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R A I N B O W S

David Copperfield

Charles Dickens



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R A I N B O W S

Charles Dickens

David Copperfield

Adaptation, dossiers and activities by
Cristina Gioli



edisco



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Reprint

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The Author

Charles Dickens



LIFE

Charles John Huffam Dickens (1812-1870) is considered the greatest novelist¹ of his time – the Victorian Age – and he certainly was the most popular.

He was born in Portsmouth, a sea town in the south of England, into a large family. There were eight children and Charles was the eldest son. His father, John, was a clerk² in a Navy office; he

had a good salary, but was very bad at managing his money, so the family always had financial problems. The character of Mr Micawber in *David Copperfield* is largely based on the figure of John Dickens.

After some years, the family moved to London, but their situation got worse because Charles's father got more and more into debt³. In 1824 he went to prison for debts in the Marshalsea debtors' prison in London, where his wife and all his children, except Charles, followed him. Charles had to leave school and go to work in a shoe polish⁴ factory. This experience had a deep effect on the boy, who later described the horrible conditions in which children worked in several of his novels, like *Oliver Twist* and *David Copperfield*.

After spending 14 weeks in prison, however, his father received some money on the death of his mother, so he could pay his debts and get out of prison, while Charles was able to return to school. His education, however, ended when he was fifteen.

He began to work as a clerk in a lawyers' office and in 1830, after learning stenography⁵, he became a parliament reporter and a journalist, writing for several newspapers.

Then he began to write stories which were published in magazines and were immediately very successful. The reading public loved his humour and his spirit of observation.

1. *novelist*: a writer of novels.
2. *clerk*: a person who works in an office.
3. *debt*: money that is owed to someone else.

4. *shoe polish*: a cream or liquid used to clean shoes and make them shine.
5. *stenography*: a way of writing very fast by using special signs instead of whole words.

In 1836, his first novel, *The Pickwick Papers*, gave him great popularity. In the same year, he married Catherine Hogarth, and the next year the first of their ten children was born. The marriage, however, was not a happy one, and twenty years later he separated from his wife.

Dickens wrote fifteen novels, besides many short stories, articles, a few plays for the theatre, and several essays. He visited America in 1842 and a second time in 1867. In the course of those visits, he made tours of public readings of his own works, which were extremely successful, but which tired him very much.

He always worked very hard and, because of this, he looked much older than his age. He died in 1870, aged only 58, and was buried in Westminster Abbey.

WORKS

His literary production was enormous; all his novels were first published in instalments⁶ and among the ones we remember most are:

- *The Pickwick Papers* (1836-1837): the adventures of a club of strange, funny gentlemen;
- *Oliver Twist* (1837-1838): the story of a poor orphan in which he showed the brutality⁷ of the workhouse⁸ system and the poverty of the lower classes;

6. *instalment*: something which is published a little at a time, at regular intervals.

7. *brutality*: very cruel and violent behaviour.

8. *workhouse*: a public building where the poor lived and received food in exchange for work.



From the poster for Roman Polański's film *Oliver Twist* (2005)

- *The Old Curiosity Shop* (1841): a very sentimental story about the maltreatment of children;
- *David Copperfield* (1849-50);
- *Great Expectations*⁹ (1860-61): about the experiences of a young boy who gradually grows up through hopes, expectations and disappointments until he becomes a better person.

Dickens was an immensely popular author who gave his large, simple, mostly middle-class audience what they wanted to read about. They wanted to be entertained, to be amused¹⁰ and moved¹¹ in turn. Therefore, all his stories are characterised by humour but also by pathos¹². His audience also wanted to identify themselves with the characters, so he created heroes which were generally middle or working class, and, especially in the first part of his career, stories which had a happy ending. In all of them, there is an enormous number of characters, who, and whose environment, are described in great detail, with a rich language and a large use of irony¹³.

Almost all his novels are set in his own time or the recent past, and mostly in London. Dickens described his contemporary society and used fiction to show its social diseases such as the misery of poor London areas, the many criminals, the exploitation¹⁴ of children, brutality in schools, and injustice in the Courts of Law¹⁵.

