

Dickens: His Work and His World

by Michael Rosen



Family Study Guide Answer Key by Suzanne Broadhurst



Illuminations

Family Study Guide

Dickens: His Work and His World

Family Study Guide Answer Key



Illuminations

Illuminations Year Six
Dickens: His Work and His World
by Michael Rosen
Family Study Guide Answer Key by Suzanne Broadhurst

~ **Weeks 1 and 2** ~

Supplies

- *Dickens: His Work and His World* by Michael Rosen (ISBN #978-0-7636-3888-7)
- *Family Tree* Worksheet
- *Name that Character* Worksheet
- Bible with concordance
- Optional: Book from library about making puppets and theatres
- Optional: A copy of the book *Great Expectations* (Free audio book available at www.librivox.org)

Reading Schedule

Week 1

- Day 1: Chapter 1, pages 6-11
- Day 2: Chapter 2, pages 12-19
- Day 3: Chapter 2, pages 20-35
- Day 4: Chapter 3, pages 36-48

Week 2

- Day 1: Chapter 4, pages 49-59
- Day 2: Chapter 4, pages 60-72
- Day 3: Chapter 4, pages 73-81
- Day 4: Chapter 5 and Timeline, pages 82-94

Introduction

Charles Dickens, a master author, was also a master performer. The role of an author requires a great deal of time alone with pen and paper, typewriter, or as in our time, a computer. The public only sees the final result in printed form.

As a performer, Charles Dickens spent much time behind the scenes developing his voice and acting skills, but he also practiced on stage in front of an audience where he received immediate feedback.

Both his writing and theatrical audiences adored him.

Although we will never have the opportunity to see Dickens perform live, we are privileged to read his works or listen to others read his writings on audio books which create images of places and times far away, yet quite close to heart.

Let's travel into the world of words, theatre, and beyond as we explore the work and world of Charles Dickens.

NOTE TO PARENTS

If your child is not ready for extensive writing, feel free to adapt written assignments to his or her natural bent. For example, instead of composing an essay or short story, the student may tell the story on camera or create a voice recording.

Week 1 - Day 1

- Read Chapter 1, pages 6-11.

Vocabulary

- miser (n): *[a greedy person who lives poorly in order to keep money saved for himself]*
- bloodcurdling (adj): *[causing great fear or terror]*
- garish (adj): *[overly colorful and showy in a tacky, tasteless manner]*
- rag-and-bone shop (n): *[a store that sells cast-off items such as rags and bones which are then used to make dishes and fertilizer]*

Discussion Generators

1. Which president of the United States was in the audience when Charles Dickens performed in Washington, D.C.? *[Andrew Johnson]*
2. Why did Dickens use different voices in his performances? *[He wanted the audience to recognize the book's characters when he narrated his works.]*
3. Why did the audience fall into a "painful silence"? *[Charles Dickens was able to portray not only the character's thoughts, but their emotions as well.]*
4. Why was the little girl frightened that Father Christmas might die, too? *[She so loved Charles Dickens and thought so highly of him that she was shocked that he was human and could die. She may have thought him to be as mythical and as fantastical as Father Christmas.]*
5. Have you read or seen a production of any of Charles Dickens' books? If so, which was your favorite? Why? *[Answers will vary.]*

6. Look carefully at the 2-page illustration on pages 10 and 11. What do you notice about the people or setting that is familiar to you? *[Answers will vary, but may include mother caring for a baby, capitol building, books, children playing, both wealthy and poor, etc.]*
7. Looking again at the illustration mentioned in question 7, what is different from life today? *[Answers will vary, but may include clothing styles, top hats, flower lady, children working on the street, etc.]*

Hands-On Activities

- Find England on a map or globe. Locate the capital. Does this city sound familiar? Why?
- Draw a picture of how Dickens most likely traveled between England and the United States.
- Choose a favorite story book with at least two characters. Read aloud to the family using different voices for each character.
 - Too young to read? Tell a familiar - or made-up - story using different voices for the characters. For example, tell the well-known story, *The Three Little Pigs*. Or create a story about five large peacocks.
 - For more fun, have your child act out the parts as a one-man show. Video record the performance and play back for family and friends.

