Dickens had a way of creating Characters (with a capital C) that became larger than the words on the page—characters good and kind, evil and calculating, ineffective and pathetic, powerful and overbearing, ghastly and repulsive, admirable and beautiful. Even his characters of the most self-serving shallowness had a commendable breadth and depth.

Let's take a look at some memorable people from his prose…
Dickens’ characters with
STARRING ROLES

Oliver Twist from the novel of the same name (one of the first child protagonists in a novel, the beloved boy who must find his way from a cruel existence in an orphanage and then a life among a gang of London pickpockets toward a happier ending)

Pip from Great Expectations (the boy from humble origins who rises to become a society snob, then discovers his own flaws and comes into his maturity)

David Copperfield from the novel of the same name (the character who most closely mirrors Dickens’s own childhood, the boy who is forced to work in a factory at a very young age and who grows up during the course of the novel)

Mr. Pickwick from The Pickwick Papers (the kind and wealthy old gentleman who travels around England reporting on the sights he encounters)

Ebenezer Scrooge from A Christmas Carol (the miserly businessman whose heart is transformed by the Christmas ghosts)

Little Nell from The Old Curiosity Shop (the angelic young girl who goes on the run with her grandfather when he falls into debt)
Dickens’ characters with stellar 
SUPPORTING ROLES

Sam Weller from THE PICKWICK PAPERS (personal servant to the main character Pickwick, a cockney who loved to make funny comments about everything that went on around him)

The entire Cratchit family, including Tiny Tim from A CHRISTMAS CAROL (Ah! Such wonderful unanimity!)

Miss Havisham, from GREAT EXPECTATIONS (the jilted bride who keeps her decaying wedding cake on display for all time and eternity!)

Fagin from OLIVER TWIST (a villain with an evil more insidious than that of the blunt Bill Sykes, who also appears in this book).

Joe Gargery from GREAT EXPECTATIONS (the blacksmith who tends to an ailing Pip after the young man’s world had fallen down around him)

Estella from GREAT EXPECTATIONS (the young girl adopted by Miss Havisham)

Harold Skimpole from BLEAK HOUSE (a despicable character who pretends to be naive and simple-minded, only to manipulate those around him)
A Dickens Literary Timeline

Here follows, dear reader, a partial bibliography of the novels of Charles Dickens:

Born Charles John Huffam Dickens (early alias: Boz)

Friday, February 7, 1812

Friday, June 9, 1870

Died from a stroke

www.cheshirecheesecat.com
The moment Skilley left Pinch's side, he set his __________ in motion. Careful to seem ______________ lest his rival might be watching, Skilley wove a path among the bustling __________ until he lost himself in the crowd. He waited but a few moments. Then, with a _______ and a __________, he ___________ to the unimposing front door of Ye Olde Cheshire Cheese. Not ______________, mind you, where smelly ___________ and gelatinous ______________ were hurled daily into the gutter—and where no doubt, even now, Pinch and the other __________ and ____________ would be assembling for the evening meal.

No. Skilley ______________ directly to the front door.

Unthinkable impudence for a cat.

Halted by a brief moment of doubt—not in the plan itself, but in its execution, he ___________.

It was a ______________ plan that was now perfectly ruined by... a _____________.

Paragraph from The Cheshire Cheese Cat: A Dickens of a Tale, p. 9
ONE

Charles Dickens married Catherine Hogarth in 1836, and they had ten children:
- Charles Culliford (Charley) Dickens (1837–1896)
- Mary (Mamie) Dickens (1838–1896)
- Kate Macready (Katie) Dickens (1839–1929)
- Walter Savage Landor Dickens (1841–1863)
- Francis Jeffrey (Frank) Dickens (1844–1886)
- Alfred D’Orsay Tennyson Dickens (1845–1912)
- Sydney Smith Haldimand Dickens (1847–1872)
- Henry Fielding (Harry) Dickens (1849–1933)
- Dora Annie Dickens (1850–1851)
- Edward Bulwer Lytton (Plorn) Dickens (1852–1902)

TWO

Dickens liked cats. He had at least three. One was named William, until Dickens discovered that the cat was a girl and decided to rename her Williamina. When this cat had kittens, Dickens kept one (against his better judgment) and it became known as the Master’s Cat. Another of his pet cats was named Bob. Bob’s paw (preserved on the handle of a letter opener) recently appeared on display at the New York Public Library.

THREE

In 1842, Charles Dickens journeyed to Canada and the United States, where he promoted two causes: the abolition of slavery and the establishment of international copyright laws (he was upset because some American publishers had pirated his works). When he published American Notes, it created an uproar in America because of his unfavorable depiction of certain American habits, for instance, chewing tobacco and spitting the juice in public. Many of his novels, however, became very popular in the U.S., and he returned for a very successful speaking tour in 1867.

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