

Charles Dickens

by Jane Lawson at DailyStep.com

Dickens is one of the most famous authors in the English language. If you study English literature, you will most certainly cover his works. This month we are celebrating 200 years since his birth, on 7th February 1812. He lived until 1870, and was considered to be the greatest author of the Victorian age – that is, the time from 1837-1901 when Queen Victoria was on the throne.

The Victorian age was one of great prosperity and industry for Britain, but it was also a time of extreme poverty and deprivation. Dickens had a strong social conscience and in his novels he drew attention to the living conditions of some of the poorest people. In one of his most famous stories, *Oliver Twist*, the main character is an orphan who starts off living in a workhouse, then moves from one miserable situation to another as he becomes a thief in London. You can tell that Dickens has real compassion for the boy and his life, and as you can see in the two bottom illustrations, the people who exploited him are always shown as pompous and very well fed, whereas poor Oliver is thin and frightened.

Some of the characters in Dickens' novels are so famous that we still use their names to describe people. In 'A Christmas Carol' about a miserly man who is never generous, the main character's name is 'Ebenezer Scrooge' – and we still use the word 'Scrooge' to describe mean people. For example, we might say 'He's such a scrooge! He never buys anyone a drink or a birthday present.' Fortunately, in the story, Scrooge completely changes his outlook after being visited by a series of ghosts, who show him visions of the past, present and future. You can see an illustration of Scrooge and one of the ghosts in the top right hand picture.

I can't possibly tell you enough about Charles Dickens in this short blog post, but I hope you will try to read his books – preferably in English! Now let's move on to our [Audio Word Study](#), where I'm going to explain the difference between LIVE, LIFE and LIVE.

To download this free PDF and to hear and download the audio blog, please visit: <https://www.dailystep.com/en/blog/meanings-live-and-life-plus-dickens-200th-birthday>



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