- | | |
|---|---|
| 9. <i>expectation</i> : the feeling that good things are going to happen in the future. | because they understand other people's sufferings. |
| 10. <i>to amuse</i> : to entertain someone by making them laugh or smile. | 13. <i>irony</i> : the use of words to express something different from or the opposite of the literal meaning. |
| 11. <i>to move</i> : to make someone have strong feelings such as sadness. | 14. <i>exploitation</i> : the act of using someone for your own advantage. |
| 12. <i>pathos</i> : the power to make people feel strong feelings such as sadness | 15. <i>Court of Law</i> : the place where crimes are judged. |

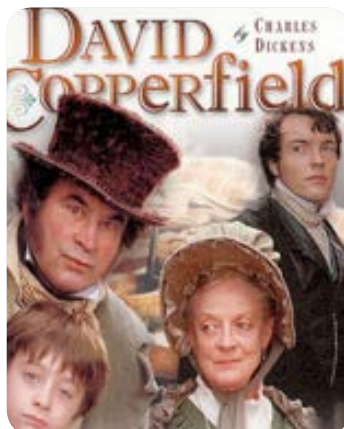


From the BBC miniseries "Great Expectations" (2023)



BEFORE READING

- 1 *David Copperfield* is the story of a boy who grows up to become a successful adult and a father of many children. Look at this picture which presents a 1999 BBC series about David Copperfield. Describe the picture and say when you think the story takes place. Can you guess who the people might be?



Poster for the 1999
BBC miniseries *David Copperfield*

- 2 *David Copperfield* (1850) is set mostly in London. Go online to look for the following information.

- a. Why was London an important city in the middle of the nineteenth century?
- b. How many people lived there?



- 3 Listen to the beginning of the story which is told by David Copperfield in first person – and say whether the following statements are true or false. Then correct the false ones.

- | | T | F |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| a. David was born in London. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b. Peggotty was David's mother. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c. Miss Betsey Trotwood was David's father's aunt. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d. David's mother liked her. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| e. When she learnt the baby was a boy, Miss Betsey Trotwood went away and did not come back. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| f. David's mother was young and pretty. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| g. Mr Murdstone was handsome and blond. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| h. He was always dressed in black. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

David Copperfield

My first years

Chapter 1



I was born on a Friday in Blunderstone, Suffolk, at 12 o'clock at night, six months after the death of my father.

My mother was still very young – almost a child – and she lived alone with a servant, called Peggotty, in the family house. One evening, just before I was born, a strange old lady arrived. It was Miss Betsey Trotwood, an aunt of my father's. She was a rich woman who hated men because she had had a bad husband, and who behaved rather rudely.

"The baby is a girl. I'm sure of it!" she said to my mother, who was quite frightened of her.

"Perhaps it's a boy," she replied shyly.

"Don't disagree with me," said Miss Betsey. "I want to be the baby's godmother¹ and I want her to be called like me."

When the time came for me to be born, Miss Betsey waited impatiently² and walked nervously all the time up and down the sitting room. However, when the doctor told her that the baby was born and that it was a boy, she hit him on the head, walked out of the house, and never came back.

Thinking about my childhood, the first things I remember are my pretty young mother and Peggotty, who was on the plump side and whose cheeks and arms were as hard and red as apples. I also remember our house, our church, and our garden, with all the fruit on the trees. Peggotty was more a friend than a servant, and in the evening we sat all together by the fire in our little sitting room.

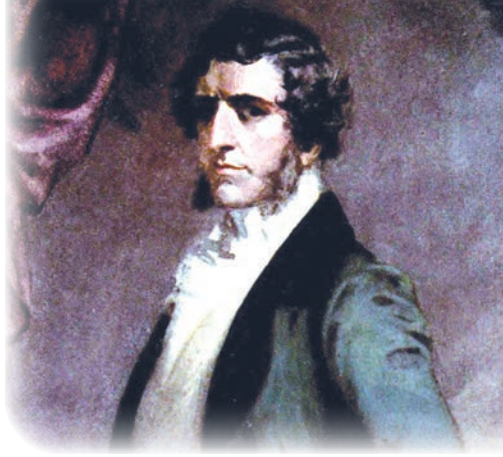
Those were happy years, until one day a handsome dark gentleman appeared in our life. His name was Mr Murdstone. He had the blackest hair and whiskers³ I had ever seen, black eyes

1. *godmother*: a woman who has promised to help with the education of a child, especially in a religious way.

