

Great Expectations

by Charles Dickens

Teacher's Guide

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Synopsis

Chapter 1

On Christmas Eve, early in the 19th century, seven-year-old Philip Pirrip, called Pip, visits the churchyard at the edge of Woolwich marsh. He looks over the graves of his parents and five brothers who died in infancy. An escaped convict from the *Hulks*, a prison ship in the nearby harbor, suddenly appears and seizes him. The convict threatens Pip with dire consequences if he does not bring food and a file to the graveyard. The terrified boy promises to obey.

Chapter 2

Since being orphaned, Pip has lived with his sister, Mrs. Joe Gargery, who is over 20 years older than he. As his unwilling guardian, she has treated him uncharitably and at times violently. His brother-in-law, blacksmith Joe Gargery, is a humble, compassionate surrogate parent who seems to suffer his wife's rampages as much as Pip.

Chapter 3

Pip steals brandy, a mincemeat, and a pork pie from the Gargery pantry and a file from the forge and takes them to the convict's hiding place in the marshes.

Chapter 4

On Christmas Day, Mrs. Joe prepares dinner for Mr. Wopsle, the church clerk; Mr. Hubble, the village wheelwright, and his wife; and Mr. Pumblechook, Joe's uncle and a prosperous seed merchant. Pip spends a miserable day listening to their criticisms of him and worrying about the inevitable discovery of theft.

Chapter 5

Just as Pip's sister finds the food missing, soldiers interrupt the dinner and demand Joe's help in repairing the irons that they plan to use when they capture two escaped convicts. Carrying Pip on his back, Joe follows the soldiers on the hunt. Pip and Joe hope that the convicts will escape, but the soldiers find them fighting in a ditch. One is Pip's acquaintance, who obviously hates the other man and claims that he betrayed him at their trial. Pip comes under no suspicion for stealing because his convict confesses to stealing them himself.

Chapter 6

After the soldiers remove the convicts, Pip wants to confess his involvement, but fears losing Joe's respect.

Chapter 7

Pip continues to suffer his sister's vile moods but enjoys love and companionship from Joe, who seems a combination father, brother, and dear friend.

Chapter 8

Pumblechook takes the boy to Satis House, a once luxurious estate now fallen into ruin. The owner, Miss Havisham, is an eccentric recluse who has remained indoors since being

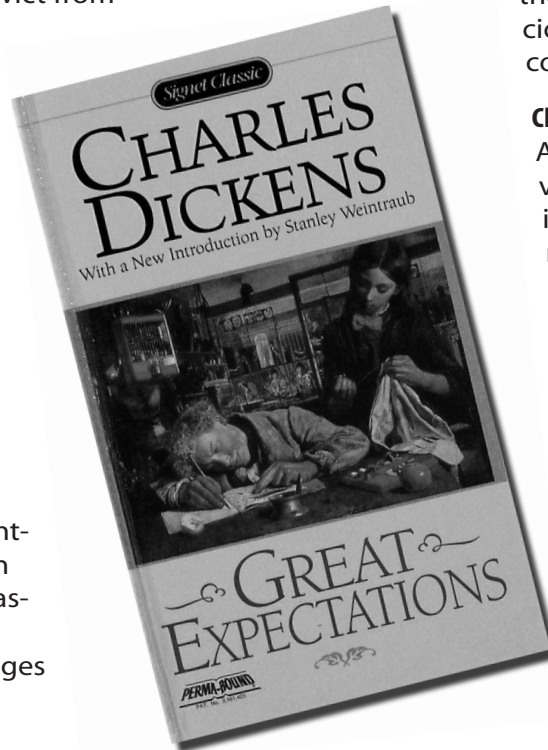
jilted on her wedding day years earlier. She still wears a yellowed wedding dress; the nuptial feast rots on her dining table. At her mansion, Pip meets Estella, a beautiful girl his own age who is Miss Havisham's ward. Estella disdains him as a commoner.

Chapter 9

On return to the forge, Pip makes up lies about playing with flags, but confesses the truth to Joe.

Chapter 10

Pip confesses to Biddy that he wants a better life than he has. A few days later, Pip finds Joe sitting



with a sinister stranger at the Three Jolly Bargemen. The man stirs his drink with a file that Pip recognizes as the one he stole from the forge. After pressing many questions, the stranger gives Pip two £1 notes. Pip has nightmares about the file.

Chapter 11

On Miss Havisham's birthday, Pip encounters her greedy relatives, Camilla, Cousin Raymond, and Sarah Pocket. Estella degrades Pip; a pale young gentleman challenges him to a fistfight that Pip wins. Estella grants Pip a kiss.

Chapter 12

Tension mounts at the mansion, where Miss Havisham urges Estella to break men's hearts. At the forge, Pip endures his sister's fights with Joe.

Chapter 13

At noon the next day, Miss Havisham summons Joe to pay him 25 guineas for Pip's indentures to bind him as an apprentice at Joe's smithy. After a celebratory dinner at the Blue Boar, Pip goes to bed wretched at the thought of becoming a blacksmith.

Chapter 14

Pip is now ashamed of home or of having Estella see him working at the forge.

Chapter 15

Pip receives an indifferent education from Mr. Wopsle's great-aunt and learns to read with the help of the old woman's clever granddaughter, Bidley, who is also an orphan. Joe hires Dolge Orlick, a morose journeyman. Pip visits Miss Havisham, who invites him back on his birthday. He returns home to a disordered crime scene.

Chapter 16

Mrs. Joe is attacked, leaving her docile and partially paralyzed. The only clues to her assailant are a convict's leg-iron filed in two and the T that Mrs. Joe draws. Joe's brutish and surly journeyman is the chief suspect. Bidley comes to keep house for the family.

Chapter 17

A year later, Pip receives a guinea on his next birthday visit to Miss Havisham. Bidley loves Pip, but his obsession with Estella and elevated status prevent

romance. Bidley confides her fear that Orlick likes her. Pip begins watching the journeyman.

Chapter 18

One evening, after four years of apprenticeship, Pip recognizes Jaggers, Miss Havisham's attorney, who informs him that a secret benefactor wants him educated as a gentleman in London.

Chapter 19

The change in Pip causes Bidley to call him proud. Trabb the tailor makes Pip a new suit of clothes. On Friday, Pip visits Miss Havisham. He assumes that she is making his dream come true, but she neither denies nor confirms his assumption. Now a young man with great expectations, he feels guilty about leaving Joe, but leaves tearfully without bidding a warm goodbye.

Chapter 20

In London, Pip becomes Jaggers' ward and receives money and directions to Barnard's Inn to stay with Herbert over the weekend.

Chapter 21

Pip learns to trust Wemmick, the law clerk, and recognizes Herbert as the pale young man he fought at Satis House.

Chapter 22

Herbert scorns the proud Estella and renames Pip "Handel." Herbert fills in the family history of Miss Havisham, whom her fiancé jilted, but Herbert is vague about Estella's adoption. At Hammersmith at noon Sunday, Pip meets Matthew Pocket, Miss Havisham's relative and the father of seven.

Chapter 23

Matthew tutors Pip, Startop, and Bentley Drummle, a nasty, snobbish youth once removed from a baronetcy.

Chapter 24

Several days later, Pip requests £20 from Jaggers.

Chapter 25

Pip rooms with Herbert, who shares a half interest in Pip's boat. Several weeks later, Pip visits Walworth, Wemmick's home.

Chapter 26

Jaggers welcomes the four youths to dinner in Soho and introduces them to Molly, his house-

keeper, whom he saved from a murder charge. He points out her powerful wrists, which bear scars. A month later, Drummle returns home to Shropshire.

Chapter 27

Biddy writes that Joe is coming to visit. The next Tuesday, his arrival is marred by his discomfort in Pip's lodgings. He informs Pip that Estella has returned and that Miss Havisham wants to see Pip. Joe asserts that he will not return again to embarrass Pip.

Chapter 28

The next day, Pip takes the coach and re-encounters the convict who gave him money. Pip rooms at the Blue Boar rather than return to his lodgings.

