Study Guide for Charles Dickens’
Great Expectations

CHARACTERS

Pip (Philip Pirrip): Narrator and main character in the novel. He is an orphan with a humble background in a village in the county of Kent, England. From the perspective of an adult, Pip tells the story of his boyhood, adolescence, teenage years, and adulthood. The narration centers on Pip’s development from a raw and uneducated youth with false values to a mature adult with the right values. Pip is a likable character even when he strays along the way to manhood.

Mrs. Georgiana -- Maria Gargery: Pip’s sister, who is twenty-one years old than her brother. With the help of her husband, Joe Gargery, she rears Pip in her home. However, because she is a nagging, shrewish woman, she makes life unpleasant for her little brother. Pip refers to her as Mrs. Joe.

Joe Gargery: Husband of Pip’s sister. He is a big, strong blacksmith with a gentle heart. He treats Pip well while rearing the boy as if he were his son.

Abel Magwitch: Escaped convict who confronts Pip at the beginning of the novel and demands food and a file. Later, he plays a major role in Pip’s life. When he arrives in London, Magwitch goes by the name of Provis.
**Miss Havisham**: Wealthy and eccentric spinster who lives a reclusive life after her husband-to-be defrauds her and abandons her on the day he is to marry her. To gain revenge against men in general, she rears her beautiful adopted daughter, Estella, to tantalize males but not to commit to any of them.

**Compeyson**: Smooth-talking swindler who pretends to love Miss Havisham in order to get at her money.

**Arthur Havisham**: Half-brother of Miss Havisham. He conspires with Compeyson to swindle Miss Havisham.

**Estella**: Adopted daughter of Miss Havisham. Though she is proud and cold, Pip falls in love with her.

**Jaggers**: Miss Havisham’s solicitor. He handles her legal and business matters. Jaggers becomes Pip’s guardian after a benefactor begins supporting the youth after he travels to London.

**John Wemmick**: Bill collector for Mr. Jaggers. He becomes a good friend of Pip and helps him and advises him on how to escape London with Magwitch.

**The Aged**: John Wemmick’s father.

**Miss Skiffins**: Wemmick’s fiancée and later his wife.

**Uncle Pumblechook**: Joe Gargery’s uncle. He arranges for Pip to play with Estella at Miss Havisham’s mansion.

**Matthew Pocket**: Cousin of Miss Havisham. He becomes Pip’s tutor when the youth resides in London.

**Belinda Pocket**: Matthew Pocket’s wife.

**Herbert Pocket**: Young man who resides with Pip in London and becomes his best friend. He is Matthew Pocket’s son.

**Dolge Orlick**: Mean-tempered journeyman blacksmith in Joe Gargery’s shop. He hates Pip and later has a confrontation with him in which he threatens to shoot him with a gun.

**Startop**: Pupil of Matthew Pocket who becomes a friend of Pip.

**Molly**: Servant of Jaggers. She and Magwitch had a long affair, and Molly bore his child, Estella.

**Clara Barley**: Herbert Pocket’s fiancée and later his wife. Her home is one of Magwitch’s hiding places.

**Old Bill Barley**: Clara Barley’s father. She takes care of him until he dies, then marries Herbert.

**Mrs. Whimple**: Proprietor of the house where Clara Barley lives.

**Mr. Wopsle**: Clerk at the village church and friend of the Gargerys.

**Mr. Hubble**: Wheelwright and friend of the Gargerys.

**Mrs. Hubble**: Mr. Hubble’s wife.

**Sergeant**: Officer leading soldiers in pursuit of Magwitch and another escaped convict on Christmas Day when Pip is a child.

**Mrs. Camilla**: Herbert Pocket’s sister and a cousin of Miss Havisham. She is one of several relatives of Miss Havisham who pretend to be concerned about her so that she will remember them in her will.

**Raymond Camilla**: Mrs. Camilla’s husband.
Sarah Pocket: Relative of Miss Havisham. Her feelings toward Miss Havisham are the same as Mrs. Camilla's.

Georgiana: Another greedy relative of Miss Havisham.

Pepper (the Avenger): Boy Pip hires for chores at Barnard's Inn.

Clarikker: Young merchant. Pip secretly uses his money to get Herbert Pocket a position with Clarikker.

Trabb: Village tailor who outfits Pip's with suitable attire before he goes to London.

Trabb's boy: Son of Trabb.

Sally Compeyson: Compeyson's wife.

Mrs. Brandley: Woman with whom Estella resides while in London.

Mrs. Coiler: Fawning neighbor of Matthew and Belinda Pocket.

Estella's Maid: Woman who attends Estella while she is residing with Mrs. Brandley.

Watchman: Man who keeps watch at the Temple, one of Pip's lodging places in London.

Coachman: Driver who takes Pip to Jaggers' office.

Clerk: Employee in Jaggers' office who greets Pip when the latter arrives to confer with the lawyer.

Clients of Jaggers

Servants

Great Expectations was first published serially in a magazine. At the end of each installment, Dickens used specific hooks to keep readers coming back for more.

When it was later published as a novel, it was divided into three volumes—called the three stages of Pip's expectations.

The significance of the title / "Expectations" defined:

1. The act or the state of expecting; anticipation.
2. Something expected.
3. A prospect of future benefit or fortune: to have great expectations.

Point of View: Pip narrates the story in first-person point of view from the perspective of a mature adult looking back on his childhood and the mistakes he made growing up.
The story begins in the early 1800s, in the marsh area of the county of Kent, in Southeastern England. The main character's village home is about twenty miles from the North Sea and subject to mists that roll in from the shore. Dickens was familiar with this area, because he lived there as a child.

Capitalism was gaining sway, but many people continued to live on inherited wealth. Sharp divisions existed between upper and lower classes.

Later in the novel, when Pip enters young adulthood, the scene shifts to busy, industrial London. The novel shifts back and forth between these two locations as events unfold.

As you read the novel, think about the values that the people in each setting hold.
Did You Know?

THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION BEGAN IN ENGLAND IN THE LATE 1700S, when the invention of machines for weaving gave rise to a factory system. The emergence of factories changed the economy of England from one that was based on agriculture to one that was based on manufactured goods.

Because of this shift, thousands of people left rural areas to take jobs in industrial cities. Despite the prosperity and modern conveniences that resulted from the Industrial Revolution, it created many social problems. Cities grew too large too quickly, and overcrowding created filth and disease. Workers were often exploited and forced to work long hours for little pay. Even young children worked long hours under dangerous conditions in factories and mines. Reform acts addressing the concerns of working people were not passed until the early 1800s. Although the acts provided workers with some protections, working conditions were still, by today’s standards, very poor.

Through his writings, Dickens drew attention to social and political problems in his country.

