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grammar, style, and proofreading exercises

**The Grammar dog Guide to
A Christmas Carol
by Charles Dickens**

**All exercises use sentences from the novel.
Includes over 250 multiple choice questions.**

About Grammardog

Grammardog was founded in 2001 by Mary Jane McKinney, a high school English teacher and dedicated grammarian. She and other experienced English teachers in both high school and college regard grammar and style as the key to unlocking the essence of an author.

Their philosophy, that grammar and literature are best understood when learned together, led to the formation of Grammardog.com, a means of sharing knowledge about the structure and patterns of language unique to specific authors. These patterns are what make a great book *a great book*. The arduous task of analyzing works for grammar and style has yielded a unique product, guaranteed to enlighten the reader of literary classics.

Grammardog's strategy is to put the author's words under the microscope. The result yields an increased appreciation of the art of writing and awareness of the importance and power of language.



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A CHRISTMAS CAROL by Charles – Grammar and Style
All sentences are from the novel

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SAMPLE EXERCISES - A CHRISTMAS CAROL by Charles Dickens

EXERCISE 5 COMPLEMENTS

Identify the complements in the following sentences. Label the underlined words:

d.o. = direct object

i.o. = indirect object

p.n. = predicate nominative

o.p. = object of preposition

p.a. = predicate adjective

- ___1. Marley was dead, to begin with.
- ___2. Scrooge and he were partners for I don't know how many years.
- ___3. Scrooge never painted out old Marley's name.

EXERCISE 6 PHRASES

Identify the phrases in the following sentences. Label the underlined words:

par = participial

ger = gerund

inf = infinitive

appos = appositive

prep = prepositional

- ___1. Once upon a time – of all the good days in the year, on Christmas Eve – old Scrooge sat busy in his counting-house.
- ___2. Wherefore the clerk put on his white comforter, and tried to warm himself at the candle; in which effort, not being a man of a strong imagination, he failed.
- ___3. Becoming immediately sensible of the impropriety, he poked the fire, and extinguished the last frail spark forever.

EXERCISE 9 STYLE: FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE

Identify the figurative language in the following sentences. Label underlined words:

p = personification

s = simile

m = metaphor

o = onomatopoeia

h = hyperbole

- ___1. Old Marley was as dead as a door-nail.
- ___2. Hard and sharp as flint, from which no steel had ever struck out generous fire, secret, and self-contained, and solitary as an oyster.
- ___3. He carried his own low temperature always about with him; he iced his office in the dog-days; and didn't thaw it one degree at Christmas.

SAMPLE EXERCISES - A CHRISTMAS CAROL by Charles Dickens

EXERCISE 12 **STYLE: ALLUSIONS AND SYMBOLS**

Identify the type of allusion or symbol in the following sentences. Label the underlined words:

a. historical *b. religious* *c. folklore/superstition* *d. literary* *e. childhood games*

- ___ 1. If we were not perfectly convinced that Hamlet's father died before the play began, there would be nothing more remarkable in his taking a stroll at night, in an easterly wind, upon his own ramparts, than there would be in any other middle-aged gentleman rashly turning out after dark in a breezy spot . . .
- ___ 2. "I'll retire to Bedlam."
- ___ 3. If the good Saint Dunstan had but nipped the Evil Spirit's nose with a touch of such weather as that, instead of using his familiar weapons, then, indeed, he would have roared to lusty purpose.

EXERCISE 13 **STYLE: LITERARY ANALYSIS – SELECTED PASSAGE 1**

Read the following passage the first time through for meaning.

Oh! but he was a tight-fisted hand at the grindstone, Scrooge! a squeezing, wrenching, grasping, scraping, clutching, covetous old sinner! Hard and sharp as flint, from which no steel had ever struck out generous fire, secret, and self-contained, and solitary as an oyster. The cold within him froze his old features, nipped his pointed nose, shriveled his cheek, stiffened his gait, made his eyes red, his thin lips blue, and spoke out shrewdly in his grating voice. A frosty rime was on his head, and on his eyebrows, and his wiry chin. He carried his own low temperature always about with him; he iced his office in the dog-days; and didn't thaw it one degree at Christmas.

External heat and cold had little influence on Scrooge. No warmth could warm, no 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. (From Stave One)

Read the passage a second time, marking figurative language, sensory imagery, poetic devices, and any other patterns of diction and rhetoric, then answer the questions below.

- 1 Oh! but he was a tight-fisted hand at the grindstone, Scrooge! a squeezing, wrenching, grasping, scraping,
- 2 clutching, covetous old sinner! Hard and sharp as flint, from which no steel had ever struck out generous
- 3 fire, secret, and self-contained, and solitary as an oyster. The cold within him froze his old features, nipped
- 4 his pointed nose, shriveled his cheek, stiffened his gait, made his eyes red, his thin lips blue, and spoke out
- 5 shrewdly in his grating voice. A frosty rime was on his head, and on his eyebrows, and his wiry chin. He
- 6 carried his own low temperature always about with him; he iced his office in the dog-days; and didn't thaw

SAMPLE EXERCISES - *A CHRISTMAS CAROL* by Charles Dickens

7 it one degree at Christmas.

8 External heat and cold had little influence on Scrooge. No warmth could warm, no wintry weather chill him.

9 No wind that blew was bitterer than he, no falling snow was more intent upon its purpose, no pelting rain

10 less open to entreaty. Foul weather didn't know where to have him. The heaviest rain, and snow, and hail,

11 and sleet, could boast of the advantage over him in only one respect. They often "came down" handsomely,

12 and Scrooge never did.

___1. The underlined words in Lines 3 and 8 are examples of . . .
 a. assonance b. consonance c. alliteration d. rhyme

___2. Line 1 contains an example of . . .
 a. metaphor b. simile c. personification

___3. All of the following word pairs are examples of assonance EXCEPT . . .
 a. Hard – sharp (Line 2)
 b. cold – froze (Line 3)
 c. thin – lips (Line 4)
 d. wiry – chin (Line 5)