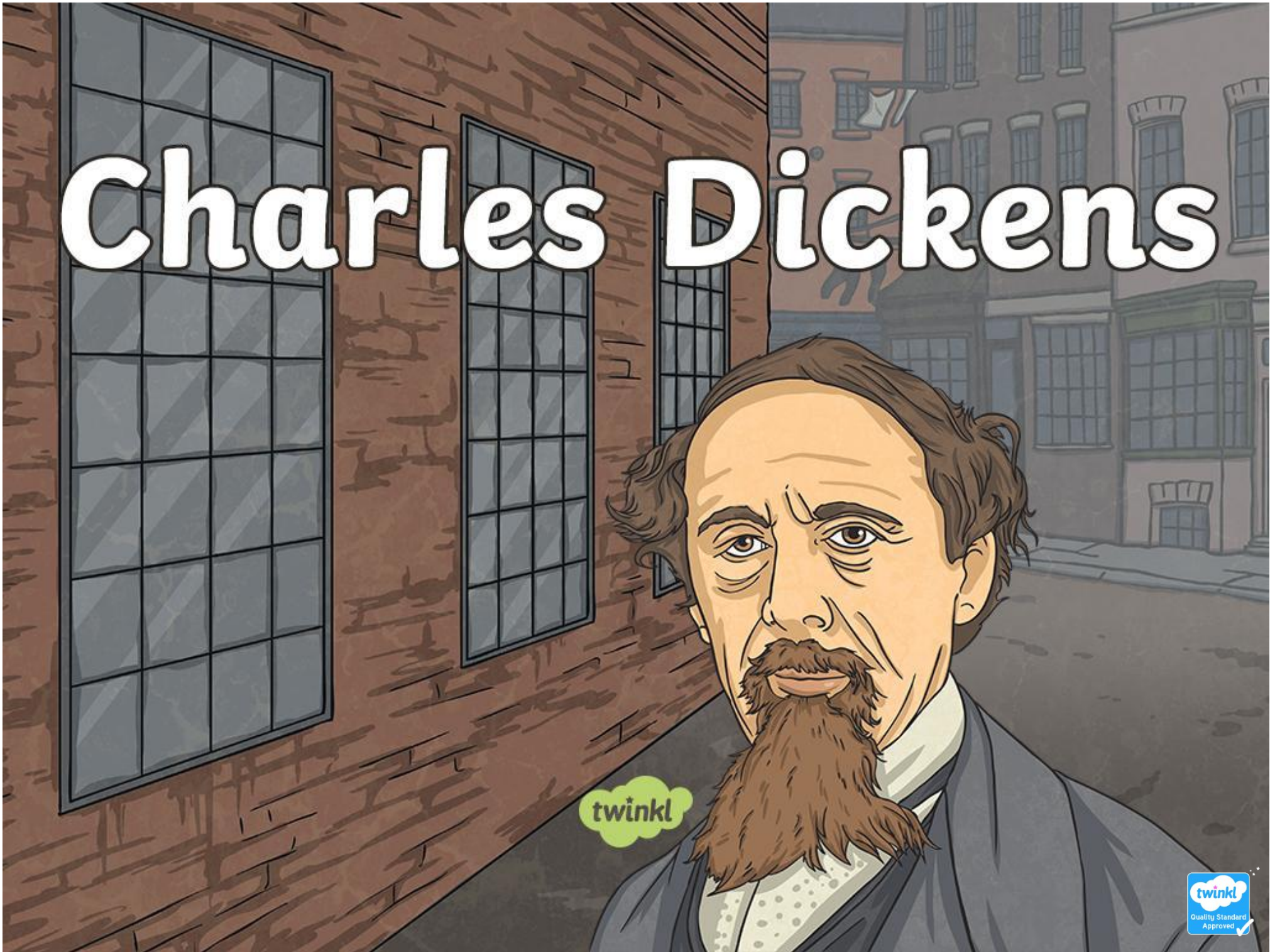


Charles Dickens



Who is Charles Dickens?

Charles Dickens is a famous British author from the Victorian era.

He is most famous for writing *Oliver Twist* and *A Christmas Carol* but he also wrote many other classic novels.



Charles Dickens – Early Years

Charles John Huffam Dickens was born in Portsmouth, Hampshire, on 7th February 1812. He had seven brothers and sisters.

His father, John, was a clerk in the Navy and his mother, Elizabeth, wanted to be a teacher.

Despite their dreams, the Dickens family never had much money.



Charles Dickens – Early Years

Dickens began school at the age of nine but unfortunately he was not able to stay there long.

In 1822, the family moved to London and they struggled for money. Charles' father was sent to the debtors prison for failing to pay his bills to the butcher and the baker.

Charles started working at a factory putting labels on jars of blacking (used for polishing boots). He was very unhappy but he still managed to visit his father every Sunday in the prison.