Critic Bert Hornback writes that although the wealthy seemed to care absolutely nothing for the lives of the “hands” whom they employed, the nation still had a conscience—and it responded to voices like Dickens’s.
Dickens was interested in social reform, and passages of the novel often reflect his feelings toward people and institutions in nineteenth-century English society. Dickens’s satire emerges in his colorful descriptions of characters, places, and events. Sometimes even the names of Dickens’s characters are satirical. In this section and in the rest of the novel, you will encounter names that
sound foolish, contain puns or plays on words, or suggest sounds.

In the novel we are introduced to two different ideas of what makes a gentleman.

One idea is that a gentleman is made what he is by his social status or class: this is measured in terms of his understanding of rules of social etiquette (table manners and so on), habits of dress and speech and the standing of his family; of course, wealth is important, too. Even a "poor" gentleman employs a number of servants.

A quite different standard is apparent to the reader from early in the novel, and eventually to Pip: that being a true gentleman is a matter of virtue and honesty, of having a station in life which one can fill with dignity.

Dickens, in the novel, exploits the ambiguity (having more than one meaning) of the term gentleman. Then, as now, it would mean someone who behaved in a certain way (truthful, honest, considerate etc.). But it also carried a sense of belonging to a separate class.
• Gentlemen and women (or gentry) derived their wealth from owning land. This wealth had been kept in families for generations by marrying within their own class.
• Ordinary people would work as farm-labourers or domestic servants.
• Trades people formed the middle class and could, by marriage, move into the upper class.
• Elder sons usually inherited whole estates (to prevent their being broken up); younger sons would go into the army or navy or the church.
• Daughters would receive a dowry but would only inherit where there was no male child (and not always then; an estate might be "entailed" to the nearest male relation).

By Dickens' time, a new factor had entered this situation, which had hardly changed for centuries: the industrial revolution and foreign trade had enabled men of very humble backgrounds to achieve immense wealth. They might eventually retire, move to a part of the country where they were not known, buy a title, and thus gain entry to the higher social circles. These were the nouveaux riches (new money) and might be disapproved by the more "established" families.

In Great Expectations, we meet no members of the highest social ranks, the aristocracy.

The language of Dickens

Elevated Style: Elevated Diction and Complex Sentence Structure -- Dickens uses language we find off-putting: his vocabulary often seems unfamiliar to modern readers, and his sentences often long and complex. Here's your chance to learn some great SAT words.
Tone: Dickens is a great lover of verbal irony: he uses words in such a way that he seems to be saying the opposite of what he really means; he expects the reader to understand this from the tone or the details of the immediate context (what comes before and/or after a word or passage, to help us understand its meaning).

Characterization: Dickens also loves caricature (extreme exaggeration for comic or grotesque effects): the peculiarities of his characters are often amplified for comic purposes; if we do not understand this, we will miss much of his humour. At a deep level, Dickens is very serious about his subjects, but on the surface, he is often ironical, sarcastic or whimsical.

What is good about Dickens is his all-round strength: there is a huge range of characters, all well-drawn; places and other details are described vividly where necessary to the story and omitted where irrelevant; dialogue is lively and varied (though prone to comic exaggeration); mood and atmosphere are convincingly conveyed, while the plotting of the novel is faultless.

Allusions by Chapter
1 “a great iron” Leg-iron, such as one worn by prisoners
1 “wittles” Vittles, or food
2 Hercules: Greek god with extraordinary strength
2 freemasonry: Associated with the “Freemasons” fraternal organization, freemasonry has come to mean fellowship or sympathy
4 the prodigal: The Prodigal Son of the New Testament spends his inheritance lavishly, but who is welcomed openly by his father upon his return. See Luke 15:11-32
10 Richard the Third: Dramatic play written by Shakespeare about a king of England
22 “half price to the theater” Admission to plays was reduced after the first performance in the evening.

23 Woolsack: A seat in the House of Lords, Lord Chancellor (also called the “mitre,” or bishop’s hat).

24 Old Bailey: The criminal court in London.

25 gothic: Dramatic, medieval style. In Europe there was a revival of gothic architecture during the 1860s. As an adjective, gothic means remote, mysterious, and macabre.

26 Macbeth: Play by Shakespeare that contains frightening witches who stir a magical potion in a cauldron at night.

28 half-way house: Roadside inn that serves as the midway point of a coachman’s journey.

28 Telemachus: In Greek mythology, Telemachus was the son of Penelope and Odysseus who conspired with his father to kill his mother’s suitors.

28 Verb. Sap Latin for, “To a wise man, a word is good enough.”

31 Hamlet: Play by Shakespeare about a teenage prince of Denmark who finds out from a ghost that his mother conspired to kill his father.

36 came of age: Turned 21 years old; became an adult legally.

37 Union Jack: Symbol on the British flag.

48 over the broomstick: Not legally married, or married only by common law.

48 Hounslow Heath: Area just west of London.

54 custom ‘ouse: Customhouse, where taxes are paid by ships taking goods in or out of a country.

54 public house: Saloon or bar.
The novel opens in the low-lying peninsula of "marsh country" between the Thames and Medway estuaries in Kent, east of London. Dickens seems to have combined the features of several of the small villages here. In the churchyard of Cooling were the graves of twelve small brothers and sisters buried together, like Pip's family.

The nearby town - in which are Satis House, the Blue Boar and Mr. Pumblechook's business - is not named in the novel but is almost certainly based on Rochester (it has a cathedral; see Chapter 49). The "old Battery" was at Cliffe, overlooking the Thames. The Hulk (Chapter 5) appears to lie on the Thames (although two hours walking might enable the party to cross to the Medway shore); in reality the Hulks were kept on the Medway at Upnor.

**The marsh country**
This is a harsh, bleak place for Magwitch to lie at night; and in the early chapters the contrast is obvious between the hunted convict, shivering on the marshes and the smug party at Joe's cottage, eating their Christmas fare. From the bleak churchyard, to the old battery and beyond, to the landing stage for the Hulks, this place becomes another character in the novel. The Hulk Pip sees he imagines as a "wicked Noah's ark" - an image that might occur as much to the child, as to the adult narrator. If Pip's experiences here are full of terror, his later visit to the marshes, at Orlick's invitation, holds more fear for the reader and real danger for Pip. As before, the place makes Pip uneasy even before his danger appears: the wind is "melancholy", the marshes "dismal"; "insupportable" to a stranger, they are "oppressive" even to Pip, who has come there and gone on against his "inclination". The marshes form a fitting backdrop for acts of terror and violence.

**Satis House**
Satis House is a perfect reflection of Miss Havisham's living death: the once-luxurious house has been allowed to decay around her. The brewery is disused and the wind seems to blow colder there; the barrels are rotting and Pip thinks he sees Miss Havisham hanging from a beam. Inside, all daylight is excluded (Pip imagines it would "have struck" Miss Havisham "to dust") and candles are lit. It is a place of darkness, of decay, of fungus and of spiders. Pip likens Miss Havisham's wedding-dress to grave-clothes and her veil to a shroud. This decay continues throughout her last years; on her death, the house is pulled down. The site, for years, is not built on again, because Estella has resisted this; she revisits it in the final chapter because she has at last allowed the site to be developed.

