

Great Expectations

Cambridge iGCSE Study Guide

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Teacher's Introduction

This resource has been created for teachers who have chosen to study *Great Expectations* for Cambridge iGCSE 2023–2025 syllabus. It has been designed to help students of varying levels to develop an understanding of the text. It aims to engage students and help them to deepen their knowledge of this universally appreciated text.

The resource begins by introducing students to the social, cultural and literary contexts of the novel. This should allow students access to the period when Dickens was writing and help them to see where certain themes, characters and settings have developed from.

The guide also provides a plot overview, brief character summaries, detailed analysis of major characters, a mind map and analysis of the relationships between characters in the novel, detailed analysis of significant settings in the novel and detailed chapter analyses. Each chapter analysis provides a 'mini vocabulary guide' to help with colloquial or archaic words or phrases and a 'key words explained' box that explains literary terms that have been used, and students should be encouraged to utilise these. Furthermore, each chapter includes a variety of activities: discussion prompts, active learning tasks, extract focus work and essay questions.

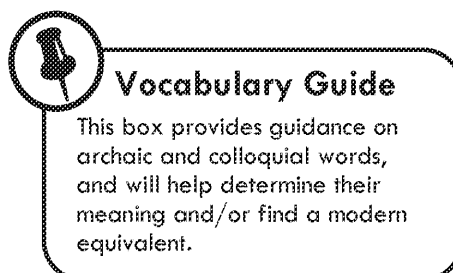
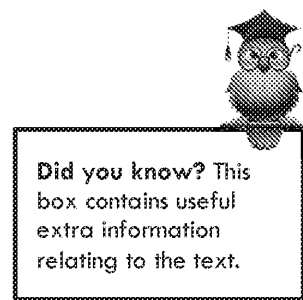
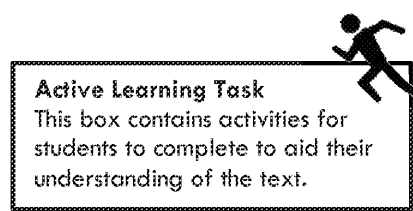
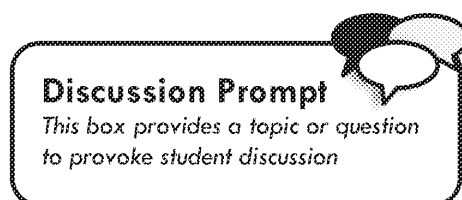
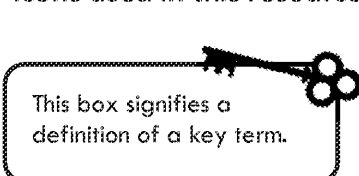
As well as looking at the plot, actions and characters, it is important to look at the language (including devices such as Dickens' use of symbolism and motifs), form and structure of the novel. This resource provides students with the chance to do this by exploring each of these crucial areas in detail, including activities in each section. Some of these activities include 'writing like Dickens' where pupils have the opportunity to do some creative writing showing that they comprehend his style, and further activities for pupils who are more able, such as sections on Dickens' use of pathetic fallacy and satire, which should encourage interpretation and allow pupils to engage on a higher level.

After the detailed chapter analysis and sections on language, form and structure, the study guide investigates Dickens' themes, ideas and messages. There also are suggestions for further reading and websites for further research. This resource can be used as a revision guide and in class throughout the year as there are various tasks that run throughout.

Text Edition

The edition referred to throughout this guide is the 2003 Penguin Classics edition. This edition includes an introduction, a chronology of Dickens' life, further reading, notes on the text and a map of Kent, as well as the original ending and Dickens' working notes.

Icons used in this resource



A Brown and T Panayiotou, May 2022

Specification Information

This resource supports the teaching of *Great Expectations* by Charles Dickens as part of the Literature in English syllabus (2023–2025).

- *Great Expectations* appears on the Cambridge IGCSE as part of Paper 1: Prose (Section B)
- Paper 1 is 1 hour 30 minutes long
- It is made up of Poetry and Prose with two questions on two texts: one poetry and one prose
- It is worth 50 marks
- It is externally assessed

Students will be examined on the following and must meet the following assessment objectives:

Assessment Objective	Description
A01	Show detailed knowledge of the content of literary texts in the text (drama, poetry and prose), supported by reference to the text.
A02	Understand the meanings of literary texts and their contexts, and beyond surface meanings to show deeper awareness of ideas and themes.
A03	Recognise and appreciate ways in which writers use language, style and form to create and shape meanings and effects.
A04	Communicate a sensitive and informed personal response to literature.

Note: *Great Expectations* could also be used for Component 5 (Coursework) if not used for Paper 1.

Assessment Objective Cross-reference Table

Section of guide	Assessment Objective
Contexts	A01, A02, A03, A04
Plot Overview; Brief Character Summaries; Key Relationships; Volume Recaps	A01, A02, A03, A04
Analysis of Major Characters; Analysis of Key Settings; Detailed Chapter Analyses; Dickens's use of Language; Form; Structure	A01, A02, A03, A04
Themes; Ideas and Messages	A01, A02, A03, A04
Glossary of Key Terms	A01, A02, A03, A04

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Plot Overview

The **plot** begins with Pip, our young **protagonist**, living with his older sister 'Mrs Joe Kent. One evening Pip, visiting the graves of his parents and brothers, is startled by a convict who orders Pip to bring him food and a blacksmith's file with which to cut off his leg. Magwitch fights another convict and is recaptured. He protects Pip by claiming he is his father.

After this, Pip's life returns to normal. One day Pip's Uncle Pumblechook takes him to visit the rich old spinster Miss Havisham at her home, Satis House. She wears an old bridal dress and has all the clocks in the darkened room stopped at 20 minutes to nine. Miss Havisham orders him to play cards with her adopted daughter, the young and beautiful Estella. Estella is cold and rude, though Pip is fascinated by her and aspires to become a gentleman so as to be worthy of her. Pip visits regularly, secretly hoping that one day Miss Havisham might help him become a gentleman. However, Miss Havisham eventually decides to help Pip become a blacksmith, apprenticed to his brother-in-law, Joe. Pip is upset and disappointed.

Plot – the story

The plot is a series of events that can be connected. Characters are directly connected and sometimes be part of additional story lines, characters, running through the story.

The protagonist

Journeyman has completed the plot.

One night Pip returns home to discover his sister, Mrs Joe, has been attacked. She is killed. Pip's childhood friend, Biddy, moves in to the Gargery household to look after her. The blacksmith, Orlick, is the attacker from certain signals that Mrs Joe makes.

Out of the blue one day, Mr Jaggers, a lawyer from London, arrives with the news that he has given Pip a large sum of money and he must leave for London immediately to see his benefactor. Pip assumes his benefactor must be Miss Havisham. In London, Pip moves into a rooming house where he recognises as a boy he once fought at Satis House. However, they quickly become friends. Pip receives education and meets the arrogant and wealthy Bentley Drummle. He also befriends a clerk. Pip behaves poorly in society, disregards his family and old friends (particularly Biddy). He is saved when, at 21, he receives a lump sum of money and the promise of a large inheritance. A letter notifying him that his sister, Mrs Joe, has died. He returns home for the funeral.

Two years later, on a stormy night a stranger calls at Pip's lodgings. It is Magwitch, his benefactor. After earning a fortune in Australia, he gave Pip the money out of gratitude. He tells him of his own child whom he believes is dead. Pip is disgusted and ashamed as he realises his criminality. However, he feels bound to help Magwitch, who is still on the run, escape.

Meanwhile, Pip discovers that Miss Havisham was jilted at the altar by Compeyson (the man at the start) and that Estella is Magwitch's daughter. To avenge her own broken heart, Miss Havisham made Estella to be cold, and break men's hearts. Pip finally finds out that Estella is going to marry Bentley Drummle. He visits Satis House to see Miss Havisham before helping Magwitch escape. She realises that she has hurt him and Estella. Pip forgives her. She leans too close to him and accidentally ignites her hair. Pip tries to save her but she eventually dies from her injuries.

Shortly before the escape attempt Pip is confronted by Orlick who had previously been the blacksmith. He attempts to kill Pip but Pip is rescued by Herbert and a group of friends.

Pip, with Herbert, tries to help Magwitch escape the country. However Compeyson betrays them and Magwitch is taken to jail. Pip has now bonded with Magwitch and tries hard to help him. Magwitch is sentenced to death but dies in prison before his execution. His death means Pip is free to go to London to care for him. When he recovers, Pip returns home after Joe, in the meantime, has died. However, he arrives during Joe and Biddy's wedding day and is thankful that he is still alive for Biddy.

