Book report – Oliver Twist

A book cover featuring a boy with a pair of watery, touching eyes, holding a bowl and asking a cook for more soup makes me want to pick it up. The great work of Charles Dickens – it’s very difficult to put it down once you start reading it.

The story begins in the workhouse of a parish in England on a date long forgotten, where a boy was born. His mother died in his childhood. After a miserable childhood spent in public workhouses, the lonely, starving and miserable orphan boy, Oliver Twist, ran away when he was barely twelve. Upon reaching London, Oliver was taken by a gang of thieves and housebreakers led by the evil genius and Master Criminal, Fagin. Eventually, befriended by a man robbed by the gang, Oliver Twist learnt his true identity, and gained a family and an inheritance.

In the book, the language Charles Dickens used is simple and easy to understand. And he used short but expressively written sentences. For example, there is a sentence that reads: “A man may lead a horse to the water, but he cannot make it drink.” It tells us that one cannot force another to do anything, and one can always object to doing something one doesn’t want to.
In the story, Oliver Twist managed to escape from the evil genius, as repentance is never too late. I am indeed impressed by the descriptive English used in the novel. The book was so captivating that you simply cannot put it down, and your curiosity on what might happen next to the characters will always lead you to surprise or another suspense. And in this way, Charles Dickens accomplished his main purpose – he was able to write a novel that leads you through the hardships of a little orphan boy in a harsh and cruel world. I felt a strong hatred to people who mistreated Oliver!

I also feel that Charles Dickens didn’t only want to tell the life of a little boy but also reflected aspects of human nature. Different forms of love did appear throughout the story. The author seemed to hint that affection is one real source of strength. Mr. Brownlow’s affection for Oliver saved him from being prosecuted. Rose and Henry found happiness finally, after all the political heat and hardships that were pressured on them by their relatives. However, this doesn’t mean that love always works out for everyone. Nancy’s love for Sikes failed because it was not returned. Love also fails when it is motivated by greed or self-advantage. Some people value money on top of every other thing in their life, and treat money as if it is their pulse. They neglect giving or even receiving love. They do whatever to satisfy their desires, even if it means causing harm to others. It makes me wonder what
life will be like if the world is deprived of love. If people only count coins instead of sharing love and care, everyone will be like Ebenezer Scrooge, a rich but lonely man in Charles Dicken’s another famous novel ‘Christmas Carol’. Wouldn’t it be a shame?

Lastly, I find the story well plotted. It begins by telling us that Oliver Twist was a poor boy lacking parental love. And what follows is an even more messy life, at the age of twelve, when he was constrained to rob. However, at the very end he became rich after getting his inheritance. The tale provides a twist, and is very ironic, which made me feel most interested in reading it. The ending of the story seems to give a message that the world is fair – that kind people will be rewarded and evil ones will have their punishment. I also felt the presence of hope after reading it, which encouraged me to hope for the best and prepare for the worst.

On the whole, *Oliver Twist* is a book that teaches moral lessons. If ever a book is for all families, this is the one.