Practice exam question using an extract from *A Christmas Carol*

SECTION B (19th Century Prose)

*A Christmas Carol*

You are advised to spend about 45 minutes on this question.

You should use the extract below and your knowledge of the whole novel to answer this question.

How does Dickens show the importance of ‘giving’ in *A Christmas Carol*?

In your response you should:

- refer to the extract and the novel as a whole;
- show your understanding of characters and events in the novel;
- refer to the contexts of the novel. [40]

But if they had been twice as many - ah, four times - old Fezziwig would have been a match for them, and so would Mrs. Fezziwig. As to her, she was worthy to be his partner in every sense of the term. If that’s not high praise, tell me higher, and I’ll use it. A positive light appeared to issue from Fezziwig’s calves. They shone in every part of the dance like moons. You couldn’t have predicted, at any given time, what would become of ’em next. And when old Fezziwig and Mrs. Fezziwig had gone all through the dance; advance and retire, hold hands with your partner, bow and curtsey; corkscrew; thread-the-needle, and back again to your place; Fezziwig cut - cut so deftly, that he appeared to wink with his legs, and came upon his feet again without a stagger.

When the clock struck eleven, this domestic ball broke up. Mr and Mrs Fezziwig took their stations, one on either side of the door, and shaking hands with every person individually as he or she went out, wished him or her Merry Christmas. When everybody had retired but the two ’prentices, they did the same to them; and thus the cheerful voices died away, and the lads were left to their beds; which were under a counter in the back-shop.

During the whole of this time, Scrooge had acted like a man out of his wits. His heart and soul were in the scene, and with his former self. He corroborated everything, remembered everything, enjoyed everything, and underwent the strangest agitation. It was not until now, when the bright faces of his former self and Dick were turned from them, that he remembered the Ghost, and became conscious that it was looking full upon him, while the light upon its head burnt very clear.

‘A small matter,’ said the Ghost, ‘to make these silly folks so full of gratitude.’

‘Small!’ echoed Scrooge.