2. *impatiently*: the attitude of someone who wants something to happen as soon as possible.

3. *whiskers*: the hair growing at the sides of a man's face.

Mr Murdstone, painting
by Frank Reynolds



and black clothes. He often walked with us from the church and came to visit; it was clear that he liked my mother, and my mother liked him too, but Peggotty and I didn't. One night I even heard them argue because of him!

One evening Peggotty surprised me when she said,
“Davy, would you like to come with me and spend a couple of weeks at my brother's in Yarmouth? There's the sea, and boats and ships, and the beach...”

Of course, I was very excited at the idea, but I was sorry at the thought of leaving my mother alone. However, when I asked her if I could go, she agreed immediately. On the day of our departure, she came out to the gate to kiss me goodbye, but Mr Murdstone came along with her and this spoiled the moment for me.

We travelled to Yarmouth on a cart pulled by a horse and, when we arrived, we found Ham – Peggotty's nephew – waiting for us at the pub. He took me on his back, and we walked down little roads and past shipyards⁴ of all types until he said,

“That's our house, over there.”

I looked in all directions, but I could see no house; there was only a big boat standing on the ground, with a smoking chimney⁵.

“Is that it?” I asked Ham.

“That's it, Davy,” he replied.

It was a boat which had become a house! I thought it was wonderful. Inside, it was beautifully clean and tidy and there was even a tiny bedroom for me. It smelt of fish because Mr Peggotty was a fisherman, and lobsters⁶ and crabs⁷ were kept in a little wooden hut just outside the house, together with pots and pans.

4. *shipyard*: a place where ships are repaired or built.
5. *chimney*: a vertical pipe that lets the smoke from a fireplace in a building escape outside.
6. *lobster*: a sea creature with a hard shell, a long body divided into

- sections, eight legs and two large claws. The shell is black but turns bright red when it is boiled.
7. *crab*: a sea creature with a hard shell, eight legs and two pincers. It moves sideways on land.



"Do you like the sea?"
"No, I'm afraid of the sea."

Mr Peggotty's family was made up of Ham and little Emily – a nephew and a niece he had adopted⁸ after the death of their parents – and of Mrs Gummidge, who was the widow⁹ of his business partner¹⁰, too poor to live on her own.

“My brother is only a poor man,” explained Peggotty, “but he's good and generous.”

I was very happy with them, and I soon fell in love with little Emily, who was the most beautiful child I had ever seen. We used to walk on the beach together and pick up stones and shells¹¹.

One day I asked her,

“Do you like the sea?”

“No, I'm afraid of the sea; many people, and even my father, have died in it. He was a fisherman. Your father has died, too, but he was a gentleman, and your mother is a lady.”

“Would you like to be a lady?”

“Yes,” she answered.

At last the holiday finished and we had to go back home. I was terribly sad at the idea of leaving little Emily, but I was really looking forward to seeing my mother again. Peggotty, however, seemed strangely confused and depressed.

“What's the matter, Peggotty?” I finally asked, but she found it difficult to answer. At last she said,

“I should have told you before now, but I couldn't find the right time. You see... you've got a new father, it is Mr Murdstone.”

When I arrived at the house, my mother got up to kiss me, but Mr Murdstone stopped her.

“Control yourself, Clara! Remember!” and he gave me his hand to shake, instead.

Everything had changed around the house, and I felt miserable. When I went upstairs, I found that they had moved my bed and my things to another room, which was in the far end of the house. In that strange room I felt cold and unhappy; I started to cry and was still crying when I fell asleep.

8. *to adopt*: to legally take the child of other people into your family and bring them up as your own.

9. *widow*: a woman whose husband is dead.

10. *partner*: either of a pair of people who do the same work or own the same business.

11. *shell*: the external hard covering of small sea creatures.

In the morning I met Mr Murdstone again; he frightened me, and I strongly disliked him. He realised how I felt, so he said,

“David, do you know what I do if I have a dog or a horse which doesn’t do as I say?”

