**A Christmas Carol**

**Stave 1 – “Marley’s Ghost”**

1. What is the setting (place, approximate year) of A Christmas Carol?

2. Why does Dickens spend the first several pages of the novel telling us “Marley was dead, to begin with”?

3. What is the first fact we discover about Jacob Marley?

4. What is one word that would describe Scrooge and his spending habits?

5. How does Scrooge feel about the fact that people avoid him on the streets, beggars won’t ask him for money, children won’t ask of him the time, no one will ask him for directions, and even seeing-eye dogs take blind men out of his path?

6. How does Scrooge feel about both Christmas and marriage?

7. Why does Scrooge think Bob Cratchit, his clerk, and Fred, his nephew, are “lunatics”?

**Read the following passage and use it to answer questions 8 to 12:**

“…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, they had better do it, and decrease the surplus population.”

8. Who is the first speaker in this passage?

9. About whom is he speaking in this passage?

10. Who is the second speaker in this passage?

11. Why are these two characters having this conversation?

12. How does the first speaker feel about the people being spoken of?

13. How does Scrooge feel about Christmas carols?

14. What “unfair” request does Scrooge’s clerk make of his boss?

15. List several personality traits of Scrooge. Support your idea.

16. Who lived in Scrooge’s house before him?

17. What does Scrooge see when he looks at the doorknocker on his front door?

18. Is Scrooge scared by what he sees on his doorknocker? How does he react?

19. Name one of the reasons why the ghost that visits Scrooge had to be Marley.

20. What does Scrooge first think the ghost actually is?

21. What do the chains in which Marley’s ghost is draped represent?

22. What is the purpose of Marley’s visit?

23. What is the punishment to which Marley is subjected?

24. According to Marley’s Ghost, what is the duration of the story supposed to be? (How long is the action supposed to take?)

25. Briefly explain who the other spirits are Scrooge sees flying around London.

26. A Christmas Carol is full of symbolism. Briefly explain how Dickens uses the following passage to tell us more about Scrooge symbolically. In other words, what is Dickens comparing Scrooge to and why? What is he saying about Scrooge through this comparison?

“External heat and cold had little influence on Scrooge. No warmth could warm, nor wintry weather chill him. No wind that blew was bitterer than he, no falling snow was more intent upon its purpose, no pelting rain less open to entreaty. Foul weather didn’t know where to have him. The heaviest rain, and snow, and hail, and sleet, could boast of the advantage over him in only one respect. They often “came down” handsomely, and Scrooge never did.” (pg 3)