Week 1 - Day 2

- Read Chapter 2, pages 12-19.

Vocabulary

- inimitable (adj): *[so special or unique that it is not capable of being imitated]*
- scandal (n): *[an action that is seen as morally wrong, which is then talked about among others]*
- scimitar (n): *[a curved single-edged sword]*
- dingy (adj): *[dull and dirty]*
- pantomime (n): *[a story told solely by facial expressions and body movement, no sound or voices]*
- extract (n): *[a small section of written work pulled out for a performance or a reading]*

Discussion Generators

1. A short list of activities that a great writer must spend time doing is found on page 12. What are those activities? *[Watching, listening, wondering, writing or “telling us about it”]*
2. What year was Charles Dickens born? *[1812]*
3. Did he have any older siblings (brothers or sisters)? *[Yes, he had an older sister named Frances, known as Fanny.]*
4. Is it ok to pretend to be someone we aren’t, like Charles’ father did? *[Answers may vary, but may include: It depends on the audience. Sometimes, it’s fun to pretend we are someone else, richer or*

poorer, from a big city or from a farm in the country. When we interact with people on a regular basis, though, it's good to be just who we are, no more, no less.]

5. Describe the port city of Chatham (pronounced chat-uhm). *[Drawbridges, ships including prison ships and a hospital ship, a muddy river, tunnels, fields, busy streets]*
 6. Who was Charles Dickens' first teacher? *[His mother]* Who was your first teacher? *[Answers will vary.]*
 7. Would you like to go to the dame school that Charles went to? *[Answers will vary, but may include a feeling of ambivalence. Learning would be interesting, but I doubt anyone would want to be near that birch stick!]*
 8. Why did Charles get in trouble for saying that marble paper wasn't really made from marble? *[Answers will vary, but may include something about some adults may be unreasonable and look for an excuse to punish children who speak up about inconsistencies in life.]*
 9. Charles read a lot after school, beyond his assignments. Why? *[Answers may vary, but may include: He was ill much of the time; he was extremely curious about other lands and peoples; reading was a way to keep out of trouble.]*
- Using the *Family Tree* Worksheet, fill in the blanks on Dickens' family tree.

Hands-On Activities

- Create and act out an impression of your favorite TV or book character. Study his or her voice (tone, volume, inflection) and mannerisms (hand-waving, head-tilt, etc). Ask your family to guess who you are. Fun for parents and children!
- Sketch a scene from a book you've read recently. Choose a book that has few pictures or a scene in the book that isn't already illustrated.
- Research Grimaldi. Who is he? Where did he live? What did he do? How is he different from clowns today? How is he the same? Write an essay about Grimaldi.
- Create a puppet show for your family and friends. Create your own puppet theatre and puppets from ideas provided at these websites and by clicking on the images found for paper and cardboard puppet patterns:

<http://www.instructables.com/id/cardboard-box-puppet-theater>

<http://blog.innerchildcrochet.com/2011/06/how-to-make-a-cardboard-puppet-theater/>

Week 1 - Day 3

- Read Chapter 2, pages 20-33.

Vocabulary

- dismal (adj): *[gloomy, dreary, cheerless]*
- cutlery (n): *[cutting tools such as knives and scissors]*

- blacking (n): *[shoe polish]*
- orphan (n): *[a child whose parents are both dead]*
- riotous (adj): *[loud and violent, turbulent]*
- mimic (n): *[someone who is talented at copying the speech and gestures of others]*
- illustrator (n): *[an artist who creates drawings, paintings and other artwork for books and magazines]*

