

Charles Dickens 200 Years

DID YOU KNOW THAT 4

Ex.1. Speaking

In pairs or groups of three answer the following questions.

1. What things at home make your life easier?
2. What pets do you and your friends keep?
3. What do houses in Britain look like?
4. Where did Victorians spend their holidays?
5. Can you think of any famous people who lived in Charles Dickens' times in Poland and other countries?
6. What do you imagine Dickens was as a person?
7. Do you believe in the paranormal?
8. What famous inventors and inventions can you remember?
9. Would you like to have a servant?
10. Would you like to be a servant?

Ex.2. Reading and Vocabulary

Read the text and discuss in pairs the words and phrases in bold.

Ex.3. Reading and Discussion

Read the text again and tick any piece of information that you found new or interesting. Compare with your partner.

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Charles John Huffam Dickens was born on the 7th of February 1812 and died on the 9th of June 1870 at the age of 58. He was one of the most famous and prolific novelists of the Victorian period. Many of his books were published serially in magazines, which explains the frequent suspense effect at the end of individual chapters. Charles Dickens has been respected worldwide as a writer for his concern for the poor, unique characters he created and for his sense of humor. In 2012 we are celebrating the 200th anniversary of his birthday.

Did you know that...

- Charles Dickens and Edgar Allan Poe were close friends?
- In 1846 Dickens co-founded Urania Cottage, a home for the **redemption** of "fallen" women where accepted candidates could learn skills, often domestic, and re-integrate into society.
- Dickens was **keenly interested in** the paranormal. He was an **advocate** of hypnotism and **attempted** to use it to cure his wife and children of ailments.
- Dickens kept a pet **raven** named Grip, which he had **stuffed** when it died in 1841.
- He was **an obsessive compulsive**, reportedly always re-arranging his hotel furniture and having to sleep with his head pointing north.

Did you know that...

- During Queen Victoria's reign towns and cities got **pipéd water**, gas and, by the end of the century, electricity.
- It was in the Victorian times that Thomas Edison invented the electric light-bulb, Lewis Carroll wrote Alice in the Wonderland and Alexander Bell invented the telephone?
- Many **households** had a **servant** or servants – 2 million servants were recorded in 1891.
- In 1837 most people lived in villages and worked on the land; by 1901, most lived in towns and worked in offices, shops and factories.
- Typical characteristics of Victorian houses are **bay windows** (they stick out), iron railings, **stained glass** in doorways and windows and **sash windows** (they open by sliding the window up)
- Seaside holidays became popular.

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Teachers' Notes

Before asking students to read the text ask them to discuss the questions in Ex.1.
You can use the following technique:

- Students stand in two lines facing each other.
- Teacher writes the questions on board.
- Students answer the first question with the person opposite.
- Then the teachers ask students in one line to move one person to the right.
- Everybody has a new partner now.
- With new partners students discuss the second question.
- They change partners at the teacher's signal, before every question.

Try it, it's fun. And students don't have to sit at their desks all the time.

You can then ask the group what they think all the questions have in common.

Then ask the students to read the text and do exercises 2 and 3.

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