

Year 7 – Oliver Twist – English Knowledge Organiser

Expectations and content

What is this unit about and why do we teach it?

- This novel is essentially about good versus evil. Dickens mixes grim realism with satire to describe the effects of industrialism on 19th-century England and to criticise the harsh new Poor Laws. Students are encouraged to consider the effects of poverty and social injustice on behaviour choices.

Key Vocabulary taught:

- morality
- vulnerable
- brutal
- corrupt
- malicious
- villain
- victim
- naïve
- society
- workhouse

Key terminology taught:

- quotation
- topic sentence
- analysis
- themes
- character
- essay
- novel

If your child needs support

Vocabulary help:

- Use a dictionary to find definitions of the key vocabulary
- Write sentences about the novel using the key vocabulary
- Create a crossword where the answers are the key vocabulary

Terminology help:

- Create flashcards to help you remember the definitions of the key terminology
- <https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize> has resources to support learning of English subject terminology

General help:

- Create a fact file on the context of 19th Century London
- Watch this Vile Victorians clip about child exploitation:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4gkGybl071l>
- For more information about Dickens and the workhouse, watch:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YcpqCdIXmHE>
- Oliver Twist is a popular film and you could watch it for further understanding of the plot and characters.
- Find images of real people living in Victorian London and create a collage/scrapbook

If your child needs extension

Questions to discuss with your child:

- How could society ensure that vulnerable people are supported?
- Will success always come to people who are law-abiding, honest and truthful?
- Are people born good or bad or are their life choices caused by their circumstances (nature v nurture)?

Challenging activities to complete:

- Research the life and work of Charles Dickens.
- Find out about other Victorian Villains – real or fictional
- Make a Tik Tok or YouTube video about life in the workhouse

Suggested further reading:

- **The Graveyard Book** by **Neil Gaiman** is the story of a young orphan who is adopted by the ghosts of a **graveyard**.
- **Hetty Feather** by **Jacqueline Wilson** is the story of an abandoned baby in Victorian London.
- **The Ruby in the Smoke** by **Philip Pullman** is a mystery story set in Victorian London.
- **Coram Boy** by **Jamila Gavin** is the story of Toby, saved from an African ship as a child, and Aaron, the illegitimate son of the heir to a great estate.