Discussion Generators

1. How did Charles feel when his father paid for his older sister to go to a music school but couldn't afford to send him to school at all? *[Hurt and abandoned]*
2. What is the difference between taking items to a pawn shop and having a yard sale? What would you do with something you didn't want anymore? What if you hoped to get it back in the future? *[At a yard sale, items are sold "for good." You can't buy the item back, unless you know who bought it and he or she agrees to sell it back. At a pawnshop, an item is not sold outright. It is held without the possibility of anyone else buying it until a set time has passed. If the price is met by the original owner, he or she can get the treasure back. Typically, we don't want to sell anything at a yard sale that we aren't willing to let go of forever.]*
3. How old was Charles Dickens when he began to work? *[Twelve]*
4. What did he do at the blacking factory? *[He covered the pots of polish with oily paper, then with blue paper, then tied it with string, and cut the paper close to the string to make it look nice. Then he pasted a label onto each pot.]*
5. How far did he have to walk to and from work? *[Three miles each way]*
6. Who taught him to fib about his lifestyle? *[His father, by example]*
7. How did his life experiences help him each time he had a new opportunity? *[He used the knowledge and wisdom gained from the past to help his present as he looked forward to the future.]*
8. Why was he afraid when he dropped his first manuscript into the mailbox? *[He wasn't sure that he wrote well enough to be published. He may have been concerned that his style of writing or his subject matter would be rejected.]*
9. How old was Dickens when he died? Did he have his birthday before he died in 1870? *[He was fifty-eight years old. He was born in 1812, so yes, he would have had his birthday, meaning he died sometime after February 7th.]*

Hands-On Activities

- Form a simple writing club with siblings and/or a few friends. Write and put on plays, memorize and recite poems and songs, write and tell stories, just like Charles Dickens and his friends did.
- Do copy work like Charles Dickens did at the lawyer's office. Depending on writing ability, choose a word, sentence or paragraph from *Dickens: His Work and His World* to copy onto lined paper. Use your best handwriting.

- On page 30, the author tells us that Charles Dickens enjoyed arranging family gatherings. Ask family members and friends to come over for an evening of entertainment. Read with a variety of voices, do impressions, put on the puppet show you produced, and read your essay about Grimaldi. Then ask your audience to share their favorite stories and impressions. An adult may even borrow a puppet for on-the-spot fun!
- Write a news report (or draw a picture) of an event in your family or town. Did something important happen in your family recently? A baby born? A bedroom painted? A new pet? What a memorable addition to the family scrapbook!
- Go to the symphony, a local theatre production, or watch a family movie. Write a review. Give your impressions (your thoughts and feelings) about the production. Did you enjoy it? Why or why not? Would you recommend others see it?

Week 1 - Day 4

- Read Chapter 3, pages 34-47.

Vocabulary

- locality (n): *[a specific place, such as a neighborhood or district]*
- placard (n): *[a public poster, notice, or sign]*
- destitute (adj): *[lacking the necessities of life]*
- domestic labor (n): *[a servant who is paid to help with basic chores around the house]*
- humiliate (v): *[to cause extreme embarrassment, disgrace]*
- chapbook (n): *[a small book or pamphlet sold by peddlers door to door or on the street]*

Discussion Generators

1. What one word did Michael Rosen, the author of the book you are reading about the life and work of Charles Dickens, use to describe London? *[Change]*
2. What one word sums up your life right now? *[Answers will vary. My word would be “curious.” I’m curious what your word will be!]*
3. What new way were people traveling during the time of Charles Dickens? *[By train]*
4. On pages 40 and 41, the author mentions several groups of people who were considered poor. Do people still live in these conditions or with these challenges? Should we help them? How? *[Yes, poverty is still a problem in many parts of the world. God asks us to care for the poor, and the opportunities are overwhelming. We can’t do it all, but we all can do something.]*
5. Were you surprised that Charles’ family had servants even though they were rather poor? Why do fewer people have servants now than back in the “olden days”? *[Answers will vary, but may include the concept of minimum wage. Many can’t afford servants today because the household would have to pay*

a minimum amount of wages, which is set by our government. In Dickens' day, laws didn't exist that stated how little a servant could be paid. Of course, the conditions that the servants lived in were much worse than household help lives in today.]