**The forge**
Joe's forge and little cottage contrast strongly with the faded grandeur of Satis; we do not have a very detailed description, but know the cottage is made of wood (usual in this area at the time) and adjoins the
forge; we know of the chimney-corner, where Pip has his stool; of the "little state parlour across the passage", and that the kitchen can accommodate a file of soldiers. We are told that Mrs. Joe is a very clean housekeeper, but that her cleanliness is more uncomfortable than dirt. There seem to be rooms enough for Joe and Mrs. Joe, for Pip and for Biddy, later; we know the house has stairs and a pantry, even that the kitchen table is made of deal, and twice we are told of a dog. Despite Mrs. Joe, the cottage is naturally homely; when Biddy moves in, it becomes much more so: the idyllic picture of the simple country cottage is completed by Biddy's and Joe's child in the chimney corner.

**Places in London**
The places in London can mostly be found on a good map.

Little Britain runs past St. Bart's Hospital, between Smithfield Market and the Barbican; from here Jaggers would ride (or walk) less than two miles home to Gerrard St., Soho (between Wardour St. and Cambridge Circus).

Barnard's Inn, an ancient Inn of Chancery once attached to Gray's Inn, had ceased to have any legal character by the time of the novel; in 1892 it became a school. It is a short walk from Little Britain, as we read in Chapter 20.

Later (between Chapters. 38 and 39) Pip and Herbert move to Garden Court, in the Temple, by the Thames.

The Pockets live in Hammersmith, several miles west of London; their house also overlooks the river.

Walworth is south of the river, about two miles from the City.

Mill Pond Bank appears to be in what is now Docklands, perhaps on the Isle of Dogs. Richmond (Mrs. Brandley's) is in Surrey, several miles upstream and south-west of Hammersmith (through which Estella's coach passes in Chapter 33).

The Hummums was in Covent Garden, on the corner of Russell St.; it stood on the site of a Turkish-bath-house, from which it took its name.

Many of the London locations are in the area of the law courts, close to Newgate prison: this is plausible, given the occupation of Pip's guardian, who has been chosen because he is the only lawyer Magwitch knows in England; but it enables Dickens to confront Pip with frequent reminders of his convict and of the process of law.

Similarly, there are many river locations: partly this is made necessary by the plot; that Pip, a good waterman, should try to smuggle Magwitch aboard a steamer is most likely. But again it allows the river as a symbol or metaphor for experience to figure prominently. The same river links Estella at Richmond, the Pockets at Hammersmith, Pip at the Temple and the village in the marsh country.

**Barnard's Inn and Wemmick's House**
Barnard's Inn, despite its historic standing, is an unwholesome place. It is described as a collection of dingy buildings, in one of which Pip and
Herbert lodge: it is repeatedly described as "dismal", and likened to "a club for Tom-cats". The air is stale, wet rot and dry rot abound, and Pip is almost decapitated by a sash window, from which the lines have rotted away. The reality of Barnard’s Inn is a shock to Pip, who expects a grander hotel than the Blue Boar; it helps put his expectations in perspective, and is memorably described by Joe, when he first comes to London. The Pockets’ house and Jaggers’ establishment are very sketchily described, but Wemmick’s wooden Gothic "castle" is depicted in great detail: we know of the drawbridge, the fountain, the cannon, the mechanism for giving messages, the flagpole and flag, and so on. This place typifies the charm and ingenuity of the human Wemmick of Walworth.

Other places
Other places Pip visits are the humble village pub, the Three Jolly Bargemen, with its common room, settle and kitchen fire, and the Blue Boar, an elegant hotel, in the coffee room of which Pip contests with Drummle the warmth of the fire. But the most memorable and atmospheric place in the novel appears in the first chapters, and we return there much later: the marsh country.

FOCUS ACTIVITY
Remember yourself as a young child. What kinds of people and situations made you feel happy and secure? frightened or insecure?

Think about a person or incident that made a strong positive or negative impression on you when you were a child. Why were you so affected? What feelings did you experience?

Setting a Purpose
Read to learn about the people and events that make strong impressions on a child named Pip.
The first ten chapters of the novel introduce you to a variety of characters who affect Pip’s life. As you read, think about Pip’s relationships with these people and their effect on him:

1. Joe
2. Mrs. Joe
3. Uncle Pumblechook
4. The Convict
5. Miss Havisham
6. Estella

VOCABULARY PREVIEW

capricious adj. unpredictable; inconsistent
conciliatory adj. intended to restore harmony or goodwill
felicitous adj. happy
imprecations n. curses
incomprehensible adj. incapable of being understood
penitent n. person who repents sin under the direction of a religious confessor
perspicuity n. clearness
remonstrance n. criticism
trifle n. small amount
CHAPTER 1

PLOT DEVELOPMENT: On the afternoon of Christmas Eve, while visiting the graves of parents he never knew, seven-year-old Pip meets an escaped convict who tells him to be quiet or he will cut his throat! The convict orders Pip to steal some food (“wittles”) and a file from his blacksmith uncle and convinces him that if he doesn’t, he will be killed. Pip hurries home in fear for his life.

NEW CHARACTERS & PLACES:
• The marshes: also referred to as “the meshes,” these are the dark and misty places near Pip’s childhood home. They symbolize the murky, uncertain, mysterious times in his life.
• Pip: Philip Pirrip, the protagonist and narrator of the story. The book is told through his eyes, some 28 years later.

• The convict: (identified later as Abel Magwitch). He says that he is working with a younger partner who will hunt Pip down if he doesn’t return.

CHAPTERS 1-2
* What is Pip doing when the story opens?
* How does the author hook readers immediately?
* What is Pip afraid will happen if he does not return with the file and food?
* Why do you think Mrs. Joe calls her stick “Tickler”? What does this irony reveal about her?
* From whose point of view is the story told? What is unusual about the way the author has used this point of view?
* Why is Pip living with Joe Gargery? What is their relationship?
* Where are the comical passages in these chapters? Why does the author include so many funny lines of dialog, most of them frightening, even in the first chapter?
* What does the author do at the end of Chapter 2 to keep readers interested?

CHAPTER 2

PLOT DEVELOPMENT: Pip returns home to discover his sister angrily looking for him. During supper, he hides bread down his trousers’ leg. His sister, thinking that he’s eating too fast (or “bolting” his food), forces him to drink tar water. At bedtime, Pip hears guns signaling that another convict has escaped. Later he steals a pie, some brandy, bread, cheese, mincemeat, and a meat bone from his sister’s pantry.
NEW CHARACTERS & PLACES:
• Mrs. Joe: Pip’s abusive sister who has raised him since his parents’ death. Proud to have raised Pip “by hand,” she menaces him with a stick she ironically calls “Tickler.”
• Joe Gargery: Mrs. Joe’s husband, a large blacksmith who tries to shield Pip from the wrath of his sister. He is an honest, good man who stays with his abusive wife because of his love for Pip.
• Pip’s boyhood home: In Kent, Mrs. Joe maintains a little cottage that is fastidiously clean and includes an uncomfortable parlor Pip never enters. It serves as a contrast to Miss Havisham’s opulent home that Pip will
encounter in Chapter 8. Joe’s forge is just outside the home.

