

Charles Dickens David Copperfield

David Copperfield looks back on the first twenty-five years of his life. He's only eight years old when his mother, a pretty young widow, remarries. Unfortunately, Mr Murdstone isn't a good husband or father. David is sent away to school and only returns home when tragedy strikes. Unloved and unwanted, he's sent to work in a factory. But David is a clever boy and wants a better life for himself.

In this reader you'll find:

- Information about Charles Dickens
- A section providing background and contextual information
- A glossary of difficult words
- Comprehension and grammar activities including B1 style exercises and 21st century skills activities
- Final test

Tags

Family | Friendship | Love | Adventure

Downloadable
**Audio
Files**

Look at the inside front cover flap
to find out how to download
your free Audio files.

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

Classic

www.eligradedreaders.com

*Eli Readers is a beautifully illustrated
series of timeless classic and original
stories for learners of English.*

 The pleasure of Reading

ISBN 978-88-536-3214-2



9 788853 632142

TEEN ELI READERS
David Copperfield
ISBN 978-88-536-3214-2

ELT
B1

Charles Dickens

David Copperfield

Stage 3 B1

Teen Readers



Teen



Readers

Classic

CHARLES DICKENS

David Copperfield



Downloadable
**Audio
Files**

Book brief

- 1** Charles Dickens' eighth novel first published as a serial in 1849-50, then as a book in 1850. It's often described as a masterpiece and is Dickens' favourite novel.
- 2** Written in the first person by the main character, David Copperfield, it describes his life from childhood to middle age.
- 3** David has lots of adventures and makes several friends and enemies along the way.
- 4** It includes different aspects of Victorian life that Dickens fought to change. Main themes include adventure and teamwork.
- 5** Main themes include growth and changes that happen on the way to becoming an adult.

Charles Dickens

David Copperfield

Retold and with activities by

Silvana Sardi

Illustrated by

Felicita Sala

Contents

6	Main Characters	
8	Before you read	
10	Chapter 1	<i>Mr Murdstone</i>
18	Activities	
20	Chapter 2	<i>School</i>
28	Activities	
30	Chapter 3	<i>Everything Changes</i>
38	Activities	
40	Chapter 4	<i>A New Life</i>
48	Activities	
50	Chapter 5	<i>Dora</i>
58	Activities	
60	Chapter 6	<i>Endings and Beginnings</i>
70	Activities	
72	Focus on...	<i>Charles Dickens</i>
74	Focus on...	<i>Life in Victorian Times</i>
76	Focus on...	<i>CLIL - Education and Travel</i>
78	Test Yourself	
79	Syllabus	

Main Characters



David Copperfield

He tells the story of his life from childhood to middle age.



Dora Spenlow

David falls in love with Dora the first time he sees her.



Peggotty

David's nurse. She looks after him as a child.



Edward Murdstone

David's stepfather. He's horrible to David.



Miss Jane Murdstone

Edward Murdstone's sister. She's as bad as her brother.



Clara Copperfield

David's mother. She's unhappy after she marries Edward Murdstone.



Uriah Heep

An evil criminal.



Mr Micawber

A kind middle-aged man. He's the first person David stays with in London.



Agnes Wickfield

She's about the same age as David and is a gentle, kind person.



Miss Betsey Trotwood

David's father's aunt. She's serious but not unkind.



James Steerforth

A boy who helps David at school.

Vocabulary

1 Match the words with their definitions.

- 1 ☒ nurse
- 2 ☐ orphan
- 3 ☐ stepfather
- 4 ☐ mourner
- 5 ☐ niece
- 6 ☐ nephew
- 7 ☐ schoolmaster
- 8 ☐ debtor
- 9 ☐ clerk

- a a person who works in an office.
- b old word for a male teacher.
- c your brother or sister's daughter.
- d your mother's second husband.
- e your brother or sister's son.
- f a woman who looks after small children.
- g a person who feels sad for someone who has died.
- h a person who doesn't have the money to pay for something he has received.
- i a child whose parents are dead.

Speaking

- ### 2 Look at the words above again. Use them to talk about what you think will happen in the story.

Discuss with a partner.

21st
Century
Skills



Grammar

- 3 Complete this text about *David Copperfield* with the words in the box.

nurse up old a back his at talks ~~and~~ as the to a

Charles Dickens wrote *David Copperfield* between 1849 and 1850. However, it wasn't published (1) _____ a complete book at first: every month (2) _____ few chapters were published in a newspaper, so people had to wait (3) _____ discover what happened next, a bit like people do now with their favourite soaps! *David Copperfield* is (4) _____ story of (5) _____ young boy. He is eight years (6) _____ (7) _____ the beginning of the story and he lives happily with (8) _____ mother and (9) _____. Unfortunately, David's life changes completely. In the book, David looks (10) _____ on his life and (11) _____ about his adventures as a child and as he grew (12) _____.