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Pip decides to leave the country and join Herbert, who marries his long-term love (and gradually pays off his debt working for the company he financially helped Herbert) set up. It is 11 years before Pip returns to England to visit Joe and Biddy of their own and one is named after Pip. Pip feels he must make one last visit to Estella. Her husband, Drummle, has since died and he finds she has grown kinder. The couple, reunited, leave the garden hand in hand with Pip believing they

Did you know? This is not the original ending. Dickens, taking advice from a friend, changed it. It is a relatively happy one as opposed to the one Dickens had intended. The original conclusion had Pip wandering the streets of London. He learns that she has married a country doctor after the death of Drummle. He states that although he could never have her he is happy that she has grown into a different person. Havisham had intended her to be and that her suffering had given her a heart to understand.

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Chapter-by-chapter Analysis

Each chapter has been summarised to help with your understanding of the text. As *Great Expectations* was written in 1860 there are many **archaic** and **colloquial** words. The 'Vocabulary Guide' will help determine their meaning and/or find a modern equivalent for you.

Did you know? Great Expectations was published in serial form in the Victorian era, which was actually for a long time. It was a week long serial and would receive the novel's title at the end.

Volume One: Chapters 1–

Chapter 1

In the opening chapter we meet the protagonist (and narrator), the young orphan Pip, who has difficulty pronouncing his name so comes to be called 'Pip'. We learn that Pip has a sister and her husband, the blacksmith, Joe Gargery. On this misty night he is visiting his parents' and brothers' graves. Suddenly a rugged and fearful man with a convict's appearance demands that he tell him where his parents are. Pip points to the graves and explains. As a means to scare poor Pip the convict pretends to be accompanied by another convict, who is capable of eating little boys' hearts and livers. He asks little Pip to provide him with a file to remove his leg iron. Pip, frightened into agreeing, quickly runs home without stopping.

Analysis

The opening scene of any novel is incredibly important. The author must use this opportunity to introduce important characters, set the scene and begin the action. As the book is narrated in the first person, Dickens must make Pip's voice believable. He must also make sure he **simultaneously** puts across all the important elements of the novel. This includes plot, characterisation, action, and themes.

The narrator is an older Pip who is looking back at past events in his life. This means the events are **focalised** through the eyes of the younger Pip. This is most notable when Pip is a young boy, as the narrator makes comical and judgmental comments on his actions. An example is when he comments on his own immaturity at the time of reaching the 'childish conclusion that my mother was freckled and sickly'.

Discussion Prompt

Reread Pip's first encounter with the convict. What are your first impressions of him?

Dickens successfully uses Pip's voice to convey his innocence. His naivety and immaturity are evident in the way he makes of his surroundings which are 'unpleasant and tombstone-like'.

Pip's youth and innocence is portrayed as a result of the **juxtaposition** of his small, innocent world with not only the gruff, scary convict but also the bleak landscape ('The dark flat wilderness beyond the churchyard, intersected with dykes 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.').

Simultaneous

Focalised means the focus. In literary narration being concentrated on a single point of view.

Juxtaposition is the act of placing two things side by side, especially in literature.

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The terrifying convict frightens little Pip and not just because he is so much bigger than him. Dickens presents him as a 'terrible' and 'fearful' figure who threatens Pip. He belongs to a criminal underclass and his lower-class status is shown through his speech and grammar: 'That young man has a secret way pecooliar to himself, of getting at a boy, and at his heart, and at his liver. It is in wain for a boy to attempt to hide himself from that young man.' Dickens spells the words phonetically so the reader has an idea of how they are pronounced.



Vocabulary Guide

Who d'ye live with? – Who do you live with?

Wittles – the way the convict pronounces 'vituals', a food fashioned word for food

Old Battery – an old fort

Pecooliar – peculiar

Gibbet – a structure for hanging a person until death

Towards the end of the chapter, Pip sees him with some chains held a pirate. The latter, as if he were come down, and go again'. This may be his eventual fate. It could be the person he is – a lo



Exam extract focus

Looking at the extract below, how do the bold words create tension or opinion of the escaped convict?

The marshes were just a long **black** horizontal line then, as I stopped to look after him; and a horizontal line, not nearly so broad nor yet so **black**; and the sky was just a row of **long and black lines** intermixed. On the edge of the river I could **faintly** make out the only two black seemed to be standing upright; one of these was the beacon by which the sailors steered—like an ugly thing when you were near it; the other a gibbet, with some chains hanging to it which a man was limping on towards this latter, **as if he were the pirate come to life, and come to hook himself up again**. It gave me a terrible turn when I thought so; and as I saw the convict after him, I wondered whether they thought so too. I looked all round for the horrible young man. But now I was frightened again, and ran home without stopping.



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Chapter 2

A frightened Pip runs home and is confronted by Joe Gargery, his brother-in-law. Mrs Joe Gargery is looking for him and has 'Tickler' with her (Tickler is a cane that she uses with). After the beating he receives from Mrs Joe they settle down to tea. Pip, reformed convict, stashes his last piece of bread and butter down his trousers, hoping to go unnoticed. Mrs Joe is suspicious and accuses Pip of 'bolting his food'. It is Christmas Eve and as a punishment for his behaviour, quickly he is left to stir the Christmas pudding. Early the next morning he awakes, so frightened he never slept, and creeps downstairs with a huge sense of guilt and steals some bread, cheese, mincemeat, a pork pie, brandy, and a file for the convict on the misty marshes.

Analysis

This is the first time we are introduced to members of Pip's family. Pip evidently admires his sister and describes every attribute of her: her looks, her dress, her actions. On the other hand, the description portrays him as almost cherishing his blondish hair and watery blue eyes, reflecting the sweet-tempered and good nature of his personality.



Vocabulary Guide

By hand – this relates to something that is done rather than breast-fed
Larceny – theft; the unlawful taking of property
Betwixt – between
Bolting his food – eating too fast
Hulks – the prison ships

Active Learning Task

Joe is described as a 'mild, good-natured, sweet-tempered, easy-going, foolish, dear fellow' whereas Mrs Joe is described as having 'a hard and heavy hand'. Make a list of examples in the action of how Dickens shows this nature of their personalities.



Discussion Prompt

Reread from 'I was never allowed a candle to light me to bed'. How does Dickens portray Pip's guilt?



Dickens presents Pip as innately terrified and feels incredibly guilty about being the convict. His kind-heartedness is one of his points. However, the extent of his guilt over everything reminds him of the tale of the fugitive out on the marshes with the young man, the file, the food, and the need to commit a larceny on those shelves in the avenging coals.'). Dickens uses these to enhance Pip's feelings of guilt. By listing these attributes, he makes it seem as though he is watched ('I got up and went down the way, and every crack in every board was a voice and "Get up, Mrs Joe!"').



Essay Question

How does Dickens make use of the older narrator for the purpose of the story?

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Chapter 3

A very guilty Pip believes that the gates, dykes and even the animals are aware of his secret. On a damp morning yet Pip trudges on to find the convict. From the mist he perceives a figure that he believes to be his convict. As he approaches however, and touches him on the shoulder the figure reveals himself to be somebody else. Pip recognises him as another escapee and a young man the first convict invents in order to frighten Pip. He strikes at Pip unsuccessfully. A short while later Pip comes across his convict; he seems cold, hungry and low. He eats hurriedly. Pip shows compassion towards him, worrying that he may catch a fever. The convict also shows gratitude to Pip and almost starts to cry. However his countenance grows more menacing than the other criminal he met in the marshes. He is notably agitated and grabs the file from Pip. He files at his leg iron. This is the last Pip hears of him while he slips home through the mist.

Analysis

Dickens continues his use of pathetic fallacy in this chapter to further emphasise the extent of Pip's guilt. He also uses the weather as a **motif** that symbolises a number of things. It magnifies Pip's emotions as well as foreshadows his future. In this chapter Pip is guilty and scared; the weather is damp and icy, reflecting his mood. The weather also creates a dramatic and tense atmosphere ('On every rail and gate, weather was so thick, that the wooden finger on the post directing people to our village—accepted, for they never came there—was invisible to me until I was quite close to it, while it dripped, it seemed to my oppressed conscience like a phantom devoted to my service'). The weather emphasises how terrified the young Pip is, out on the misty marshes alone.



Vocabulary Guide

- Rimy** – coated with ice
- Cravat** – a type of scarf usually worn by men
- Larks** – laughs, fun
- Ague** – a fever with alternating symptoms of shivering and sweating
- Rheumatic** – a disorder that affects the joints
- Gallows** – where people are hanged

Discussion

1.

2.