Chapter 29

Pip finds Orlick working as the gateman at Satis House. Estella has become a heart-breaker whom her foster mother has taught to hate all men. Pip dines with Jaggers. Pip lies at the inn that night deeply in love with Estella.

Chapter 30

The next morning, Pip warns Jaggers that Orlick is the wrong man to work for Miss Havisham. Pip confesses his adoration of Estella to Herbert; Herbert expresses his love of Clara, but is too poor to marry her.

Chapter 31

Pip and Herbert witness the debut of Wopsle, who acts in a production of *Hamlet*.

Chapter 32

When Estella visits London, Pip paces in anticipation of meeting her coach.

Chapter 33

Estella plans to go to Richmond, Surrey, under Pip's escort. She intends to enter society with the help of Mrs. Brandley, a great lady.

Chapter 34

Herbert, Startop, and Pip join a club called the Finches of the Grove. A letter arrives stating that Mrs. Joe has died.

Chapter 35

Pip attends the funeral and has supper with Joe and Biddy, who wants to take a job at a new

school. Pip learns that Orlick is working at the quarries.

Chapter 36

In London, Pip and Herbert grow extravagant. At age 21, Pip hears from Jaggers that his annual income will be £500, but still doesn't learn his benefactor's name.

Chapter 37

Jaggers' clerk, John Wemmick, gives Pip money to anonymously buy Herbert a post at Clarriker and Company without telling him of the gesture.

Chapter 38

Pip escorts Estella to Satis House, where she quarrels with Miss Havisham. Drummle courts Estella.

Chapter 39

On Pip's 23rd birthday, while Herbert is out of town, the old convict, Abel Magwitch, surfaces unexpectedly and reveals that he is the anonymous benefactor. After working for years at Botany Bay, Australia, he thinks of Pip as his son and has come to see him even if the visit results in recapture and hanging. Pip conceals his "uncle" in Herbert's room.

Chapter 40

Shaken, Pip goes to Jaggers to confirm the benefactor's identity. Abel swears Herbert to secrecy about his identity.

Chapter 41

The next morning, Pip questions Abel about his fellow convict.

Chapter 42

Abel discloses how Compeyson used and deceived him. Pip recognizes that Arthur Compeyson was Miss Havisham's fiancé.

Chapter 43

Pip has harsh words with Drummle, who ridicules "smithies."

Chapter 44

Pip realizes that Miss Havisham used him to taunt greedy relatives and never intended to educate him to marry Estella. He confronts Miss Havisham and learns that Estella is engaged to Drummle. Past midnight, Pip approaches home and receives a warning from Wemmick to avoid home.

Chapter 45

After a night at Covent Garden, Pip learns from Wemmick that Abel is in danger.

Chapter 46

Pip joins Herbert and Magwitch at Clara's house. Pip remains on edge for several weeks.

Chapter 47

Pip sinks into debt and warns Herbert not to mention Estella's name; Compeyson sits behind Pip at the theatre.

Chapter 48

Jaggers invites Pip to dinner, where he learns more of Molly's past and receives a summons to Satis House.

Chapter 49

On a second visit, Pip begs Miss Havisham to give Herbert enough money to buy a partnership at Clarriker and Company. She agrees, in part because she is sorry for manipulating Estella and Pip. Pip wants nothing for himself. After departing, he feels drawn back to her room and finds her engulfed in flame from a hearth accident. He burns his hands and forearms during the rescue and leaves her in a doctor's care. The next morning, he kisses Miss Havisham, who asks him to write "I forgive her."

Chapter 50

Herbert tends Pip's dressings and informs him that Estella is the daughter of Abel and Molly.

Chapter 51

The next morning, Pip informs Jaggers that Abel is Estella's father. Jaggers explains indirectly the circumstances of Estella's adoption.

Chapter 52

Pip concludes the purchase of Herbert's position. Wemmick sends word that Abel can escape on the Hamburg steamer the next Wednesday. A letter urges Pip to come to the limekiln.

Chapter 53

On a dark night, Orlick captures Pip and holds him at gunpoint for costing him the job at Satis House. He boasts of assaulting Pip's sister. Herbert and Trabb's boy rescue Pip.

Chapter 54

In March, Pip and Herbert take Abel to the steamer. A police galley carrying the informer Compeyson intervenes. Abel pulls him from the boat into the water in a deadly tussle. Compeyson dies; Abel is seriously injured.

Chapter 55

Wemmick marries Miss Skiffins.

Chapter 56

Pip visits Abel at the jail and tells him that he loves Estella. Abel dies content believing that Pip will inherit his money, which the authorities have confiscated.

Chapter 57

Pip falls so ill that Joe must attend him. He informs Pip that Miss Havisham is dead and that Orlick is in jail after robbing Pumblechook's house. Joe saves Pip from prison by paying his debts.

Chapter 58

Pip arrives at the village on a June day and learns that Joe has married Biddy. Pip promises to repay the loan and departs the country to work for Herbert. Pip rises in the company and lives contentedly with Herbert and his wife Clara.

Chapter 59

Eleven years later, Pip has repaid the money he owes Joe. He visits at the forge and meets his namesake, little Pip. He visits Satis House and encounters Estella, who lived a wretched life married to Drummle, who has died. Leaving the garden together, Pip and Estella realize that they must live as friends. An earlier alternate ending to the novel has Pip meeting Estella in London and learning that she had married a Shropshire doctor.

Timeline

- Feb. 7, 1812** Charles Dickens is born.
- 1812-15** United States and Britain fight War of 1812.
- 1813** Jane Austen publishes *Pride and Prejudice*.
- June 1815** Napoleon is defeated at Waterloo and sent into exile on St. Helena.
- 1817** New York Stock and Exchange Board is formed.
- 1820** George III dies; George IV becomes king.

1822 Dickens' family moves to London. Rosetta Stone is used to decipher Egyptian hieroglyphs.

1824 John Dickens is imprisoned for debt; Charles quits school and works in a factory.

1827-28 Charles works as a clerk in an attorney's office.

1828 Catholic Emancipation Act allows British Catholics to vote and hold public office.

1829 Railroad locomotives used to pull freight.

1830 George IV dies; William IV becomes king.

1831 Michael Faraday builds first electric generator.

1832 Dickens begins working as a journalist.

1836 *Sketches by Boz* and *The Pickwick Papers* are published.

Dickens marries Catherine Hogarth.

1837 William IV dies; Victoria becomes queen. *Oliver Twist* is published. *Nicholas Nickleby* is published.

1841 *The Old Curiosity Shop* is published.

1842 Ether and chloroform are used as anesthetics.

Dickens tours the United States.

1843 *A Christmas Carol* is published.

1844-46 Dickens takes his family to Italy and Switzerland.

1845 Potato crop fails in Ireland, leading to widespread famine. By 1851, over 1 million have died and 1.5 million have emigrated, mostly to the United States.

1846 The planet Neptune is discovered. The Smithsonian Institution is established in Washington, D.C.

1847 The Bronte sisters publish *Wuthering Heights*, *Jane Eyre* and *Agnes Grey*.

1848 Revolutions break out across Europe.

1849 *David Copperfield* is published.

1851 Great Exhibition is held in Hyde Park in London.

Herman Melville publishes *Moby Dick*.

1853 Boolean algebra is developed.

1854 Crimean War begins: Britain and France join Turkey in war against Russia. *Hard Times* is published.

1855 Florence Nightingale takes nursing volunteers to the Crimea.

1856 Crimean War ends. Dickens meets Ellen Ternan.

1856-58 Sepoy Mutiny: British government dis-

solves East India Company and takes direct control of India.

1858 Dickens and his wife separate.

1859 *A Tale of Two Cities* is published. George Eliot publishes *Adam Bede*; Darwin publishes *The Origin of Species*.

1860 *Great Expectations* is published.

1861-65 Despite wide sympathy for the Confederacy, Britain stays neutral in the U.S. Civil War.

January 1863 Abraham Lincoln issues The Emancipation Proclamation.

November 1866 Lincoln delivers The Gettysburg Address. Gregor Mendel publishes his discoveries on heredity.

