

Name:

## Teacher Sheet 2.7

### Stave 1: Marley's Ghost

**Decide which Assessment Objective each comment relates to and draw a line from the comment to the appropriate section of the text**

The first sentence of the novella sets a tone of both humour and tension and informs us that we should not be sensitive to Marley's passing.

**AO1**

Dickens' use of simile suggests Marley's death is not to be taken seriously, especially as it is followed by a digression on the simile itself and instantly highlights the dark comic undertone.

**AO2**

Marley was dead: to begin with. There is no doubt whatever about that. The register of his burial was signed by the clergyman, the clerk, the undertaker, and the chief mourner. Scrooge signed it: and Scrooge's name was good upon 'Change, for anything he chose to put his hand to. Old Marley was as dead as a door-nail.

Mind! I don't mean to say that I know, of my own knowledge, what there is particularly dead about a door-nail. I might have been inclined, myself, to regard a coffin-nail as the deadest piece of ironmongery in the trade. But the wisdom of our ancestors is in the simile; and my unhallowed hands shall not disturb it, or the Country's done for. You will therefore permit me to repeat, emphatically, that Marley was as dead as a door-nail.

*Stave 1, p.1*

The narrative voice frequently makes asides to the reader. These generally serve to lower the tension and are intended to amuse the reader because they are discussing trivial ideas; serving to create a familiarity with the reader. This is epitomised in Dickens' use of direct address and exclamatory sentences.

**AO2**

Dickens is therefore setting up the novella as an allegory, using the character of Marley to symbolise that those who are unkind will not be mourned in a sympathetic way. Here, Dickens is encouraging his Victorian readers to be kinder, more compassionate citizens, yet it is also important to reflect on the universality of this message; modern readers can equally relate and learn from this.

**AO4**

**AO3**

Dickens shows Marley's passing in facetious terms, informing us that he is "as dead as a door-nail". The alliterative phrase exaggerates the humorous tone and prevents one from attaching oneself to the character in a sentimental manner. One might assume that since a "door-nail" is used as a strengthening tool and cannot be used again, we learn that the purpose of Marley as a live human character is over, but alternatively, the narrative voice suggests that he does not know "what there is particularly dead about a door-nail" and therefore we are reminded that Marley's role is actually just a narrative to set us up for Dickens' central message.

**AO2**

**AO1**