Chapters 3-4: How do you feel about the convict whom Pip helps? What kind of person do you suppose he is? Consider rating him on a scale of 1-10. Why do you believe he was put in prison?

CHAPTER 3

PLOT DEVELOPMENT: Early Christmas Day Pip sneaks out into the misty marshes to meet the convict. Along the way, he runs into another escapee who he mistakes for the man he met in the graveyard. The other convict lunges for him and then runs away. When Pip finds his convict, he watches him gulp down the food and drink, and he tells him about the other convict he saw. Hearing about the other prisoner causes the first man to become very angry. As Pip leaves, he watches his convict filing his leg-irons.

NEW CHARACTERS & PLACES:
• Second convict: Pip believes him to be the man he met the previous day. Later he thinks he is the “partner” that the original convict had mentioned.
PLOT JUMBLE, CHAPTERS 1-3
Can you put the following events in the correct order?
___ Pip steals a pie.
___ Pip hears gunfire.
___ Pip sees a second convict.
___ Pip visits his parents’ graves.
___ Pip’s sister marries a blacksmith.
___ Pip returns to the graveyard with a file.
___ Someone threatens to cut his throat!
___ Mrs. Joe makes Pip drink tar water.
___ Pip bolts his food.

CHAPTERS 3-4
* Who does Pip meet when he sets out to make his delivery?
* What is surprising about how the first convict acts when he hears about the second one?
* What does Mr. Wopsle say about “the prodigal”? Why did Dickens include this allusion?
* What is ironic about Mrs. Joe not attending church? Why doesn’t she go?
* Who attends dinner at the Gargerys’ house? What is funny about the dinner scene? About the scene when Joe and Pip go to church?
* How does Dickens characterize Mr. Wopsle? Uncle Pumblechook?
* What are Pip’s expectations at this point in the novel?
* How does the author build suspense at the end of Chapter 4?

CHAPTER 4
PLOT DEVELOPMENT: On Christmas Day Pip and Joe go to church dressed in formal, totally unsuitable clothes, at Mrs. Joe’s insistence. Later, a variety of silly but interesting people attend Christmas dinner. During dinner, Pip worries that the stolen food will be discovered. Mr. Wopsle gives a dramatic blessing that
reminds the narrator of Richard the Third. Pumblechook gets sick drinking brandy Pip had supplemented with tar-water while he was stealing it for the convict. Pip’s fears are realized when, just as Mrs. Joe discovers her missing pie, soldiers arrive at the door with a pair of handcuffs.

NEW CHARACTERS & PLACES:
• Mr. Wopsle: a pontificating, dramatic clerk of the church who likes to brag that if it were “thrown open” to commoners, he would welcome the competition.
• Uncle Pumblechook: Joe’s self-important uncle who acts in concert with Mrs. Joe.
• Mr./Mrs. Hubble: minor characters. Mr. Hubble is a wheelwright who does not like children.

CHAPTER 5
PLOT DEVELOPMENT: The soldiers have come not to arrest Pip but because they need Joe to fix a pair of broken handcuffs. They are searching for a pair of escaped convicts, and Joe, Pip, and Wopsle agree to join the manhunt (while Pumblechook, the Hubbles, and the sergeant stay home and drink with Mrs. Joe). They find the two convicts (the ones Pip has met) fighting with one another. Pip fears that his convict will think he betrayed him, but instead the convict looks at him with gratitude. The convict tells the police that he stole the food and file from the blacksmith.

NEW CHARACTERS & PLACES:
• The soldiers: though pursuing escaped felons, the soldiers appear to be more like Keystone Cops than serious police.
• The convicts: the men found by the party are indeed the two convicts that Pip encountered in Chapter 3 (Magwitch and Compeyson).
• The Hulks: old ships used to house prison inmates.
Chapter 5: *What do you think has caused the hostility between the two convicts? Write the story of what you believe happened.*
* How does the suspense of the previous chapter get resolved?
* How does the author characterize the sergeant?
* What accounts for the strange expression on the convict’s face as he looks at Pip?
* What seems to explain the anger existing between the two convicts? What do they say to one another?
* How does Joe react when the prisoner says he stole the pie? What does this reveal about Joe as a person?
* Why does the narrator refer to the ship as “a wicked Noah’s ark”?

CHAPTER 6
PLOT DEVELOPMENT: Pip ruminates on recent events, still fearful of being caught. Later, though he does not feel bad about stealing from Mrs. Joe, he feels shame for not telling Joe. Mr. Pumblechook makes wild deductions about how the convict got into Mrs. Joe’s pantry.

CHAPTER 7
Pip attends a small, inferior school taught by Mr. Wopsle’s great aunt. On the side, a local girl named Biddy tries to teach Pip the most basic reading, writing, and math. One evening Pip’s poor attempt at writing impresses Joe—who has never learned to read or write—so much that he refers to Pip as a “scholar.” He tells Pip that he was never able to stay in school because he and his mother were always leaving his violent father. He also reveals that he married Pip’s sister so that he could provide for Pip and take care of him. In the midst of their conversation, Mrs. Joe and Pumblechook arrive with news that a rich spinster, Miss Havisham, wants Pip to visit her house and play with her
adopted daughter. They hope that Miss Havisham will bestow money on Pip.

NEW CHARACTERS & PLACES:
• Mrs. Wopsle: Mr. Wopsle’s inept great aunt who teaches a school in the evenings.
• Biddy: a local girl, Mrs. Wopsle’s granddaughter, who attempts to give Pip a basic education. She works in the store beneath the school.

CHAPTERS 6-7
* At the beginning of Chapter 6, why does Pip feel bad?
* Why doesn’t Pip feel ashamed for stealing Mrs. Joe’s food when he does feel guilty for not telling the truth to Joe?
* What does Mr. Pumblechook make of the news that a convict had stolen the food? What does his explanation reveal about him?
* Pip says he was to be apprenticed to Joe. What is an apprenticeship?
* Where does Pip get his education? In what ways does the author satirize public education?
* What do readers learn about Joe’s childhood? Why didn’t he finish school? Who raised him? How does he feel about these individuals? Was growing up a pleasant experience for him? Explain.
* Explain Joe’s play on the two meanings of the word “hammering”.
* What motivates Joe to stay with his wife?
* What do you think will happen next? What clues in the story cause you to make these predictions?
Chapter 8: Describe what you expect Miss Havisham’s house will be like.

NEW CHARACTERS & PLACES:
• Estella: a young girl being raised by Miss Havisham. Her name means “star.”
• Miss Havisham: a dowager who adopted Estella and lives in the ruins of a once-great estate.
How does Pumblechook treat Pip before his visit to Satis House? Why?