July 1, 1867 Dominion of Canada is created. Joseph Lister introduces sterilization and antiseptic procedures.

June 1870 Dickens dies and is buried in Poets Corner.

Author Sketch

Charles Huffman Dickens, a giant of 19th-century fiction, worked hard for success. A scholarly child, he was born the second of a lower middle class family of eight at Portsea on February 7, 1812. He grew up in Chatham and became a voracious reader of Smollett, Defoe, Richardson, Fielding, and Goldsmith, the notable authors of English fiction. His father, John Dickens, a bureaucrat for the Office of the Royal Navy, demonstrated little ability to manage money and subsequently served a sentence at Marshalsea prison for his debts. His personal and household goods were sold at public auction and the family transported to prison apartments.



Dickens' life was forever changed at this point. Humiliated, he left school at the age of twelve and labored in a shoe polish factory pasting labels on bottles. He served as an office boy at Gray's Inn before mastering shorthand and establishing himself in journalism. His more memorable characters, such as Ebenezer Scrooge, Mr. Micawber, Pickwick, and Uriah Heep, became household names to readers who devoured his works. His manuscripts were often serialized in London's *Morning Chronicle*, where Dickens found employment around age

twenty as reporter of political debates from the House of Commons.

After his marriage to Catherine Hogarth, his “Dearest Mouse,” Dickens wrote for the *Monthly Magazine*, *Bentley’s Miscellany*, and the *Evening Star*, for which he produced *Sketches by Boz*, published under his pseudonym from 1836 to 1837. His first fiction, *Pickwick Papers*, led to lasting fame as an entertaining novelist. Subsequent emphasis on social issues such as workhouses, child abuse, alcoholism, crime, and unconscionable labor practices earned him the reputation of reformer and gained him the support of John Forster, who later composed his biography. In 1842, a tour of the United States brought Dickens in contact with his American supporters. The American press criticized him for some of his beliefs, especially his disdain for slavery.

At the height of fame, Dickens, while living at Tavistock Square in London, produced his long-lived classics—*David Copperfield*, *A Tale of Two Cities*, and *Great Expectations*. During a tour of the industrial town of Preston near Manchester in 1854, he formed impressions of utilitarian philosophy in action, which evolved into his shortest novel, *Hard Times*, set far from his usual London setting and published in *Household Words*. In a letter to Thomas Carlyle dated July 13, 1854, Dickens noted, “I am going, next month, to publish in one volume *Hard Times* . . . It contains what I do devoutly hope will shake some people in a terrible mistake of these days.”

Fascinated with the theater, Dickens followed local stage productions and had an affair with actress Ellen Ternan. His health failed in his last years from too many public readings and lectures and from the mental anguish he experienced when his marriage crumbled in 1858. In 1870, suffering exhaustion, he died unexpectedly while dining, leaving the manuscript of *Edwin Drood* unfinished. His body was buried in Poet’s Corner of Westminster Abbey.

Critic’s Corner

Since his first serialized publications, Dickens has become one of the most famous fiction writers in the English language. To his detriment, the urgent demands of serial writing for magazines and of rapid production of novels placed constraints on his work, robbing him of the opportunity to correct errors and improve tone and metaphor. Although

critics are quick to point out his obvious faults, such as the overuse of coincidence and caricature, as well as heavy-handed social criticism, melodrama, and excessive sentimentality, no novelist came near his skill with character and irony.

During his lifetime, Dickens was able to move the reading public to action against human misery by intense depiction of poverty and the cruelties of orphanages, workhouses, factories, law courts, and boarding schools. An influential humanitarian, he used his craft to attack corrupt clergy and politicians and to denounce impersonal merchants and bankers and corrupt legal processes, which he knew from his own career as a law clerk. He ridiculed faults of his day—the snobbery, vanity, materialism, and complacency that separated classes and enabled the comfortable to overlook or ignore those downgraded by want, exploitation, and neglect. A meticulous researcher, he visited many of the locations that became settings for his books. Out of admiration for drama, he fleshed out plots with memorably dynamic scenes, some of which critics panned despite Dickens’ huge following on both sides of the Atlantic. To the end of his life, Dickens gave profitable annual readings from *A Christmas Carol*, expressing with his voice and gesture the timeless charm of his fable.

Other Works by Charles Dickens

American Notes (1842)
American Notes for General Circulation (1844)
Barnaby Rudge (1841)
The Battle of Life: A Love Story (1846)
Bleak House (1853)
A Child’s History of England (1853)
The Chimes (1844)
The Cricket on the Hearth (1845)
Christmas Books (1852)
A Christmas Carol (1843)
David Copperfield (1850)
Dombey and Son (1848)
George Silverman’s Explanation (1868)
Hard Times (1854)
The Haunted Man and the Ghost’s Bargain (1848)
The Lazy Tour of Two Idle Apprentices (1858)
Little Dorrit (1857)
Martin Chuzzlewit (1844)
Mr. Nightingale’s Diary (1851)
The Mystery of Edwin Drood (1870)
The Old Curiosity Shop (1841)

Nicholas Nickleby (1839)
No Thoroughfare (1867)
Oliver Twist (1838)
Our Mutual Friend (1865)
Pickwick Papers (1837)
Pictures from Italy (1846)
Reprinted Pieces (1858)
Sketches by Boz (1836)
Sketches of Young Couples (1840)
Sketches of Young Gentlemen (1838)
The Strange Gentleman (1836)
A Tale of Two Cities (1859)
The Uncommercial Traveler (1868)
The Village Coquettes (1836)

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General Objectives

1. To discuss the nature and purpose of the novel
2. To characterize individual expectations of courtship and marriage
3. To outline events that reveal character
4. To contrast indoor and outdoor settings
5. To evaluate reasons for living outside the nuclear family
6. To analyze examples of snobbery
7. To assess the place of the novel in the history of English fiction
8. To note the effect of situational humor, irony, and suspense
9. To contrast characters in their response to despair, humiliation, manipulation, verbal aspersions, infatuation, bad news, and longing
10. To list ways in which social class limits courtship
11. To summarize reasons for the protagonist's shame
12. To summarize strictures on apprenticeships

Specific Objectives

1. To recount how and why Miss Havisham comes to hate men
2. To explain Pip's dependence on Abel's money
3. To characterize suspicions that Orlick harmed Mrs. Joe
4. To describe the Gargery family at the novel's conclusion
5. To explain how Pip uses up his emotional and physical energies
6. To discuss the choice of title
7. To define the role of the Pockets
8. To analyze Estella's coldness toward Pip
9. To contrast Abel before and after he meets Pip
10. To contrast Herbert and Pip as loyal friends
11. To explain the symbolism of the stopped clock
12. To account for Jaggers' role in Pip's education
13. To characterize Wemmick's role as rescuer
14. To comment on Drummle's villainy
15. To summarize Bidley's part in restoring family unity

Literary Terms and Applications

For a better understanding of Charles Dickens' style, present the following terms and applications:

Character Naming: a method of displaying or revealing character traits, attributes, or attitudes through the choice of symbolic names, which may contain a descriptive term. For example, the greedy Pockets and the starlike Estella, who bears the name for "star." Pip is a nickname for Philip that suggests childish behaviors and outlook. The convict, who goes through a number of names, is really Abel Magwitch, a name replete with suggestion, particularly the Old Testament victim Abel, slain by his brother Cain.

Historical Milieu: the setting of fictional events in a real period of history. One of Dickens' many depictions of time and place, Victorian London stands out in vivid detail, particularly the professional and financial district where Pip gets his introduction to a gentleman's lifestyle. The Finches, new clothes and jewelry, the Assembly Ball, and a flat shared with Herbert show Pip's inability to care for himself amid city glitter and temptation or to budget his money and time to good use.

Plot Resolution: the stage of the novel in which victims attain sympathy, acknowledge their faults, and achieve contentment, discipline, forgiveness, or even reward and elevation resulting from a necessary change of heart or behavior, as found in Pip's realization that he has wronged Bidley and Joe in pursuing a self-important, but misguided woman he can never have.

