

Reading Test



Many people believe that Charles Dickens was the greatest English novelist of all time. He lived in the nineteenth century and wrote many novels and short stories. Most of his novels first appeared as weekly instalments in magazines. This kind of publishing was popular in the nineteenth century and Dickens was a master at it. More recently, directors have made films and TV series of his stories.

One of his most famous novels is *Oliver Twist*. It is the story of a young boy who spends the first nine years of his life at a baby farm (a place for orphans) and a workhouse. He is hungry and unhappy there and in the end he runs away to London. There he meets a boy called Jack Dawkins, who tricks him into joining a band of thieves. Most people know this story because the writer Lionel Bart made it into a popular musical and then the director Carol Reed made the musical into a very famous film which was shown all over the world.

David Copperfield is another very well-known Dickens story. It is partly based on the author's own life, and tells the story of a poor boy who has a hard childhood but after many difficulties becomes a successful writer.

Great Expectations is another dramatic novel about a poor boy called Pip who becomes rich, not because he works hard but because a mysterious person leaves him a lot of money. In the end, Pip loses his fortune but finds something more important.

Almost all of Dickens' novels take place during the nineteenth century. The exception is *A Tale of Two Cities*. This novel is about the French Revolution, which took place in the century before Dickens was born. It tells the story of two men who look exactly the same, a Frenchman and an Englishman. They both love the same girl, but the Frenchman is sent to prison. The Englishman takes his place there and dies so that the Frenchman can escape and marry the girl.

Read a text about Charles Dickens. Are the sentences true, false or not mentioned? Choose the correct answer.

Example

Charles Dickens lived in England in the nineteenth century.

- A. ☒ True
- B. ☐ False
- C. ☐ Not mentioned

1. Dickens wrote only short stories for magazines.
 - A. ☐ True
 - B. ☐ False
 - C. ☐ Not mentioned
2. *Oliver Twist* was Dickens's second novel.
 - A. ☐ True
 - B. ☐ False
 - C. ☐ Not mentioned
3. Most people know the story of *Oliver Twist* because they have seen the film and TV adaptations.
 - A. ☐ True
 - B. ☐ False
 - C. ☐ Not mentioned
4. *David Copperfield* is about a boy who is born rich and becomes poor.
 - A. ☐ True
 - B. ☐ False
 - C. ☐ Not mentioned
5. In *Great Expectations* the hero is given money by someone he doesn't know.
 - A. ☐ True
 - B. ☐ False
 - C. ☐ Not mentioned
6. The hero of *Great Expectations* is an orphan.
 - A. ☐ True
 - B. ☐ False
 - C. ☐ Not mentioned
7. *A Tale of Two Cities* is the only novel by Dickens that is not set in the nineteenth century.
 - A. ☐ True
 - B. ☐ False
 - C. ☐ Not mentioned
8. *A Tale of Two Cities* describes the life of two Frenchmen during the French Revolution.
 - A. ☐ True
 - B. ☐ False
 - C. ☐ Not mentioned

Read a text about Charles Dickens. Complete the sentences.

1. Dickens's novels and short stories appeared every _____ in magazines.
2. Oliver Twist ran away to _____ because he was unhappy.
3. Oliver Twist joined a group of _____.
4. At the end of the book, David Copperfield becomes _____.
5. David Copperfield's life is similar in some ways to _____ life.
6. In *Great Expectations* the hero receives _____ from a stranger.
7. *A Tale of Two Cities* is set in the _____ century.
8. *A Tale of Two Cities* is about two men during the _____.