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Chapter 4

Pip, returning home, is so plagued by guilt for having helped the convict that he cannot go to church. There are no police, only Mrs Joe who is decorating for the Christmas festival. Joe has been and tells his sister he had been down to hear carols. Joe and Pip eat breakfast at church without Mrs Joe who feels she has too much to do. He still feels incredibly guilty and innocence suspects that everybody knows or will soon find out. The clerk at the church invites Pip's family for Christmas dinner along with Mr and Mrs Hubble, a couple from Pumblechook, Joe's uncle. Dinner proves to be an agonising ordeal for Pip who is shocked when his uncle asks for brandy and finds it mixed with tar-water (Pip's uncle's bottle) and then when several police officers suddenly enter the house with a pair of

Analysis

In contrast to Pip's desire for moral improvement at the beginning of the novel and the guilt he feels, Dickens shows that Mrs Joe and Pumblechook are merely concerned with social improvement ("But I don't mean to do it for n, sir," returned Mr Pumblechook, "I mean, enjoying himself with his elders and betters, and improving himself with their conversation, and rolling in the lap of luxury. Would he have been doing that? No, he wouldn't."). Mrs Joe's preference to stay at home and prepare for the festivities, rather than attend church, emphasises that she is more concerned with appearances and social standing than religion and morality.

Vocabulary

Accoucheur – a male midwife
Parenthesis – punctuation mark
Contumaciously – stubbornly
Omnipotent – an all-powerful deity
Musket – a type of gun

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Active Learning Task

Write a brief account of events at Christmas dinner from the perspective of one of the following characters: Mrs Joe, Pumblechook, Mr Wopsle or Joe. Think about how they would view events at dinner, particularly the way Pip behaves during the meal.

Dickens continues to make use of the older Pip here. The older Pip continues to contrast his younger self's naïve and immature behaviour with his current state. Perhaps, they became the restless and discontented man in consequence. Anyhow, Mr Wopsle's recital of my misdemeanor during the meal pull it until he howled.').

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Chapter 5

The police arrive at the house in need of a blacksmith to fix their handcuffs, much as provided on the order of Uncle Pumblechook with a glass of wine and settle in that they are searching for two convicts believed to be out in the marshes and Joe helps them in their search. The escapees are found fighting in the marshes and one convict claims to have taken the wittles and food to protect Pip. He is taken away and time young Pip believes he will see him.

Analysis

Once again Pip's compassionate nature is shown as he is greatly concerned for the convict. He refers to the convict using the possessive 'my' ('My convict looked round him for the first time, and saw me'). This evokes affection, albeit it a small amount, towards him and shows us that Pip feels a bond with the convict. This is furthered by his eagerness for the convict to know that he is not responsible for letting the police to him ('I looked at him eagerly when he looked at me, and slightly moved my hands and shook my head as if I had been waiting for him to see me, that I might try to assure him'). The tentative look the convict gives in reply shows the loyalty and admiration he comes to feel for Pip, foreshadowing what is to come.

Active Learning
Unbeknownst to the reader, the convict appears to be a partner to Pip. Can you find evidence in the text to support this? (You might want to look at the mood and tone of the chapter.)



Vocabulary Guide

Asunder – apart from each other
Parley – a discussion between enemies

In the first chapter the convict seems to be portrayed as terrifying; however we see a different side of him when he lies to save Pip and his words.

Chapter 6

This chapter concentrates more on Pip's emotions rather than the action, focusing on the guilt he felt for not having told Joe the whole truth about the stolen items. We witness his relationship with Joe and witness his innocent young mind fear that he might lose him. Joe does not feel any 'tenderness of conscience' (p. 41) towards his sister. After the escape, the sleepy Pip is carried home by Joe who then retells the night's events to the rest of the family.

Analysis

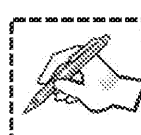
Dickens continues to make use of the older narrator's perspective, using elaborate metaphors that stand out as unlikely to be the way a young boy would think. For example, he writes 'for Mr Wopsle, being knocked up, was in such a very bad temper that if the Church had been thrown open, he would probably have excommunicated the whole expedition, beginning with me and myself'. This is clearly a comment from the older Pip looking back retrospectively.



Characterisation
The older Pip is shown to be a very different person from the young Pip we met in Chapter 1.

Discussion
Discuss the role of the older narrator in the novel.

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Question

How has Dickens established the relationship between Pip and Joe here?

Chapter 7

It is at least a year after the hunt on the marshes and Pip attends school where he is incredibly determined. He meets the orphaned child 'Biddy' whom he believes has 'fallen from heaven'. He, with the help of Biddy, eventually begins to learn how to read and write. When he discusses a letter Pip has written, Mrs Joe and Pumblechook charge in with some excitement. Mrs Havisham, 'immensely rich and grim lady' uptown, has requested that Pip should come and play with her. Uncle Pumblechook believes that Pip's fortune may be made by his going to play with her. He is scrubbed, dressed in his tightest suit and driven away by Pumblechook in order to meet her the following day.

Analysis

This is one of the most important chapters and it leads to one of the most pivotal chapters in the novel. It is the first time Pip learns of his going to see Miss Havisham, a major influence on his life. Before this point he had only the company of people of his own class and similar backgrounds and he had readily accepted that he is to become a blacksmith. However, his encounter with Miss Havisham and Estella that is about to take place greatly changes him forever. Our first indication that Miss Havisham is of a much higher social status comes from the fact that Pip has heard of her and the way he refers to her ('I had heard of Miss Havisham up town—everybody for miles round had heard of Miss Havisham up town'). 'Up town' houses are usually associated with bigger, more expensive houses for the upper classes.

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Vocabulary Guide

Catechism – a series of questions and answers commonly taught to children to educate them in the religion of England

Mark Anthony's Oration – a reference to a speech in Shakespeare's play *Julius Caesar*

Purblind – partially blind

Epistle – A letter

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Chapter 8

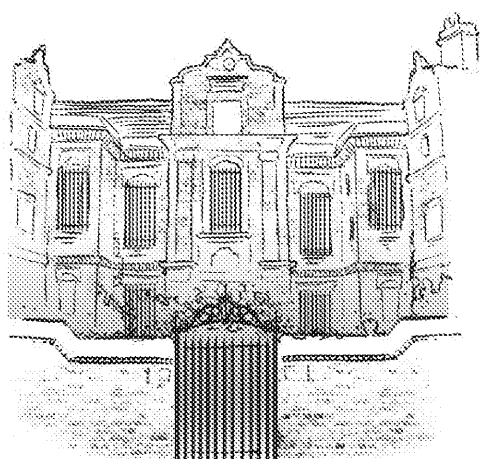
Pip, after breakfasting with Pumblechook is taken to Miss Havisham's house. As the glimpses of the outside. He describes it as 'dismal' and observes that many of the windows and that the lower windows and the garden had been barred. After waiting for some time, the doors are opened by a very pretty and proud young lady. She sends Pumblechook away and takes Pip through the darkened corridors. She takes him to a closed door and leaves him to wait with her and leaving the terrified Pip in darkness. He knocks on the door and is invited in.

Upon entering the room he discovers a fine ladies' dressing table and sat in front of it a woman he has never seen. She is dressed entirely in faded white materials with only one shoe on. The clock surrounding her stopped at 20 minutes to nine. She orders him to play but Pip, over the strangeness of the situation replies that he cannot. Miss Havisham asks him to wait for a girl named Estella. When she arrives they begin a game of cards. She is mean and cruel to Pip by frequently criticising his lower class status. Miss Havisham is pleased that Pip is so proud of his attitude. Miss Havisham orders Pip to leave and has Estella bring him food in the meantime. He has the opportunity to explore and while looking around the brewery sees the body of a man hanging from the rafters. Petrified, he runs away but then he turns back and realises there was no one there. Estella returns and pushes him out of the gates. He runs straight to Pumblechook and there waits, suddenly aware of his coarse hands, thick boots and common speech.

Analysis

This chapter is possibly one of the most pivotal as Pip is exposed to a world very different from his own. It proves to be an important learning curve for him, though not necessarily for the best.

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Description in this chapter is crucial to understanding Miss Havisham's appearance and her personality. Pip observes 'that everything to be white, had been white long ago, faded and yellow. I saw that the bride had withered like the dress, and like the figure that was left but the brightness of her sunken eyes had been put upon the rounded figure of Estella, a figure upon which it now hung loose, like a faded garment upon which the sun has been laid. This quotation shows that while she has been a bride, she is now old, and faded. The description, especially the description of her 'sunken eyes', implies that though Miss Havisham is still alive, she has died herself when she was jilted at the altar.

The garden of Satis House is described as 'rank'. It reverses literary ideas of nature as beautiful and representing life, ideas that stem from as far back as the Garden of Eden in the Bible. It is also very likely that Dickens' choice of the word 'rank' is an intentional reference to Shakespeare's *Hamlet*. In this play, Shakespeare uses comparisons of nature to death and decay as a tool for foreshadowing tragic events that are to come. Dickens has used it to emphasise Miss Havisham's misery and the effect it has on everyone and everything around her. The rank, decaying garden is a metaphor for Miss Havisham's life. The hanging body that Pip sees in the brewery symbolises the hurt Miss Havisham feels. She has literally stopped time and is dead inside.

