

# Oliver Twist Discussion Guide for Parents

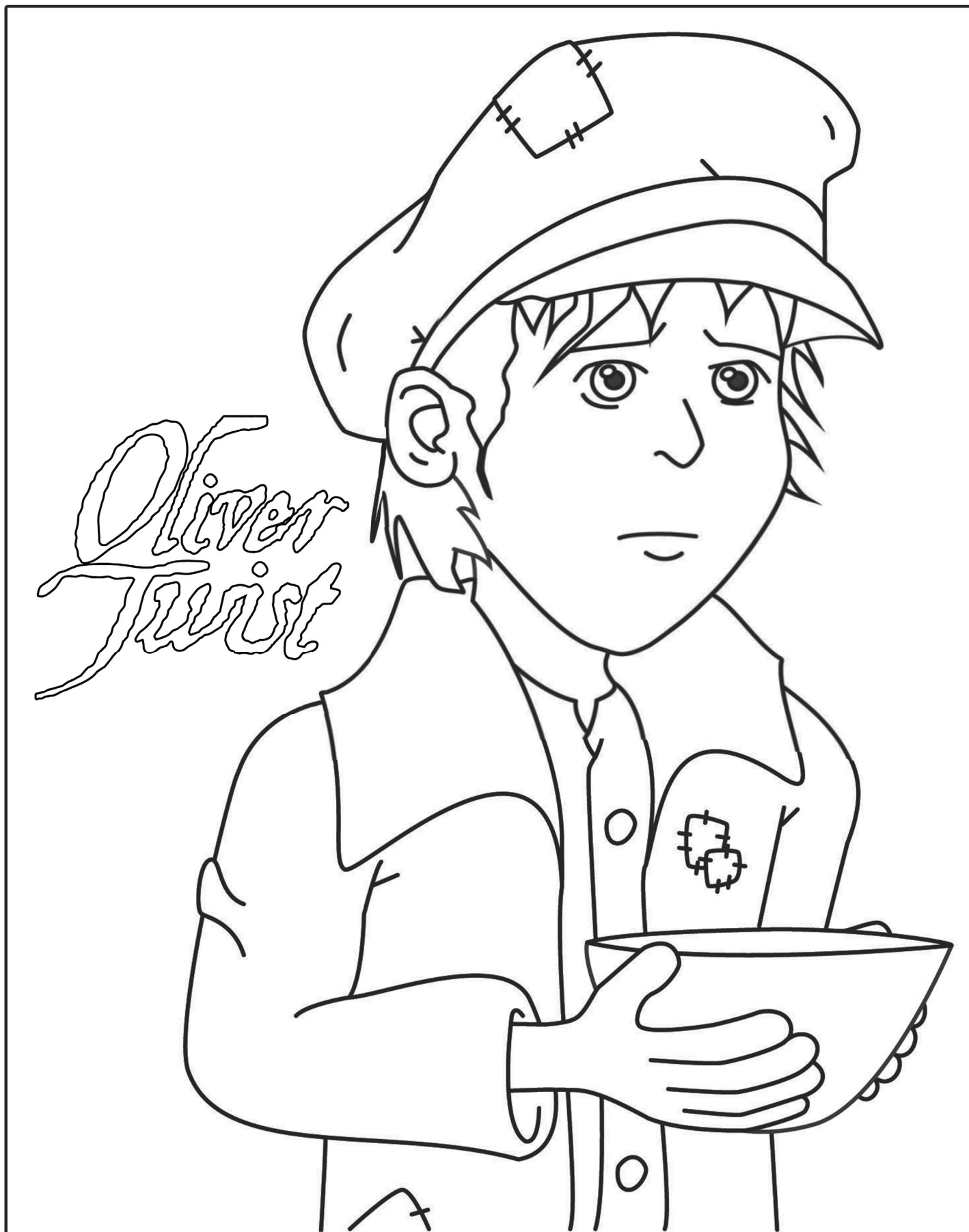
by Novia Chang

Use these questions to discuss Radio Theatre's *Oliver Twist* with your tweens and teens after you listen to the audio drama.

- 1 Oliver and the other orphans are routinely abused and betrayed by the people who are supposed to protect them. Have you ever felt hurt or betrayed by your loved ones or by the people who are taking care of you? What was the situation? How could it have been handled differently?
- 2 The boys at the workhouse are so desperate for food that they decide someone needs to ask for more. Has there ever been something that you needed but were afraid to ask for? If yes, what did you need, and why were you afraid?
- 3 Noah constantly bullies Oliver until one day Oliver becomes angry and attacks him. Have you ever been bullied? What was the situation? How did you react to the bullying? If you were Oliver, what would you have done differently?
- 4 How does Fagin try to corrupt Oliver? How is stealing depicted in this novel? What does the Bible say about stealing? Why do you think Oliver refuses to join the gang and give into a life of crime? How would you have dealt with the temptation of regular food and easy money if you were in Oliver's situation? Is the criminal world in the novel better or worse than the workhouse?
- 5 How are people's attitudes toward the poor and orphans depicted in the novel? How are poor people and the homeless treated today?
- 6 The parish councils were in charge of the workhouses and baby farms. This means that the government used the dividing lines of the parishes, but these groups were run by the government. Sometimes clergy were on these committees, but the church was not over the workhouses and baby farms. If churches had been supervising orphans, the poor and the sick, how should the church (the body of Christ) have treated them? How is this directive different from the ways the government-run councils and individuals treated Oliver?
- 7 How are marriage relationships portrayed in the novel? How are marriages based on economic advantage depicted differently from marriages based on love? Which marriage relationships are portrayed as good and which are bad? What do you think a good marriage relationship should be like?

As your younger children color the *Oliver Twist* sheet (see below), talk with them about one big thing they want. Have them consider how *Oliver Twist*'s "big thing" was food. Tie that to how parents look out for children and how some children, similar to Oliver, don't have parents to take care of them.





FOCUS ON THE FAMILY

RADIO THEATRE®