6. On page 42, the author shares the contrasts involved in a move from one country to another. When I was in high school, we moved from Los Angeles (a very big city) to Blythe, a small town in the middle of the desert, so I can relate to the statement: "I used to do this; now I do that. My street used to look like that; now it looks like this." Have you made a move from one place to another? What changed? What remained fairly the same? *[Answers will vary.]*
7. What two big events occurred just before Charles Dickens was born that affected Great Britain? *[The French and American Revolutions]*
8. On page 44, the author gives a glimpse of how Dickens felt about a few issues. Do you agree or disagree? Why? *[Answers will vary.]*
9. What was Dickens' nudge that encouraged him to write about the subjects he chose? *[He saw that people enjoyed talking about and reading about their own lives and lifestyles.]*
10. The author suggests that people today are talking non-stop. Do you agree? Do you think this is wise, helpful, destructive or disastrous? *[Answers will vary. A child's view may be from a different perspective than an adult's. Be open to their thoughts and concerns.]*

Hands-On Activities

- Read the fog poem on page 35. Find all the **verbs** (doing or action words) in the poem. List them on a piece of paper. Now find all the **adjectives** (describing words). Add them to your list. Using those words, write a poem about something other than fog.
- Ponder the words from the activity above. Use pastels, chalk, or watercolors to create the scene that comes to mind.
- On page 36, the author asks: How does the time and place we live in affect us? Using the list of questions provided in the appendix, think about who and what affects your life. If you answer the questions on paper, you will have an outline for your autobiography!
- A cartoon picturing an army of robots is described on pages 37 and 38. If an army of robots came into your town, what would they do? Sketch a cartoon and write a caption.
- You may change your opinions over time as you learn more and experience more, but what you think now is important too. Answer the questions on page 43 about expectations and rights. These questions, asked around the dinner table, will surely breed a lively discussion. If your family tends to enjoy debating, but the heat tends to run a little hot, set ground rules before the discussion
 - We may not interrupt anyone.
 - We must give each speaker equal time.
 - We allow disagreement on issues, but we will not allow name-calling or derogatory terms.

- If we don't understand someone's thoughts, we may ask for clarification.
- What other ground rules are appropriate for a healthy debate?
- Challenge: Write your autobiography based on the outline you created and the opinion questions you answered.

Week 2 - Day 1

- Read Chapter 4, pages 48-59.

Vocabulary

- slushy (adj): *[insincerely emotional]*
- pauper (n): *[a very, very poor person]*
- lunatic (n): *[someone who is insane, behaving wildly, or behaving in a bizarre manner]*
- gripping (adj): *[holding someone's attention]*

Discussion Generators

1. Look at the illustration on page 48. Have you ever felt this way? What could you say to the child to make him smile? *[Answers will vary.]*
2. People who read Dickens' stories in magazines would have to wait a month to hear the next chapter. How do you feel when you have to wait until the next chapter is read, or the next TV episode comes on? *[Answers will vary, but may include curious, excited to hear what happens next, wishing you could know right now.]*
3. The author states that Christmas is a time when we're "supposed to" give presents. Is it a law? If not, why do people feel they are supposed to give gifts? *[Answers will vary, but may include tradition, love, kindness, generosity, guilt, fear.]*
4. Look at the illustration on page 51. What do you see in the characters' eyes? How did the artist create such depth of feeling? *[Answers will vary, but may include sadness, anger, loneliness, fear, tiredness. The artist used shadows and lines around the eyes and mouth to express emotion.]*
5. Who is the character Fagin named after? See page 26, if you don't remember. *[Bob Fagin, a childhood friend of Charles Dickens]*
6. Psalms 27:13 says, "I would have lost heart, unless I had believed that I would see the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living." How could this verse have encouraged Oliver Twist? *[Answers will vary, but may include: Oliver is treated cruelly, and children had no power to create change in their society. It must have been a very lonely, frightening world. To hear that God knows and cares and offers His goodness would have given Oliver hope.]*

7. Look at the illustration of Miss Betsy Trotwood on page 58. Would you like to spend an afternoon with her? Why or why not? *[Answers will vary, but the author of this study guide would love to sit and listen to her tell stories!]*
- Create names for the people listed on the *Name that Character* Worksheet.