When Pip first enters Miss Havisham’s room what does she request? Is Pip able to fulfill her request? Why? Why not?

Describe Miss Havisham’s house.

Who admitted Pip to the house?

What was the name of the house and what did it mean?

Describe Satis House. Though it is a mansion, what other type of building does it seem to resemble?

Describe Miss Havisham, her appearance and surroundings.

At what time had all the clocks stopped? What do you infer was happening when the clocks were stopped?

What does Pip conclude about why Miss Havisham and the room look as they do?

Describe Estella’s mistreatment of Pip.

What was the effect on Pip of Estella’s treatment?’

After visiting Satis House, why does Pip feel ashamed? What does Pip see hanging by a beam as he leaves?
In Chapter 8, Pip says: In the little world in which children have their existence, whosoever brings them up, there is nothing so finely perceived and so finely felt as injustice. It may be only small injustice that the child can be exposed to; but the child is small, and its world is small, and its rocking horse stands as many hands high, according to scale, as a big-boned Irish hunter.

Discuss the significance of this quotation. What injustices does Pip suffer? How do you think Dickens wanted readers to feel about Pip?

Chapters 9-10:
NEW CHARACTERS & PLACES:
• Mysterious stranger: a man who Pip has never seen who smokes a pipe and rubs his leg. He is not named, but he resurfaces later. Pip is afraid of him because he looks as if he takes aim “with his invisible gun.” He fears being found out for stealing the file.
The Three Jolly Bargemen: a local pub where Joe goes to relax after working at the forge.

Think About: Have you ever told a big lie to your family or friends? Describe what you said, where you were, and what happened after you told the lie.

CHAPTERS 9-10
* Why won’t Pip tell the truth about what happened at Satis House?
* What details of the “story” did you find funny?
* Why do Mrs. Joe and Pumblechook believe his tale?
* How does Joe react when Pip tells him the truth? What does this reveal about Joe?
* How have Pip’s expectations changed? What does he expect now?
* Reread the end of Chapter 9. What changes do you expect the visit to make?
* Reread the first two pages of Chapter 10. Why is Pip dissatisfied with Mrs. Wopsle’s school? Identify at least five reasons.
* Who is the stranger stirring his drink with the file at the Three Jolly Bargemen that has come to visit Pip? Why does he keep looking at Pip like someone about to take aim with a shotgun? Why does he give Pip two one-pound notes?
* “Pause you who read this, and think for a moment of the long chain of iron or gold, of thorns or flowers, that would never have bound you, but for the formation of the first link on one memorable day.” Explain the significance of this quote. How do readers know that the bank notes came from the convict?
FOCUS ACTIVITY
If you could sample a life completely different from your own, what kind of life would you choose? Why?

Think about a life you have always wanted to experience. In what way is this life different from your own?

Setting a Purpose
Read to learn about Pip’s new life and the ways in which it differs from his old one.

BACKGROUND -- DID YOU KNOW?
Pip is to be an apprentice to Joe, which means he will work under his supervision for a specified amount of time in order to learn Joe’s trade. In doing this, Pip will sign an indenture, which is a type of binding contract. In this period in history, it was common for someone as young as Pip, who is approaching fourteen, to be indentured as an apprentice. In fact, many poor families were forced to indenture their children as a
means of support for the family. In Pip’s case, the working relationship is an extension of the close partnership he and Joe have already been enjoying.

VOCABULARY PREVIEW

clemency n. mercy; forgiveness

disconcerted adj. confused

latent adj. hidden; undeveloped

malignant adj. evil; bitter

manifest v. to display

ostentatiously adv. in a showy or gaudy manner

pervade v. to spread throughout

retributive adj. done as a penalty or punishment

stipulations n. terms or conditions of an agreement

trepidation n. uneasiness

In Chapters 11 through 19, Pip lives in two different worlds: the world of the working class and the world of the gentleman. As you read, record the names of people and other details that, in Pip’s mind, represent each station in life.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Life as a commoner</th>
<th>Life as a gentleman</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Working as a blacksmith’s apprentice</td>
<td>Estella</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
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SIGNIFICANCE OF NAMES

- Camilla = chameleon
- Pocket = only interested in getting your pocket or at your money
- Estella = star/unreachable dreams and goals

NEW CHARACTERS & PLACES:
- Miss Havisham’s birthday guests: Sarah Pocket, Georgiana, Camilla, and Raymond are relations jockeying for the favor of the wealthy spinster.
- Matthew (Pocket): a relative referred to by the birthday guests with disdain. They don’t like that he seems uninterested in material things and that he does not visit Miss Havisham.
- Man coming down the stairs: a character who we meet only briefly but who later plays an important role in Pip’s life. The dark man seems serious and gruff and smells of soap.
- The pale young gentleman: another character who takes on a greater role later.

* Why do Miss Havisham’s relatives visit her on her birthday? How do we know they are a bunch of phony flatterers? What is meant by “toadies and humbugs”?
* Which relative do the others talk about? What do they dislike about him?
* Briefly describe Camilla. Why is she so attentive to Miss Havisham? What aspects of upper-class society might Dickens be satirizing in his portrayal of Camilla?
* How does Miss Havisham explain the rotting wedding cake that is the centerpiece on the table? What is the rotting cake symbolize? What else is rotting?
* Who does Pip meet as he leaves the mansion? What takes place between Pip and the pale young gentleman in the garden? Why do you think the boy is at Satis House? Why might his presence be calculated and part of some larger strategy?

* How do you account for Estella’s erratic behavior towards Pip? She slaps him when he arrives and kisses him when he leaves. Why did her attitude change towards Pip?

**CHAPTERS 12 -13**
* Why do you think Miss Havisham manipulates and misleads Pip into thinking she is his secret benefactor? What could she get from this behavior?
* What does Pip expect to be the outcome of his fight with the “pale young gentleman”? What prompts Pip’s actions, and how does he feel about himself later?
* Why does Miss Havishan command Joe and Pip to meet with her? What does Pip’s attitude toward her offer reveal about his changing sense of values?
* Why does Pip feel uncomfortable visiting Satis House with Joe?
* Who does Pip begin to confide in instead of Joe? Why does he do this?
* Who takes most of the credit for Miss Havisham’s gift? Who takes the money?
* What does Pip mean when he says, “I should never like Joe’s trade. I had liked it once, but once was not now”?

**CHAPTERS 14-15**
* Why doesn’t Pip run away if he is so ashamed of his home and the forge?
* Why does Pip go back to Satis House despite Joe’s advice that he shouldn’t?
* Why does Sarah Pocket treat Pip with such contempt?
* How does Joe get into a fight with Orlick?
* Why did the author make Joe such a “big” man? What might his size symbolize?
* Where is Estella?
* Who is George Barnwell? Why does Pip identify with him?