Estella is the young girl for whom Pip harbours affection throughout the rest of his life. His first impression of her is that she is 'very pretty and seemed very proud'. From her he learns the differences between class and ideas of superiority and inferiority that he had not experienced with people of his own age. We see

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the differences between them when Dickens writes 'He calls the knaves, Jacks, the before our game was out. 'And what coarse hands he has. And what thick boots!' 'a common labouring boy' and Pip doesn't reproach her because he is ashamed of Estella's snobbery is further shown in the way she speaks about Satis House: "Encouraging name, miss." "Yes," she replied; "but it meant more than it said. It meant whoever had this house, could want nothing else. They must have been easily satisfied." Here we see that Estella feels she is better than Satis House and would do a profound effect on Pip, causing him to see himself and his life differently ('They are not troubled me now, as vulgar appendages.'). She becomes a symbol to him of what he aspires to.

We get our first hints of the attitude Miss Havisham has towards Pip in the way she takes him down. Let him have something to eat, and let him go to his room and look about. Although Pip interprets her actions as being kind towards him, she speaks to, and responds when Estella calls him 'a common labouring boy' is also telling: 'I thought of an answer – only it seemed too good for me.' Well? You can break his heart." There are two things that you can read Miss Havisham's reply. The first suggests that she doesn't care about Pip's status, only that he is male and has a heart that can be broken. The second suggests that it doesn't matter if he has his heart broken because he is only a 'common labouring boy'. Either way, this response is our first hint of the fact that Miss Havisham is using Estella to hurt men as revenge for what happened to her.



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Exam extract focus

There is a **semantic field** of death and burial that runs throughout Chapter 10. Can you find it? What do they tell us about the nature of Miss Havisham's words that contribute to the semantic field in bold.

It was then I began to understand that **everything in the room had stopped**, like the clock. I noticed that Miss Havisham put down the jewel exactly on the spot from which she had taken it. As I glanced at the dressing-table again, and saw that the shoe upon it, once white, **now** was black, I glanced down at the foot from which the shoe was absent, and saw that the silk stocking on it had been trodden ragged. Without this arrest of everything, this standing still of all the **pale decorations**, the bridal dress on the **collapsed form** could have looked so like **graveclothes**, or the long veil so like a shroud. So she sat, **corpse-like**, as we played at cards; the frillings and trimmings on her bridal dress were like the frillings and trimmings on a coffin. I knew nothing then of the discoveries that are occasionally made of **bodies buried in ancient times** in the moment of being distinctly seen; but, I have often thought since, that she must have been struck by the natural light of day would have struck her to **dust**.



Essay Question

How does Dickens present the character of Miss Havisham here?

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Chapter 9

Upon his arrival home Pip is questioned by Joe, Mrs Joe and Uncle Pumblechook aware of how peculiar Miss Havisham is and doubts that anyone will believe him convinced that if I described Miss Havisham's as my eyes has seen it, I should not lies about her, saying she is 'tall and dark' and that she was sitting in a black velvet and wine on a gold plate by Estella. He then continues to invent a story about four veal cutlets in a silver basket. Later that day while in the smithy with Joe, the guilt Joe is amazed that he lied to him and tells him that the only way up is through hard work not forget Joe's wise recommendations but is still in a 'disturbed and unthankful' state Estella would think Joe. The narrator acknowledges the importance of that day in

Analysis

This chapter is important as we see our first indication that Pip is beginning to feel shame towards his background. He thinks that Estella would think Joe is 'a mere blacksmith'. We get a sense of his ambitious nature and his desire to 'be common' as a result of his visit to Satis House ('And I told Joe that I felt very miserable... and that there had been a beautiful young lady at Miss Havisham's who was dreadfully proud, and that she has said that I was common, and that I knew I was common, and that I wished that I was not common.').

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Chapter 10

In order to make himself 'un-common' and further himself in society Pip asks Biddy to go outside of school. That evening on the way home from school Pip goes to the village sitting with a stranger whom Pip notices is stirring his drink with the same file he saw the stranger gives Pip two one-pound notes and departs. Pip surrenders the money to his nightmares and is haunted by the image of the file, dreading that he still might be

Analysis

In this chapter, we become more aware of Pip's desire for self-improvement in society.

Pip's encounter with the stranger in the pub foreshadows events that are to come. The description of 'the stranger' creates a sense of foreboding: 'As I looked at the fire, I thought I saw a cunning expression, followed by a half laugh, come into his face.' By characterising him as a frightening figure, Dickens makes the reader more and more intrigued. His actions are an explicit example of foreshadowing ('He stirred his rum-and-water pointedly at me, and he tasted his rum-and-water pointedly at me. And he stirred it and he tasted it: not with a spoon that was brought to him, but with a file.'). Unfortunately for Pip at this stage he does not understand why this has happened and what it all means.

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Discussion Prompt

Discuss what is significant about the incident with the bank notes. How do we know that they are from the convict? What does the image of the bank notes signify? What does the incident tell us about Joe's personality?

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Chapter 11

Pip returns to Satis House and is led by Estella into a part of the house he has not been in before and in a room with four unknown people. After scrutinising him they turn back to their game. The four people that they are relatives of Miss Havisham come to visit for her birthday. All of them are wealthy. Estella rejoins Pip and they head upstairs to Miss Havisham. On the stairs Estella reproaches Pip. We discover later on in the novel that this is Jaggers who plays a role in the story.

In Miss Havisham's room Pip is asked to walk her round; as he is doing so the unknown people are brought into the room by Estella. Miss Havisham is dismissive of them and eventually sends them away. Miss Havisham has been in this 'heap of decay' for a very long time. Once again Estella and Pip resume their game of cards. Later, out in the garden, Pip comes across a 'pale young fellow' who challenges him to a fight. Pip obeys and wins and in return Estella allows him to kiss her cheek.

Analysis

Our understanding of the effect Estella's comments are having on Pip deepens in this chapter. We note the fact that he remains drawn to her. Estella's comments are badly affecting his self-esteem: 'I felt that the money that was given to the coarse common boy as a piece of money might have been, and that it was worth nothing.'

Discussion

What is the effect of Estella's comments on Pip? (who we first meet on the stairs? Discuss throughout the chapter.)

After Pip's experiences that day at Satis House, his description of seeing his home seems familiar and welcome to him: 'When I neared home the light on the spit of the marshes was gleaming against a black night sky, and Joe's furnace was flinging a glow that suggested that he is aware that his idea of fitting in with the people at Satis House was not to be, even though he cannot seem to help himself.'



Vocabulary Guide

Superciliously – sneeringly

Pervade – to fill completely

Sal Volatile – a compound used to revive a fainting fit

Stay-lace – a corset lace

Active Learning Task

Make notes comparing Pip's visit to Satis House on his first visit in Chapter 8. You should consider aspects: his impressions of the house and the people he meets there; how he feels before, during and after the visit.

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Chapter 12

Pip becomes increasingly worried about the consequences he may face as a result of the fight. He remarks that a young boy such as himself cannot go around hurting a gentleman. Fortunately, when he returns to Satis House the incident is not mentioned. Pip continues over the following months and pushes her around in a wheelchair. As their relationship develops, Pip reveals how he wishes to learn and know everything, hoping that she will help him. She does not. His affection towards Estella grows and Miss Havisham enjoys watching him. He begins confiding in her, but she drifts apart from his family. Up until this point Pip has been unable to understand why a lady would require his presence at her house. He begins to consider that it is because of his 'expectations' of her. He believes she wants to make him a gentleman and marry him. During his visits to Miss Havisham Pip learns that she wishes to help him become an apprentice. When Mrs Joe learns of the news she becomes hidden away in her room.

Analysis

In worrying about the consequences he might face as a result of the fight, Pip is aware of class boundaries and what they might mean for him for the first time. He is starting to have a realisation of the limitations of his class, realising that 'village boys could not go stalking about the country, ravaging the houses of gentlefolks and pitching into the studious youth of England, without laying themselves open to severe punishment.' Pip not only feels ashamed but also frustrated.



Vocabulary

Myrmidons of Jupiter – are turned into Myrmidons. They were brave and skilled warriors. In Greek Mythology, the Myrmidons were the soldiers of Achilles, the hero of the Trojan War.
Unremunerative – not providing enough money or reward.
Besought – ask for help or favour.

Discussion Prompt

Why do you think Pip is so ready to believe that Miss Havisham wants to make him a gentleman and see him married to Estella? Do you think it is reasonable for him to assume this?