Speaking B1 Preliminary

- 4 In the story, *David Copperfield* talks about his life as a child and growing up. Answer these questions about you.

- 1 Where do you live and who do you live with?
- 2 How many days a week do you go to school?
- 3 What's your favourite subject? Why?
- 4 What do you like doing in your free time?
- 5 Who's your best friend and why do you like him / her?
- 6 What kind of job would you like to do in the future? Why?



Chapter 1

Mr Murdstone

- 2 I disliked Mr Murdstone the first time I met him. Perhaps I was just jealous or perhaps it was more than that. Certainly he was a handsome gentleman with dark hair and dark whiskers¹ but there was something in his eyes that made me feel uneasy². He began to call at our house and then my mother started putting on her prettiest dresses and going out in the evenings.

One such evening my nurse, Peggotty, suggested that I go with her to visit her brother in Yarmouth for a fortnight³. I agreed immediately, happy at the thought of an adventure. I didn't realise how different things would be on my return.

The day of our departure soon arrived and Peggotty and I climbed into the carrier's cart⁴ that would take us to Yarmouth. My mother and I kissed each other and we both cried. When the cart started off she ran after it to ask for another kiss. As we rode away I saw Mr Murdstone speak to her angrily and

Although Mr Murdstone is handsome, David probably doesn't like him because his mother starts going out with him. The day David leaves with his nurse to visit her brother, his mother runs after the cart for another kiss from her son, but Mr Murdstone doesn't like her doing that.

¹ **whiskers** hair on side of a man's face

² **uneasy** not comfortable, worried

³ **fortnight** two weeks

⁴ **cart** people sat on this for travelling and it was pulled by horses

David Copperfield

she lowered her head to show she was sorry.

I'll never forget that holiday. Peggotty's nephew, Ham, was waiting for us when we got off the cart. He put me on his broad¹ shoulders and took us to their home. The Peggottys lived in a boat which wasn't used in the water anymore, but was now a small cosy² home. For a young boy like me it was magical. My nurse's brother, Mr Peggotty, was friendly and introduced Little Emily, his niece. Both she and Ham were orphans. She was about my age with blue eyes and curly hair and I quickly wanted to do everything I could for her. When it was time for me to leave we were both heartbroken.

However, as we approached³ home, I became excited about seeing my mother again. She wasn't waiting for me at the gate and Peggotty led me into the kitchen. Now I was worried.

'Where is Mama, Peggotty? What has happened? She isn't dead, is she, like Papa?' Tears filled my eyes.

'Of course not, Master Davy!' she replied shocked. 'But there's something I must tell you. You have a new pa! Come and see him. And your mama.'

Peggotty's family are all kind to David and he has a lovely holiday, but when he goes back home two weeks later, he finds that his mama has married again.

¹ **broad** wide

² **cosy** comfortable and welcoming

³ **approach** get near

Charles Dickens

David is shocked when he sees that his mum has married Mr Murdstone. He knows that everything will be different now and that his happy life is over.

We went into the best parlour¹. My mother was sitting on one side of the fireplace and Mr Murdstone sat on the other side. As soon as she saw me, my mother smiled and and gave me a quick hug².

‘Now, Clara, control yourself,’ Mr Murdstone said. She kissed me avoiding looking at me under Mr Murdstone’s watchful eye. As soon as I could, I went to my room. Miserable, I thought of how different things used to be, how loving and kind my mother had been. I knew that my happy life was over³ and I cried myself to sleep.

I was awoken by my mother and Peggotty when they found me in my room.

‘Davy, what’s the matter?’ my mother asked. She tried to put her arms around me but I pushed her away. ‘Oh, this is your fault, Peggotty!’ she cried. ‘You’ve turned my boy against me!’

I heard other footsteps and Mr Murdstone entered. ‘Clara, my dear, remember yourself!’

‘Oh, it’s too much!’ my mother exclaimed⁴. ‘Can’t I have some peace and happiness?’ Mr Murdstone calmed her with a kiss and I saw immediately that she would do whatever he said.

¹ **parlour** (old-fashioned) living room

² **hug** (v and n) see page 13. David’s mum is hugging him

³ **over** finished

⁴ **exclaim** shout suddenly in surprise or pain



David’s mum is hugging him and Peggotty is happy to see how much Clara loves her son.



Charles Dickens

Mr Murdstone's sister is as bad as he is and takes control of everything in the house. David used to enjoy lessons with his mother but now they're both nervous because Mr Murdstone and his sister are always there shouting at them.

‘Go downstairs while David and I talk.

We'll join you shortly,’ he said with a smile. When we were alone he asked me, ‘Do you know what I do to a dog that doesn't do what I say? I hit it. I beat it.’ He looked at me angrily, and I understood all too well. ‘Now, come downstairs and don't annoy your mother or me again.’

