

Let's Read 2

B. Below is an extract from an adapted version of the novel *Oliver Twist*. Look at the picture. Can you guess what's happening? What was life like for an orphan at the workhouse? Read and check your answers.

CHARLES DICKENS

At last, it was evening. The large stone hall of the workhouse filled with hungry, skinny, young orphans dressed in filthy rags. Perhaps the word *hungry* doesn't accurately describe their grumbling, empty little stomachs. Starving would probably be more suitable. They had three meals a day, which consisted of only one bowl, and no more, of watery, tasteless soup; except on special occasions when they enjoyed a tiny piece of bread, too.

Moments after the food was served, it disappeared. The boys licked bowls, spoons and fingers and searched busily for a splash that they hadn't noticed. Because of this, the bowls never needed cleaning. Then they stared, as they always did, at the huge copper pot that held the soup. It appeared that that evening was no different from any other. It was, though.

Before dinner, all the boys had held a meeting and had made a decision. They couldn't suffer any longer. They had to act and it was Oliver Twist who was chosen to perform the task. First, the boys whispered to each other, then they winked at Oliver. The boy next to him nudged him and told him to go and ask for more food. It was time. Perhaps it was the hunger, or the misery that comes with it that gave him courage. He rose from the table and walked up to the master, bowl and spoon in hand, and said:

'Please, sir, I want some more.'

The whole room fell silent. The master's face turned white, not believing what he was hearing.

OLIVER TWIST

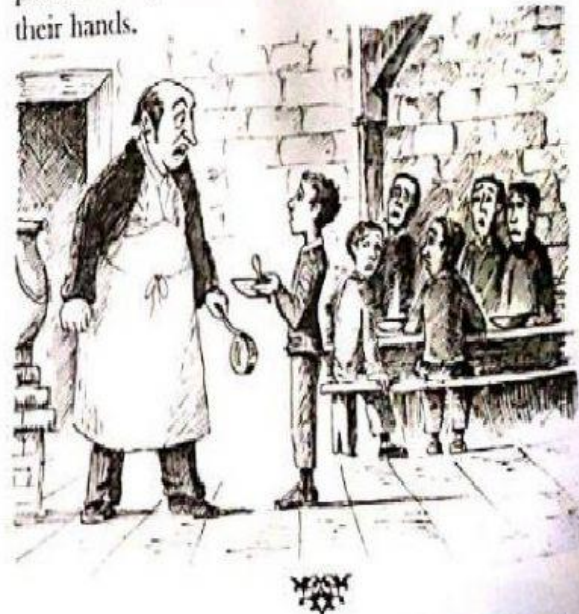
He stared at Oliver for a few long seconds, speechless. All eyes were on the master, half fear, half hope.

'What?' he said angrily. Without hesitating, again Oliver asked if he could have some more soup. The master was furious and did not reply. He raised his ladle high, not to serve more soup, but to hit poor Oliver violently on the head.

The men in charge of the workhouse were shocked when the master rushed into their room.

'I beg your pardon, sir! Oliver Twist asked if he could have some more!'

They quickly decided that they had to do something at once. The next morning, there was a poster at the gate of the workhouse offering five pounds to anyone who would take Oliver Twist off their hands.



C. Read the text again and answer the questions. Choose a, b, c or d.

- What's the main message of the 1st paragraph?
 - The food was awful.
 - The children needed new clothes.
 - The children didn't get enough food.
 - The children looked forward to special occasions.
- The bowls didn't need cleaning after the children finished eating because
 - the soup tasted good.
 - the soup disappeared.
 - the children ate from the copper pot.
 - the children cleaned everything with their tongues.
- What did the other boys want Oliver to do?
 - find a solution
 - eat more food
 - make a request
 - act in a performance
- The first time Oliver asked for more soup, the master
 - didn't react.
 - was shocked.
 - started shouting.
 - hit Oliver on the head.
- What does 'ladle' (line 39) mean?
 - pot
 - hand
 - voice
 - spoon
- What did the people responsible for the workhouse want to do with Oliver?
 - punish him
 - get rid of him
 - help him escape
 - give him one more chance

D. Match the highlighted words below from the text with their meanings. Then check your answers in a dictionary.

- | | |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1. orphan ☐ | 5. wink ☐ |
| 2. rags ☐ | 6. nudge ☐ |
| 3. stare ☐ | 7. courage ☐ |
| 4. whisper ☐ | 8. speechless ☐ |
- to quickly close and open one eye as a signal to somebody
 - old, torn clothes
 - not able to speak because you are very angry, surprised, etc.
 - to give a little push to somebody especially with your elbow
 - the ability to do something difficult or dangerous without showing fear
 - a child whose parents have died
 - to speak very quietly so that other people cannot hear you
 - to look at something / someone for a long time without moving your eyes

G. Read the first paragraph of the text again and find adjectives which mean:

very thin _____
 very dirty _____
 very hungry _____
 very small _____

H. Replace the 'strong' adjectives in the sentences 1-7 below with an appropriate adverb and the 'weak' adjectives in the box.

surprised	interesting	hungry	dirty	hot
	beautiful	angry		

1. I was **furious** with myself when I lost my mobile phone.

2. It's **boiling** outside. We should go for a swim.

3. I watched a **fascinating** documentary about dolphins last night.

4. My cousin Stephanie has **gorgeous** blue eyes.

5. I was **astonished** to hear that Frank got fired.

6. Your hands are **filthy**. You'd better wash them before dinner!

7. I haven't had anything for breakfast and I'm **starving**

terribly surprise

extremely dirty

very beautiful

extremely hot

very hungry

really interesting

incredibly angry