As Pip now aspires to be with Estella, he has similar beliefs and values to her. He is now perceived as 'common'. However, Dickens uses the older narrator to influence the text and to show his feelings towards Joe. He writes that 'Joe offered to show us that the older narrator, looking back, is sorry for Joe despite his younger self's

Chapter 13

Joe dresses in his best clothes to make a visit to Satis House in order to arrange for Pip's apprenticeship. He tries his hardest to look good and act well purely for Pip's purposes. He is ashamed of him, especially when he sees Estella laughing at him. As a reward for his efforts, after several months Miss Havisham grants them 25 pounds. Joe, Mrs Joe and Pumblechook go to the town hall to verify the apprenticeship. Mrs Joe, particularly excited at the amount of money, invites Pumblechook, the Hubbles and Mr Wopsle to dinner. After the party Pip returns home angry with the strong knowledge that he will not enjoy being Joe's apprentice.

Analysis

At the beginning of the novel Pip is set apart from the other classes; he is a boy from a village. In this chapter, Miss Havisham thrusts him straight into the presence of the high social circles. He now understands that it is not just the way one acts that makes one 'upper class' but the cultural beliefs and understandings. He is repelled by Joe's attempt at smartening up in order to see Miss Havisham ('It was a trial to my feelings, on the next day but one, to see Joe arraying himself in his Sunday clothes to accompany me to Miss Havisham's') and this attitude is seen more frequently further on in the novel. It is clear in this chapter how influenced Pip has been by his experiences ('liked it once, but once was not now'). This shows how ambitious he has become, wishing to rise above Joe's trade.

Active Learning Task

Research how the system of apprenticeship worked in Dickens' time. You may want to use <https://www.bbc.com/history/11621-victorian-britain> or <https://www.bbc.com/history/11621-victorian-era>

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Chapter 14

This chapter focuses mainly on Pip's emotions rather than the action. He mentions feeling ashamed of home and we learn that despite being unhappy he has stayed on as an apprentice. However, often, when Joe sings a song that reminds Pip of Miss Havisham he sees Estella.

Analysis

Like Chapter 6, this short chapter allows us more of an insight into Pip's emotions. The feelings he experiences here are ones that he struggles with throughout the course of the novel ('It is the most miserable thing to feel ashamed of home.').

Discuss
Pip's
choice of
words



Vocabulary Guide

Retributive – well-deserved
Sanctified – made holy
Chaste – abstinent

The idea that holds Estella's face in the fire makes her seem devilish and seductive ('Often when I saw Joe, and we were singing Old Songs we used to sing it at Miss Havisham's would see the fire, with her pretty hair fluttering in the wind. Fire has connotations of hell and the devil and Estella's face in the fire may be an omen or a warning. This shows us the full extent of the hold she has on Pip.

Discussion Prompt

Explain the excerpt below. You might want to look at Dickens' choice of words and how this has been influenced by his recent circumstances.

I had believed in the forge as the glowing road to manhood and independence. Within a short time, however, it was all changed. Now, it was all coarse and common, and I would not have had Miss Havisham and Estella.

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Chapter 15

Pip still desires to be wise and gain knowledge and what he learns he tries to impart for selfish reasons for wanting Joe to learn, believing that if he makes him less 'common' Pip's company and less likely to be scorned by Estella. Pip, still thinking often of Estella, puts forward the idea to Joe that he should pay a visit. Joe is uncertain but his reluctance is eventually overcome and he allows Pip a half day. Pip introduces us to the journeyman Orlick with his vicious stories. Orlick, hearing that Pip is getting a half day requests one too but Joe does not consent immediately. He eventually allows a half holiday for all but scolds him. Orlick and Mrs Joe argue resulting in Joe having to fight Orlick. Joe wins and is left on the ground while he carries Mrs Joe, who has fainted, home. Pip finally returns to the gate, not by Estella, but by Sarah Pocket. He learns from Miss Havisham that the gloomy Pip, while walking fruitlessly along the high street, drops in to Mr Wopsle at Pumblechook's where they read a book. On the walk home with Mr Wopsle they hear the gunfire from the prison ships and then come across Orlick in the darkness. When Pip discovers that his sister, Mrs Joe has been viciously attacked and has been left badly injured.

Analysis

Pip battles in this chapter between his love for Joe and his love for Estella. The quotation 'Whatever I acquired, I tried to impart to Joe. This statement sounds so well, that I cannot in my conscience let it pass unexplained. I wanted to make Joe less ignorant and common, that he might be worthier of my society and less open to Estella's approach' shows this struggle. Though a seemingly selfless act, Pip admits to teaching Joe with the hope that if he succeeds in being an educated man he won't be looked down upon by Estella.

Ominous
improving
going
Foreboding
ominous
going

The book that Pip reads at Pumblechook's is entitled *The History of George Barnwell*, a real novel that shares many interesting parallels with *Great Expectations*. It tells the story of a young apprentice who falls in love with a beautiful, but evil, woman. Intertextual references help gain a deeper understanding of a certain situation. In this instance, readers with previous knowledge of *The History of George Barnwell* may become suspicious of Estella's character, the beautiful woman that Pip falls in love with.



Vocabulary Glossary

Sagacious – wise
Gridiron – a metal grid
Sprat – a type of small fish
Howbeit – how be it / nevertheless
there's some birds flown – some convicts have escaped

Active Learning Task

Write a newspaper report about the attack on Mrs Joe. You should make sure that you include the following information, as far as a reporter would be able to find out at this time: what happened, where it happened, who was involved. You should also include quotations from people the reporter might have spoken to: Pip, Joe, the police.



Dickens uses the sound of the gunfire from home to create dramatic tension and uses pathetic fallacy, using the weather to change in reflection. The quotation 'The fog did not clear and it fell wet and thick. The light of the lamp's usual place appeared as a substance on the fog. We were noticed as the mist rose with a change of wind from the marshes, when we came upon a man on a turnpike house' suggests that all is not as it seems. The 'out of the lamp's usual place' and the suggestion of a man among the mist, used here are also particularly ominous.

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Essay Question

How does Dickens present the character of Orlick?

Chapter 16

Pip learns the details of the crime. He learns that next to Mrs Joe's beaten body through leg-iron. Pip assumes the iron is his convict's iron but he does not accuse her either Orlick, because of the quarrel, or the strange man he met at the pub that she had stolen for his convict. The inept London detectives that come to solve the crime discovering who the attacker was and the case remains unsolved. Much to the relief into the house in order to become Mrs Joe's full-time carer. Mrs Joe struggles to cope and re-writing the letter 'T' upon a slate. Pip has trouble trying to determine its meaning out that Mrs Joe is drawing the shape of a hammer. The hammer represents Orlick. Pip's surprise Mrs Joe welcomes Orlick's company and is anxious to please him. At Orlick's presence.

Analysis

Pip's feelings of guilt are exemplified in two chapters. 'I was at first disposed to believe that I must have had some hand in the attack upon my sister.' These feelings then develop further: 'It was horrible to think that I had provided the instrument, however undesigned.'



Did you know? Detective fiction was a relatively new genre at the time Dickens wrote *Great Expectations*. Dickens himself wrote the first English novel featuring a detective when he created the character of Inspector Bucket in the novel *Bleak House* in 1852 (eight years before *Great Expectations*).



Assess
Tenses
Tenses
Conjunctions

Describe
Write
the



Exam extract focus

How does Dickens use satire in the following extract to convey his feelings?

They took up several obviously wrong people, and they ran their heads very hard against what was trying to fit the circumstances to the ideas, instead of trying to extract ideas from the circumstances about the door of the Jolly Bargemen, with knowing and reserved looks that filled the whole with admiration; and they had a mysterious manner of taking their drink, that was almost as good as not. But not quite, for they never did it.



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Chapter 17

Pip makes another visit to Satis House, this time on his birthday, but is once again notes how rigid and dull the house is and how strong its influence is over him. He returns home and his trade. Pip begins to notice a change in Biddy. She is not beautiful, but pleasant and sweet-natured girl. One Sunday afternoon Pip and Biddy go for a walk and Biddy confides in Pip and tells her how he is unhappy as a blacksmith's apprentice and how he wishes to win Estella's affection. It is obvious that Biddy has strong feelings for Pip and is so deeply infatuated with Estella. Biddy advises him not to pursue Estella but to stay with Orlick who begins flirting with Biddy, making Pip jealous.

Analysis

Satis House stands as a symbol to Pip of magnificence and mystery: 'So unchanging was the dull old house, the low light in the darkened room, the faded specter in the chair by the dressing-table glass, that I felt as if the stopping of the clocks had stopped Time in this mysterious place, and, while I and everything in the house grew older, it stood still... It bewildered me and under its influence I continued at heart to hate my trade and the aura surrounding it that is inexplicable. While Pip has a connection with that house, he has a settled connection with his own home. Regardless of what he is doing at any time, he always returns to his home. When he least expects it 'some comfort' from his Havisham days would fall upon me. This simile exemplifies the effect of Satis House on Pip. He still has great expectations of Miss Havisham 'perhaps after all [she] was going to be my time was out'.



