

Charles Dickens

The text below is a brief biography of the author Charles Dickens. In the frame around the edge of the text you will find the titles of some of his stories – perhaps you may have heard of some of them.

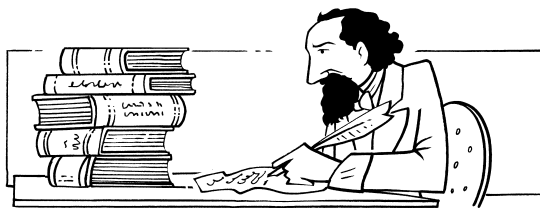
The famous English author Charles Dickens was born in the south of England in February 1812, moving to London in 1814. Although his family was not wealthy Charles was lucky enough to be sent to school at the age of nine, in an age when education was an expensive privilege. Just three years later he had to find work, as his father was imprisoned for debt and unable to pay for his schooling. Fortunately after just six months, his father inherited enough money to pay off his debts and was released from prison. He could afford to pay for Charles to be educated again.

When Charles Dickens left school at fifteen he was employed by a firm of solicitors as an office clerk but he really wanted to be a journalist and so, with this in mind, he taught himself shorthand. He became very skilled at shorthand and soon learned to transcribe speeches accurately and quickly. He was then able to find work as a reporter and he worked for a number of papers.

Charles Dickens' first piece of published work was a short story, written under the pseudonym 'Boz', that appeared in a magazine in 1833. Several more short stories followed this. His first novel, *The Pickwick Papers*, was originally published in monthly instalments at a cost of one shilling per instalment, with the first episode of this being available in 1836.

Dickens was soon a very successful novelist but continued to work for a range of magazines and papers. Amongst his most famous stories are *A Christmas Carol*, *Oliver Twist* and *A Tale of Two Cities*, all of which have been made into films and are still enjoyed today.

This prolific author died in 1870. By then he had become a famous and important person and so was buried in Westminster Abbey, London.



The Pickwick Papers

David Copperfield

THE HAUNTED MAN

GREAT EXPECTATIONS

Bleak House

Oliver Twist

Nicholas Nickleby

THE OLD CURIOSITY SHOP