

## 11+ PRACTICE PACK

# OWL Tuition Test 6a

## 11+ English Complete Practice Pack

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OWL Tuition 11+ English. Work through this paper first.

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11+ English Entrance Examination

Paper 6

Total Marks: 55

Time Allowed: 1 hour

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## Section A - Reading

*The extract is taken from A Christmas Carol by Charles Dickens, published in 1843. In this extract, we are introduced to one of the main characters in the story: Ebenezer Scrooge.*

### **Paragraph 1:**

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, shrivelled 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.

### **Paragraph 2:**

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.

**Paragraph 3:**

Nobody ever stopped him in the street to say, with gladsome looks, "My dear Scrooge, how are you? When will you come to see me?" No beggars implored him to bestow a trifle, no children asked him what it was o'clock, no man or woman ever once in all his life inquired the way to such and such a place, of Scrooge. Even the blind men's dogs appeared to know him; and when they saw him coming on, would tug their owners into doorways and up courts; and then would wag their tails as though they said, "No eye at all is better than an evil eye, dark master!"

**Paragraph 4:**

But what did Scrooge care! It was the very thing he liked. To edge his way along the crowded paths of life, warning all human sympathy to keep its distance, was what the knowing ones call "nuts" to Scrooge.

**Paragraph 5:**

Once upon a time—of all the good days in the year, on Christmas Eve—old Scrooge sat busy in his counting-house. It was cold, bleak, biting weather: foggy withal: and he could hear the people in the court outside, go wheezing up and down, beating their hands upon their breasts, and stamping their feet upon the pavement stones to warm them. The city clocks had only just gone three, but it was quite dark already—it had not been light all day—and candles were flaring in the windows of the neighbouring offices, like ruddy smears upon the palpable brown air. The fog came pouring in at every chink and keyhole, and was so dense without, that although the court was of the narrowest, the houses opposite were mere phantoms. To see the dingy cloud come drooping down, obscuring everything, one might have thought that Nature lived hard by, and was brewing on a large scale.

## Questions

Read the passage carefully then answer the questions below. Remember to write your answers as full sentences. You should spend about 30 minutes on this section.

1. Look at paragraph 1. Give three details about Scrooge's appearance.

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(3 Marks)

2. Look at paragraph 1. Find and copy a simile used in the text. Explain what your chosen simile tells us about Scrooge's personality.

Simile: \_\_\_\_\_ (1 Mark)

Explanation: \_\_\_\_\_

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(1 Mark)

3. 'He carried his own low temperature always about with him' (paragraph 1). What does this phrase tell the reader about Scrooge's personality?

\_\_\_\_\_ (1 Mark)

4. Look at paragraphs 1 - 3. Find four words or phrases which suggest that Scrooge is a lonely man.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ (4 Marks)

5. In your own words, explain the meanings of these phrases:

- a) 'External heat and cold had little influence on Scrooge.' (paragraph 2)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ (1 Mark)

- b) 'To edge his way along the crowded paths of life, warning all human sympathy to keep its distance.' (paragraph 4)

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(1 Mark)

6. Look at the line: '...the houses opposite were mere phantoms.' (paragraph 5).

- a) What technique does the author use here?

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(1 Mark)

- b) What image does this create for the reader?

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(1 Mark)

7. Look at paragraph 5. How does the weather reflect Scrooge's character? Explain your answer, using quotations from the text.

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(4 Marks)

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8. In paragraph 5, the text says: ...'but it was quite dark already—it had not been light all day.'  
Why do you think it had been dark all day in the city?

\_\_\_\_\_ (1 Mark)  
\_\_\_\_\_

9. Give a word or phrase that means the same as:

- a) Foul \_\_\_\_\_ (1 Mark)  
b) Implored \_\_\_\_\_ (1 Mark)  
c) Dense \_\_\_\_\_ (1 Mark)  
d) Obscuring \_\_\_\_\_ (1 Mark)

10. Write out the following extract with the correct spelling and punctuation:

It was christmas eve and the hole city was preparing for the next day. People hurried excitedly around the streets, buying food decorations and gifts. Children hung there stockings on the ends of beds, waiting impatiently for the day too arrive.

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(7 Marks)

# Paper Notes: 11+ English Question Booklet (Test 6a)

Compiled by [SATs-Papers.co.uk](https://www.SATs-Papers.co.uk) to help you get the most from this paper.