Did You Know? - Life in London

In the Victorian era, London was a crowded city. Thousands of poor people lived in slums and homeless children slept on the streets.

Diseases were common and often deadly, especially for children. In the 1830s, nearly half of London funerals were for children who had died before their tenth birthday.

Until 1829, London did not have a police force. It could be a dangerous place and, if they got into trouble, even young children were sent to prison.



Charles Dickens – The Writer

In 1828, Charles began his writing career as a journalist for a newspaper.

He married Catherine Hogarth in 1836 and soon afterwards his stories started to become popular. The Pickwick Papers, a funny set of stories, were published weekly in the newspaper.



Charles Dickens – The Writer

In 1837, the first instalment of *Oliver Twist*, a story that became one of Dickens' 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 wrote many more famous novels during his life, such as *A Christmas Carol*, *David Copperfield* and *Great Expectations*.



Famous Dickens Quotes

Charles Dickens created many words and phrases we still use today.

Can you guess the meaning?

Scroog

[Click here to find out](#)



Famous Dickens Quotes



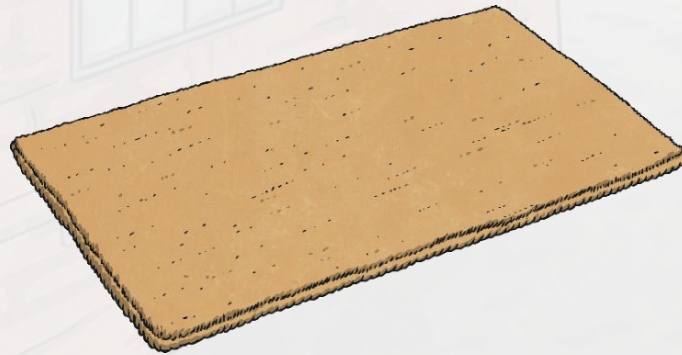
Scrooge - a mean,
miserable person

Famous Dickens Quotes

Can you guess the meaning?

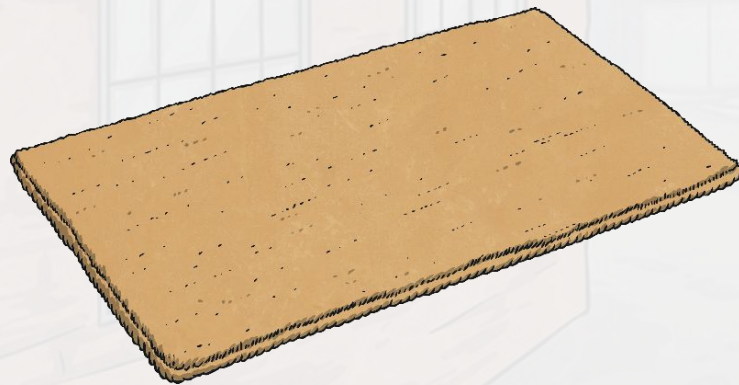
treated like a doormat

[Click here to find out](#)



Famous Dickens Quotes

treated like a doormat – treated badly



Famous Dickens Quotes

Guess the
meaning?

Bah humbug!



[Click here to find out](#)

Famous Dickens Quotes



Bah humbug –
an expression of
irritation or disgust

Famous Dickens Quotes

Can you guess the meaning?

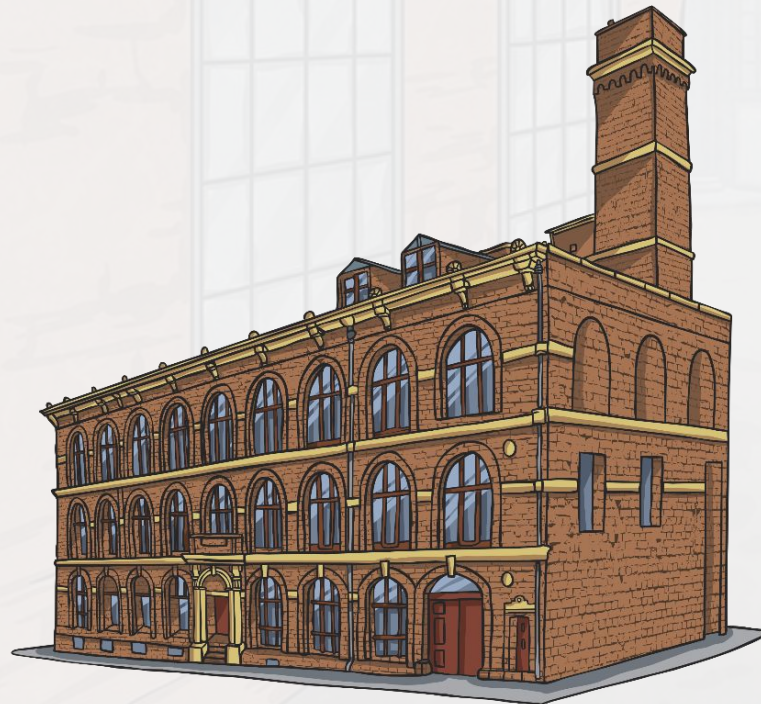
Working round the clock

[Click here to find out](#)



Famous Dickens Quotes

working round the clock – working all day and night



Famous Dickens Quotes



Can you guess the meaning?

