



HARD TIMES

## Hard Times (dramatic reading)

by Charles Dickens (1812-1870)

Charles Dickens' 1854 novel opens with the philosophy of education espoused by the eminently practical Mr. Gradgrind, who prizes "facts and calculations." He raises his children, most prominently Louisa and Tom, to eschew imagination and emotion and embrace order and reason. The results are disastrous: Louisa marries out of duty to the supposed self-made man Mr. Bounderby, while Tom grows up dissolute, ultimately commits theft and blames it on an unfortunate laborer, Stephen Blackpool. Set in the fictional Coketown, a mill town in the north of England, Dickens' novel satirizes capitalism, social mobility, class stratification, and Utilitarianism. This dramatic reading of the novel features a full cast of LibriVox volunteers, who lend their voices to Dickens' vibrant comic characters.



CHARLES DICKENS

CHARLES DICKENS



Total running time: 12:00:43

Cover design by Kathryn Delaney  
Cover illustration from *Hard Times* by Fred Walker, 1868

HARD TIMES