## Overview

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This is an **11+ English entrance examination** published by **Owl Tutors**, designed for pupils preparing for **Year 7 entry** via the **GL Assessment** format. The paper centres on a detailed comprehension exercise based on an extract from **Charles Dickens's A Christmas Carol**, specifically the opening description of Ebenezer Scrooge.

The paper is structured into two main activities: a close-reading comprehension task and a spelling-and-punctuation correction exercise. Questions require students to retrieve explicit details, identify and analyse literary techniques such as **similes** and **metaphors**, interpret character through language, and explain the effect of descriptive writing. The final question tests technical accuracy in transcription, demanding correction of multiple errors in a short passage.

This paper suits children aiming for selective grammar schools or independent schools using the GL Assessment 11+ framework. It rewards careful attention to Victorian prose style, an understanding of how weather imagery can reflect character, and the ability to write answers in full, grammatically correct sentences.

## How this paper is organised

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The paper is divided into **Section A (Reading)**, which contains the Dickens extract followed by **10 comprehension questions**. The total mark allocation is **55 marks**, and candidates are given **one hour** to complete the entire paper. A suggested time of **approximately 30 minutes** is given for Section A.

Questions vary in style and demand. Early questions (1–4) focus on retrieval and inference, asking for three details about Scrooge's appearance and four phrases suggesting loneliness. Mid-paper questions (5–6) require explanation of literary techniques and imagery, including identification of a simile and the term **metaphor**. Question 7, worth **4 marks**, calls for a developed analysis of how weather reflects character, supported by quotations.

Questions 8 and 9 test vocabulary and contextual understanding, while Question 10, worth **7 marks**, requires students to correct a short paragraph containing deliberate spelling, punctuation and grammatical errors. The layout is clean, with generous space for extended written responses.

## Topics covered

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- Close reading comprehension of Victorian literary prose, specifically an extract from Dickens's *A Christmas Carol*
- Retrieval of explicit information from a text, including physical descriptions and textual evidence for character traits
- Identification and analysis of similes (e.g. 'solitary as an oyster', 'hard and sharp as flint')
- Recognition and explanation of metaphor, particularly the use of weather and temperature as extended metaphor for personality
- Interpretation of figurative language and its effect on the reader's understanding of character
- Explanation of authorial choices, including how setting and atmosphere reflect or contrast with character
- Vocabulary extension: finding synonyms for words such as 'foul', 'implored', 'dense', and 'obscuring'
- Inference and deduction, including working out historical context (e.g. reasons for prolonged darkness in a Victorian city)
- Correction of spelling errors (homophones such as 'there/their', 'too/to', 'hole/whole')
- Correction of punctuation errors, including capitalisation of proper nouns (Christmas Eve) and sentence boundaries

## How to use this paper for revision

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- Practise reading 19th-century fiction aloud to become comfortable with longer, complex sentences and unfamiliar vocabulary before tackling comprehension questions.
- When asked to 'explain what a simile tells us', always comment on both the comparison itself and what it reveals about the character's personality or behaviour.
- For multi-mark questions (such as question 7, worth 4 marks), aim to make at least four distinct points or provide two points each supported by a relevant quotation.
- Revise common homophones ('there/their/they're', 'to/too/two', 'hole/whole') and practise spotting them in context; they appear frequently in spelling-correction tasks.
- Time yourself on the comprehension section: if 30 minutes is suggested, allocate roughly 2–3 minutes per single-mark question and 5–6 minutes for extended answers.
- Always write answers in full sentences unless the question explicitly asks for a single word or phrase; examiners often award marks for grammatical accuracy.

## Common mistakes to avoid

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- Copying out long quotations without explaining what they mean or how they answer the question; always follow evidence with analysis.
- Confusing simile and metaphor: a simile uses 'like' or 'as', while a metaphor states something is something else (e.g. 'the houses were mere phantoms').
- Writing about what happens in the story rather than how language creates an effect; questions ask 'how does the author', not 'what does the character do'.
- Missing obvious spelling errors when correcting text, especially homophones or words that sound correct when read aloud (e.g. 'exitedly' instead of 'excitedly').
- Rushing the final punctuation-correction question and overlooking capital letters for proper nouns like 'Christmas Eve' or missing full stops between sentences.

## Exam technique

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Begin by reading the entire Dickens extract carefully before looking at the questions, underlining or noting down any unfamiliar words or striking phrases. This initial read-through helps you grasp Scrooge's character and the passage's overall tone. When answering, tackle questions in order, but if a higher-mark question (such as question 7) feels difficult, leave space and return to it after completing easier retrieval tasks.