The Importance of Setting

Great Expectations is a varied assortment of indoor and outdoor locales that typify poverty, danger, gentrification, privilege, and interaction between the classes. Essential to the main characters is the meaning of city as opposed to village life, beliefs, pursuits, and values. The opening scene places Pip at one of his lowest points as he walks on a gray December day among tombstones of his parents and brothers and encounters a runaway from the *Hulks*, the recycled ships that are England's answer to overcrowded jails.

Pip's dread of grime and rough clothes and hands from an apprenticeship to the hated forge grows deeper as he spends more time in the decaying mansion with Miss Havisham and Estella. Ironically, he fails to see the corruption that destroys the old lady and her greedy family. He reaches toward a gentility and style that Satis House once had, but lost when its mistress withdrew from normality into an obsessive hatred of men. The sudden move from village to city allows Pip his own experiment with joining a men's club, attending the Assembly Ball, and living like gentry, a lifestyle that brings him little peace from the debts that he and Herbert incur.

The plot resolution carries Pip across a nightmare montage and without opportunity to recover, Pip plunges into his worse nightmare, the attempt to spirit Abel out of the country by steamer. From rowboat and river to the courtroom and prison, where the old convict slips away from him, Pip finds himself in a chaotic world with nothing to grasp. When he opens his eyes on Joe and finds his residence safe with debts paid, Pip begins to put together the jagged ends of his young life and to succeed where before he had failed.

Cross-Curricular Sources

Novels

Charlotte Brontë, *Jane Eyre*

Theodore Dreiser, *American Tragedy*

George Eliot, *Silas Marner*, *The Mill on the Floss*, and
Middlemarch

Colleen McCollough, *Morgan's Run*

Margaret Mitchell, *Gone with the Wind*

Plays

Evelyn Waugh, *The Man Who Liked Dickens*

Nonfiction

Richard Brown, *Economic Revolutions in Britain, 1750-1850:
Prometheus Unbound?*

Christine Counsell and Chris Steer, *Industrial Britain: The
Workshop of the World*

Diane Yancey, *Life In Charles Dickens' England*

CD-ROM

The Time, Life, and Works of Dickens (Filmic Archives)

Videos/DVDs

Great Expectations (1946)

Great Expectations (1975)

Great Expectations (1997)

Themes and Motifs

A study of the central issues and situations in Charles Dickens' *Great Expectations* should include these aspects:

Themes

- home
- danger
- longing
- duty
- snobbery
- disillusion
- self-knowledge
- flight
- collapse
- self-improvement

Motifs

- compassion towards felons
- the inheritance of an estate and education
- selfless acts
- false assumptions and their consequences

Meaning Study

Below are significant words, phrases, or sentences from the book. Explain each in context. Volume, chapter, and page numbers pinpoint each entry so that you can re-read the passage in which it appears.

1. The dark flat wilderness beyond the churchyard, intersected with dikes and mounds and gates, with scattered cattle feeding on it, was the marshes; and that the low leaden line beyond was the river; and that the distant savage lair from which the wind was rushing was the sea; and that the small bundle of shivers growing afraid of it all and beginning to cry was Pip. (Chap. 1, p. 2)
(Dickens opens the novel on a tract of low, wet, soft land suited more to cattle than small boys. Much of the desperate action of the novel takes place in such swamp. The convicts flee across the marshes; later Pip confronts Orlick, a violent quarryman, in the same dismal setting. Dickens evokes an air of mystery and tense expectancy to create an atmosphere of low light and uncertain ground, all of which preface Pip's mishandling of his great expectations of becoming a gentleman.)
2. She concluded by throwing me—I often served as a connubial missile—at Joe, who, glad to get hold of me on any terms, passed me on into the chimney and quietly fenced me up there with his great leg. (Chap. 2, p. 7)
(Georgiana Gargery, who is 20 years older than Pip, earns the approval of villagers by rearing her orphaned brother with the same heavy hand that she rules her sweet-natured husband. She prides herself on bringing him up "by hand," a euphemism for regular whippings with Tickler. Aggression seems to be her way of venting frustration at the burden of rearing Pip and at being married to Joe. Much to her regret, she applies this tyranny to Orlick, the brutal journeyman, who seriously wounds her.)
3. Now, I too had so often thought it a pity that, in the singular kind of quarrel with myself which I was always carrying on, I was half-inclined to shed tears of vexation and distress when Biddy gave utterance to her sentiment and my own. (Chap. 17, p. 128)
(When Pip hears his reasoning concerning adoration for Estella and Biddy's response spoken in one voice, he shows signs of recognizing his illogical desire to abandon the apprenticeship to the forge to become a gentleman. Biddy further shocks him when she criticizes the beautiful Estella for being impolite and untrue. In Biddy's opinion, Estella is not worth the effort of altering the whole structure and intent of Pip's life.)

4. "Bear in mind then, that Brag is a good dog, but that Holdfast is a better." (Chap. 18, p. 138) *(Jaggers, who asks Joe to cancel Pip's indentures for the boy's good and with no fee charged, is surprised to encounter a man so unselfish as Joe. Accustomed to the cynicism and maneuvering over felons, Jaggers indirectly instructs Joe that boasting is fine, but keeping one's word is better. Joe, a simpler, more direct speaker, reveals his love for his foster son and his desires the boy's happiness.)*
5. "He may be too proud to let any one take him out of a place that he is competent to fill, and fills well and with respect." (Chap. 19, p. 150) *(Biddy's angry retort follows Pip's decision to help Joe become a learned gentleman. In response to Pip's self-praise, Biddy summarizes the true meaning of pride. She informs him that Joe is proud because he is what he seeks to be, and he does well what he chooses to do. Pip accuses Biddy of jealousy of his good fortune.)*
6. We Britons had at that time particularly settled that it was treasonable to doubt our having and our being the best of everything: otherwise, while I was scared by the immensity of London, I think I might have had some faint doubts whether it was not rather ugly, crooked, narrow, and dirty. (Chap. 20, p. 161) *(Dickens intrudes on Pip's thoughts after the five-hour coach trip into London. The squalor that greets the boy inserts doubts about the gentleman's life. Dickens asks readers to ponder the pomposity of established tradition by implying that England must pay a high price for a lifestyle that allows so few to prosper while the vast underclass languishes.)*
7. He would wash his hands, and wipe them and dry them all over this towel, whenever he came in from a police court or dismissed a client from his room. (Chap. 26, p. 210) *(Jaggers' symbolic actions express distaste for dishonest dealings on behalf of felons associated with his law practice and revulsion at the courts' corruption. He also attempts a symbolic cleansing of his own guilt incurred by profiting from these dealings. His clerk, John Wemmick, makes his own separation from criminals and crime by withdrawing into Walworth, a miniature fortress that wards off the evil of the city.)*
8. As soon as I arrived, I sent a penitential codfish and barrel of oysters to Joe (as reparation for not having gone myself), and then went on to Barnard's Inn. (Chap. 30, p. 247) *(After his return to the village and a visit to Satis House, Pip suffers some guilt for avoiding Joe and the forge. Seeking excuses*

for not going home, he stays at the Blue Boar. When he returns to London, he sends the gifts to Joe as penance for slighting his foster father.)

9. Now, Handel, I am quite free from the flavour of sour grapes, upon my soul and honour! Not being bound to her, can you not detach yourself from her? (Chap. 30, p. 250) *(In discussing Estella, Herbert establishes that he is not criticizing her just because she is unattainable. He refers to Aesop's fable of the fox and the grapes. When the fox was unable to reach the grapes, he concluded that they were probably sour and therefore no great loss.)*
10. You always waits at the gate, don't you, dear boy? (Chap. 56, p. 464) *(Dickens creates powerful symbolism to enhance Abel's last moments with Pip. Just as Pip once waited at the gate of Satis House in hopes that Miss Havisham would make his fortune, he now waits daily at the gate to visit his benefactor. Ironically, the benefactor is unaware that there is no money and that Pip attends him out of true love. The old man himself hovers at the gate of death and stares at the white ceiling as though prepared to accept imminent demise.)*

Comprehension Study

Answer the following questions in your own words. There is not always a right answer. Your judgment is important and you should be ready to defend your answers with quotations from the book.