Hands-On Activities

- What does the Bible have to say about money and our attitudes toward it? Using a concordance, look up words such as: money, wealth, poverty, poor, blessed, and blessing. Are all blessings monetary? Choose a verse or passage of Scripture that stands out to you. Use your copy work skills to copy it onto lined paper. Decorate the border of the paper (or glue onto colorful scrapbook paper). Post it somewhere to help you remember God's perspective.
- Charles Dickens was a master at creating names for his characters. What kind of person do you think Mr. Murdstone is? Someone you want to do business with? Or how about the teacher named Creakle? Would you like to be her student solely on her name? What about Traddles? Does his name sound like a friend or foe? Although fictional characters may have names that suit their character, in real life we should not judge a person by his or her name. For example, one of my family members had heart surgery performed by a doctor whose last name sounded like Blew It. This would not be a comfort if he were in a Dickens' story!
- Using a few of the characters you named in the previous activity write a short story. Read the first part of the story to your family, and then wait a week to share how the story ends.
- Experience lifestyle contrast. Drive by a neighborhood that is much different from yours. Pray for the people in the homes, whether they are mansions or hovels, country homesteads or city apartments.

Week 2 - Day 2

- Read Chapter 4, pages 60-72.

Vocabulary

- shun (v): *[to avoid on purpose]*
- tar-water (n): *[an old-style medicine made of pine tar and water]*
- barricade (v): *[to prevent exit or entry]*
- seclusion (n): *[the condition of living apart from others, in isolation]*
- snob (n): *[someone who feels and acts superior to others]*
- catch phrase (n): *[a saying repeated often, becoming part of general speech]*
- loiter (v): *[to hang around a place without having a purpose]*

Discussion Generators

1. Who is the main character in *Great Expectations*? [Pip]
2. The author calls Pip an antihero rather than a victim. Why? [*It's mostly Pip's fault when bad things happen to him. He brought the trouble on himself.*]
3. Do you think all books should have happy endings? Why or why not? [*Answers will vary.*]
4. Does Dickens tell the reader *only* what the characters know, or does he allow us to have inside information? [*He often gives the reader more information than the characters have themselves.*]
5. What colors are used in the illustration on pages 64-65? What if the illustrator used bright colors, such as neon pink and green? Would you feel the same way looking at the artwork? [*The artist used grays, sage green, black, the tiniest bit of light orange. Bright neon colors would change the whole mood of the painting. It might still be disturbing but in a different way. The dark, somber colors make us feel Pip is isolated and alone with Magwitch, the faded light and even the weather obscuring the encounter.*]
6. Is Miss Havisham rich or poor? How can you tell? [*She appears very rich because she lives in a large house.*]
7. What chapter in which Dickens book does the author refer to as “one of the most amazing chapters in literature”? Does this make you curious to read the chapter? [*Chapter eight of “Great Expectations.” Even though I've read the book, I am very curious to read chapter eight again! I hope you are too!*]
8. What made up word did Dickens use to describe the way the girl who answered the door spoke to Pip? (See page 71.) [*Undiscussible*]

Hands-On Activities

- On page 67, the author quotes Dickens using the word, “fearfullest.” Is this a real word? What common word or words could Dickens have used to describe the suit he had to wear? What do you think his suit felt like? Create a few new words this week. Use them in your writing and your speech. Do people understand what you are saying? Encourage others to use the word themselves. It just may catch on!
- Michael Rosen, the author of the book we are studying, is a master at defining words in the context of his writing. For example, on page 67 he presents the definition of the word “crock” in parentheses. What other words has he defined for us throughout the book? Make a list of words and definitions. Use at least two of them in your writing or speech this week. For example, “I must clean the crock in my fireplace.” (Many of us today would think I keep my slow cooker or a large pot in the fireplace!)
- On page 68, Dickens shares traits of characters in *Great Expectations*. Based on their names and the little information you are given, where would they be on your graph in GO? Write their initials on the graph in the appropriate quadrant.
- Review the list of names you created on the graphic organizer, *Name That Character*. Write their initials on the graph in the appropriate quadrant of the graphic organizer, *Money and Attitudes*.

