

Charles Dickens
Oliver Twist

Oliver Twist is a poor orphan boy. He hasn't got a mum or dad and he lives in a terrible place called the workhouse. One day, he makes the master of the workhouse very angry and his life changes forever. What happens next to Oliver? Where does he go? Does he find a nice family to live with or do Fagin and his gang of thieves make Oliver stay with them? Read this exciting tale of life in 19th century Britain and find out!

In this reader you will find:

- Information about Charles Dickens
- Focus on sections: 19th century England, Modern Britain
- Glossary of difficult words
- Comprehension and grammar activities including A1 Movers style exercises and 21st century skills activities
- Final test

Tags

Friendship and hate | Social Issues



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● STAGE 1	600 headwords	Elementary	A1	Movers
STAGE 2	800 headwords	Pre-intermediate	A2	Flyers/Key
STAGE 3	1000 headwords	Intermediate	B1	Preliminary

Classic

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A1
Charles Dickens
Oliver Twist

Teen Readers



Stage 1 A1

Classic

Charles Dickens

OLIVER
Twist



Book brief

- 1** *Oliver Twist* was the first of Dickens' books that shows the reader what life was like for the poor in London in those days.
- 2** The novel is Dickens' way to show he was against the laws of 19th century London that did nothing to help the poor.
- 3** *Oliver Twist* was immediately popular with the public because they liked exciting stories about crime and murder told in such a realistic way.
- 4** Some Victorian book critics didn't like it and called it a 'Newgate Novel'. Newgate was a prison in London and they gave the book this name because they didn't think it was socially correct to write about things like crime and murder.
- 5** *Oliver Twist* is still popular today for its historical, social context and because it's such a good story to read.

Charles Dickens

Oliver Twist

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For Review Only

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Main Characters



Oliver Twist

*Born in a workhouse,
this poor little boy
has no home and no family*



Mrs Sowerberry

*She's horrible to Oliver
and doesn't give him
any food*



Mr Sowerberry

*He wants Oliver
to work hard
in his shop*



Mr Bumble

*He works in the workhouse
where Oliver was born*



Monks

*An angry, young man
who wants Oliver
to be a thief*



Doctor Losberne

*A kind doctor,
who feels sorry for Oliver*



Fagin

He uses boys to steal things from rich people



Dodger

A boy who steals for Fagin



Bill Sikes

This horrible man works with Fagin and steals from people's homes



Mr Brownlow

A kind, rich man who helps Oliver



Nancy

She loves Bill but she also wants to help Oliver



Mrs Bedwin

Mr Brownlow's housekeeper



Rose Maylie

A beautiful, kind, young woman who lives with her aunt



Mrs Maylie

She's Rose Maylie's aunt and is a kind woman who helps Oliver

Before you read

Reading and Writing **MOVERS**

- 1 These words are all in Chapter 1. Look at the pictures and choose the correct word for each definition.



butcher's



porridge



clothes



kitchen



church



toys



carrots



baker's

These vegetables are orange.

carrots

- 1 You can buy bread in this shop.
- 2 You wear these.
- 3 You can cook in this room.
- 4 Some people eat this for breakfast.
- 5 Children play with these.

- 2 Match each verb with the correct definition.

☒ cry

a two or more people are angry and hit each other

1 ☐ run away

b someone walks behind another person.

2 ☐ fight

c you get money from someone who dies.

3 ☐ follow

~~**d**~~ something you do when you're sad.

4 ☐ hide

e a man or woman legally makes a child their son or daughter.

5 ☐ inherit

f you leave a place you don't like.

6 ☐ adopt

g you go to a place where no one can see you or put things in a place where no one can find them.

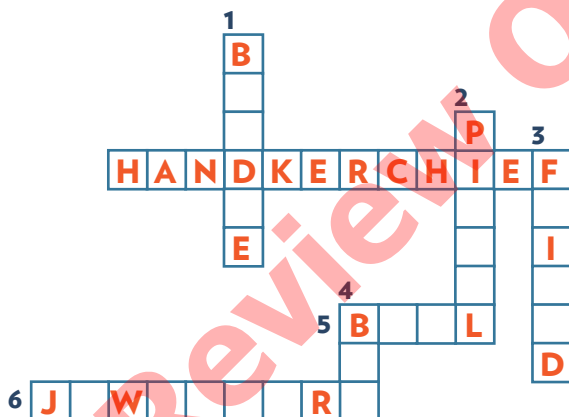
- 3 Read the crossword clues and complete the words in the puzzle.

Down

- 1 Something you walk over to cross a road or river.
- 2 Something you use to shoot things.
- 3 Someone who you like spending time with.
- 4 Someone who is not a girl.

Across

- 5 A dish that you eat soup from.
- 6 Something you wear on your body.



21st
Century
Skills

- 4 *Oliver Twist* is the story of a poor boy in 19th century England. Answer these questions about your country in the 21st century.