“No, sir.”

“I beat¹² it, and in the end I am able to control it, even if it has cost it all the blood it had.”

I understood and did not answer.

At dinner I heard that his elder sister was coming to stay with us that very evening. When she arrived, I thought she was as frightening as her brother. She was as dark as him, looked like him, and had very thick eyebrows which almost met over her big nose. She had brought with her two big, hard, black boxes, and carried a bag which shut with a metallic sound.

When she looked at me, she said to my mother,

“Is that your boy?”

“Yes,” she replied.

“Generally speaking,” said Miss Murdstone, “I don’t like boys.”

The next morning, at breakfast, she told my mother that she had come to help her in all daily activities and then took the keys of the house from her.

“Don’t worry, Clara, I’ll run the house instead of you, from now on.”

My mother tried to protest¹³, but very weakly, because Mr Murdstone and his sister were too strong for her. From that moment on, she began to do and behave as they wanted. They were very strict, especially with me.

They spoke of sending me to boarding school¹⁴, but for the moment I took my lessons at home, and it was a nightmare! Officially it was my mother who asked me questions about the things that I had studied, but Mr Murdstone and his sister were always present, and their dark looks made me forget everything. I started to speak, but then I forgot a word, and then another, until I felt all the words escape from my head, and I fell silent. My mother looked worried and sad, but, if she tried to help me, Mr Murdstone said,

12. *to beat (beat, beaten)*: to hit someone repeatedly.

13. *to protest*: to say that you don’t agree

and complain about something.

14. *boarding school*: a school where students study and live.



“... until I felt all the words escape from my head...”

“Be strong with the boy, Clara. Does he know his lesson or does he not know it?”

“He doesn’t know it,” said his sister.

This system went on for about six months during which I was always miserable. I seemed unable to learn anything. Before the Murdstones’ arrival, however, I had always been a good student, and learning had been a joy to me.

One morning, when I went downstairs for my lesson, I saw Mr Murdstone holding a cane¹⁵.

“Now, David, today you must be more careful than ever,” he said, showing me the cane.

The fear of the cane, however, made me answer worse than ever. My mother started to cry, and Mr Murdstone said,

“David, you and I are going upstairs.”

While we were climbing the stairs, he was holding my head under his arm, hurting me.

“Please, sir, don’t beat me! I’ve tried to learn, but I can’t if you and Miss Murdstone are there.”

“Can’t you, David?” he said, and hit me cruelly with the cane.

I was so furious that I took his hand and bit it hard. That made him so angry that he started to beat me as if he wanted to kill me. Then he locked me in my room.

I was hurting all over, but nobody came to comfort¹⁶ me. In the evening, Miss Murdstone brought me some food, left it on the table, and went away without a word.

15. *cane*: a long, thin stick which was used in the past to punish students.

16. *to comfort*: to say kind things to someone, in order to make them feel better or less sad.

This went on for five days, five terrible days during which I saw nobody and wondered what they were going to do with me.

On the last night, Peggotty came to speak to me through the keyhole.

“They are sending you to school, my boy. Near London. I love you, dear David, and I will take care of your mother. I will write to you, too.”

Her kind, loving words were a great help to me. In the morning, Mr Barkis – the cart driver – arrived to take me away. My mother only said,

“Goodbye, David, you are going for your own good. Be a better boy. I forgive you.”

So, they had convinced her that I was bad! That was the thing that hurt me the most.

Mr Barkis drove very slowly and after about a mile he stopped the horse. At that moment, Peggotty appeared from behind some trees and got on the cart. She hugged and kissed me, and gave me a packet with some sweets and some money sent by my mother; then she jumped down quickly. When we started again, the driver tried to comfort me and then asked about Peggotty.

“Has she got a boyfriend?”

“No, she hasn’t.”

“Well, when you write to her, tell her that Barkis would like to marry her.”

Then we didn’t speak any more. He drove me as far as Yarmouth, and there he put me on the stagecoach¹⁷ which would take me to London. It was a long and uncomfortable journey which lasted all night. Finally, in the morning, we arrived in London.