Motivation

1. Why does Pip obey the convict in the cemetery?
(When Pip comes upon the convict near the Pirrup family plot in the cemetery, he believes the fierce man in chains will eat his heart and liver unless Pip locates food and a file and brings them back. Terrified, he steals the Christmas mincemeat pie and brandy from the pantry and slips a file from the forge to help the trembling felon escape and stop haunting the neighborhood.
Still quaking at the holiday dinner that follows a Christmas church service, Pip is more frightened of his sister, a shrew who is constantly armed with Tickler. When soldiers rescue him and return him to the marsh, Pip once more recognizes the grim escapee who terrorized him. To Abel, Pip silently gestures with his head to indicate that he didn't summon the authorities. At the hut where Abel warms himself at the fire, the boy's obedience moves the convict to state that he stole a pie and brandy from the blacksmith's house.)

Setting

2. What does Satis House reveal about Miss Havisham and Pip?

(The mental aberration that causes a young jilted bride to curtain the windows and stop the clock suggests a trauma beyond her comprehension. Lashing out at the world that has rejected and humiliated her, she retreats into money and power, humbles her groveling relatives, and adopts a daughter to become her warrior against males in general. When Pip comes to keep Estella company, Miss Havisham taunts and manipulates the boy as though he, too, has joined the evil male population and must be put in his place. The whole scenario perplexes Pip, who is too young and ill-informed to judge Miss Havisham's eccentric behaviors.)

Pip's maneuvering of Miss Havisham's chair around the rotting wedding feast becomes a grotesque tableau of his first experience with inner corruption. Gentle and courteous at every visit, he continues to regard Miss Havisham as a superior and a lady deserving of respect even though he recognizes the strangeness in her behavior. His willingness to risk burned hands and forearms in rescuing her from her vile, decaying nest indicates a true compassion for a woman brought low by her own obsession.)

Character Development

3. Why does Joe love Pip?

(Following the loss of his parents and brothers, Pip has regarded Joe as a foster father and an affectionate equal. Living in an uneasy household with a tyrannic sister, the boy and man become co-conspirators against constant uproar and abuse for the smallest offense. Joe admires Pip for his tender-heartedness and gladly aids him when Pip comes under Tickler and later when he falls ill from trauma and debt.)

After Pip grows arrogant with his rise in education and status, Joe interprets the difference between them as a matter of social expectation: the man at the forge must show deference to the well-dressed, well-educated gentleman. Pip's obvious slights to his family and home cause Joe no anguish because he is not judgmental or jealous. Upon marrying Bidley and siring his own son, he honors Pip by calling the boy by the same name.)

Social Setting

4. Where and under what circumstances does Pip receive an education?

(At the home of Mr. Wopsle's great aunt, Pip attends an unusual evening school where the teacher sleeps rather than conduct class. The chaotic and thoroughly unprofessional academy leaves Pip's education to chance. Through Bidley, he learns to read, write, and cipher, but the pathetic letter that Pip sends Joe suggests that Pip has only a minimal grasp of literacy.)

When an unknown benefactor elevates Pip above home schooling, he journeys to London and enters the tutelage of Matthew Pocket, a respected Eton graduate, Cambridge scholar, and author. The uproar in the household, which is run by servants and unruly children, suggests that Matthew is the stereotypical idealist who has no grasp of reality. Like Pip, Matthew anticipates that the young men he educates will remember him with preference, but Matthew's hopes come to nothing. Obviously, he is the wrong man to direct Pip's ambitions from empty dreams to solid plans for the future.)

Theme

5. How does Orlick's vengeance provide a parallel plot to that of Miss Havisham's mania?

(A surly, menacing fellow, Orlick enters the forge as Joe's journeyman and adds an uncontrolled temper to a household bristling with animosity. After assaulting Georgiana Gargery over the head with a leg iron, Orlick moves on to an easy post at Satis House. Because Pip recognizes the menace and potential violence of which Orlick is capable, he warns Jaggers that Orlick is the wrong man to serve Miss Havisham as gateman. Because of Pip's meddling, Orlick must find lowly common labor at the quarry.)

Like Miss Havisham, Orlick falls into a blind-sided hatred. Nursing his vengeance, he lurks about the village and terrorizes Bidley, who fears that he stalks her. When Pip falls into Orlick's hands, he delights in incarcerating him at the limekiln and anticipates murdering the enemy who cost him his easy estate job. Orlick places blame for Georgiana's injury on Pip, declaring, "I giv' it her! I left her for dead, and if there had been a limekiln as nigh her as there is now nigh you, she shouldn't have come to life again. But it wasn't Old Orlick as did it; it was you."

Orlick's skewed logic blames Pip's social advancement, which boosts him from forge boy to gentleman. Casting himself as the one "bullied and beat," Orlick drinks, swears, and exults over his mastery of Pip. He holds a candle to Pip's face while revealing more instances of stalking and seeking vengeance, both elements of Orlick's inner darkness. When he flees into the night like a grim miscreant, Herbert and Pip wisely leave him to nature and the authorities.)

Interpretation

6. What are Pip's great expectations?

(The legacy that Jaggers reveals to Pip and Joe at the Three Jolly Bargemen promises "a handsome property" and a future training for gentility and rise to the professional class. With the lawyer as his guardian, Pip will dress in new clothes and go to London for a more purposeful education than he has been receiving. If Joe agrees to cancel the indentures and Pip continues under his original name, nothing stands in the way of Pip's entering the privileged class.)

The hope of learning, polish, and wealth arouse hope in Pip that he will one day be worthy of Estella's esteem and, hopefully, her love. Rather than view his windfall as a means of bettering himself, Pip hopes only to acquire the accoutrements, prestige, and bearing of a gentleman. Wanting only to dress up the exterior, he is too shallow, too naive, and too misguided to use the trust money to good purpose.)

Conflict

7. How does Pip's discovery of his benefactor affect his future?

(On the night that Abel reveals to Pip that he is the unknown benefactor, Pip is appalled. Repelled by the ex-convict's coarse appearance and ignorance and by his knowledge of the man's background, Pip is horrified to learn of the danger of associating with a hunted man. Once more judging his outlook in terms of what Estella will think, Pip lapses into despair, but does not neglect the kind old man who has brought him fortune and a chance at social betterment.

The irony of rising in society on a convict's money weighs heavily on the scene as Pip scrambles to make the man a home and to establish his identity as an uncle. The unsettling escape attempt and Abel's recapture, trial, and condemnation penetrate Pip's outer airs of gentility. Within lies the compassion of the boy in the cemetery who once fed a wanted criminal and commiserated with his fever. The conflict in Pip begins its final decline as he holds Abel's hand at the court dock and attends him daily to his dying hour.)

Atmosphere

8. Why does Dickens set episodes of the story in damp and unsavory climes?

(Dickens creates contrast between the ideals of gentility and reality. Miss Havisham, owner of a mansion in Pip's village, appears elevated and ladylike to locals. The reality of her derangement appalls Pip to the point that he makes up a story of a game with flags to tell Mrs. Joe after his first visit to the crumbling interior of Satis House. When Pip shares Herbert's lodgings at Barnard Inn and begins setting himself up as a gentleman, his old life returns him repeatedly to unpleasant places, people, and situations.

The final sink into illness proves to Pip that life in his gentleman's quarters are a false front to a misspent life. Ironically, it is Joe's hard-earned money from the forge that pays Pip's debts and relieves him of the fear of arrest. While receiving kind nursing, Pip recognizes real value in his foster father. Only after Pip abandons pretense and follows Herbert into business abroad does he begin to profit from his advancement.)