Fagin

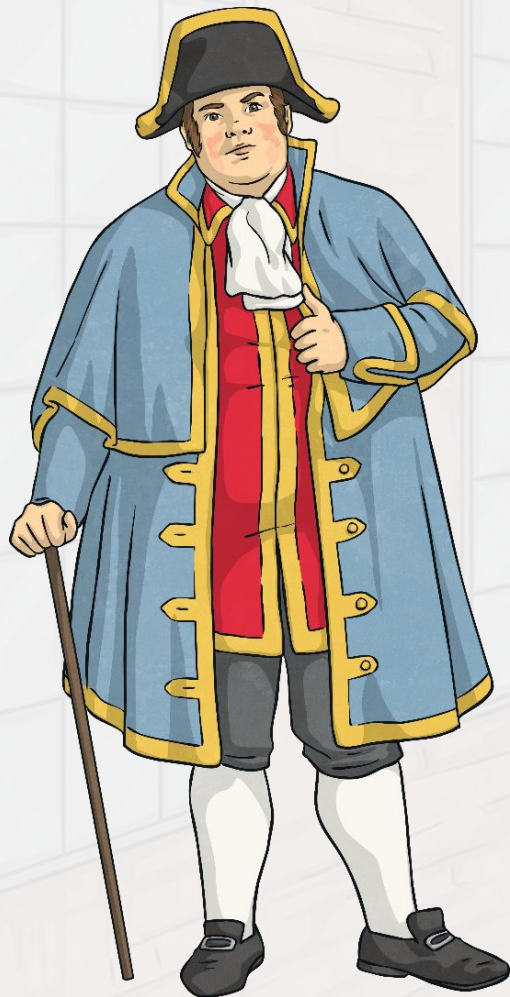
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Famous Dickens Quotes



Fagin – a crook
or villain

Charles Dickens – The Writer



Inspiration for Writing

Dickens liked to walk around London, observing the goings-on in the city. The inspiration for his characters came from the people he met on his travels.

For example, the boys who bullied him at his first job were called Bill and Fagin. They became the characters in *Oliver Twist*.

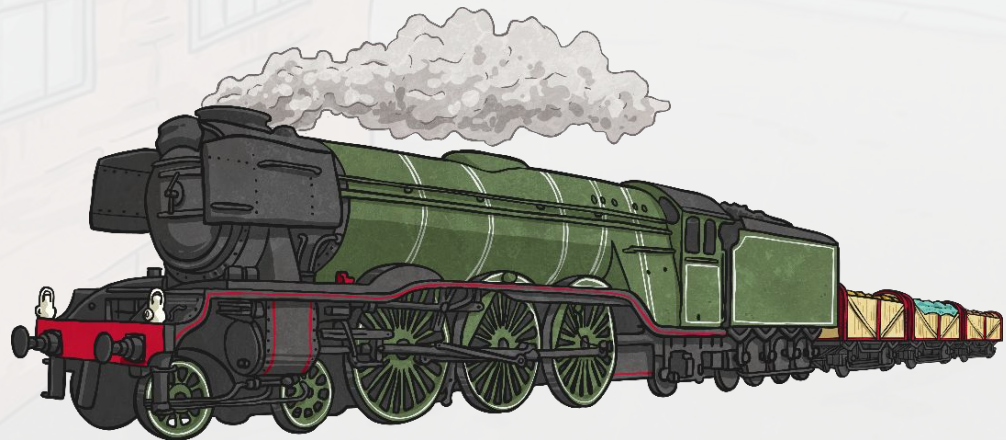
Charles Dickens – Later Life

Charles and his wife Catherine had ten children but unfortunately, their marriage did not last.

In 1864, Charles Dickens was involved in a train crash. Although he survived, he never quite got back to full health.

On 9th 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. His book *A Tale of Two Cities* has sold over 200 million copies.



Biography

Your task is to write a biography about Charles Dickens.

A biography is a story about a real person's life written by someone else.



Task One

Use the Charles Dickens research map to collect further information about the important events in Charles Dickens life.

Challenge:

Which Dickens novel is based on his own life?

Did Dickens ever meet Queen Victoria?
If so, when and where did they meet?

What is Gad's Hill Place and why is it important?



Task Two

Use your research notes to write a biography about Charles Dickens.

You might like to use these headings:

- Childhood/Early Life
 - where and when was he born, his family life, school and first job
- The Writer
 - some of the books he wrote and the inspiration for his stories
- Later Life
 - his children, the train accident, his final novel and his death
- Legacy
 - his quotes, Dickensian language we still use today, his face on the £10 note, the amount of books sold

