



Oliver Twist

Charles **Dickens**



free Audiobook



Oliver Twist

Charles Dickens



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The text is recorded in full.



These symbols indicate the beginning and end of the passages linked to the listening activities.



Charles Dickens

Charles Dickens

Charles Dickens, one of the world's greatest authors, was born in Portsmouth, England, on 7 February 1812. He was the second of eight children. He had a happy childhood and loved reading all kinds of books.



track 02

When Dickens was only twelve years old his father went to prison because he had serious money problems. Young Dickens had to leave school and went to work in a factory. He worked long hours in very bad conditions and he never forgot this terrible experience.

When Dickens was nineteen years old he became a newspaper reporter for *The Mirror of Parliament*. Soon he began writing short stories for magazines. In Dickens's times novels were usually published in parts

in magazines: every week or month a part of the story appeared in the magazine. This went on for many months until the story was finished. A lot of people bought the magazines to read the story.

In April 1836 Dickens married Catherine Hogarth. They had ten children. *The Pickwick Papers* was Dickens's first novel. It was published in monthly parts. He finished it in 1837 and it was a great success.

During his life Dickens met many people; they were young, old, rich, poor, happy, sad, kind and unkind. He wrote about them in his wonderful novels. Dickens lived during the Victorian Age and his books often talk about poverty and the many social problems of the time. He wrote fourteen major novels: some of them are *Oliver Twist* (1837-38), *A Christmas Carol* (1843), *David Copperfield* (1849-50), *Nicholas Nickleby* (1854) and *Great Expectations* (1860-1).

Dickens travelled to Italy, Switzerland, France and the United States, where he read extracts from some of his novels to the public in New York and Boston. The Americans liked his books a lot.

He died at the age of 58 and was buried in Poets' Corner in Westminster Abbey in London.

1

COMPREHENSION CHECK

Are the following questions true (T) or false (F)? Correct the false ones.

	A	B
1 Charles Dickens was born in London, England in 1812.	☐	☐
2 Dickens's father worked in a prison.	☐	☐
3 Young Dickens did not like working in a factory.	☐	☐
4 Dickens worked for a newspaper when he was nineteen years old.	☐	☐
5 Dickens's first novel was not successful, but he continued to write books.	☐	☐
6 The Victorian Age had many social problems.	☐	☐
7 People in New York and Boston went to listen to Dickens.	☐	☐

The Characters



First row from left: Fagin, Bill Sikes, Monks, Nancy, Mr Sowerberry, Rose Maylie, Mrs Bedwin

Second row from left: Oliver, Jack Dawkins "the Dodger", Mr Bumble, Noah Claypole, Mr Brownlow, Doctor Losberne



BEFORE YOU READ

1 VOCABULARY

Match the words with their meaning.

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| 1 ☐ workhouse | A warm breakfast food made from cereal and milk or water. |
| 2 ☐ orphan | B a child who has no parents to look after him. |
| 3 ☐ orphanage | C a place where very poor people live. |
| 4 ☐ porridge | D to continue to live in difficult circumstances. |
| 5 ☐ to survive | E a place where orphans live. |



2 LISTENING



track 03

Listen to the first part of Chapter One and choose the correct answer – A, B or C.

- 1 Oliver Twist's mother
 - A ☐ lived in a workhouse.
 - B ☐ died in a workhouse.
 - C ☐ knew a doctor at the workhouse.
- 2 Oliver's mother didn't have
 - A ☐ a wedding ring.
 - B ☐ a coat.
 - C ☐ a pair of gloves.
- 3 Until the age of nine Oliver lived in
 - A ☐ a workhouse.
 - B ☐ a church.
 - C ☐ an orphanage.
- 4 The people in the workhouse ate
 - A ☐ bread on Sundays.
 - B ☐ an onion on Sundays.
 - C ☐ porridge three times a week.
- 5 The people in the workhouse were always
 - A ☐ sleepy.
 - B ☐ thirsty.
 - C ☐ hungry.



Young Oliver

CHAPTER ONE

A long time ago every town in England had a workhouse. This was a house for very poor people and a very sad place to live. Oliver Twist was born in a workhouse. His mother, who was a young woman, was very ill when she came to the workhouse.



track 03

A doctor and an old woman were with her. After Oliver was born his mother said, 'I want to see my baby and then die.'

