

Teacher Resource

Charles Dickens

Episode 16
9th June 2020

Focus Questions

1. Who was Charles Dickens?
2. Where and when was Dickens born?
3. Describe what Dickens' life was like growing up.
4. What influenced Dickens' writing?
5. Finish the following sentence: Charles Dickens worked as a newspaper reporter but preferred writing...
6. Complete the following sentence. Dickens wrote funny short stories under the name of _____.
7. Describe the success of Dickens' novels.
8. What did he want to educate his upper-class readers about?
9. Name one of Dickens' books.
10. What influence has his writing had on other authors and films?

Activity

Class Discussion

After watching the BTN *Charles Dickens* story hold a class discussion, using the following as discussion starters:

- What do you THINK about what you saw in the BTN *Charles Dickens* story?
- What does this video make you WONDER?
- Think of three QUESTIONS you have about the *Charles Dickens* story.
- What did you LEARN from the BTN story? Leave your comment on the BTN *Charles Dickens* story page.

Activity

Personal Response

Students will write a personal response to the BTN *Charles Dickens* story. Ask students to finish one or more of the following incomplete sentences:

- Charles Dickens is an important writer because...
- It was interesting to learn...
- These are five words that I would use to describe Charles Dickens' writing ...
- It is important to remember Charles Dickens because...



Key Learning

Students will learn more about the life and work of Charles Dickens and experiment with shared story writing. Students will develop storylines, characters and settings in their writing.

Curriculum

English – Year 4

Create literary texts by developing storylines, characters and settings.

English – Year 5

Create literary texts using realistic and fantasy settings and characters that draw on the worlds represented in texts students have experienced.

Create literary texts that experiment with structures, ideas and stylistic features of selected authors.

English – Year 6

Create literary texts that adapt or combine aspects of texts students have experienced in innovative ways.

English – Year 6

Analyse how text structures and language features work together to meet the purpose of a text.

Plan, draft and publish imaginative, informative and persuasive texts, choosing and experimenting with text structures, language features, images and digital resources appropriate to purpose and audience.

Activity

Create a biography

Students will research and write a biography on Charles Dickens. Before students begin to construct their biographies, hold a class discussion to find out what they already know about biographical writing. Discuss what type of information is included in a biography and what they tell us about a person. The [Civics and Citizenship website](#) has some examples of biographies for students to look at.

Below are some discussion starters:

- What does a biography tell us about a person?
- Where can you look to find information for your biographical writing? It could include the internet, newspaper articles, magazine articles and interviews, other biographies, historical books or television interviews. Why is it important to use more than one source of information?
- What makes a biography interesting? For example, key information and facts, a timeline of events, photographs, illustrations and quotes.

Using the biography organiser template at the end of this activity, students will find and record information about Charles Dickens.

Some possible areas of research include:

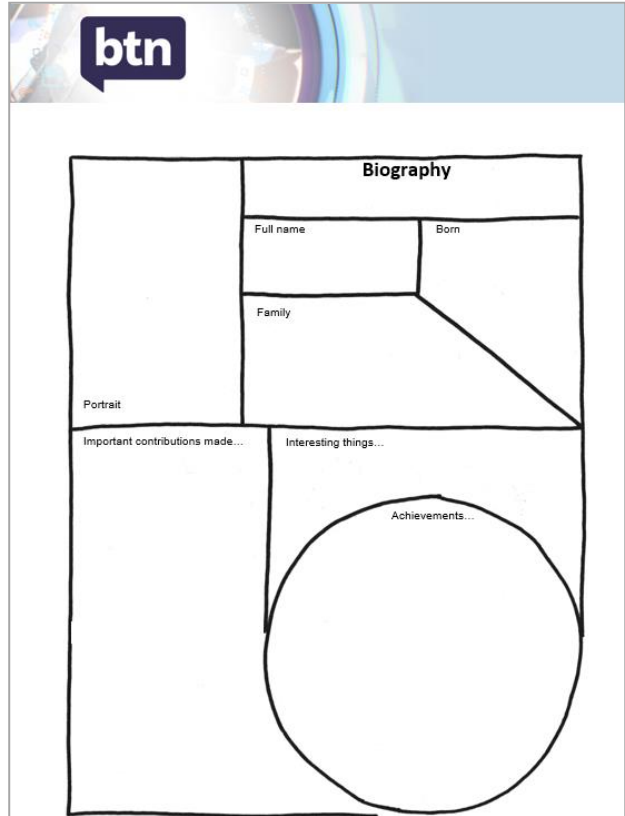
- Where and when was Charles Dickens born? Locate using Google Maps.
- Describe his family life growing up.
- What are some of his achievements? Choose one to explore in more detail.
- What inspired/motivated him in his writing?
- What were some of the challenges he faced?
- What do you admire about him?
- Sketch a portrait of Charles Dickens. Explore and experiment with different techniques and media to produce a portrait.

Further investigation

- Imagine you could sit down and talk to Charles Dickens. What questions would you ask him about his life and achievements?

Present your findings in an interesting way.

- Give a presentation on their achievements.
- Make a “Did you know?” for other students.
- Write a letter thanking them for their achievements.
- Create a timeline highlighting significant events.