Author Purpose

9. Why does the novel appeal to readers?

(Dickens' profound novel of hopes and ambitions has remained at the top of reading lists throughout the 19th and 20th centuries and into the 21st. Readers love the story of Pip, a complex boy who falls in love with a dream girl for whom he is willing to abandon all. Perhaps because most readers are Pip's age and share his faulty logic about a glorified future, they read with sympathy the coming of age of an orphaned boy who lives in an unhappy home, yet is capable of aiding an escaped felon and pitying his quandary from cold and fever as he flees the authorities. The indistinct conclusion departs from "happily ever after" love stories and reduces Pip's relationship with Estella to a well-deserved friendship. Like Pip, she has mellowed and softened from marriage to a brutal husband into a more amenable adult.)

Structure

10. How does Dickens hold the reader's interest?
(Rich with irony and humor, the novel rapidly shifts scenes and plunges the main character into a variety of situations. Dickens typically wrote in serial style for publication in periodicals, leading Victorian readers along chapter by chapter with subsequent issues. Thus, the repeated cliffhangers keep the reader guessing how Pip will cope with hiding a wanted man and how rowing on the river will prepare Pip and Herbert for the great escape from the lurking shadow figure who suspects that Abel is near.

Just as Pip anticipates setting Abel free of English law by dispatching him to Hamburg, the on-the-scene struggle with Compeyson and the loss of the pocketbook change forever Pip's great expectations. No longer focused on money, he worries more about the failing old man who is doomed to another harsh court appearance and execution. Dickens manipulates the reader's sympathies with the stirring moment in which Pip reveals his love of Estella, a great lady, and witnesses Abel's contented last breath. The sincere prayer for the sinner's soul reads like stage drama—an overt expression of change in Pip as he sheds boyhood and achieves the promise of worthy manhood.)

How Language Works

Explain how the following citations capture the speech, education, background, and faults of characters:

1. My name is on the first leaf. If you can ever write under my name, "I forgive her," though ever so long after my broken heart is dust, pray do it! (Miss Havisham)
2. You said to me, "God bless you, God forgive you!" And if you could say that to me then,

you will not hesitate to say that to me now—now, when suffering has been stronger than all other teaching, and has taught me to understand what your heart used to be. I have been bent and broken, but—I hope—into a better shape. Be as considerate and good to me as you were, and tell me we are friends. (Estella)

3. Old Orlick bullied and beat, eh? Now you pays for it. You done it; now you pays for it. (Orlick)
4. I've done wonderful well. There's others went out alonger me as has done well, too, but no man has done nigh as well as me. I'm famous for it. (Abel)
5. Why go into subjects, old chap, which as betwixt two sech must be for ever onnecesary? There's subjects enough as betwixt two sech, without onnecesary ones. Lord! To think of your poor sister and her rampages! And don't you remember Tickler? (Joe)
6. I am rather bare here, but I hope you'll be able to make out tolerably well till Monday. My father thought you would get on more agreeably through tomorrow with me than with him, and might like to take a walk about London. I am sure I shall be very happy to show London to you. (Herbert)
7. I may truly say I've never had this apron of mine off, since born you were. It's bad enough to be a blacksmith's wife (and him a Gargery) without being your mother. (Georgiana)
8. I earnestly hoped and prayed that he might die before the recorder's report was made, but, in the dread of his lingering on, I began that night to write out a petition to the Home Secretary of State, setting forth my knowledge of him, and how it was that he had come back for my sake. I wrote it as fervently and pathetically as I could. (Pip)

Across the Curriculum

Art

1. Draw a wrap-around book jacket or poster emphasizing Victorian England at Christmas.

Stress warm clothes, visitors, church services, acts of charity, and a table and pantry filled with traditional foods and beverages.

2. Design a tour guide to historical London, a Dickens web page, illustrated entries on the Poor Laws and the Industrial Revolution, a banner advertising a Dickens reading or *Hamlet*, multiple views of a chaise or hackney chariot, a business card for a legal clerk or tutor, a sign naming court sessions or visiting hours at a prison, an epitaph for Georgiana Gargery or Miss Havisham, a news feature about the *Hulks* or the robbery at Pumblechook's house, an extended definition of gentleman or felon, a chart detailing the differences between a farthing and other sums of money mentioned in the novel, a map of New South Wales or of London's business district, and a schematic drawing of leg irons.

Cinema

1. Draw a storyboard of a film version of *Great Expectations*. Note the gradual decline in Pip's fortunes as his values improve. Chart his coming of age, the arrest of the convicts on the marshes, Mrs. Joe's decline and death, Orlick's capture, the mockery of Trabb's boy, and Joe's first visit to London. Explain why the purchase of the partnership is an important indication that Pip has learned something about gratitude and generosity.
2. View various films about Victorian England, e. g. *Howard's End* or *Far from the Madding Crowd*. Discuss why filmmakers focus on imported goods, social outcasts, crime, travel, and world markets.

Drama

1. Role-play the part of a partner, supplier, client, competitor, or employee of Clarriker and Company. Explain how the story would change if the main character had been lacking in ambition, handicapped, or unsuccessful.
2. Read aloud other dramatic holiday celebrations. Discuss the importance of belonging to a family or close circle of friends during holidays. Why does Dickens begin *Great Expectations* at the Christmas season?

Economics

1. Explain the application of these terms to characters in the novel: benefactor, articles of apprenticeship, surrogate parent, convict, codicil, and employer.
2. Compose an extended definition of ambition. Explain how life apart from family hardens Pip and impels him toward a life of wasting money to impress Estella. Contrast his ambitions to those of Drummle, Matthew, Estella, and Herbert.
3. Give a chalk talk on the nature of debtor's prison in Dickens' day. Explain how his father's incarceration and his own experience as a court reporter exposed Dickens to the hardships of poor people.

Education

1. Propose studies for youths like Startop, Drummle, Pip, and Herbert that would prepare them for the vast change in the British economy during the rise of the Industrial Age and the astounding growth of the Empire. Suggest courses in math, geography, world history, and business, particularly accounting.
2. Outline studies for Estella, such as composition and letter-writing, dance, speech, literature, and art appreciation. Suggest the study of a musical instrument that would introduce her to European composers.

Geography

1. List and illustrate examples of transportation in 19th-century England, especially the rowboat, carriage, post-chaise, and steamer. Suggest other methods by which Herbert and Pip could have gotten Abel out of the country before Compeyson led police to the rowboat on the river.
2. Advise travelers on a journey to New South Wales. Note the extent of English investment in deportation of prisoners to the Pacific.
3. Make a schematic drawing of Pip and Herbert's residence and its environs.

History and Social Studies

1. Make an oral report on the theme of the

nuclear family. Give reasons why Queen Victoria's example inspired her subjects to honor and protect their families.

2. In an impromptu speech, comment on the childhoods of Pip and Estella. Explain how their emotional needs preface difficulties in adjusting to adulthood.
3. Compose a short speech in which you describe the role of money in the lives of these characters: Clara, Herbert, Estella, Pip, Joe, Matthew, Miss Havisham, Abel, Wemmick, and Camilla.
4. Summarize methods of travel in the novel, including walking, riding horseback, and traveling by rowboat, steamer, carriage, hackney chariot, and chaise. Determine how far Abel Magwitch intended to travel from the basin to Hamburg.

Language Arts

1. Contrast minor characters in terms of action, realism, and compassion. Which characters are stereotypes? Which seem like characterizations of real people? Which have the most influence on the action?
2. Analyze character interaction by emphasizing the types of relationships that exist between these pairs: Camilla/Pocket, Jaggers/felons, Clara's father/the Aged P., Wemmick/Molly, Miss Havisham/Estella, Abel/Joe, and Pip/Herbert.
3. Write a theme in which you explain the role of a minor incident in the action. Choose from these: the robbery at Pumblechook's house, Orlick's interest in Biddy, the secret courtship of Miss Skiffins, Mrs. Pocket's problems with young children, Wemmick's affrontery to his employer, and Camilla's inheritance from Miss Havisham.
4. Apply a Freytag diagram to the novel. Label parts of the plot that form exposition, rising action, climax, falling action, and resolution. Why does this clear delineation of action lend itself well to radio, audio cassette, children's literature, or the stage? What problems would a producer have in staging *Great Expectations* as a

tableau or pantomime, opera, TV miniseries, or outdoor musical drama?