- On page 72, the phrase “word painting” is used to describe pictures created in our imaginations using words alone. Let’s do the opposite! Let’s paint words! Choose a word or phrase from this book or from a story by Charles Dickens. Paint the word or words on a piece of paper. Enjoy the creative process by painting a scene around the word.

Week 2 - Day 3

- Read Chapter 4, pages 73-81.

Vocabulary

- convict (n): *[a person found guilty of a crime]*
- psychological (adj): *[having to do with the mind or emotions]*
- melancholy (adj): *[sad]*
- contempt (n): *[extreme lack of respect for something, disdain]*
- internalize (v): *[to make others’ thoughts or beliefs one’s own, to hold inside oneself]*

Discussion Generators

1. What does Miss Havisham ask Pip to do in her presence? *[She asks him to play in front of her.]*
2. What game do Estella and Pip play? *[A card game called Beggar My Neighbor]*
3. On page 79, Pip notices something about himself that he never thought of before. What was it and how did he feel? *[He noticed his rough hands and became ashamed.]*
4. Near the bottom of page 79, the author suggests we can change things about ourselves that make us ashamed. Compare this thought to John 15:5 “I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.” Who do you think is correct? *[It is by God’s grace that we can change.]*

Hands-On Activities

- Read the scene on page 73. What color comes to mind? Use only that color and shades of that color to draw the scene described. Be sure to include at least three details from the passage.
- Challenge: Think of something you do every day, such as brushing your teeth. Describe the scene in double-voice storytelling. Once, as if you are watching yourself brush your teeth and again, from the perspective of actually brushing your teeth yourself. Tricky, isn’t it?
- Play *Beggar Your Neighbor*, or the similar card game called *War*.
- Listen to the free audio book, *Great Expectations*, at www.librivox.org

Week 2 - Day 4

- Read Chapter 5 and Timeline, pages 82-94.

Vocabulary

- purist (n): *[someone who insists on exactness, and stays strictly with the original standard]*
- mythic (adj): *[not real]*
- archetypal (adj): *[an original pattern or model which others copy]*
- fusty (adj): *[having a stale smell, needing a good airing out]*
- tribute (n): *[a sign of respect, something given or done as an expression of honor]*