The image shows a biography organiser template titled "Biography" with a "btn" logo in the top left corner. The template is divided into several sections:

- Portrait**: A large empty box on the left side.
- Full name**: A small box at the top right.
- Born**: A small box at the top right, next to "Full name".
- Family**: A box below "Full name" and "Born".
- Important contributions made...**: A box on the bottom left.
- Interesting things...**: A box on the bottom right.
- Achievements...**: A large circle on the bottom right, overlapping the "Interesting things..." box.

Activity

Glossary

Students will brainstorm a list of key words that relate to the story writing process. Students may want to use pictures and diagrams to illustrate the meaning and create their own glossary. Here are some words to get you started.

Episodic	Narrative	Theme
Character	Comedic	Series

Further investigation

Students will choose one of the words from their glossary to explore in more detail and develop a key question to guide their inquiry. Alternatively, students will respond to one or more of the following:

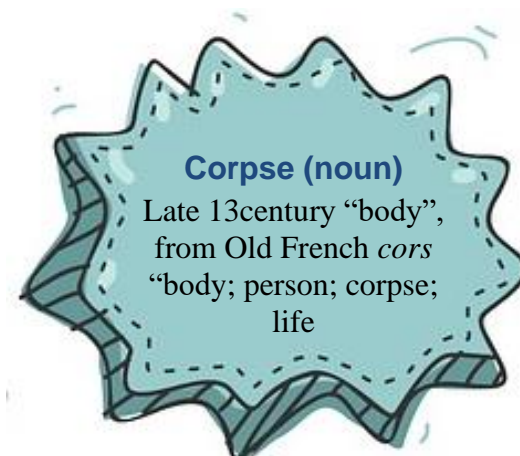
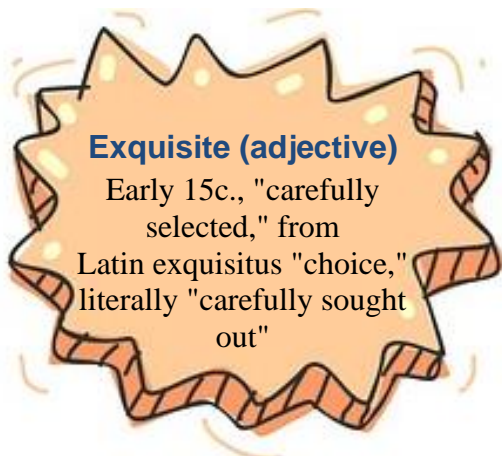
- What common themes did Charles Dickens explore in his writing?
- What was London like during Victorian England? Find images. How was Charles Dickens' writing influenced by the Victorian Era?
- Rewrite the ending of a Charles Dickens book (or your favourite book). Explain why you chose to end it the way you did.
- What is episodic writing? Give an example of episodic writing in Charles Dickens' work. Can you give any other examples of episodic storytelling? How are they similar or different to Charles Dickens' writing?
- Find 5 images that relate to a book by your favourite author and explain why you chose the images.
- Write a letter to the author of your favourite book explaining your views on the book and asking any questions you have about the book.

Activity

Writing activity – Exquisite Corpse

Exquisite corpse is the most famous of all the surrealist games and was invented by Andre Breton and the surrealists in the 1920s. The surrealists were a group of artists and poets who loved breaking the rules of art and finding new ways to look at the world.

Exquisite corpse is a method by which a collection of words or images is collectively assembled. Each collaborator adds to a composition in sequence, either by following a rule, or by being allowed to see only the end of what the previous person contributed.



Drawing your Exquisite Corpse

Students will work in groups of three to create their exquisite corpse drawing, using the following steps.

How to:

1. Fold an A4 piece of paper into three equal parts.
2. The first person begins the drawing at the top of the paper. Using a black tip pen, draw the head and neck of any creature – real or imagined. When finished, make sure you can see two marks from your drawing down to the middle fold. This will help the next person know where to start their drawing.
3. Fold the paper to make sure the next person can't see what you have drawn – pass it on to the next person.
4. The second person draws a body – any kind of body – in the middle section of the paper. When finished, the second person puts two marks down to the bottom fold – remembering to fold the paper so the next person can't see what has been drawn and pass it on to the next person.
5. The third person draws the legs.
6. NOW – SHARE!

TIP – use a black tip pen for drawing.

Folding Story based on the Exquisite Corpse

The instruction provides outline details for writing a narrative, but it could also be used for writing a poem. If writing a narrative, students will write a beginning, middle (with a complication) and an ending (with a resolution). Students will work in groups of three to create their folding story, using the following steps.

How to:

1. Fold an A4 piece of paper into three equal parts.
2. The first person begins writing the beginning of the story on the first section of the paper. The **last word** they are going to write should be written onto the next section.
3. The second person uses the word that is written as the start of the second section (middle) of the story – it should include a complication. The **last word** they are going to write should be written onto the next section.
4. The third person uses the word that is written as the start of the third section (ending) of the story – it should include a resolution for the story.
5. NOW – SHARE!

Reflect

Reflect on the activity by responding to the following questions:

- What did you enjoy about this investigation?
- What did you find surprising?

Useful Websites

Dickens Museum

<https://dickensmuseum.com/>

Charles Dickens – BBC History

http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/historic_figures/dickens_charles.shtml

Charles Dickens – Australian Dictionary of Biography

<http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/dickens-charles-3409>

Portrait	Biography	
	Full name	Born
	Family	
Important contributions made...	Interesting things...	
	Achievements...	