CHAPTERS 16-17
* Explain why Biddy believes Orlick may have hurt Mrs. Joe. What does this tell you about Biddy?
* How does the author characterize the police?
* In Chapter 17, when Pip is walking with Biddy, he thinks to himself, “Biddy was never insulting, or capricious, or Biddy to-day and somebody else to-morrow; she would have derived only pain, and no pleasure; from giving me pain . . . How could it be, then, that I did not like her much better of the two?”
* What feelings does Pip seem to have for Biddy? What information does he share with her, and how does she react to this information? Why does Pip tell Biddy about his attraction to Estella? Compare and contrast Pip’s interactions with Biddy to his interactions with Estella. In what way are these two relationships different? In Pip’s mind, how are Biddy and Estella different? Who does he value the most? What does this tell you about Pip?
* Summarize the reasons why Pip does not like Orlick. Does his anger seem justified?
* In what ways does Pip seem immature?

CHAPTER 18
* Who is the mysterious stranger that visits Pip at the pub? What are Pip’s expectations on learning about the reason for the man’s visit?
* Summarize the news that Jaggers brings.
* What conditions are set for Pip to realize his new, great expectations?
* Why does Pip believe Miss Havisham sent Jaggers? Reread Joe’s response to being offered money and the two paragraphs that follow. How are the young Pip and
Joe juxtaposed? *How does the narrator feel now about
the scene? Why have his feelings changed?
* Why does Pip say he is unhappy despite his great
fortune? What does he mean by this?

CHAPTER 19
* Pip promises that he will come back to his village and
do something for everyone. Do you think he will keep
this promise? Why or why not?
* Why does Pumblechook tell Pip that his fortune is
“well-deserved”? Give evidence to support the idea that
he is insincere.
* Who is Trabb? Pip describes him as a “hail-fellow-
well-met.” What does he mean by this? How does Trabb
treat Pip? Why?
* What does Miss Havisham say and do that makes Pip
more certain that she is the source of his new wealth?
* How does Pip feel about leaving home? What is the
tone of the last two pages in the chapter?
* How many of Pip’s earlier expectations have been
realized?
* How have Pip’s expectations changed? What does he
expect now?
* What conflicting feelings does Pip have as he moves
toward a new life? Why does he have such mixed
feelings?
* How do you feel about what happens to Pip at the end
of this section? Do you think he will regret making this
life change? Why or why not?
* Do you think Pip’s actions and feelings toward Joe are
selfish, or understandable?

FOCUS ACTIVITY
How do other people affect your behavior and your
feelings about yourself?

CHAPTERS 20-31
Think about a person or situation that brought out the best in you. Then write about a person or situation that brought out your worst. Explain the reasons behind your different reactions.

Setting a Purpose
Read to find out how Pip’s behavior is affected by his new surroundings.

BACKGROUND
Did You Know?
Dickens was an avid theatergoer who once had ambitions of becoming an actor. In a letter to a friend, Dickens described his boyhood “rehearsals” for the stage: “I practised immensely (even such things as walking in and out, and sitting down in a chair) often four, five, six hours a day, shut up in my room or walking about in the fields.” As an adult, Dickens took every opportunity to return to his first love. He acted in several amateur productions, including a production of Ben Jonson’s popular play Everyman in His Humor, in which he played the role of Bobadil, a character given to shouting oaths. Dickens drew on his acting experience in his portrayal of Mr. Wopsle and the production of Hamlet.

Hamlet
Hamlet, William Shakespeare’s most popular tragedy, is set in Denmark. As the play opens, Prince Hamlet is visited by the ghost of his father, King Hamlet, who was recently murdered and seeks revenge. Prince Hamlet agrees to carry out the ghost’s wishes and kill the murderer, but when the opportunity presents itself the prince stops short of the act. Wracked by guilt, Prince Hamlet finally avenges his father’s death but is himself killed in the process. As you read the scene in which Pip dreams about Hamlet, think about
his own feelings of guilt and his descriptions of the ghostly Miss Havisham.

VOCABULARY PREVIEW

depreciation n. ridicule; belittlement
dexterously adv. skillfully
diffidence n. shyness
impetuosity n. reckless enthusiasm
judicious adj. wise; discreet
pernicious adj. harmful; deadly
prodigious adj. gigantic
supplicant n. someone who begs
zealous adj. eager

In Chapters 20 through 31, Pip finds himself with new people in a variety of new settings. Dickens uses carefully chosen details to characterize Pip’s new surroundings. In the chart below, describe each setting. Then explain the atmosphere, or mood, that the details create.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Place</th>
<th>Details</th>
<th>Atmosphere</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>London</td>
<td>Large, dirty,</td>
<td>Forbidding, cold,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>crowded,</td>
<td>lonely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jagger’s office</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bernard’s Inn</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pocket household</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wemmick’s home</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jagger’s home</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CHAPTERS 20–21
* Why do you think Jaggers believes Pip will not make anything of his new good fortune?
* What kind of lawyer is Jaggers?
* What does Jaggers’s office reveal about him?
* How is Wemmick characterized? What is he compared to? Why?
* What sort of place is Barnard’s Inn?
* Did you expect Pip’s roommate to be the “pale young gentleman”? Why or why not? How well will they get along? What effect does the appearance of the “young gentleman” have on Pip’s belief that Miss Havisham is his benefactor?

CHAPTER 22
* Describe Herbert and Pip’s interactions. How do they relate? What do their interactions reveal about each of them?
* Why does Herbert call Pip by another name?
* What is Herbert’s profession? What does he aspire to do?
* Why is Pip not bothered when Herbert corrects his manners?
* Why did Miss Havisham order Matthew Pocket to leave her house?
* How would you describe the Pockets’ household? How is Mrs. Pocket characterized?

CHAPTERS 23-24
* Who does the narrator say has the real power in the Pockets’ house?
* Who is Mrs. Coiler? What other characters does she remind readers of?
* How are Pip and Mrs. Pocket alike?
* What is funny about the dinner scene with the children?
* What kind of lessons is Mr. Pocket supposed to give Pip?
* Who are Drummle and Startop? How do their names seem to fit their personalities?
* What is “portable property”?
* What is Wemmick’s view of Jaggers?
* What does Wemmick advise Pip to pay attention to when he eventually goes to dine with Jaggers?

CHAPTERS 25-26
* What does Pip share with Herbert besides a place to live?
* How does Wemmick treat the butcher? What happens to Wemmick’s mood and personality as he and Pip walk home?
* How does Walworth reflect Wemmick’s personality?
* How does Jaggers’s home reflect his personality?
* How is Jaggers’s housekeeper characterized?
* What is the effect on readers of Jaggers referring to Drummle as “the spider”?