- 1 Do all children in your country go to school?
- 2 Do you like school? Why/ Why not?
- 3 Do you prefer doing lessons online or in the classroom? Why?
- 4 Do most people in your country live in cities or in the countryside? Why?

The Workhouse¹

▶ 2 *England*

Oliver Twist is nine years old. He's got blond hair and big sad blue eyes. He's sad because he hasn't got a mum and he hasn't got a dad. Oliver is an orphan². He lives in a workhouse in a town near London and he hasn't got any friends. The workhouse is a bad place to live because it's very cold and dark.

Life in the workhouse is very hard for Oliver and the other orphans.

There are a lot of orphans in the workhouse and they don't receive³ a lot of food. All the orphans are sad and hungry. They have porridge⁴ every day for breakfast, lunch and dinner. They don't like porridge but one day they're very hungry so they want Oliver to ask for more porridge.

'We're hungry, Oliver,' they say. 'You must ask for more porridge.'

Oliver is afraid⁵ but he's very hungry too. He takes his porridge bowl⁶ and walks slowly to the front of the dining hall.

¹ **workhouse** a place where children with no mum or dad and no money lived in England in the nineteenth century

² **orphan** a child with no mum or dad

³ **receive** get

⁴ **porridge** traditional breakfast food

⁵ **afraid** 😞

⁶ **bowl** you can eat soup from this

Oliver Twist

Oliver doesn't want to ask for more porridge but the other children push him forward.

The hall is silent¹ as Oliver walks to the front. He goes to the big table where the master² of the workhouse is having his dinner and quietly asks him for some more porridge.

'Please, Sir, can I have some more?' asks Oliver.

The master is very angry. He stops eating his chicken and potatoes and stands up. 'More?' he shouts. 'No, you can't!'

The master thinks that Oliver is a bad boy and he calls for Mr Bumble. Mr Bumble is a very important man. He's very angry and agrees³ with the master. 'Oliver Twist, you're a bad boy,' he says. He throws Oliver in a cold, dark room and locks⁴ the door.

They put Oliver in a cold, dark room because he asks for more porridge.

Poor Oliver stays in the cold, dark room for many days. He's so cold that he can't sleep and he's very hungry. The master doesn't give him porridge for breakfast, lunch and dinner. In fact, sometimes he doesn't give Oliver any porridge. Oliver is very tired and thin and he's very lonely⁵ because he hasn't got anyone to talk to.

¹ **silent** very quiet

² **master** a man who has people working for him

³ **agree** when you think the same as another person

⁴ **lock** to close something with a key

⁵ **lonely** sad because you haven't got any friends

Charles Dickens

Oliver cries¹ every day. After one week, Mr Bumble goes to the workhouse. He goes to the cold, dark room and unlocks² the door. Oliver is sitting in the corner of the room. He's very white.

'Get up!' shouts Mr Bumble. Oliver stands up and runs to the door. 'You must leave the workhouse,' says Mr Bumble.

Mr Bumble wants Oliver to leave the workhouse immediately³ so he speaks to Mr Sowerberry. 'Mr Sowerberry,' says Mr Bumble, 'Here's five pounds⁴. I want you to take Oliver Twist to live with you. He can work in your shop.'

Mr Sowerberry agrees, but not because he's a kind⁵ man. He wants Oliver to work very hard in his shop. 'Come with me, Oliver,' he says. 'I've got a lot of work for you to do.'

Poor Oliver. He doesn't want to live with Mr Sowerberry but he must leave the workhouse. He hasn't got any clothes or toys to take with him to Mr Sowerberry's house.

¹ cry 🥹

² unlock to open something with a key

³ immediately at that moment

⁴ pounds British money

⁵ kind nice, good

Oliver has to leave the workhouse and work for Mr Sowerberry in his shop.



Poor Oliver is cold, sad and hungry in the dark room.



Charles Dickens

It's grey and rainy when he leaves the workhouse and the other orphans don't say goodbye to him.

Mr Sowerberry lives with his wife, Mrs Sowerberry. Mrs Sowerberry is fat and ugly and she's got a horrible¹, mean² face. She doesn't like Oliver. She's making a big dinner when he arrives. She's cooking beef and carrots but she doesn't make any dinner for Oliver. 'There's no dinner for you,' says Mrs Sowerberry. 'You're a bad boy so you can eat with the dog.'

Mrs Sowerberry's dog is a big black dog. It eats all the food and so there's nothing for Oliver. Oliver is hungry and tired. He wants to go to sleep but Mrs Sowerberry doesn't give him a bed. 'We haven't got a bed for you,' says Mrs Sowerberry. 'You must sleep on the floor.' Oliver goes to sleep on the cold, hard floor. He's very sad.

The next day, Oliver meets Noah in the kitchen. Noah works in Mr Sowerberry's shop.