Vocabulary

Capricious
Disaffected
Guinea
British post

Discussion Prompt

Why do you think Pip is jealous of Orlick flirting with Biddy when he thinks that she is 'not beautiful' but 'common, and could not be like Estella'?

In thinking about Biddy, Pip suggests that as she is common, she cannot be beautiful ('She was not beautiful—she was common, and could not be like Estella'). To Pip, beauty is linked to wealth. He is oblivious to Biddy's obvious feelings for him because he is so blinded by the love he has for Estella. When Pip says that he 'wish[es Biddy] could put [him] right', she replies 'I wish I could!'. The exclamation mark that punctuates her response hints at frustration and possibly anger.

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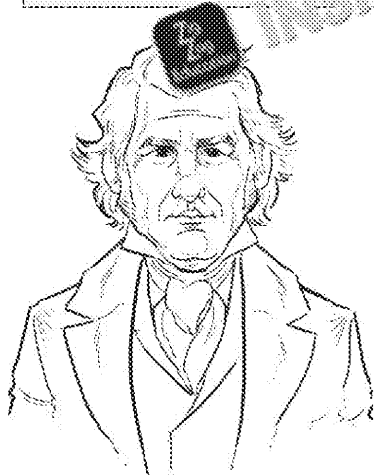
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Chapter 18

Pip has been an apprentice to Joe for four years. It is a Saturday night and a nun is listening to Mr Wopsle read aloud a recent murder case from the newspaper. Pip is amongst them who begins to question Mr Wopsle about the case he has been reading. He knows a lot about the legal system which is a hint towards his profession. Pip recognises the man he passed on the stairs on his second visit to Satis House. The stranger asks if he is amongst the company. He replies that he is and the stranger suggests they should go.

Back at the Gargery household the stranger introduces himself as Jaggers and reveals that Pip has inherited a great sum of money and should immediately migrate to London to become a gentleman. Pip immediately believes that Miss Havisham is the person responsible for his current difficulty communicating as his speech is so stuttered. He learns that his benefactor is not Miss Havisham but that he is going to be taught by 'Matthew Pocket'. Jaggers offers Joe money but Joe declines. Both Joe and Biddy congratulate him on his new status. As he looks at the two of them sitting by the fire he feels a great sense of relief to leave them. However, he becomes snobbish saying that the town will make 'such a difference' of the situation.



Analysis

The fact that Pip jumps to the conclusion that Miss Havisham is his benefactor is partly as a result of the fact that it is Jaggers, her lawyer, who tells him the news. However, he is also quick to believe her story because of his secret hope that her intention is to make him a gentleman who will be worthy of marrying Estella.

Discussion

Do you think Pip is a snob?



Vocabulary Guide

Abhorrent – despised

Timon of Athens – a tragedy by Shakespeare

Coriolanus – another tragedy by Shakespeare

Expostulatory – to reason with

Obtruded – imposed

Brag is a good dog, but Holdfast is a better dog – that it is better to keep quiet than to brag

Active Learning Task

With a partner, discuss the things you think Pip will need to be taught in order to become a gentleman. You may want to do some research into what people in the nineteenth century considered a gentleman to be.



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Chapter 19

Pip wakes up the next morning feeling bright and happy. However he is still acting towards people of his town as 'poor creatures' that will know nothing better than the life he has. He talks to Biddy in the garden about Joe which results in the two of them arguing. He wants to remove Joe from his current station and into a higher one. However, he believes Joe will not be received well. Biddy confronts Pip saying that Joe would be too proud to be sufficiently qualified for. Pip responds by saying that he thinks Biddy is envious of his speech, which angers Biddy. She returns to the house and Pip walks off into the garden.

The next morning Pip awakes happy again, he makes up with Biddy and goes into her belongings. After he has finished he agrees to lunch with Pumblechook. Pumblechook is affectionate towards Pip and feels honoured to be in his company. It is evident that Pip is moving for himself into the higher social circles. Pip asks if he can have his new clothes cleaned and have them picked up as he is ashamed of his village and wants to avoid people knowing.

Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday pass. It is Friday and Pip dresses himself in his new clothes to Miss Havisham. Pip is nervous about what words he uses as he wants to convey gratitude for providing him with his new life but does not want to say it **explicitly** for he knows it would be **anonymous**. After saying their goodbyes Pip returns home and has a hot dinner. In the evening he remarks how all three were in low spirits despite trying to act well. As he walks alone (he did not want to be seen with Joe) to catch his coach to London.

Analysis

Pip's attitude in this chapter is condescending and patronising, believing that one cannot be happy living a simple life like he had been before. This shows us a negative side to Pip's ambitious trait. He is already becoming materialistic, promising to throw a huge feast for the people of the village. This is not him showing compassion, however; it is a way that he can boast about his fortune.

Action
Pip's attitude towards the characters and the plot.

Dickens makes use of the older Pip as narrator here, presenting his conversation with Biddy in a way that ensures that readers will disapprove of his own actions and instead approve of Biddy and agree with her view of Joe. It is Dickens' language choice which affects the way that we feel about Pip here; for example, the fact that he speaks to Biddy in a 'virtuous and superior tone'.

Dialogue
Why does Pip speak to Biddy in this way?

Discussion Prompt

What is the tone in the last two pages of this chapter? How does Dickens create a sense of this?

Whereas before Pip strived for moral improvement, he now feels a lot of guilt in the earlier chapters. He believes that the improvement that he believes will result in a 'Farewell, monotonous acquaintances of the past for London and a new life.' To him London is a new life.

Explicit – refers to something that is obvious

Anonymous – means unknown

Despite the change in the setting, Dickens always keeps the convict at the back of our minds, particularly in places where Pip is.

Pip is now living on his fortune and new circumstances: 'If I had often thought before, with something allied to shame, of my companionship with the fugitive whom I had once seen limping among those graves, what were my thoughts on this Sunday, when the place recalled the wretch, ragged and shivering, with his felon iron and badge!'



Example
Clear and concise writing style.

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Volume Two: Chapters 20–

Chapter 20

Pip makes the trip to London where he is scared by its immensity and disgusted by it. It makes a stark contrast to the countryside that Pip as a young 'labouring boy' has arrived at Mr Jaggers' law firm and is escorted by his clerk into Jaggers' office. He looks over the curious items on the shelves and then, overcome by heat and dirt, decides to go out. By the clerk, Pip takes a look around Smithfield, the famous meat market. He is disgusted by the 'filth and blood and foam' that he finds there. Eventually he ends up around the front of the queue of other people waiting for Mr Jaggers' assistance. Jaggers throws the book at him, the building where he meets Jaggers' clerk, Wemmick, for the first time.

Analysis

As we have seen earlier in the novel, London represents greatness and social advancement for Pip. However, his first impressions of it are displeasing, and he overestimated what it would be like: '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.'

Active Learning Task

Write a piece of descriptive writing in the third person about one or more of the places Pip sees in London. Try to include multi-sensory descriptions, i.e. sights, sounds, smells, etc. Try also to think of your own similes/metaphors to describe the place.

At this stage in the novel, Pip is as innocent as he begins his time to enjoy the coach and straw-yard it was, and yet to wonder why the horse

Chapter 21

Wemmick takes Pip to West London where he introduces him to Herbert Pocket, who Pip will stay for the night. The two immediately become fond of one another and Pip is to stay. We learn that Herbert is self-sufficient; unlike Pip he has to earn his own money. Pip is astonished, that they have met previously. Herbert is the 'pale young gentleman' in the garden of Satis House.

Analysis

Dickens further demonstrates Pip's naivety and innocence with his nervous apprehension about London: 'Is it a very wicked place?' Unsurprisingly, Wemmick has nothing to console him at first.

Also in this chapter we get a sense of gender roles in Victorian society. Pip 'judge[s] Herbert' to be a bachelor from the frayed condition of his linen'. This quote reinforces the idea of a woman's role in society. Her place would have been in the household looking after the house and family.



Vocabulary Guide

Mottled – spotted
Frouzy – musty

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Chapter 22

Herbert and Pip quickly establish a tight friendship. Herbert tells him that as a young man he was introduced to Miss Havisham as a playmate for Estella. He assumed she intended for him to marry her, but we know that she never had that idea in mind. It seems she chose Pip over Herbert. Herbert gives Pip the nickname of Handel and delicately corrects Pip's poor table manners.

He then goes on to tell Pip of Miss Havisham's tortured history. We learn that Miss Havisham was a proud girl whose mother died when she was a baby and whose father married a woman who was in love with the cook. When the father died he left most of his inheritance to his daughter, Estella, and his son, Arthur, furious. Miss Havisham, a young and rich heiress was pursued by a shadowy figure, her brother out with money. Miss Havisham was smitten with this man and they became lovers. One day arrived and the young Miss Havisham, while getting ready for her big day, was waiting at 20 minutes to nine. The wedding is called off and she puts herself away, never to be seen again. Pip also discovers that Estella is adopted and Herbert tells Pip that Miss Havisham has a revenge on all the male sex'. The next day Pip makes a visit to Herbert's home at Drummle's.

