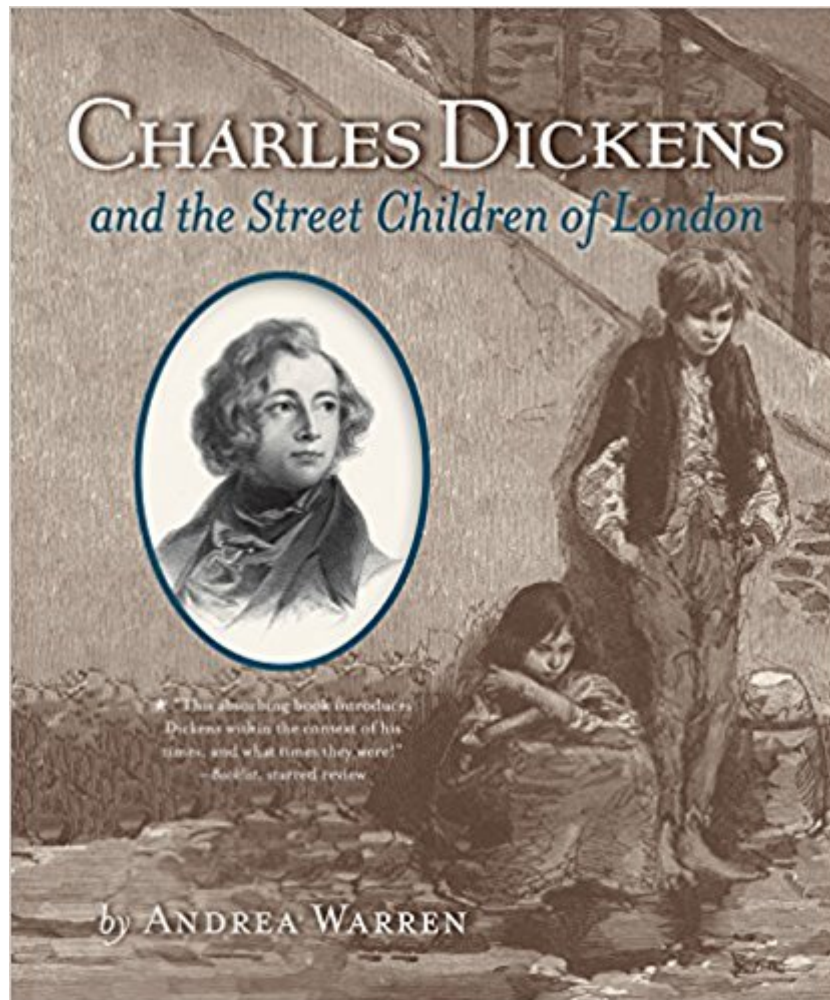




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# Charles Dickens And The Street Children Of London



## Synopsis

Provoked by the horrors he saw every day, Charles Dickens wrote novels that were originally intended as instruments for social change – to save his country – its children. Charles Dickens is best known for his contributions to the world of literature, but during his young life, Dickens witnessed terrible things that stayed with him: families starving in doorways, babies being “dropped” on streets by mothers too poor to care for them, and a stunning lack of compassion from the upper class. After his family went into debt and he found himself working at a shoe-polish factory, Dickens soon realized that the members of the lower class were no different than he, and, even worse, they were given no chance to better themselves. It was then that he decided to use his greatest talent, his writing ability, to tell the stories of those who had no voice. In this book, award-winning author Andrea Warren takes readers on a journey into the workhouses, slums, factories, and schools of Victorian England, and into the world of a beloved writer who used his pen to do battle on behalf of the poor, becoming one of the greatest reformers of his or any age.

## Book Information

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A Note from the Author Dear Readers: You know me as the author of nonfiction books for young readers about remarkable children living through dramatic historical events. I’ve written about orphan train riders, pioneer children, orphans escaping the Vietnam War, young people enduring the horrors of the Civil War, and a boy who survived the Nazi death camps. All

were ordinary children who became extraordinary when events in their lives demanded it. Why would I write about someone as famous as Charles Dickens? He too faced difficult odds as a child. When his father was imprisoned for debt, twelve-year-old Dickens had to work in a factory and care for himself. He knew he could become one of the hungry street children he saw every day in London. He had been taught that the poor deserved their miserable fate, but as one of them, he realized that they were held down by the upper classes, who exploited them for their cheap labor. As an adult, Dickens used his literary gifts to become a champion of the poor. He wrote vividly and feelingly about the lower classes, including poor children like Oliver Twist. With calculated skill, Dickens engaged readers' emotions, inspiring them to work for changes to better the lives of the lower classes. Charles Dickens was one of history's great social reformers. Once you understand how he accomplished this, you'll read his books in a whole new way. I hope you find his story as inspiring as I did. Yours in good reading, Andrea Warren

\* "Making no assumptions about her readers' prior knowledge of Dickens, his novels, or the period, Warren writes in a clear, direct, vivid manner that brings it all to life." •Booklist, starred review "A well-researched biography explores how Charles Dickens used his stories to effect social change for London's most destitute children... A lively biography and an interesting lens through which to see a venerated author." •Kirkus Reviews \* "The author adeptly makes connections between Dickens's own experiences and key events and characters in some of his greatest novels... Readers will come away with a real sense of Dickens's immense influence in both literature and society as well as an appreciation for the compassionate, tireless man who championed Victorian England's most vulnerable citizens." •School Library Journal, starred review

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