marley
  3. " This boy is Ignorance. This girl is Want. Beware them both" Ghost of Christmas Present
  4. 'Scrooge was better than his word. He did it all and infinitely more.' to describe Scrooge in stave 5