Analysis

Dickens shows the closeness of the friendship between Pip and Herbert in this chapter. Herbert gives Pip the nickname 'Handel' asking him 'Would you mind Handel for a familiar name? There's a charming piece of music by Handel, called The Harmonious Blacksmith?' This marks a strong connection between the two that will continue to grow through the novel.

Light imagery is used throughout the book to symbolise love and happiness; therefore, there is greater significance in the way Miss Havisham keeps herself in darkness.

Discussion

What is the significance of the light imagery in the way Miss Havisham keeps herself in darkness?

Discussion Prompt

Why do you think Dickens presents the character of Mrs Pocket in the way he does?

Mrs Pocket, along with her two nuns, provides the reader with slapstick comedy that is very exaggerated and over-the-top.

Active Learning Task

Write a short paragraph in your own words of Miss Havisham's life story in a similar style to the following:

Miss Havisham is a bitter old woman, jilted at the altar on her wedding day by...

This has left her feeling...

As a result she now vows to...

She has a daughter, Estella, who is similarly...

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Chapter 23

The next day, Pip meets Matthew Pocket, his new tutor and Herbert's father. Mr Pocket introduces him to two other students, Bentley Drummle and Startop. Once again, witness some more slapstick comedy at the expense of Mrs Pocket's baby.

Analysis

Drummle's and Startop's actions suggest the nature of their characters. 'Drummle, an old-looking young man of a heavy order of architecture, was whistling', which connotes ideas of superiority or indifference to Pip. 'Startop, younger in years and appearance, was reading and holding his head, as if he thought himself in danger of exploding it with too strong a charge of knowledge', suggesting that he is quiet and intelligent.

Active Learning Task
Complete a character profile for Bentley Drummle. You should include anything we know about him at this point, i.e. facts but also impressions of his personality (use quotations).

Dickens shows us the difficulty that Pip is having learning some of the upper-class traits such as table manners. The quote 'While I was attentive to my knife and fork, spoon, glasses, and other instruments of self-destruction' suggests objects, if misused, could potentially destroy the gentleman that he is trying to create.

Discuss
Why
and

Chapter 24

Pip sets off to visit Jaggers with the intention of finalising his plans to move in with Jaggers' clerk Wemmick and is invited to dinner with him. Wemmick also offers him a job in the courtroom. Pip notices how powerful and domineering Jaggers is, especially in the courtroom.

Analysis

Dickens demonstrates here the effect that Jaggers has on Pip: 'This strongly marked way of doing business made a strongly marked impression on me, and that not of an agreeable kind.' He also uses pathetic fallacy again, to enhance the characterisation of Jaggers ('He sometimes caused the boots to creak, as if they laughed in a dry and suspicious way').

Discuss
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get



Discussion Prompt
How does our opinion of Mr Jaggers develop in this chapter?

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Chapter 25

The sluggish, disagreeable Bentley Drummle is presented to us by Pip as a boy with family members in the country. They nursed his terrible qualities until they realised the boy, sending him to Mr Pocket to be taught otherwise. The feminine Startop who is his mother for much of his life was a lot more agreeable and Pip befriends him quite easily. He remains his most 'intimate companion and friend'. Pip continues his education and meets Herbert and Mr Pocket.

Having not heard from Wemmick for a while Pip sends him a letter inviting himself to dinner and asks Pip to meet him at his office at six in the evening. Pip is led to the house of his 'Aged Parent'. He discovers it has been decorated to look like a castle; it even has a moat up and 'cut off the communication' with the outside world. Pip thoroughly enjoys his time there and the change in Wemmick's personality. Whereas at work he is stiff and cynical, at home he is warm and cheerful.

Analysis

Dickens shows the problems associated with people trying to move up the rigid class structure in Victorian England. The quote 'These people hated me with the hatred of cupidity and disappointment' shows this. The fact that they are disappointed hints at their dislike of Pip transcending the class boundaries from a lowly blacksmith to a genteel man in high society.

Discussion Prompt

How does Walworth, Wemmick's castle, reflect his personality?

Again here, we see the older narrator in the narrative: 'I had an affection for the road as it was then.'



Exam extract focus

Dickens has been criticised for 'over-the-top', unbelievable characters. In this chapter Dickens has used metaphor and caricature to personify the characters. Highlight instances in the extracts below where this has been done and write a sentence explaining the effect.

Bentley Drummle, who was so sulky a fellow that he even took up a book as if its writer had been up an acquaintance in a more agreeable spirit. Heavy in figure, movement, and comprehension of his face, and in the large awkward tongue that seemed to loll about in his mouth as he him idle, proud, niggardly, reserved, and suspicious. He came of rich people down in Somersetshire. A combination of qualities until they made the discovery that it was just of age and a blockhead. He came to Mr Pocket when he was a head taller than that gentleman, and half a dozen heads taller than that gentleman's wife.

... (Drummle) would always creep in-shore like some uncomfortable amphibious creature, and he would creep fast upon his way; and I always think of him as coming off a boat in the dark or by the light of the boats were breaking the sunset or the moonlight in mid stream.

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Chapter 26

Pip and his friends are invited to dine at the house of Mr Jaggers. In contrast to the house of Mr Jaggers, which is dark and gloomy and shared only with his housekeeper, Molly, Pip notices that Mr Jaggers pays attention to Drummle and enjoys trying to tease a response out of him. Drummle is proud of his muscles and to boasting about himself until it becomes a ridiculous competition between the two. Molly comes to clear away the dishes and as she does so is asked by Mr Jaggers to show her wrists. She is desperate not to but eventually forced into showing them. They are marked with scars, but we do not discover why. Pip confronts Drummle about his borrowing money from Mr Jaggers and a quarrel. Later Jaggers warns Pip to stay away from Drummle in the future.

A month after the events we learn that Drummle's tutorage with Matthew Pocket has ended and he has returned back home, much to Pip's relief and joy.

Analysis

The fact that Pip dwells on the nature of Molly more than he would on any other minor character is a sign of Molly's significance in the book.

Discuss Prompt

Think about the character Molly.
What is suspicious about her?

Pip notices that Jaggers has an obsession with the lower classes and takes this opportunity of remarking that he was 'a surgeon or a dentist.' Here, Dickens refers to the lower classes as disease, something

Dickens makes a specific intertextual reference to Shakespeare's *Macbeth* in this chapter. He describes how any diseased affection of the heart caused her lips to be parted as if she were passing a curious expression of suddenness and flutter; but I know that I had been to see Mr Jaggers two before, and that her face looked to me as if it were all disturbed by fiery air, as if it were of the Witches' caldron.' The witches in the first scene of *Macbeth* foretell of the future. By alluding to this scene Dickens hints at bad things to come; he uses it as an omen.

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Chapter 27

Pip receives a letter from Biddy notifying him of Joe's intention to come to London. He reacts to the news as he is scared of how he will be received. However he is relieved Joe is coming as there is little opportunity of him bumping into Bentley Drummle. Pip is noticeably nervous of his habits and becomes increasingly annoyed at him making it difficult for Joe to tell him the truth. However Pip's countenance greatly changes when he learns of Estella's return to London and he speaks to her.

Analysis

Dickens again uses pathetic fallacy here, using the weather to reflect Pip's apprehensive and gloomy mood: 'Unfortunately the morning was drizzly, and an angel could not have concealed the fact that Mr. Barnard was shedding sooty tears outside the window. Like some weak giant of a Sweep.'

Active Learning Task

Write a letter from Joe to Biddy telling her about his visit to London and giving his impressions of Pip.

Joe's visit to London re-establishes the social hierarchy and marks the stark differences, not only in class but also in such as the mode of address Joe employs to Pip, his supposed inferiority. However, Joe is described as 'Pip, how AIR you, Pip.' Dickens uses phonetic spelling to show the exact way it is being spoken. Joe makes his final home as a goodbye and a message to Pip.

Pip, dear old chap, life is made of ever so many partings welded together, as I may say, one's a blacksmith, and one's a whitesmith, and one's a goldsmith, and one's a coppersmith, and they all come, and must be met as they come. If there's been any fault at all to-day, it's mine. It's my figures to be together in London; nor yet anywheres else but what is private, and that's among friends. It ain't that I am proud, but that I want to be right, as you shall need the best clothes. I'm wrong in these clothes. I'm wrong out of the forge, the kitchen, or off the street. I find half so much fault in me if you think of me in my forge dress, with my hammer in my hand, as I find half so much fault in me if, supposing as you should ever wish to see me, you were to see me at the forge window and see Joe the blacksmith, there, at the old anvil, in the old but for the old work.