CHAPTERS 27-28
* Why does Joe call Pip “Sir”?
* What do these chapters show about Pip’s snobbery?
* Explain the confusion behind “what larks”.
* Why does Joe come to London?
* What is Pip embarrassed for Joe to see?
* What news does Joe bring regarding Wopsle? What kind of an actor do you predict Wopsle will make?
* The second to the last paragraph in Chapter 27 is one of the most important in the entire novel. Reread the paragraph. What feelings does it create? Explain Joe’s metaphor, “Life is made of ever so many partings welded together...Divisions amongst such must come, and must be met as such.” Do you agree with his philosophy?
* Why is Pip unable to recognize Joe’s intelligence?
* Mr. Pumblechook is often seen as a comical character. What are some of his dark traits?
* Why does the narrator say, “All other swindlers on earth are nothing to the self-swindlers”? To what action does this event refer?
* What coincidence happens on Pip’s way back to Kent?
CHAPTER 29
* What role does Pip imagine for himself as he returns to Satis House?
* How has Estella changed?
* Why does Miss Havisham seem to enjoy ridiculing Pip?
* Why does Pip decide not to visit Joe?
* To what extent do you believe Estella when she says no heart, no softness, and no sentiment?
* Explain the apparition, or ghost, that Pip sometimes sees when he looks at Estella.
* Why does Miss Havisham want Pip to love Estella so much?

CHAPTERS 30-31
* What does Pip do to get even with Orlick?
* How did you feel about Trabb’s boy mocking Pip? How justified was this?
* What does Pip do to relieve his guilt about not visiting Joe?
* What does Pip confess to Estella? What is Herbert’s advice about the confession? What advice would you have given Pip?
* Why do Herbert and Pip go to the theater?
* Describe Wopsle’s performance in Hamlet. Why did he change his name?
This section of the novel represents a turning point, when Pip’s expectations are forced to change because of a series of devastating disappointments. Throughout the novel, Pip has been unable to see Estella objectively. His romanticized view of her prevents him from preparing for the inevitable pain that she causes him.
In the graphic organizer below, list three expectations Pip held when he first learned about his anonymous benefactor. In the corresponding boxes, describe how each expectation was met or not met and why.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pip’s expectation</th>
<th>WEALTH</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Outcomes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pip spends money foolishly; when he learns Magwitch is benefactor, refuses to touch the money, and debt builds</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pip’s expectation</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Outcomes</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pip’s expectation</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Outcomes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CHAPTERS 32-33
* Why does Pip meet Estella’s coach so early? What does this say about him?
* What is Wemmick’s “green-house”? Why is this an odd metaphor? Why might Wemmick treat the prison this way?
* In Chapter 32, what image is juxtaposed with Newgate?
* Why has Estella come to London?
* Given the way Dickens portrays Estella, what do you think attracts Pip to her?
* Though Estella treats him badly, Pip has hope. In what does his hope lie?

CHAPTERS 34-35
* Who are the “Finches of the Grove”? Why does Pip associate with them?
* Describe Pip’s spending habits. What do Pip and Herbert do when their spending seems out of control? Explain “leaving a margin.” How helpful is this practice?
* What is the significance of Mrs. Joe’s death? What is surprising about how Pip feels about his sister now? Why doesn’t it bring Joe and Pip closer?
* What is ironic about Pip’s claim that Biddy has done “an injustice” and “an injury” to him?

CHAPTERS 36-37
* How did Pip’s life change when he turned 21?
* After having a birthday supper with Jaggers and Wemmick, why does Pip go to Walworth?
* Why does Wemmick give advice at Walworth that contradicts what he has said on Gerrard Street?
* How is Pip changing? Why does he cry after returning from Walworth?

CHAPTER 38
* Reread the descriptions of Miss Havisham). What images does the author invoke to describe her? Why?
* In Chapter 38, Pip witnesses for the first time an argument between Miss Havisham and Estella. Discuss the possible reasons for Estella’s behavior. Then
contrast Estella’s state of mind with Miss Havisham’s state of mind during the fight. Do you feel sorry for Miss Havisham, or do you believe she must take responsibility for Estella’s behavior? In what way might her plan for Estella have backfired?

* What does Pip clearly realize about Miss Havisham?
* What devastating news does Pip get about Estella while visiting Satis House?
* Why does Pip stay devoted to Estella even when he sees how she treats him and her other suitors?

CHAPTER 39
* How does the “heavy slab” fall?
* How does the weather mirror Pip’s emotions and foreshadow events?
* What is Pip’s first reaction to his strange visitor?
* What is Pip’s horrible realization?
* Why has the man returned to England?
* How does Pip feel about the visitor at the end of the chapter?
* How have Pip’s expectations changed? What does he expect now?
* How does the author build suspense for the third part of the novel?

CHAPTER 40
* How does Abel Magwitch resemble Joe? Identify at least four characteristics they share.
* Why does Magwitch say he will get pleasure watching Pip spend money?
* What did Magwitch say that he characterizes as “low”? What does this characterization reveal about him?
* Why does Pip find it so difficult to disguise Magwitch?
* Why does Magwitch insist that Herbert swear on a Bible? What does this reveal about Magwitch?
CHAPTERS 41-42
* Why might it be important to Magwitch that Pip “always bear the name of Pip”?
* Why does Pip feel he cannot receive any more money from Magwitch? Is this an admirable trait of Pip’s?
* What advice does Herbert offer about Magwitch? Why does he say Pip should wait to tell Magwitch that he cannot accept his money?
* Who is Compeyson? Identify two coincidences involving him. Why does Magwitch hate him?
* How does Magwitch’s life story affect what you think of him? What effect does it have on Pip?

CHAPTERS 43-44
* What danger do Herbert and Pip realize Magwitch is in?
* What effect does Magwitch’s appearance have on Pip’s feelings for Estella?
* Why does he go to Satis House?
* Who does he see at the Blue Boar? Who does he think he sees?
* How does Miss Havisham explain why she did not correct Pip’s belief that Estella was intended for him?
* Do you think it is true that Estella never deceived Pip? Why or why not?
* How do Pip’s conversations at Satis House reveal that he is changing? What, if anything, does he say that takes courage or shows virtue?
* How is Pip feeling as he leaves Satis House? How do you know?

CHAPTERS 45-46
* What is the mood at the Hummums? Why does he stay there?
* Based on the information Pip receives from Wemmick, what adjectives would you use to describe Wemmick? Why?
* Describe life at Clara’s house.
* What information does Pip give Magwitch? Why does he withhold information about Compeyson? What does this reveal about Pip?
* How does the pair plan to get Magwitch on a ship leaving England?
* At the end of Chapter 44, Pip expresses his feelings for Estella in a passage that begins “Out of my thoughts! You are part of my existence, part of myself . . . .” Dickens uses poetic techniques such as repetition, parallel phrases, and imagery to make this speech musical and dramatic.

**CHAPTERS 46–59**

The last chapters of the novel solve many of the novel’s mysteries and lead readers to a resolution.

acquiescence n. agreement; consent
beguile v. to trick; to deceive
demeanor n. behavior
despondent adj. depressed
eloquence n. expressiveness
entreat v. to beg
obdurate adj. firm
repugnance n. distaste
tremulous adj. timid; cowardly
truculent adj. fierce

**ABEL MAGWITH – SIGNIFICANCE OF HIS NAME/ BIBLICAL ALLUSION**

In this section of the novel, the character of Abel Magwitch plays a central role. Magwitch has already changed Pip’s life once with his anonymous donation of money. In the chapters that follow, his character
begins to affect Pip’s life in a different way.