The old woman and the doctor looked at each other.

'You're too young to die,' said the old woman.

The doctor put the little baby in his mother's arms and she kissed the baby; then she died.

'Goodness!' ¹ said the doctor, 'she's dead.'

'The poor dear!' said the old woman. 'She came here late last night.'

'Where's she from?' asked the doctor.

'No one knows where she's from,' replied the old woman.

1. **Goodness** : an expression of surprise.



The doctor looked at the young woman's left hand and said, 'There's no wedding ring; she wasn't married. Good night.' He put on his hat, coat and gloves and left.

The old woman began to dress the baby with some old clothes. Little Oliver was alone in the world; he was an orphan and no one loved him.

When Oliver was small his home was an orphanage, where he lived with other young orphans. The children of the orphanage were given very little food and very little love. Many of the orphans died because they were cold and hungry. The orphanage was a unhappy place. Oliver survived, although he was pale, small and thin.

At the age of nine Oliver had to leave the orphanage and the only friends he had. This made him very sad because now he was really alone in the world. He was taken to a workhouse, a miserable place where he had to work long hours. He was given only one small bowl of porridge three times a day and an onion twice a week. Because Sunday was a special day he was given a small piece of bread.

Oliver and the other people at the workhouse were always cold, hungry and unhappy. They never asked for a second bowl of porridge because they were afraid. However, after three months of hunger and unhappiness Oliver and the others decided to do something. They discussed the matter and decided that Oliver had to ask the master for more porridge. So that evening he took his small empty bowl to the master of the workhouse, who was a big man with a white apron.

'Please, sir,' said Oliver looking at the master, 'I want some more.'

The master was very surprised and stared at him. Then he hit Oliver with his big wooden spoon.

'Mr Bumble,' cried the master. 'Please come here!'

Mr Bumble, who was an important officer in the town, rushed into the room and said, 'What's this nonsense?'



end





‘This young boy asked for *more porridge!*’ exclaimed the master, whose face was red.

‘What?’ asked Mr Bumble. ‘Did I hear you correctly? *More porridge?*’

‘Yes sir, *more porridge?*’ replied the master, holding up the big wooden spoon.

Mr Bumble took Oliver to the office of the directors of the workhouse and said, ‘Oliver Twist asked for more porridge!’

‘For more porridge?’ they cried, looking at each other. ‘This boy must leave the workhouse immediately!’

Mr Bumble put Oliver in a cold, dark room for one whole week. Every morning Mr Bumble opened the door of the dark room and hit Oliver with a stick in front of his friends. Poor Oliver did nothing but cry all day long and he couldn’t sleep at night because he was terribly cold, hungry and sad.

One day Mr Bumble met his friend Mr Sowerberry, who was a tall, thin man. He made coffins² for dead bodies, and many of the dead bodies came from the workhouse.

‘Do you need a boy to work in your shop?’ asked Mr Bumble. ‘We’ll give you five pounds if you take him.’

‘Hmm,’ said Mr Sowerberry, ‘yes, I need a boy and I need the five pounds. I’ll take him!’

That evening Mr Bumble took Oliver to Mr Sowerberry’s shop. When they got near the shop Oliver looked at Mr Bumble and started crying.

‘Oh, sir, I want to be a good boy. I am a very little boy, sir. And it is so... lonely. So very lonely!’ Oliver couldn’t stop crying and his thin, pale face was covered with tears.

2. coffin :



UNDERSTANDING THE TEXT

1 COMPREHENSION CHECK

Match the phrases 1-8 to the phrases A-L to make complete sentences about Chapter One. There are four phrases you do not need to use.

- 1 ☐ Oliver Twist's mother died
 - 2 ☐ The old woman did not know
 - 3 ☐ The orphanage was a very sad place
 - 4 ☐ Oliver and the other people at the workhouse
 - 5 ☐ No one at the workhouse asked for more porridge
 - 6 ☐ Oliver had to leave the workhouse
 - 7 ☐ Mr Sowerberry
 - 8 ☐ Mr Bumble asked Mr Sowerberry
-
- A because the children were always hungry and no one loved them.
 - B made coffins for dead bodies.
 - C because they were afraid.
 - D was the director of the workhouse.
 - E immediately after Oliver was born.
 - F if he needed a boy to work for him.
 - G a month after Oliver was born.
 - H were always hungry, cold and unhappy.
 - I because he was very lonely.
 - J where Oliver's mother came from.
 - K because he asked for more porridge.
 - L because he didn't like Mr Sowerberry.

