**David Copperfield**

by Charles Dickens

Comprehension Activities

Chapter 1- A Bad Child

1. How does the writer describe the ‘downs’ he experienced when he was a child?
2. Where does the writer’s story start?
3. Why was his Aunt Betsey so angry?
4. Who was Peggotty?
5. How does the writer describe his early childhood?
6. What words does he use to describe Mr. Murdstone?
7. What did the writer like about his visit to the seaside?
8. Did the writer want to leave the seaside to return home? Give reasons.
9. What had the writer’s mother done whilst he was away? Was he happy about this?
10. Did Mr Murdstone treat Clara well?
11. Why is the writer frightened of Mr Murdstone and how do you think he must have felt?
12. How does the writer describe Mr. Murdostone and his sister?
13. How did David ‘lose’ (escape mentally) himself?
14. Why do you think David finally attacked Mr. Murdostone?
15. Why do you think his mother didn’t help him?
16. What did Mr. Murdostone finally decide to do with David?

Follow Up Task

\*Research rich and poor communities in Victorian Britain. Write a paragraph describing both of these. Draw a picture of what you think rich Victorian people would have looked/dressed like and what you think poor people would have looked like.

Chapter 2- Banished to Boarding School

1. What was the name of David’s new school?
2. Describe the new school.
3. How do you think David felt about his new school? Give reasons.
4. What did the sign say that David was expected to wear?
5. How does the writer describe Mr Creakle?
6. How would you describe Mr Creakle?
7. How did the rest of the boys treat David?
8. What was the name of the older boy who protected David?
9. What was different about David’s home when he returned at summer?
10. Describe what happened when David tried to talk to his baby brother?
11. What horrible news did Mrs Creakle tell David about his mother?

Follow Up Task

\*Research the life of Charles Dickens. Note down important parts of his life and some of the other books he has written.

Chapter 3 -Working in the Warehouse

1. How does the writer describe how David reacted to the news of his mother?
2. How did Peggotty describe his mother’s last days?
3. Where did Mr Murdstone send David to work?
4. Describe David’s new place of work?
5. What was David expected to do?
6. Do you think David liked his job? Give reasons why.
7. What was Mr. Micawber’s problem?
8. What eventually happened to the Micawbers?
9. Why was David going to Dover?
10. What tragic things happened to David?

Follow Up Task

\*Write about a time something sad happened to you. Use lots of adjectives to describe how you felt.

Chapter 4 -It’s me, Aunt Betsey!

1. Describe David’s journey travelling from London to Dover.
2. Describe Aunt Betsey.
3. How did Aunt Betsey finally treat David?
4. Who lived with Aunt Betsey?
5. Who did Aunt Betsey write to to tell them David was at her house?
6. Describe how you think David would have felt whilst his aunt was discussing with the Murdstones what they wished to happen with David.
7. What did Aunt Betsey decide should happen with David?

Follow Up Task

Write lots of adjectives to describe the picture of Victorian Britain.

Chapter 5 - A Fresh Life and Old Friends

1. Describe how you think David must feel about his new life with Aunt Betsey?
2. Who was David to stay with whilst he was at school?
3. Why did David dislike Uriah Heep?
4. Describe what you think about Uriah Heep and his mother.
5. Who did David meet again at Uriah Heep’s house ?
6. The next night David saw Uriah talking with Mr. Micawber. What is you opinion of this event and what was David’s opinion of this event?

Follow Up Task

Boarding schools  
Discuss and write down the pros and cons of boarding schools.  
Would you like to sleep at school like David does? Is his school more fun than your school? Would you miss your parents/your home?

Chapter 6- Agne’s Warnings

1. Where did David visit after he had finished school?
2. Who did David meet in the hotel he was staying in?
3. Why was everyone at the Peggotys celebrating?
4. Why was Steerforth concerned about the engagement of Ham and Emily?
5. Describe how David found the state of his old house.
6. What do you think was wrong with Steerforth?
7. What eventually did David and Aunt Betsey decide he should become?
8. Who was Agnes concerned about and why?
9. Why was Agnes worried about Uriah?
10. What did David promise to Agnes he would do regarding Uriah?
11. Describe Uriah’s personality. What do you personally think of him?
12. What was Uriah really wanting to happen?(page 61)

Follow Up Task

Choose the lesson that you like best from the story and explain why. Write at least a good paragraph and provide reasons.

. a  Our friends and our family are more important than money.

. b  Money doesn’t make you happy.

. c  It’s important to help others.

. d  Love is very important in a child’s life.

. e  We can all learn how to be better people.

. f  Adults can also change.

Chapter 7 - Bad News from the Peggotys

1. What happened to David that he forgot about Uriah for a little while?
2. Describe how David felt about Dora.
3. Why did Mr. Spenlow become a bit ‘cool’ with David?
4. What happened to Mr. Spenlow?
5. As David could not continue his career in Law what job did he try next?
6. Why did David visit Yarmouth and what happened to Peggoty’s husband?
7. Why had Emily run away?
8. Why had Steerforth been lying about his sailing trips?
9. Who was going to try and find Emily?

Follow Up task: Think of and write several questions you would like to ask David Copperfield.

Chapter 8 - Uriah Heep’s Scheme

1. How did David feel Steerforth had behaved?
2. What new job did Mr. Micawber get?
3. What had Uriah finally managed to do?
4. Describe how you think Mr. Wickfield feels towards Uriah.
5. How did Mr. Wickfield react to Uriah’s comments about marrying his daughter Agnes?
6. What did David plan to do to destroy Uriah Heep?

Follow Up Task: With a partner research and make a powerpoint presentation about what it was like for children to live in Victorian Britain.

Chapter 9 - The Shipwreck

1. Who invited David and his Aunt to Canterbury?
2. What important news did Mr. Micawber read out in front of David and his aunt?
3. How does David describe the atmosphere in the room at this time?
4. What had Uriah actually been doing to Mr. Wickfield’s clients?
5. What did David say to Uriah in response to his nasty comments about him?
6. After the recovery of all the money what career was David able to continue with and whom did he marry?
7. What sad things in life did David suffer after his marriage to Dora?
8. Why did David want to leave England?
9. Who was the last body on the shipwreck that Ham tried to save?

Follow Up Task

Write: Heep’s letter of apology  
In pairs, write Heep’s letters to Mr Wickfield, to Agnes and to Miss Trotwood.

Chapter 10 - New Beginnings and Happy Endings

1. Who all began a new life in Australia?
2. What did David do for a short while?
3. When David returned to England how did he find Mr. Wickfield?
4. Who did David fall in love with and marry?
5. How did David feel about his Aunt Betsey?
6. Why do you think the author finishes the story with a question? Give reasons.

Follow Up Task

Write/type a book report of this adaptation of David Copperfield.

You should include:-

The Setting

Where did the story take place? Was it in a city, farm, village, lots of different places? Was it a made-up place or somewhere in outer space? Give a good description of the place with as much detail as possible.

The Characters

Who was the story about? Was there just one main character or were there a few? When you write about the characters, include their names and what they look like.

The Story

What happened in the book? Was there a problem the characters were trying to solve? Were the characters on some sort of an adventure? Describe what happened in the beginning, the middle and the end of the book.

Your Thoughts

Did you like the book? Write a little bit about why you liked or didn’t like the book. Talk about how the book made you feel – happy, sad, excited. Would you tell your friends to read this book?

When you're finished writing the report, read it over carefully to make sure everything is spelled correctly.

Finally create your own front cover - include a drawing of what you think David Copperfield as a Victorian boy would have looked like?