We stopped at an inn in the district of Whitechapel¹⁸. When we got off, I looked anxiously around, but I found nobody waiting for me. I was only eight years old and I felt scared and lonely; I went inside and waited, wondering what I should do and where I should go if no one came for me. I thought that

17. *stagecoach*: a covered vehicle pulled by a horse which was used in the past to carry passengers or goods along a regular route.

18. *Whitechapel*: it is an area of London which, in the Victorian Age, was considered to be very dangerous because of the many criminals who lived there.



David on his way to school, by artist Albert Ludovici

maybe Mr Murdstone had abandoned¹⁹ me there in order to get rid of²⁰ me.

At last, a young man arrived, asked me if I was the new boy, and told me I had to go with him. He was thin and almost as dark as Mr Murdstone. His black clothes looked very old and not very clean.

“I am Mr Mell, one of the teachers at Salem House, your new school,” he said.

Then he took me there. The school was surrounded by a high brick²¹ wall. When we rang the bell, the door was opened by a big man with a thick neck, a wooden leg, and an unfriendly face.

“The new boy,” said Mr Mell, introducing me to him.

Salem house was a square brick building which looked dark and empty. When I asked Mr Mell where all the boys were, he informed me that it was holiday time, and that the students would return the following month. I, instead, had been sent to school during the holidays to be punished for my bad behaviour.

The schoolroom was a sad, long room with three rows of desks, pieces of old exercise books on the dirty floor, and ink all over everything. There was also a very unpleasant smell. Mr Mell had left me for a moment to go upstairs, so I examined all the room.

19. *to abandon*: to leave a person or a place for ever.

20. *to get rid of*: to make yourself free of somebody/something that is annoying

you or that you do not want.

21. *brick*: a rectangular block of hard material, used for building houses and walls.



"Be careful of him. He bites", by artist Ron Embleton

On the desk I saw a placard²² with these words written on it: "BE CAREFUL OF HIM. HE BITES."

I jumped on the desk and looked all around, thinking there was a dangerous dog nearby, but I could see nothing.

Mr Mell came back and was surprised to see me on the desk.

"What are you doing up there?" he asked.

"I'm sorry sir, I'm afraid of the dog," I said, and showed him the placard.

"No, Copperfield, that placard is not for a dog. It's for you. I was told to put it on your back."

So saying, he tied the placard on my shoulders like a rucksack and, from that moment on, I had to carry it wherever I went.

Nobody can imagine how much I suffered because of that placard; I always thought that somebody was reading it: the servants, the people who delivered food, anybody who passed where I had to walk.

Although my lonely life was very sad, I feared the re-opening of the school. I imagined what the other boys would be like and how they would behave when they saw my placard.

Every day I studied long hours with Mr Mell, who never spoke much, but was never unkind to me. I was a rather good student, since Mr Murdstone and his sister were not there. Every night I went to bed and cried, missing the company and love of my mother and Peggotty.

22. *placard*: a large piece of paper or cardboard with a message written on it.

After about a month, the servants began to clean the school all over, and a few days later Mr Mell told me that Mr Creakle, the principal, would be home that evening. The man with the wooden leg took me to him that very night.

Mr Creakle had a red face and a comb-over²³, small eyes, a little nose, and a big chin. He had practically no voice and spoke in whispers²⁴.

“Has this boy done anything wrong, yet?” he asked Tungay, the man with the wooden leg.

“Not yet,” he answered.

Mr Creakle looked disappointed and took me by the ear. He pinched²⁵ it hard. I was very scared and felt like crying because he was hurting me. He said,

“I know Mr Murdstone and he knows me. Soon you will know me, too. I am a very determined man. Now, go, and don’t try to take off that placard.”

Tommy Traddles was the first boy who returned. He was nice to me and found my placard very amusing. The other boys, when they arrived, also behaved better to me than I expected.

J. Steerforth, one of the older boys, was considered their leader. He was very good-looking and clever. He wanted to know why I was wearing that placard, and, when I told him, he said it was ‘a real shame’. For that I was really grateful to him.

We were in the same room, and we became friends. He offered to manage my money for me and with that money he bought biscuits and wine for us and for the other boys. We had a party that night, all of us sitting on the beds and talking in whispers, so that the teachers would not hear us. I heard a lot of things about the school that night, among them that Mr Creakle was very strict and very ignorant, and that he enjoyed hitting the boys, all of them except Steerforth.