He's a big boy and he's got a horrible, mean face too. He doesn't like Oliver and he says horrible things about Oliver's mother.

¹ **horrible** not nice

² **mean** not kind



Poor Oliver,
he has to
stay with
Mr and Mrs
Sowerberry.
Mrs Sowerberry
doesn't like
him and treats
him in a very
bad way.
Oliver is very
sad.

Oliver Twist

‘Your mother didn’t love you,’ he says to Oliver. Oliver didn’t know his mother but he’s sure¹ she loved him. Oliver is angry.

‘That’s not true! She did!’ he shouts.

‘No, she didn’t,’ shouts Noah.

‘Stop it! Be quiet,’ shouts Oliver but Noah continues² to say horrible things.

Oliver becomes angrier and angrier. Suddenly³, he hits Noah on the head and then Noah hits him on the nose. The two boys start to fight⁴ and they make a lot of noise.

Mrs Sowerberry hears the noise. She runs into the kitchen and sees Oliver and Noah fighting on the floor. ‘Stop fighting immediately!’ she shouts.

Oliver and Noah stand up. Mrs Sowerberry doesn’t like Oliver but she likes Noah. ‘Come here, Noah,’ she says. ‘Are you okay?’ Noah runs to Mrs Sowerberry. He tells her that he’s got a headache because Oliver hit him on the head a lot of times. ‘I don’t know why Oliver hit me so many times. My head hurts⁵,’ says Noah. Mrs Sowerberry is furious⁶.

¹ **to be sure** when you believe something

² **continue** not stop

³ **suddenly** when something happens quickly

⁴ **fight** Oliver hits Noah and Noah hits Oliver

⁵ **hurt** when something hurts it makes you say ‘Ouch’

⁶ **furious** very angry



Charles Dickens

Oliver tells Mrs Sowerberry that Noah said horrible things about his mother but she doesn't listen to him. She throws him in a cold, dark room. She closes the door but she forgets to lock it.



Mrs Sowerberry is very angry with Oliver.

Oliver stays in the room for many hours. It's very late and the house is silent. Mr and Mrs Sowerberry are asleep. Oliver doesn't know what to do. He didn't like the workhouse and he doesn't like Mr and Mrs Sowerberry and Noah. Then, he has an idea.

He decides to run away¹. He slowly opens the door to the room and quietly walks to the kitchen. Then, he opens the kitchen window and jumps out into the street, but he doesn't know where to go. He can see the church and the baker's and the butcher's in the town centre. Then, he sees a big road. He runs down the road, away from the town and Mr Sowerberry's shop and the workhouse. ■

Think

After fighting with Noah, Oliver runs away from the Sowerberry's house. Do you think he did the right thing?



Oliver is fighting with Noah because Noah said bad things about Oliver's mum.

¹run away to leave a place you don't like



Reading

1 Read the sentences and tick True or False.

	T	F
Oliver Twist is ten years old.	☐	☒
1 The orphans love porridge.	☐	☐
2 Mr Bumble locks Oliver in a cold, dark room for one week.	☐	☐
3 Mr Sowerberry has got a lot of work for Oliver to do.	☐	☐
4 Mrs Sowerberry likes Oliver.	☐	☐
5 Noah hits Oliver on the nose.	☐	☐
6 Noah has got a headache.	☐	☐
7 Mrs Sowerberry forgets to lock the door.	☐	☐
8 Oliver jumps out of the living room window.	☐	☐

Grammar

2 Read the sentences and write *is/are* in each gap.

- Oliver Twist is an orphan.
- All the orphans are sad and hungry.
 - We are hungry.
 - Mr Bumble is a very important man.
 - You are a bad boy.
 - Mrs Sowerberry is fat and ugly.
 - Mrs Sowerberry's dog is a big black dog.

3 Read the sentences and circle the correct word.

- Oliver *live* / *lives* in a workhouse
- Oliver *have* / *has* got blond hair.
 - They *have* / *has* porridge every day for breakfast, lunch and dinner.
 - He can *work* / *works* in your shop.
 - Mrs Sowerberry's dog *eat* / *eats* all the food.
 - Mrs Sowerberry *don't* / *doesn't* listen to Oliver.

Speaking

4 Answer these questions.

- 1 Oliver feels sad and lonely in the cold dark room.
When do you feel sad?
- 2 Oliver gets angry when Noah says bad things about his mother.
When do you get angry with people?
- 3 Oliver hits Noah. Do you think it's right to hit people?
Why/why not?

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Before-reading Activity

5 Choose the correct word for each sentence.

Oliver continues running down the big road but he's very tired.

under ~~down~~ by

- 1 _____ two hours, he stops to sleep under an enormous tree.

Before During After

- 2 When he wakes up, the _____ is shining.

sun moon road

- 3 He _____ a sign for London.

looks sees watches

- 4 Oliver decides to go _____ the city of London.

for on to

- 5 He hasn't got _____ food or water.

any some no