5. Organize a game of charades or Pictionary with these terms: pence, guinea, turnpike, sluice, finger-post, portmanteau, Tartar, Gothic, Harrow, Cambridge, baronetcy, choleric, miscreant, per annum, esquire, credentials, vittles, *Hulks*, limekiln, leg irons, mincemeat, and bilious.
6. Discuss in a paragraph your response to the illiterate language of Joe and Abel. Why does Dickens compare the two men in terms of work, family, and limited education?
7. Explain in a paragraph why Satis is an appropriate name for Miss Havisham's mansion. What does the word mean in Latin?
8. Compose an extended definition of suspense. Explain how character interaction increases both suspense and anticipation. Note the importance of Orlick's kidnap plot at the time the stalker searches out Abel's lodgings.
9. Compose an oral character sketch emphasizing the family relationships of the Pockets, including Matthew and his many children. Indicate elements of cooperation and sympathy.

Psychology

1. Describe in a short speech the effects of despair, loneliness, hard work, humiliation, longing, rejection, celebration, and ambition on characters in the story. Explain why Herbert's advancement is a necessary parallel to Pip's.
2. Characterize Pip as potential heir, husband, and father. Propose how life with Estella might have alleviated his obsession with money and social position.
3. Compose an informal essay on helping young people remain well balanced in terms of family, career, beliefs, values, and daily life. Suggest ways that Joe and Georgiana Gargery could have helped Pip develop normally.

Science and Health

1. Determine how burns, fatigue, rowing, the river struggle, debts, Estella's marriage, and capture at the limekiln precipitate Pip's emotional and physical collapse.
2. Characterize the elements of the accident that kills Miss Havisham. How might a normal lifestyle have saved her from the fire in a darkened room? Why would the yellowed wedding dress ignite quickly?
3. Compose an interview between a doctor and Joe. Express the trauma that paralyzes Georgiana and the likelihood that she will recover. Add details of modern diagnosis of concussion, especially CAT scan and MRI.
4. Give a brief talk on the subject of hygiene, nutrition, and sanitation in British prisons. Explain why Abel is not likely to receive the kind of care and diet that will enable him to recover from the battle with Compeyson.

Alternate Assessment

1. List examples of secrets in the novel and summarize the revelation of each.
2. Compile a list of actions and statements that demonstrate extremes of selfishness, egotism, vengeance, and manipulation.
3. Compose a scene in which Pip and Herbert return to London to establish a new business.
4. Make a character list and explain the character flaws of each.
5. Account for the difficulties a village boy faces in coming to London to study and learn a profession.

Vocabulary

Complete each of the numbered blanks in the paragraphs below with an appropriate word from the list that follows.

aggravated	defiant	exile	missile	propensities
complicated	denounced	gallery	offender	proscribed
conclusively	disaffection	gewgaws	offences	quitted
confounding	dispersed	hardihood	perplexities	scourge
confronted	dock	immeasurably	premature	thousand-fold

A. And now, because my mind was not confused enough before, I (1) _____ its confusion fifty (2) _____ by having states and seasons when I was clear that Bidley was (3) _____ better than Estella, and that the plain honest working life to which I was born had nothing in it to be ashamed of, but offered me sufficient means of self-respect and happiness. At those times, I would decide (4) _____ that my (5) _____ to dear old Joe and the forge was gone, and that I was growing up in a fair way to be partners with Joe and to keep company with Bidley—when all in a moment some (6) _____ remembrance of the Havisham days would fall upon me, like a destructive (7) _____, and scatter my wits again. Scattered wits take a long time picking up; and often, before I had got them well together, they would be (8) _____ in all directions by one stray thought, that perhaps after all Miss Havisham was going to make my fortune when my time was out. If my time had run out, it would have left me still at the height of my (9) _____, I dare say. It never did run out, however, but was brought to a (10) _____ end.

B. Penned in the (11) _____, as I again stood outside it at the corner with his hand in mine, were the two-and-thirty men and women—some (12) _____, some stricken with terror, some sobbing and weeping, some covering their faces, some staring gloomily about . . . The sheriffs with their great chains and nose-gays, other civic (13) _____ and monsters, criers, ushers, a great (14) _____ full of people—a large theatrical audience—looked on, as the two-and-thirty and the judge were solemnly (15) _____. Then the judge addressed them. Among the wretched creatures before him whom he must single out for special address was one who almost from his infancy had been an (16) _____ against the laws; who, after repeated imprisonments and punishments, had been at length sentenced to (17) _____ for a term of years; and who, under circumstances of great violence and daring, had made his escape and been re-sentenced to exile for life. That miserable man would seem for a time to have become convinced of his errors, when far removed from the scenes of his old (18) _____, and to have lived a peaceable and honest life. But in the fatal moment, yielding to those (19) _____ and passions, the indulgence of which had so long rendered him a (20) _____ to society, he had (21) _____ his haven of rest and repentance, and had come back to the country where he was (22) _____. Being here presently (23) _____, he had for a time succeeded in evading the officers of justice, but being at length seized while in the act of flight, he had resisted them, and had—he best knew whether by express design, or in the blindness of his (24) _____—caused the death of his denouncer, to whom his whole career was known. The appointed punishment for his return to the land that had cast him out being death, and his case being this (25) _____ case, he must prepare himself to die.

Comprehension Test A

Part I: Description Identification (30 points)

Match each of the following descriptions from the book with a character. Place the letter of your response in the blank provided at left.

- | | |
|---|------------------|
| _____ 1. becomes Pip's best friend in London | A. Bidly |
| _____ 2. recommends Pip as Estella's playmate | B. Clara |
| _____ 3. exploits Miss Havisham and robs her | C. Compeyson |
| _____ 4. seeks a fortune in New South Wales | D. Drummle |
| _____ 5. hates all men | E. Miss Havisham |
| _____ 6. helps Herbert rescue Pip | F. Jaggers |
| _____ 7. gives birth to Pip's namesake | G. Abel |
| _____ 8. trains young men | H. Orlick |
| _____ 9. insults smithies to degrade Pip | I. Herbert |
| _____ 10. makes a crooked T | J. Matthew |
| _____ 11. tends a cranky, disabled father | K. Pumblechook |
| _____ 12. receives money for pills | L. Wemmick |
| _____ 13. tends a sweet-natured old father | M. Camilla |
| _____ 14. points out Molly's scars | N. Georgiana |
| _____ 15. blames Pip for costing him a job | O. Trabb's boy |

Part II: True/False (20 points)

Mark the following statements either T for true or F if any part is false.

- _____ 1. Pip fears the convict in the graveyard and hopes that soldiers will catch him.
- _____ 2. Miss Havisham raises Estella to punish Compeyson's abandonment.
- _____ 3. After meeting Estella, Pip grows dissatisfied with his life and education from Mr. Wopsle's great-aunt.
- _____ 4. Joe, a weak-willed, henpecked husband, demonstrates little strength.
- _____ 5. Herbert teaches Pip the social amenities that a gentleman needs in London.
- _____ 6. Jaggers reveals the identity of Pip's benefactor.
- _____ 7. Established as a London gentleman, Pip feels socially superior to Bidly and Joe.
- _____ 8. When Pip learns that Abel is his benefactor, he regrets deserting Joe for a convict.
- _____ 9. After Abel's death, Pip returns to the village to marry Bidly.
- _____ 10. Pip finds no happiness because he maintains false values.

Comprehension Test A (Page 2)

Part III: Completion (20 points)

Fill in the blanks below with a word or phrase which completes the sentence.

1. _____ takes Pip to _____ House, a once luxurious estate now fallen into ruin.
2. After her jilting, Miss Havisham stopped the _____ and never removed her yellowed _____.
3. On his return to the forge from his first visits, Pip makes up lies about joining Estella in playing with _____, but confesses the truth of the afternoon's activities to _____.
4. On the occasion of Miss Havisham's _____, Pip encounters her greedy relatives, Camilla, Cousin Raymond, Sarah Pocket, and a pale young gentleman who challenges him to a _____.
5. Pip receives an indifferent _____ from Mr. Wopsle's great aunt and learns to read with the help of the old woman's granddaughter, Biddy, who is an _____ like Pip.