2 VOCABULARY

A Circle the odd words out and explain why.

- 1 porridge meat fish poultry
- 2 bowl cup dish box
- 3 doctor teacher parent engineer
- 4 onion orange carrot spinach
- 5 Turkey England Irish Italy
- 6 hat coat gloves ring

B Now complete the sentences with the odd words.

- A** Is Patrick an name?
- B** They put all the books in a big
- C** Oliver was tired of eating every day.
- D** He ate an at breakfast.
- E** Oliver did not have a to look after him.
- F** Oliver's mother did not have a wedding on her finger.

3 WRITING

Read the information about workhouses and fill in the gaps with the correct past tense of the verb in the box. The first is done for you.

have to (x2)	know	work	mean	go	do
wear	start	be (x2)	can	want	

In Great Britain after 1834 poor people who had no job or home (0)~~went~~..... to live in a workhouse, where they (1) work for their food. They (2) hard and (3) unpleasant jobs.

Women, children and men (4) stay in different living and working areas and they (5) not speak to one another. These people (6) uniforms and this (7) that everyone looked the same and everyone outside (8) they were poor and lived in a workhouse. The day at the workhouse (9) at six o'clock in the morning and everyone was in bed by eight o'clock at night.

There (10) very little food and it didn't taste good. Only porridge, soup, potatoes, cheese, bread and little cooked meat (11) on the menu. No one (12) to live in such a terrible place!

T : GRADE 4

4 SPEAKING - FOOD

Oliver never had enough good food at the workhouse. Talk to your partner about your favourite food and use these questions to help you.

- 1** What's your favourite food and why?
- 2** Do you know how to make it?
- 3** Who does the cooking at your house?
- 4** What's your favourite restaurant or fast-food place?

5 NOTICES

Look at the text in each question and choose the correct answer – A, B or C.

1



- A ☐ Dogs must never enter the inn.
 B ☐ Dogs can enter the inn between noon and 2 pm.
 C ☐ Dogs can enter the inn before noon and after 2 pm.

2



- A ☐ The bank is open five days a week.
 B ☐ You can't go to the bank on Monday at noon.
 C ☐ The bank is closed on Friday.

3



- A ☐ You must not walk on the left.
 B ☐ It is dangerous to walk on the right.
 C ☐ Don't walk on this road.

4



- A ☐ Someone is selling a luxury flat near Trafalgar Square on September 1 at 5 pm.
 B ☐ You cannot get information about the luxury flat on weekends.
 C ☐ You must move out of the luxury flat by September 1 at 5 pm.

BEFORE YOU READ

1 VOCABULARY

Match the words with their meaning.

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| 1 ☐ scary | A feeling angry because you want to be like another person or have what that person has |
| 2 ☐ mourner | B something that makes you afraid |
| 3 ☐ jealous | C a religious function when a person dies |
| 4 ☐ confused | D when you feel you don't understand something |
| 5 ☐ funeral | E a person who cries during a ceremony when somebody dies |



2 LISTENING



Listen to Chapter Two and choose the correct answer — A, B or C.

track 04

- 1 What did Mrs Sowerberry say about Oliver?
A ☐ She said that he was pale and thin.
B ☐ She said that he was ugly.
C ☐ She said that he was good-looking.
- 2 Where did Oliver sleep the first night?
A ☐ On the floor with the dog.
B ☐ On the floor with the coffins.
C ☐ In a warm, comfortable bed.
- 3 What was Noah Claypole like?
A ☐ unfriendly
B ☐ polite
C ☐ friendly
- 4 How old was Oliver?
A ☐ eleven
B ☐ ten
C ☐ nine
- 5 What did Noah say about Oliver's mother?
A ☐ He said that she was a bad woman.
B ☐ He said that she was a poor woman.
C ☐ He said that she was an ugly woman.