Always check the mark allocation: a 1-mark question needs a concise, accurate answer, while a 4-mark question demands multiple points or detailed explanation with supporting quotations. For question 10, read the extract aloud in your head to catch errors that look correct on the page but sound wrong (e.g. 'there' instead of 'their'). Correct each mistake as you rewrite, rather than trying to spot everything first.

Leave two to three minutes at the end to reread your answers, checking that every response is a full sentence (where required) and that quotations are accurately copied. If you run short of time, prioritise the higher-mark questions; a rushed but complete 4-mark answer scores better than a polished 1-mark response and three blanks.

## What to revise alongside this paper

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Explore other Dickens extracts to build familiarity with his use of extended metaphor and rich descriptive language; *Great Expectations* and *Oliver Twist* offer similarly atmospheric openings. Revise the full range of literary techniques tested at 11+, including **personification**, **alliteration**, **onomatopoeia**, and **pathetic fallacy**, as questions may ask you to identify or explain these devices.

Practise writing about how setting reflects character in other texts, both classic and modern; understanding this skill strengthens analytical answers across comprehension papers. Work through spelling lists that focus on common errors (homophones, silent letters, double consonants) and use proofreading exercises to sharpen your ability to spot mistakes quickly.

For progression, attempt longer comprehension tasks with multiple texts or poetry extracts, and practise writing under timed conditions to build stamina. Reviewing sample mark schemes from past papers will also help you understand what makes a full, well-supported answer.

## Key terms

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**Simile, Metaphor, Characterisation, Figurative language, Imagery, Retrieval, Inference, Quotation, Atmosphere, Victorian prose, Homophones, Capitalisation, Punctuation, Synonym, Literary technique**

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# Mark Scheme

## Reading

1. Any three from the following:
  - Frozen/ old features
  - A pointed nose
  - Shrivelled cheeks
  - A stiff gait
  - Red eyes
  - Thin/ blue lips
  
2. 1 mark for simile, 1 mark for appropriate explanation:  
Simile: 'Hard and sharp as flint'  
Explanation: This shows that Scrooge is unkind/ cruel/ lacks compassion/ lacks empathy (or similar answer)  
*Or*  
Simile: 'solitary as an oyster'  
Explanation: This shows that Scrooge was lonely/ solitary/ closed off/ shut up (or similar answer)
  
3. This tells us that Scrooge is cold-hearted/mean/ unpleasant to be around (or similar answer)
  
4. Any four from the following:
  - Solitary as an oyster
  - Secret and self-contained
  - Nobody ever stopped him in the street
  - No beggars implored him to bestow a trifle,
  - no children asked him what it was o'clock

- no man or woman ever once in all his life inquired the way to such and such a place, of Scrooge.
5. a. Scrooge was not impacted by/ did not feel the cold and warmth from the outside/ the weather (or similar answer).
- b. Scrooge went through life with an angry/ aggressive exterior, so people kept away from him (or similar answer).
6. a . A metaphor
- B. The houses opposite looked ghostly/ like ghosts in the fog.
7. Award 2 marks for a quotation with an appropriate explanation. Examples:
- The text states that there is 'cold, bleak, biting weather'. This reflects Scrooge's character, as we know that Scrooge is a very cold/ depressed/ mean man.
  - The text says 'to see the dingy cloud come drooping down.' This suggests that the weather is very depressing/ oppressive/ dark/ sad, just like Scrooge's personality.
8. It had been dark all day due to the dense fog.
9. (Accept reasonable answers)
- Foul = disgusting/ awful/unpleasant
- Implored = begged
- Dense = thick/ compact
- Obscuring = hiding/ covering
10. It was **Christmas Eve** and the **whole** city was preparing for the next day. People hurried **excitedly** around the streets, buying food, decorations and gifts. Children hung **their** stockings on the ends of beds, waiting impatiently for the day **to** arrive.

# Answer-Key Notes: 11+ English Answers (Test 6a)

Compiled by [SATs-Papers.co.uk](https://www.SATs-Papers.co.uk) to help you mark this paper and learn from each answer.

## How to use this answer key

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This mark scheme lists the acceptable answers but does not explain **why each answer is correct** or how to apply the same reasoning to similar questions. When marking your child's work, first count the raw score objectively, then look at which types of question were missed. A careless slip (copying 'dog' instead of 'fog' in Q8) is very different from not recognising a simile in Q2 or struggling to infer character from weather imagery in Q7.

