



## Welcome to the Dickens House

### A Web activity for Grades 6-9

Author: E. Bergstresser, middle school Gifted Education teacher, PA

Time needed : one 40 to 45 minute class period.

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#### ***An Introduction for the Teacher:***

This Internet-based activity was originally designed as a creative way for students to learn some biographical background as part of a unit of study about Charles Dickens. Since so many of Dickens' characters and social themes are known to be inspired by real life experiences, this background is particularly helpful, no matter which pieces of literature your classes are studying. You can even ask your students to draw their own possible connections with works you are reading. The house tour gives a quick vignette of everyday life in Victorian England, helpful for students trying to picture scenes of comfortable London homes from *David Copperfield* to *Great Expectations*.



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Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Class: \_\_\_\_\_

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Prepare yourself for a trip to Victorian England and to walk in the footsteps of Master Charles Dickens! As you walk through the four levels of the Dickens House, be very perceptive, for there are many secrets and fascinating facts to be discovered in every room!

Take your time as you wander through each floor, and join us for a treasure hunt of the information. Answers to the following questions will be revealed to you. Please record your responses below. You may enter the house on any level. Enjoy your stay at 48 Doughty Street!

Enter the Dickens House for your tour by accessing the following web site:

**[http://www.rmplc.co.uk/orgs/dickens/tour/d\\_plan.html](http://www.rmplc.co.uk/orgs/dickens/tour/d_plan.html)**

As you take your tour, look for the answers to these questions:

1. In which room did Dickens write most of *Oliver Twist*?
2. Who was Mary Horvath and what happened to her? In which room?
3. What was the copper in the basement used for? In which Dickens novel is a copper mentioned?
4. What novel was Dickens writing at the time of his death?
5. What school did Dickens attend at the age of 13 or 14?

6. What did he do before he entered school?
7. What job did he hold after leaving school?
8. In which room is Dickens' public reading desk found?
9. In Dickens study on the first floor, there is a cabinet which contains something Dickens insisted be on his desk when he wrote. What is it?
10. What was the still room used for?
11. What item, on display in the morning room, was laid upon Dickens' body the day he died? What was the date of his death?
12. During what years did Dickens live at 48 Doughty street?



## Welcome to the Dickens House - Answer Key

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As you take your tour, look for the answers to these questions:

1. In which room did Dickens write most of Oliver Twist?  
The study
2. Who was Mary Horvath and what happened to her? In which room?  
Dickens' sister in law. She died in "Hogarth's room."
3. What was the copper in the basement used for? In which Dickens novel is a copper mentioned?  
The copper was the chief source of hot water. Clothes boiled in it. Christmas pudding boiled in it. A Christmas Carol.
4. What novel was Dickens writing at the time of his death?  
The Mystery of Edwin Drood
5. What school did Dickens attend at the age of 13 or 14?  
Wellington House Academy

6. What did he do before he entered school?  
He sealed bottles of liquid shoe blacking at Warren's Blacking Warehouse.
7. What job did he hold after leaving school?  
Clerk for a firm of solicitors in Gray's Inn
8. In which room is Dickens' public reading desk found?  
The dressing room
9. In Dickens study on the first floor, there is a cabinet which contains something Dickens insisted be on his desk when he wrote. What is it?  
A china monkey
10. What was the still room used for?  
Perfumes and cordials were distilled. Cakes, preserves, and liqueurs were kept there. Bread, butter, coffee, and tea were prepared. Housekeeping was directed from here.
11. What item, on display in the morning room, was laid upon Dickens' body the day he died? What was the date of his death?  
A rose. June 9, 1870
12. During what years did Dickens live at 48 Doughty street?  
April, 1837- December, 1839