Charles Dickens was a very famous British novelist who was born on February 7th, 1812 in Portsmouth, England. In 1814, his father, who was a clerk in the Navy Pay Office, was transferred to London. Three years later, when Dickens was about five, the family moved to Chatham, near Rochester, where they lived for five years. These were the happiest and the most pleasant years in Dickens’ childhood. He had learned to read and he was able to read all of his father’s small collection of classics, which included Shakespeare, Cervantes, Defoe, Smollet, Fielding and Goldsmith. These writers inspired Dickens and had a great influence on him and his future writing. Unfortunately, the family had to move back to London again, and this time they moved to a suburb of Camden Town, where the family faced financial difficulties. Due to his father’s debts and imprisonment when Charles Dickens was 12 years old, he was forced to leave school and work at a boot-blacking factory. This experience marked his life forever as he felt helpless, abandoned and betrayed by adults who were supposed to look after and take care of him. These feelings became a repeated theme in most of his novels. During his lifetime, he had a growing interest in social and educational issues and the legal system in Victorian times. In his novels, he depicted the experiences he had faced as a young boy, working in a factory, the lack of money, the problems of living in the city, debts, prison and crime. Dickens is well-known and remembered for the characters he created in his novels. He was very successful and very popular for his classic novels: *Pickwick Papers* (1837) *Oliver Twist* (1837), *Nicholas Nickleby* (1838), *A Christmas Carol* (1843), *David Copperfield* (1849) and *Great Expectations* (1860). *A Tale of Two Cities* (1859) was his most popular novel.
Read about Charles Dickens

Answer the following questions about Charles Dickens and his novels

1. Many of Charles Dickens’ novels deal with repeated themes. Which of the following was NOT one of these themes?
   a. Children
   b. Poverty
   c. Crime
   d. Travel

2. Dickens wrote in a period of English history called …
   a. Regency
   b. The Enlightenment
   c. Victorian
   d. Renaissance

3. Dickens lived in several places during his life. Where didn’t he live?
   a. Chatham, Kent
   b. Camden Town, London
   c. Holborn, London
   d. Bath, Somerset

4. Charles Dickens criticised the following aspects of English society in his novels:
   a. Social problems
   b. The Education System
   c. The Legal System
   d. All of the above

5. Dickens’ most popular novel is …
   a. Little Dorrit
   b. Dombey and Son
   c. Our Mutual Friend
   d. A Tale of Two Cities

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