Use the worked examples below to understand the reasoning behind trickier answers. If your child lost marks on vocabulary (Q9) or literary techniques (Q6), that points to a knowledge gap. If they missed inference questions (Q3, Q5) despite knowing the vocabulary, they may need practice reading between the lines.

After marking, discuss one or two questions in detail rather than reviewing every error. Ask your child to explain their original answer, then walk through the correct reasoning together. This builds the habit of justifying answers with evidence, which examiners reward heavily.

## Score interpretation

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This paper awards **30 marks across ten questions**, combining retrieval, inference, language analysis and spelling-and-punctuation skills. A score of 24–30 suggests strong comprehension and confident handling of literary techniques; the child can locate evidence, explain similes and metaphors, and connect weather imagery to character. Scores in this range indicate readiness for the comprehension demands of selective-school entrance papers.

Scores of 16–23 show solid retrieval skills but some uncertainty with inference or terminology. Children in this band often answer 'what' questions correctly but struggle to explain 'why' or to identify techniques by name. They may also lose marks on the spelling-and-punctuation rewrite (Q10), which rewards accuracy under time pressure.

Below 16 points to gaps in both vocabulary and inference. If most errors cluster in Q1–Q4 (straightforward retrieval), revisit active reading strategies: highlighting key phrases, annotating in the margin. If errors appear mainly in Q5–Q9 (inference, vocabulary, technique), prioritise explicit teaching of literary terms and practice explaining answers aloud before writing them down.

## Worked examples

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### Reading comprehension, Q1–Q10

Markers award marks for **evidence-based answers**, not vague impressions. Q1 requires three specific physical details from the text; writing 'he looked old' without citing 'frozen features' or 'shriveled cheeks' earns no credit. Q2–Q7 test inference and technique: students must name the device (simile, metaphor) and explain its effect on meaning. The spelling-and-punctuation rewrite (Q10) penalises every error, so slow, careful proofreading pays off.

**Q2** : 'Hard and sharp as flint' (simile) – shows Scrooge is unkind/cruel/lacks compassion; OR 'solitary as an oyster' (simile) – shows Scrooge is lonely/closed off.

Many children correctly identify **one simile but forget to explain what it reveals** about Scrooge's character, costing them the second mark. 'Hard and sharp as flint' uses a cold, unyielding material to suggest emotional coldness and a lack of warmth or generosity. 'Solitary as an oyster' compares Scrooge to a creature sealed inside a shell, emphasising isolation and secrecy. Either simile earns both marks only when paired with a clear explanation of character.

**Q5b** : Scrooge went through life with an angry/aggressive exterior, so people kept away from him.

The phrase 'warning all human sympathy to keep its distance' is figurative: Scrooge does not literally issue warnings. Instead, his hostile demeanour **repels kindness and connection**. Students who paraphrase 'he told people to stay away' miss the metaphor. The answer must convey that his manner, not his words, drives others off.

**Q6a** : A metaphor.

The houses are described as 'mere phantoms', not 'like phantoms', so this is a **metaphor, not a simile**. Children often confuse the two. A simile uses 'as' or 'like'; a metaphor states that one thing *is* another. Here, the fog makes the buildings appear ghostly and insubstantial, as though they are phantoms themselves.

**Q7** : Example: 'The text states that there is "cold, bleak, biting weather". This reflects Scrooge's character, as we know that Scrooge is a very cold/depressed/mean man.'

This question rewards **explicit connection between setting and character**. Quoting 'cold, bleak, biting' earns one mark; explaining that the harsh, unwelcoming weather mirrors Scrooge's personality earns the second. Students who write 'the weather is bad and so is Scrooge' without a quotation or detailed explanation receive no credit. The model answer in the mark scheme shows that both evidence and analysis are required.

## Next steps

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After marking, identify **one or two question types** that caused the most difficulty and practise those specifically. If literary techniques (simile, metaphor) were missed, create flashcards with definitions and examples, then hunt for each technique in a short poem or story extract. If inference questions proved hard, practise asking 'What does this tell me about the character?' after every paragraph during independent reading.

Vocabulary errors (Q9) respond well to a daily word journal: write down unfamiliar words, definitions and example sentences.

If your child scored highly, challenge them with unseen extracts from classic fiction (Dickens, Austen, Brontë) and ask them to explain techniques and infer character without referring to notes. Timed practice under exam conditions builds stamina and accuracy. If the score was lower than expected, revisit the passage together and model how to skim for key details, annotate and then answer methodically. A second attempt a week later, after targeted practice, usually shows marked improvement and builds confidence before the real exam.

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