Significantly, Dickens gave Magwitch the name Abel, which refers to the second son of Adam and Eve in the Old Testament of the Bible. According to the biblical account, Abel was a shepherd who was killed in a jealous rage by his brother Cain. Abel’s innocent blood put a curse on Cain, and he became a fugitive. As you read, think about why Dickens wanted readers to associate Magwitch with the innocent, slain brother, even though Magwitch is a convict. You might also think about which characters in the novel represent Cain, the evil, murdering brother.

CHAPTERS 47-48
* What does Pip describe as his primary concern, a “high mountain above a range of mountains”? Why does this concern cause him such anxiety?
* Why does Pip return Magwitch’s unopened pocket book?
* What does Wopsle tell Pip that intensifies his fears for Magwitch?
* What kind of husband does Jaggers suggest Drummle will be to Estella?
* What happened at Hounslow Heath?
* How did Jaggers know Molly? Why did he refer to her strong hands when Pip met her (in Chapter 26)? What does Pip deduce about her?

CHAPTERS 49-50
* What does Miss Havisham want in exchange for helping Herbert?
* Do you believe Pip when he says that he forgives Miss Havisham? Why or why not?
* Do you believe Miss Havisham when she tells Pip that in raising Estella she “meant to save her from misery like (her) own”? Why or why not?
* Explain what Pip means by “the vanity of sorrow...the vanity of unworthiness...the vanity of penitence”. How could these traits be considered vanities?
* Why did Miss Havisham’s dress catch fire? Does Dickens want readers to believe this was an accident?
* How does Pip show real courage and character in Chapter 50?
* What does Pip deduce about Magwitch?

CHAPTERS 51-52
* Why does Pip go to Little Britain?
* How does Pip persuade Jaggers to give him more information about Estella when he first refuses?
* Why does Jaggers refer to Wemmick as the “most cunning impostor in all of London”?
* Besides Wemmick’s home life, what else did Jaggers not know?
* Why does Jaggers pose his information in the form of a hypothetical situation?
* What news does Pip get about Herbert when he goes to Clarriker’s?
* How does Startop get involved in the plan to save Magwitch? Do you think this is a good idea?
* Why does Pip leave Monday night? Why does he decide to go in spite of the risk? Why must he hurry and return to London?

CHAPTER 53
* What is the mood as Pip sets out for the sluice house? How does this foreshadow the action in the chapter? Why does Pip feel he is doomed?
* What is the effect of his candle going out? What does the candle symbolize?
* How is Orlick characterized? What motivates him to want to kill Pip?
* What event from Chapter 43 gives us a clue that Orlick may have been the one waiting in the sluice house?
CHAPTER 54
*Why does Magwitch say Pip cannot appreciate freedom the way he does? How accurate is his theory?  
* Explain Magwitch’s belief that life is a river. Is the metaphor appropriate?  
* The narrator says of Magwitch, “One would have supposed that it was I who was in danger, not he, and that he was reassuring me” (p. 446). Why does Magwitch seem increasingly calm and submissive, even under such dire circumstances?  
* What causes Pip’s fear when they stop for the night? How do readers learn that his fears are justified?  
* What has happened to Compeyson? Do you think Magwitch killed him?  
* Why is Pip finally able to accept and love Magwitch? What has caused this change in Pip?

CHAPTERS 55 -56
* Does Dickens think that all criminals are bad? How do you know?  
* How does Dickens gain sympathy for the people who are on trial?  
* What does the author do to keep the chapters from being too dark and tragic?  
* What is the significance of Magwitch’s death? Why did Dickens have him die, but not hanged, as he was sentenced?  
* How does Pip repay Magwitch before he dies?  
* How do you think the book will end? What will Pip do now?

CHAPTER 57
*Why is Pip in so much debt?  
* Why were the police unable to take him to Newgate?  
* In Chapter 27 Joe says he will not return to London, but he does in Chapter 57. Why?  
* Why was Biddy able to teach Joe to read when Pip had failed?
* What does Pip plan to do after Joe leaves? What are his newly revised expectations?

CHAPTERS 58-59
* Reread Pip’s speech to Biddy and Joe. What does he say? Why is his speech significant?
* What advice does Biddy give to Pip after his return 11 years later?
* During this 11-year period, what happened to Estella? What does Pip notice about her when he meets her at the site of Satis House?
* How have Pip’s expectations changed? What does he expect now?
* What do you think will happen to Pip during the next twenty years?
* Dickens originally wrote a different ending to Great Expectations, which he later discarded. In the original ending, Estella remarried after the death of her husband Drummle. As in the revised ending, Pip sees her after years have gone by and he notices that she seems to have learned from her suffering and become warmer and kinder. In this ending, however, there is no suggestion that the two will spend additional time together. Pip is satisfied to know that Estella finally has a heart that will allow her to perhaps know how Pip has suffered over her. Compare the two endings. Which do you prefer? What is the basic difference between the two endings? Why do you think Dickens decided to discard the original ending? Which ending of the story do you find the most believable? The most satisfying? Why?

THE FILM VERSIONS
There are at least five film or video versions of Great Expectations, including: a 1917 black and white version recently released on video; David Lean’s 1946 version that won several Academy Awards and stars John Mills,
Valerie Hobson, and Alec Guinness as Herbert Pocket; a 1999 production for Masterpiece Theater, a 1974 mediocre version with Michael York, Sarah Miles, and James Mason; and a modern-day version set in New York starring Ethan Hawke, Robert de Niro, Gwyneth Paltrow, and Glenn Close.

Each offers opportunities for analysis of the novel.
• Describe the differences between one of the films and the novel. Speculate about why the filmmakers made these changes.
• Compare the opening scenes of the David Lean and Masterpiece Theater films. Each begins creating entirely different moods. Determine which filmmaking tools the filmmaker used to establish the mood. Evaluate which film’s opening is more true to the novel and which is more interesting.
• View any of the films and make deductions about what each film reveals about the times, in which it was made. What unique perspectives does each offer about the problems of the poor?

PRISON REFORM
Make a recommendation about prison conditions: Have students explore prison conditions in England during the Victorian Era. Reread Chapter 32, where Pip visits Newgate prison. Draft an argument about the need for prison reform.

Alternative: Ask students to research the condition of prisons today and write a letter to convince a legislator about the need for reforms in prison conditions or laws today.
Sources:

- Cummings Study Guide by Michael J. Cummings
  http://www.cummingsstudyguides.net/Guides6/GreatExp.html

- Glencoe Study Guide

- Signet/Penguin Study Guide
  http://www.us.penguingroup.com/static/pdf/teachersguides/greatexp.pdf by Laurie Calvert

- http://www.universalteacher.org.uk/prose/greatexpectations.htm by Andrew Moore