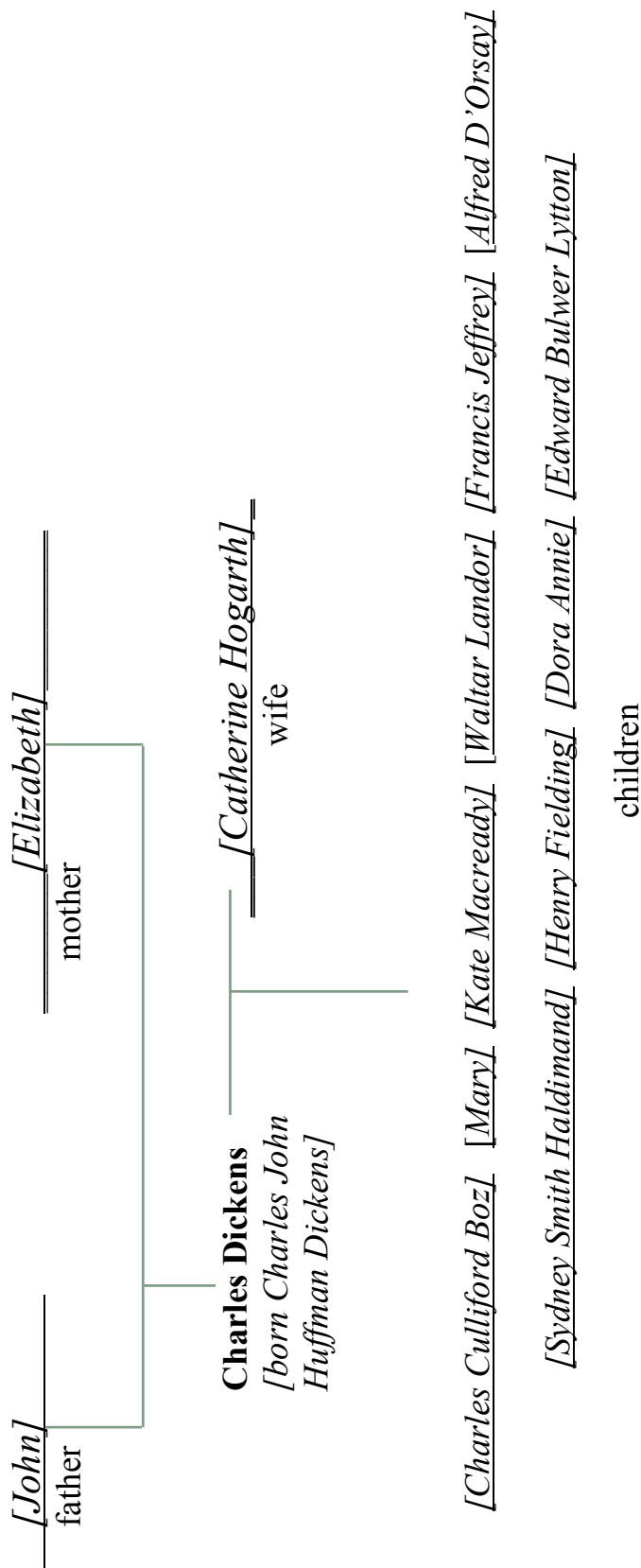
Discussion Generators

1. Look at the illustration on page 82. What do you think he is doing on the chair? *[Answers will vary.]*
2. What year did Charles Dickens die? *[1870]*
3. If someone uses the word *Scrooge* to describe someone with miserly behavior, what book are they referring to? *[A Christmas Carol]*
4. Is it true that Dickens invented Christmas? *[No.]*
5. Did Dickens' writings influence people's Christmas celebrations? *[Yes.]*
6. Compare the two-page illustration on pages 88-89 with the character key on page 90. Who is your favorite character and why? *[Answers will vary.]*
7. Use the timeline on pages 90-94 to find out when your favorite Dickens book was written. *[Answers will vary.]*

Hands-On Activities

- Create a booklet of quotes from Charles Dickens and other favorite authors. Use your copy work skills and best handwriting.
- When he wrote *A Christmas Carol*, Charles Dickens described a Christmas holiday his audience could relate to and enjoy. Celebrate a more obscure holiday, such as National Pickle Day. Draw a picture of what the perfect National Pickle Day would look like. Plan a celebration of the crunchy snack and be sure to eat pickles!
- Speaking of pickles, did you know there is a sport called Pickleball. Research the sport to see if you can adapt household or sporting goods into the equipment you need to play in a simplified home version of the game. Children in Dickens' day made up games, so you will be doing something very Dickensian!

Family Tree of Charles Dickens



Name That Character

A small man with a big black beard, who likes to eat pickles:

His name is: _____

An old woman, who lives with a pet bunny and likes to laugh:

Her name is: _____

A courageous young boy, who lives on a ship and enjoys tying rope into knots:

His name is: _____

A baby girl, who lives with her mom and dad in New York City:

Her name is: _____

A woman in love with a man with a big black beard, who likes to eat pickles:

Her name is: _____

A mean old man who dislikes animals, especially bunnies:

His name is: _____

Now, it's your turn to create the character and the name:

A _____, who _____.

His/her name is: _____