OLIVER WANTS SOME MORE

This text is an extract of the chapter two of Charles Dickens’ *Oliver wants some more.*From the title the intelligent reader can understand that the story is about a situation of discontent and uneasiness for which the protagonist, who is called Oliver, rebels and makes his voice heards.
The text tells about a group of children who live in a workhouse. The man who is in charge of the building wants to be named “master”, he’s women assistant and he’s very authoritarian and strict. The extract mainly focuses on the hungry children who receive only a poor portion of soup, so one day, they got together and Oliver was chosen to ask the master for more food. When he did the master was very astonished for the request and put him in confinement and then he’s offered for sale for five pounds.
The story consist mainly in telling but have also some part of showing.
The narrator is a omniscient third person one, that is an external person who knows and see everything that happen to the characters and uses the passive form (the characters suffer the actions).
In my opinion Charles Dickens has written this novel for a public of intelligent readers who can understand the difficult and not right situation that he tells with irony.
There are different sequences, in the first the narrator describes the initial situation, the place where the children live and the poorly food they can have and that little increase for some festivity. The master is described with an apron with the purpose to underline his importance, in fact he was seen like a god and the children are very scary to talk or make a request to him. The man has some women assistant and his take to focus their minor role as they were servant.
In the second sequence were described the bowl of the poor children and the narrator use ironical expressions, like “The bowls never wanted washing” or “The boys polished them till they shone again”, to make the readers understand how much this children are hungry. To empathize this hunger, the narrator says that one child was afraid that some night he may eat the boy who slept next to him and describes the child with wild and hungry eyes to make understand that this isn’t a joke.
In the third sequence there is the turning point in which the children who are too hungry decided to held together and with a draw, because no one had the courage to go and talk to the master, Oliver was chosen to ask for more food.
Then is described the dinner and the narrator brings out tension but also the hope of the children that push Oliver to accomplish his duty.
In the fourth sequence is shown the reaction of the master that at first was astonished and aghast and then exploded with anger and make an exaggerating fuss. This show how powerful was the role of the man and how little the children are considered in the Victorian age, so little that they were left to suffer the hunger.
The final sequence show the measures that the master took for Oliver, its function once again underline the minor, almost nothing importance that children have in that period, Oliver was sold like an object, and for the master he was worth only five pounds.
The story, as it was already specified above, is setting in the Victorian age. During this period England experienced a period of stability, economic prosperity and commercial and colonial expansion, but also saw the emergence of important social problems concerning above all the exploitation of workers and the poverty of the lower social class in which the workhouses appear.
There are many characters: the master who is considered as a God of whom everyone are afraid, he’s described like a fat healthy man and this make the reader understand that he give only poor portion of soup to the children not because there aren’t any others but only because he doesn’t want. He consider the children like a burden, object with which he can do anything he desired, also sold them.
In the story appeared also two women who assist the master in his work but have a marginal role, the position of the women in that period was very low.
The children are described like animals that become wild for the hard work they are subject to and for the growing hunger.
Oliver Twist is the protagonist of the story and he’s a child who live in the workhouse and like his companion he’s exploited and hungry. He was chosen to make the master the request of more food for him and all his friends. After the request he was sent in confinement and the very next morning was offered to sale for only five pounds.
Charles Dicken to describe and make the reads understand the situation, uses ironical and exaggerating language to bring the story to the ridicule.
I think that his choice of the use of language is well done and accomplish his intention.