The next day, school began. Mr Creakle, with Tungay at his side, appeared in the schoolroom soon after breakfast. We all fell silent immediately, we were all scared.

23. *comb-over*: an arrangement of hair in which a man who is going bald combs his hair from the side of his head over the top.

24. *whisper*: a very soft tone of voice,

produced using only the breath.

25. *to pinch*: to press someone’s skin between the thumb and another finger, usually in order to cause pain.

“Now boys, be careful what you do, because here I am, ready to punish you!”

After that, he came to where I was and started to hit me with his cane, saying that if I was famous for biting, he was famous for biting too. I was soon in tears, but I was not the only boy to be beaten. As he went round the schoolroom, Mr Creakle beat most of the boys, especially the smaller ones, so that half the class was crying even before the lessons began.

He really enjoyed hurting us, and we were afraid of him. Poor Traddles was hit every day, but he was a happy boy, and used to cheer up²⁶ soon. He was a really good boy too and believed that we should protect one another.

Once, Steerforth laughed aloud in church and the beadle²⁷ thought it was Traddles. For that, he was beaten hard, but didn't say that it had been Steerforth.

It was a horrible school, managed with cruelty, where the boys were too scared, and too often hit, to learn anything.

Steerforth continued to protect me and be my friend. I loved and admired him, but I didn't like the way he treated Mr Mell: he had no respect for him.

One day Mr Creakle wasn't there, and the boys were really making a noise. At last Mr Mell got up from his desk and shouted 'Silence!', but Steerforth laughed at him and insulted him because of his poverty; he called him a 'beggar'²⁸. At that moment Mr Creakle appeared at the door and, instead of defending Mr Mell, he fired²⁹ him. I was very sorry for Mr Mell but didn't want to show it to Steerforth for fear of offending³⁰ him.

One day, Tungay came in and called out,
“Visitors for Copperfield!”

I was surprised and excited. I ran to the visiting room, and found Mr Peggotty and Ham. We laughed and cried for the emotion of seeing each other again, then I started asking questions about Peggotty and little Emily. They had brought me a basket of seafood

26. *to cheer up*: to start to feel happier.

27. *beadle*: a church officer who has minor duties.

28. *beggar*: a poor person who lives by asking people for money or food.

29. *to fire*: to remove someone from their job.

30. *to offend*: to hurt someone's feelings or make them angry.

WORKING ON THE TEXT

1 Complete the following sentences with the appropriate character's name.

- a. lived with David's mother when he was born.
- b. was David's father's rich aunt.
- c. was a handsome, dark gentleman.
- d. and didn't like Mr Murdstone.
- e. was a fisherman who lived in Yarmouth.
- f. and had been adopted by Mr Peggotty after the death of their parents.
- g. was a hard, frightening lady.
- h. hit David with a cane because he was unable to say his lesson.
- i. put a placard on David's back.
- j. was the principal of the school.

2 Answer the following questions.

- a. Why did Miss Trotwood hate men?
- b. What was special about Mr Peggotty's home?
- c. Why didn't David like Mr Murdstone?
- d. Why was David sent to school?
- e. Why was the school empty when David arrived there?
- f. Who became David's best friend at school?
- g. Why were all the students afraid of Mr Creakle?
- h. What surprise did David find when he went home at the end of the semester?
- i. What happened to David after his mother's death?
- j. What was the Murdstones' attitude to David? s

3 Dickens focuses much of his attention on the way the weaker members of his society are treated: in this first chapter we see this especially in relation to children and women. Tick the statements which you think are right and correct the false ones.

- a. Middle class married women in the Victorian Age were independent because they worked. ☐
- b. The wife's role in the family was secondary to her husband's. ☐
- c. Children were educated in a very strict way and beating them was considered a normal punishment. ☐
- d. Children were educated only at school. ☐

- e. Salem House symbolises Dickens' idea of a bad school. ☐
- f. The students at Salem House were well treated. ☐
- g. The suffering of children was considered unimportant. ☐
- h. Children did not have the possibility of expressing their opinion either at home or at school. ☐
- i. Dickens seems to show that unmarried women (as shown in Peggotty and Miss Tortwood) had more freedom than married ones. ☐
- j. Dickens shows that Clara is too young and innocent to disagree with her husband and that is probably what makes her die, in the end. ☐

WORKING ON GRAMMAR AND VOCABULARY

- 4 **PET** Read the text below taken from the beginning of the story and choose the correct word for each space.