After dinner that evening, Mr Murdstone's sister arrived. She was dark and looked angry like him, and had a large nose and thick eyebrows¹ which almost met in the middle. She had come to help my mother, and started the next morning by rearranging all our food cupboards. From then on she took control of everything. On the one occasion that my mother asked to be consulted occasionally, he told her he was disappointed that she was so ungrateful. It was enough. My mother never mentioned it again.

I started my lessons again with my mother but these were no longer the happy times they had been before. Mr and Miss Murdstone were always there, always shouting at my mother for being too kind to me, and at me for every mistake I made. Mr Murdstone made me nervous and I

¹ **eyebrows** the line of hair above your eyes

David Copperfield

couldn't remember anything. My mother also became nervous. When she thought no one was looking she tried to help me but was immediately rebuked¹ by Miss Murdstone. My poor mother suffered as much as I did, if not more.

This continued for several months until one morning I entered the parlour for my lessons and saw my mother looking more nervous than usual. Mr Murdstone was holding a cane² in his hand.

'Now, David, you must be very careful doing your lessons today,' he said. This made me forget everything, and things went from worse to worse. Finally my mother burst into tears.

'David, you and I will go upstairs,' Mr Murdstone said, taking my arm. My mother ran after us but Miss Murdstone stopped her. I could hear my mother crying as I went up the stairs. When we got to my room Mr Murdstone suddenly pinned³ my head under his arm and raised the cane in his other hand.

'Please, Sir! Don't hit me! I'll do better!' 'Really!' he replied and hit me hard. The hand holding me was near my mouth and I bit it. He hit me even

One day, Mr Murdstone appears with a cane, which makes David even more nervous and he can't remember anything. His mother cries when Mr Murdstone takes David away to punish him. David bites Mr Murdstone's hand while he's hitting him with the cane.

¹ **rebuked** spoken angrily to

² **cane** stick used to punish someone

³ **pinned** held so that you can't move

Charles Dickens

Mr Murdstone hits David even harder, then he locks him in the room. David sees nobody for five days except Miss Murdock who brings him his food but she doesn't speak to him. Then Peggotty comes to the door one evening to tell him he's going away to school the next day.

harder, again and again. I heard my mother and Peggotty crying outside the door and then it was over. He left me and locked the door behind him.

I was kept in my room for five days. The only person I saw was Miss Murdstone who brought me food but never spoke to me. On the fifth evening I heard whispering¹ at my door.

'Davy, my darling.' It was Peggotty.

'Oh, Peggotty!' I cried.

'Hush or they'll hear us, my lovely. Listen! You're going away to school tomorrow.' 

For Review Only

Think

Do you ever feel nervous at school?

Why? / Why not?

¹ **whisper** speak very quietly



David bites Mr Murdstone's hand which makes him even angrier than before.



Reading Comprehension

- 1** Decide if the following sentences about Chapter 1 are true (T) or false (F).

	T	F
David felt uncomfortable with Mr Murdstone from the beginning.	☒	☐
1 The Peggottys lived on the water.	☐	☐
2 Peggotty knew about the marriage before David.	☐	☐
3 David realised his life had changed with his mother's marriage.	☐	☐
4 Miss Murdstone arrived on the same evening David returned home.	☐	☐
5 David's mother tried to take control of the house again.	☐	☐
6 David's mother was afraid to help him with his lessons when Mr Murdstone was there.	☐	☐
7 David bit Mr Murdstone's arm.	☐	☐

Speaking and Writing

**21st
Century
Skills**

- 2** In Chapter 1, we find out that David does his lessons at home with his mother. Discuss these questions with a partner, then write your answers.

- Would you like your parents to teach you? Why? / Why not?
- Do you prefer doing lessons online or in the classroom? Why?
- Who's your favourite teacher? Why?
- What happens if you do something that makes the teacher angry?
- What do you think makes a good teacher?
- Do you think teaching is a good job? Why? / Why not?



Grammar

3 Write sentences using *used to* / *didn't use to* with the prompts below.

- 1 David's mother / go out in the evenings.
- 2 Things / be different.
- 3 Mr Murdstone / live with them.
- 4 David's mother / be affectionate.
- 5 David / enjoy his lessons.

Before-reading Activities

Speaking

4 Discuss the following questions with a partner.

- 1 Do you think David will be happy at school? Why? / Why not?
- 2 What will the school, teachers and other pupils be like?

Listening B1 Preliminary

4 5 Listen and complete the information about David's school with one word in each space.

The school was called Salem House. It was an unwelcoming
(1) _____ building. When David arrived, the school was very
(2) _____. There were no boys because it was the school
(3) _____. The classroom was a horrible, dirty (4) _____ room
and it smelt terrible. David noticed that there were pieces of
(5) _____ on the floor. At one end of the room, there was a
(6) _____ on a desk that said: "Be careful. He bites."