Part IV: Essay (30 points)

Choose two and answer in complete sentences.

1. Describe how villagers share in each other's lives and news.
2. Explain the title.
3. Discuss the change in Pip after he meets Herbert.
4. Account for the scene in which Pip wishes he could fall in love with Biddy.
5. Summarize events that rely on coincidence.

Comprehension Test B

Part I: Multiple Choice (20 points)

Select the phrase that completes each of the following sentences. Place the letter of your response in the blank provided at left.

- _____ 1. Pip brings food to the convict because he
 - A. pities him suffering fever in the fetid air.
 - B. is terrified of his threats.
 - C. hopes for a reward.
 - D. leads Joe and the soldiers toward a recapture.

- _____ 2. Miss Havisham’s explanation of her strange behavior is that
 - A. her heart is broken.
 - B. she had an unhappy marriage.
 - C. her relatives compel her to hide from daylight.
 - D. her brother’s extravagance impoverished her.

- _____ 3. Mrs. Joe stops her rampages after
 - A. the convict assaults her.
 - B. Joe takes an interest in Biddy.
 - C. Pip becomes a gentleman.
 - D. she is paralyzed.

- _____ 4. When Jaggers informs Pip of his future, Pip
 - A. forgets Joe and Biddy.
 - B. is torn by ambition and duty to home.
 - C. welcomes the chance to snub Estella.
 - D. is fearful of life in the city.

- _____ 5. Estella informs Pip that
 - A. Miss Havisham is her adopted mother.
 - B. she has no heart.
 - C. Miss Havisham wants them to marry.
 - D. she is Abel’s daughter.

- _____ 6. After living in London, Pip
 - A. is uncomfortable pretending to be a gentleman.
 - B. begins to live extravagantly.
 - C. longs to return home with gifts for Joe.
 - D. decides to study with Matthew Pocket.

- _____ 7. After discovering his true benefactor, Pip is
 - A. angry with Jaggers for misleading him.
 - B. grateful to the old convict for working hard in New South Wales.
 - C. sorry for abandoning Joe.
 - D. fearful that he will have no money if Abel is arrested.

- _____ 8. Pip petitions Miss Havisham
 - A. to finance Herbert’s business.
 - B. to give Abel money to escape.
 - C. to reconsider the strictures of her will.
 - D. to let him play with Estella in exchange for gifts of money on his birthday.

- _____ 9. After Abel dies, Pip
 - A. is so destitute he almost goes to debtors’ prison.
 - B. becomes sole heir to the pocketbook.
 - C. confides to Biddy that he must return to the forge.
 - D. still sees an evil shadow lurking about his lodgings.

- _____ 10. Dickens’s central theme is that
 - A. crime leads to prison, flight, or the gallows.
 - B. love is more important than success.
 - C. false pride disappoints.
 - D. all people share ambitions to rise in society.

Part II: Short Answer (20 points)

Supply a word or phrase in answer to the following questions. Place your response in the blank provided.

- _____ 1. Who claims not to recognize Pip on the street?
- _____ 2. Who is Estella’s birth mother?
- _____ 3. Who leads the police toward the rowboat and steamer?
- _____ 4. When does Pip receive an annual stipend of £500?
- _____ 5. Who is Estella’s second husband?
- _____ 6. What sign does Georgiana make after the assault?
- _____ 7. With what does the stranger stir his drink?
- _____ 8. Where does Pip first see Jaggers?
- _____ 9. At what firm does Herbert find work?
- _____ 10. Where is the steamer bound?

Comprehension Test B (Page 2)

Part III: Matching (30 points)

Match the following descriptions with places from the list below. Place the letter of your response in the blank provided at left. You will use some answers more than once and some not at all.

- | | |
|---|--------------------------|
| _____ 1. Felons flee a makeshift prison beyond the marshes. | A. forge |
| _____ 2. Pip visits his parents and brothers. | B. prison |
| _____ 3. Pip burns his hands and forearms. | C. cemetery |
| _____ 4. Pip recognizes his namesake. | D. Jaggers' office |
| _____ 5. Georgiana discovers the mincemeat pie is missing. | E. Richmond |
| _____ 6. Wemmick's mouth closes like a slit. | F. limekiln |
| _____ 7. The Aged P expects a nod. | G. courtroom |
| _____ 8. Pip prays for Abel's sinful soul. | H. <i>Hulks</i> |
| _____ 9. Officers come between Abel and escape to Hamburg. | I. Walworth |
| _____ 10. Pip lies near his beloved. | J. Blue Boar |
| _____ 11. Pip serves his indenture. | K. river |
| _____ 12. Jaggers reveals Molly's strength. | L. Gargery fireplace |
| _____ 13. Pip moves to the dock to hold Abel's hand. | M. pantry |
| _____ 14. Estella comes under Mrs. Brandley's care. | N. Jaggers' dinner table |
| _____ 15. Orlick blames Pip for costing him his job. | O. Satis House |

Part IV: Essay (30 points)

Choose two and answer in complete sentences.

1. Account for the numerous names by which Dickens identifies Abel.
2. Contrast the courtship styles of Pip, Herbert, and Drummle.
3. Describe Abel's treatment by the legal system.
4. Summarize Pip's worst traits.
5. Contrast the marriage of Joe and Georgiana with that of Joe and Biddy.

Answer Key

VOCABULARY

- | | | |
|------------------|----------------|------------------|
| 1. complicated | 10. premature | 18. offences |
| 2. thousand-fold | 11. dock | 19. propensities |
| 3. immeasurably | 12. defiant | 20. scourge |
| 4. conclusively | 13. gewgaws | 21. quitted |
| 5. disaffection | 14. gallery | 22. proscribed |
| 6. confounding | 15. confronted | 23. denounced |
| 7. missile | 16. offender | 24. hardihood |
| 8. dispersed | 17. exile | 25. aggravated |
| 9. perplexities | | |

COMPREHENSION TEST A

Part I: Description Identification (30 points)

- | | | |
|------|-------|-------|
| 1. I | 6. O | 11. B |
| 2. K | 7. A | 12. M |
| 3. C | 8. J | 13. L |
| 4. G | 9. D | 14. F |
| 5. E | 10. N | 15. H |

Part II: True/False (20 points)

- | | |
|------|-------|
| 1. F | 6. F |
| 2. F | 7. T |
| 3. T | 8. T |
| 4. F | 9. T |
| 5. T | 10. F |

Part III: Completion (20 points)

- Pumblechook, Satis
- clocks, wedding dress
- flags, Joe
- birthday, fistfight
- education, orphan

Part IV: Essay (30 points)

Answers will vary.

COMPREHENSION TEST B

Part I: Multiple Choice (20 points)

- | | |
|------|-------|
| 1. B | 6. B |
| 2. A | 7. C |
| 3. D | 8. A |
| 4. B | 9. A |
| 5. B | 10. C |

Part II: Short Answer (20 points)

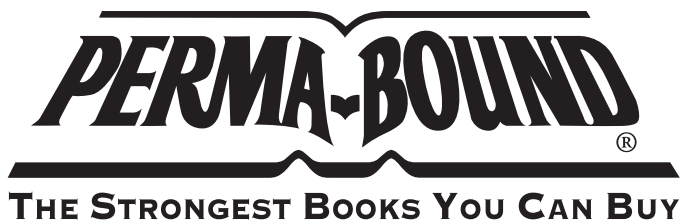
- | | |
|------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Trabb's boy | 6. T |
| 2. Molly | 7. file |
| 3. Compeyson | 8. Satis House |
| 4. age 21 | 9. Clarriker and Company |
| 5. a Shropshire doctor | 10. Hamburg |

Part III: Matching (30 points)

- | | | |
|------|-------|-------|
| 1. H | 6. D | 11. A |
| 2. C | 7. I | 12. N |
| 3. O | 8. B | 13. G |
| 4. L | 9. K | 14. E |
| 5. M | 10. J | 15. F |

Part IV: Essay (30 points)

Answers will vary.



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