

# Charles Dickens



# Who Was Charles Dickens?

Charles Dickens is a famous British writer from Victorian times.

He is most famous for writing *Oliver Twist* and *A Christmas Carol* but he wrote many other famous books as well.



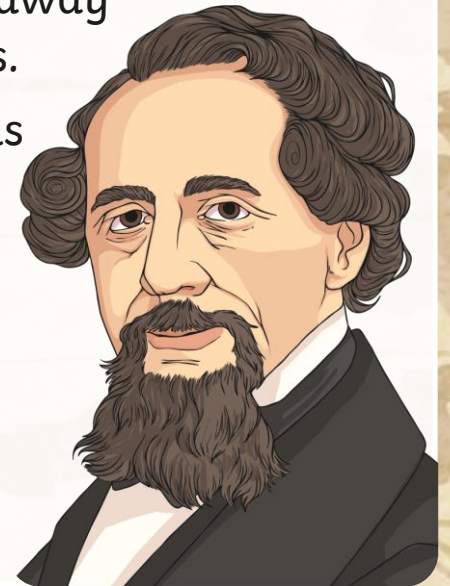


# Charles Dickens - Childhood

- His full name is Charles John Huffam Dickens.
- He was born in Portsmouth, Hampshire, on 7 February 1812.
- His father was a clerk in the navy pay office and his mother had wanted to be a teacher, although this didn't work out.
- Charles Dickens had 7 brothers and sisters.
- When he was 9 he began school but unfortunately was not able to stay there long. In 1822 when the family moved to London, they struggled for money. Charles' father was sent to prison for bad debts.
- Charles had to get a job. He worked in a factory putting labels on jars of blacking (used for polishing boots.) He was very unhappy but still managed to visit his father every Sunday in the prison.
- In 1824 Charles' father had enough money for him to return to school. Afterwards he got a job in a lawyers office.

# Charles Dickens – The Writer

- He began his writing career as a journalist for a newspaper.
- In 1836, after marrying Catherine Hogarth, his stories started to become popular. The Pickwick Papers, a funny set of stories, were published weekly in the newspaper.
- Charles was becoming famous and in 1837 the first installment of Oliver Twist, a story that became one of his most famous, was published.
- Oliver Twist is a story about an orphan boy who runs away to London and becomes involved with a gang of thieves.
- Dickens was now famous and wrote many more famous novels during his life such as: A Christmas Carol, David Copperfield and Great Expectations.
- People loved reading his books because in those days there was no TV or computer games, so most people read for entertainment.



# Charles Dickens – Later Life

- Charles and his wife Catherine had 10 children but unfortunately they split up.
- He was famous world over and visited America twice where he was treated like a pop star!
- In 1864 Charles Dickens was involved in a train crash. Although he survived he never quite got back to full health.
- On 9 June 1870 he died at his home in Kent.
- He left his final novel, *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*, unfinished.
- He is such a famous Briton that his picture has appeared on a £10 note.





# True or False

Read the following sentences and decide whether they are true or false.

- Charles Dickens' full name is Charlie James Huffam Dickens **False**
- He was born in Kent, in the south of England. **False**
- He is famous for writing stories. **True**
- His story, Oliver Twist, was about a young prince.. **False**
- His picture has been printed on £10 notes. **True**