I was a **a.** "....." child because my father's eyes closed on the light of this world, when mine **b.** on it. When I was a child, I often felt sorry if I thought that he was **c.** in the cold ground, in the dark, while our little sitting-room was warm and **d.**!"

An aunt of my father's, Miss Betsey Trotwood, was our **e.** relative. She had been married to a husband younger **f.** herself, who was handsome, but also **g.** and dishonest. So she got a divorce, and had lived as a **h.** lady ever since. When I was born, she **i.** to be the godmother of the baby, but she wanted a girl, while I was a boy, so she **j.** the house and didn't come back.

- | | | | |
|--------------------|---------------|---------------|-------------|
| a. 1. funny | 2. posthumous | 3. friendly | 4. pretty |
| b. 1. turned | 2. shut | 3. opened | 4. explored |
| c. 1. lied | 2. laid | 3. lying | 4. lain |
| d. 1. foggy | 2. bright | 3. cloudy | 4. dark |
| e. 1. richer | 2. most rich | 3. more rich | 4. richest |
| f. 1. then | 2. of | 3. than | 4. like |
| g. 1. good-looking | 2. tall | 3. drunk | 4. cruel |
| h. 1. single | 2. alone | 3. by herself | 4. unique |
| i. 1. means | 2. had meant | 3. would mean | 4. meant |
| j. 1. was leaving | 2. left | 3. leaved | 4. lost |

WORKING ON SKILLS



Listening

- 5 Listen to a passage from the story and complete the sentences with a word or a short phrase.

The doctor went into the sitting-room and said kindly to my aunt,

"Well Madam, **a.**!"

"What upon?" said my aunt, looking almost angry.

The little man gave her a little smile **b.** calm her down.

"What are you doing?" **c.** impatiently. "Can't you speak?"

"Be calm, dear Madam," said the doctor in his softest voice. "Everything is all right, now. **d.**, and well over."

"How is she?" said my aunt, **e.** her arms.

"Well, Madam, she will soon be quite well, I hope," he replied. "As well as **f.** a young mother to be, after having a baby."

"And SHE? How is SHE?" cried my aunt.

The doctor **g.** to understand.

"The baby," said my aunt. "How is she?"

"Madam, I thought you knew. **h.**!"

My aunt didn't say a word but **i.** her bonnet and hit the doctor's head with it, then put it **j.**, walked out, and never came back.

Speaking

- 6 With a partner, look at this picture of David and Little Emily on the beach, and act out their conversation on the basis of what you have read in the first chapter. Remember to speak about:

- what they like doing,
- their parents and relatives,
- how they like the sea.





David Copperfield

One of Dickens's most popular novels, it narrates the story of David Copperfield from his birth to maturity. The narrator is David himself who, in a vivid, imaginative style full of humour and irony, tells about the many adventures and misadventures of his life, managing to amuse and move the reader at the same time. David's world is peopled by a myriad of characters, some of whom are funny caricatures, while others have a tragic dignity; some are good, and others are real villains. Many of them also become the protagonists of several subplots which help to create an ironic but very realistic portrait of the Victorian Age and enable Dickens to criticise its many iniquities.

beginner

• **A1** (Breakthrough)

elementary

• **A2** (Waystage)



pre-intermediate

• **B1** (Threshold)

intermediate

• **B2** (Vantage)

post-intermediate

• **C1** (Effectiveness)

Levels of accredited examination boards:

Cambridge ESOL:	PET
Trinity:	Grade 5, 6 / ISE I
City & Guilds (Pitman):	Intermediate
ESB:	Intermediate 1, 2
Edexcel:	Elementary



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Teacher's Resources available online:
Answer Key, Audioscripts, Summing-up Activities.

www.edisco.it/rainbows

