The Old Curiosity Shop
Charles Dickens

A Before Reading

1 a Charles Dickens wrote the story in 1840. What do you know about London and England at that time?

_____________________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________________

b The story is called The Old Curiosity Shop. A ‘curiosity’ is something interesting or unusual. What kind of things do you think might be sold in such a shop?

_____________________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________________

c In the story Nell and her grandfather travel around the country. Why do you think they leave London and how do you think they travel?

_____________________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________________

2 a Here are some pictures from the story. Match the words in the box to the pictures.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>a caravan</th>
<th>a meeting</th>
<th>catching a thief</th>
<th>counting coins</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kit with Nell’s grandfather</td>
<td>puppets</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a ____________________________
b ____________________________
c ____________________________
b  Describe what is happening in each picture. Check your answers as you read.

B  While Reading

3  a  Nell meets lots of different people in the story. As you read, describe the relationship between Nell and the people, and also how she feels about each one.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The people</th>
<th>Their relationship to Nell and her feelings about them</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Her grandfather</td>
<td><em>She loves him, but is disappointed when he gambles the last of their money.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fred Trent</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kit</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daniel Quilp</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr Marton</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mrs Jarley</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tommy Codlin</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
b There are a number of other people in the story. What is the connection between these people?

Fred Trent and Richard Swiveller ______________________________________________________________

George and Mrs Jarley _________________________________________________________________

Tommy Codlin and Mr Harris ______________________________________________________________

Daniel Quilp and Nell’s grandfather ______________________________________________________

Sampson Brass and Sally _______________________________________________________________

c What happens to Nell at the end of the story?

_____________________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________________

C After Reading

4  a What did Fred Trent think Nell’s grandfather was hiding from him?

_______________________________________________________________________________

b Who was the single gentlemen?

_______________________________________________________________________________

c Mr Garland helped Kit three times. How?

_______________________________________________________________________________

Imagine what might have happened if Nell hadn’t died at the end of the story. Think about:

What would have happened with Kit?

How she would have thanked Mr Garland?

If Nell hadn’t died …
6 One of the messages in the story is that children should not be made to grow up too quickly; they need time to be children. Do you agree with this? Why/Why not? Give reasons for your answer.

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_______________________________________________________________________________
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