Discussion Prompt

What feelings do we have towards Joe in this chapter?

It is said in a way that is understandable to a blacksmith. For example 'welded together'. He also references class and status, which is what he knows best, ranging from the most expensive and most common to the least expensive and most common. He shows his goodness by not blaming Pip for his awkwardness in nature and society.

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Chapter 28

Pip travels home in order to see Miss Havisham but convinces himself that he must rather than with Joe. He must travel home in a coach which is occupied by two convicts as the stranger in the pub that stirred his drink with Pip's stolen file and on awakening from a light sleep Pip overhears the convict recalling that same night. On alight from the coach but is certain the prisoner does not recognise him so stays on to his hotel he feels a great sense of dread and fear like he had done as a young man and while he waits to dine reads the local newspaper. He learns that Pumblechook is the provider of Pip's fortune.

Analysis

Dickens shows us here that Pip's feelings of fear and guilt have again returned: 'I could not have said what I was afraid of, but my fear was altogether undefined and vague, but it was a great fear upon me.' This shows us that Pip's feelings of fear and guilt have again returned.

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Discussion Prompt

How does Pip react to finding out that Pumblechook is taking the credit for his fortune?

We know little at this stage of Magwitch's nature but Dickens hints at his innate compassion when the two convicts discuss him and refer to him as a 'green one', meaning a good and innocent person.



Exam extract focus

How does Dickens use language to present Pip's fear of the convicts in sections in bold.

At length, it was voted that there was no help for the angry gentleman, and that he must remain behind. So, he got into his place, still making complaints, and the keeper got into the cart, and the convict and I hauled ourselves up as well as they could, and **the convict I had recognized sat behind me, his head close to my hair of my head.**

'Good-bye, Handel!' Herbert called out as we started. **I thought what a blessed fortune it was to have another name for me than Pip.**

It is impossible to express with what acuteness I felt the convict's breathing, not only in my ears, but all along my spine. The sensation was like being touched in the marrow with some hot iron. It set my very teeth on edge. He seemed to have more breathing business to do than I, and more noise in doing it; and I was conscious of growing high-shouldered on one side, in order to fend him off.

But I must have lost it longer than I had, for I did not see him, although I could recognize nothing but the shadows of our lamps, I was in a strange country in the cold damp wind that blew at us. To make me a screen against the world, the convicts were closer to me than before. **The very interchanges of conversation became conscious were the words of my own thought, 'Two On**

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Chapter 29

Pip is still certain that Miss Havisham intends for him to marry Estella. He romanticises his life in the future marrying Estella and restoring Satis House. He makes his way through the fog and bumps into Orlick who he learns has been employed by Miss Havisham as the pauper's friend.

Pip makes his way to Miss Havisham's room where he meets Estella for the first time and is astounded by her beauty only managing to stammer a few words of greeting before she only warns that 'she has no heart'. Miss Havisham is scornful toward him, saying 'love her, love her!' which Pip misinterprets as a sign that she intends him and Estella to be together. He leaves Satis House and that night reflects upon Miss Havisham's words.



Analysis

This is an important chapter as Estella is reintroduced into Pip's life. Worryingly she brings her when he was a young boy. Estella as we now know that he has caused damage caused by Miss Havisham.

We also see a marked difference between what the young Pip feels and how the narrator feels. He reflects on his attitude towards Joe at this time:

'But I never thought there was anything in keeping away from Joe, because I was so contemptuous of him. It was brought the tears into my eyes, but I forgive me! soon dried.' The 'older narrator who evidently has changed his self's attitudes towards Joe. He reflects on his feelings towards Estella, using the words Miss Havisham would use: 'There is something between us, to remove her from me at the same age, though of course it is a harder case than in mine; but the air of her beauty and her manner gave me a sense of my delight, and at the height of the assurance I felt that our patroness had chosen the Wretched boy!' This shows how strong Miss Havisham's influence over Pip has been.

Active Learning Task

There is a strong semantic field of fairy tales and witchcraft. Make a list of the examples in this chapter and explain what they portray about Estella, Miss Havisham and Pip's relationships.

of my delight, and at the height of the assurance I felt that our patroness had chosen the Wretched boy!' This shows how strong Miss Havisham's influence over Pip has been.

There is a strong **semantic field** of witchcraft, magic and mystery in this chapter. The effect of this is an evil aura that surrounds Miss Havisham and a beguiling, mysterious aura surrounding Estella. Estella is portrayed as enchanting, suggesting that Pip's feelings for her are heavily under her control: 'But, in the funereal room, with that figure in the grave for a pillow, and the chair fixing its eyes upon her, Estella looked more bright and I was under a stronger enchantment.' Miss Havisham's plea to Pip to love Estella furthering the theme of witchcraft in this chapter: 'Love her, love her, love her! It will wound you, love her. If she teases you, love her. If she gets older and stronger it will tempt you, love her!' Pip reflects that 'If she had said hate instead of love—despair—would not have sounded from her lips' suggesting that Miss Havisham is trying to make Pip love Estella in spite of himself.

Discussion Prompt

How do you think Pip feels? Choose two emotions from the list below and explain your reasons for choosing them:
overwhelmed, nervous, upset, inferior, superior, equal, scared, joyful, excited

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Chapter 30

The next day Pip resolves to tell Jaggers of Orlick's past and Jaggers has him find out where Orlick lives. He goes to town and comes across the tailor's apprentice who humiliates him in the streets. He is then taken home by Herbert. He confesses his love for Estella to him but Herbert tells him that Miss Havisham never intended for him to be betrothed to Estella. He also reveals that Miss Havisham was secretly engaged to a girl named Clara that he cannot marry yet as he is too poor.

Analysis

Dickens shows again here Pip's snobbery and unwillingness to be associated with Joe: 'It was too early yet to go to Miss Havisham's, so I loitered into the country on Miss Havisham's side of town—which was not Joe's side.'



Discussion Prompt

What do you think is meant by Herbert accusing Pip of 'looking at our gift-horse's mouth with a magnifying glass'?

Dickens also comments on the law in this way, when he suggests Jaggers seek authority over others because of his size. He seems to like to see him argue the question.



Exam extract focus

How does Herbert's relationship with Clara contrast with Pip's relationship with Estella?

Chapter 31

Pip and Herbert go to the theatre to watch Mr Wopsle act in a very bad performance of the tragedy *Hamlet*. After the play the three of them eat back at Pip and Herbert's home. Pip is humiliated by the tailor's apprentice and goes to bed miserable dreaming that his expectations have been cancelled.

Analysis

The specific intertextual reference to Shakespeare's *Hamlet* reflects the fact that the play is a story of despair, betrayal and tragedy (much like *Great Expectations* could be seen to be).

Discussion: How does the play reflect the increasing despair of the novel?



Vocabulary Guide

Derisively – sneeringly
Diadem – a crown
Droll – strangely comical
Divesting – removing
Approbation – approval

One of the morals in this story is the idea that happiness is fleeting. Dickens epitomises this notion in this chapter when Pip goes to bed after all his carefully thought of expectations have been cancelled.

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Chapter 32

Pip receives a letter from Estella requesting his presence at the coach office the following day. While he is waiting for her he encounters Wemmick. As Pip has already decided to accompany Wemmick to Newgate Prison where the clerk plans to talk amongst the prisoners with ease and seems to enjoy his time there. Pip returns to Estella arrive and is troubled by her likeness to someone he can't quite place.

Analysis

Themes of crime and criminality run through the book and Pip's visit to Newgate is an important part of this. He reflects on this observing that 'I consumed the whole time in thinking how strange it was that I should be encompassed by all this taint of prison and crime'. Dickens uses the theme as morality and social class, the two traits that Pip has difficulty balancing. Magwitch is a criminal as he is a criminal. At first he is a villain but when he is reintroduced later in the book we see how compassionate he actually is. At the other end of the spectrum is Estella, who is beautiful and rich but nasty. Dickens used the contrast to emphasise how social class can give you happiness.

Discussion Prompt

How does Pip's visit to the prison appear in contrast with Estella?

Active Learning Task

Find out more about Newgate Prison and what happened to prisoners sentenced to death with the following websites:

zzed.uk/11621-newgate1

zzed.uk/11621-newgate2

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Chapter 33

Estella still treats Pip arrogantly but shows him a little more affection that she had before. He could see 'Miss Havisham's influence in the change'. This encourages Pip's belief that they should marry. Estella has been given directions to stay at a house in Richmond with the social circles there. She reveals how tortured she is inside as a result of growing up in Satis House. After having some tea, they start their journey to Richmond where Estella is dropped off. Pip feels miserable and returns to the Pockets' house in Hammersmith.

Analysis

Throughout the book despite her coldness and arrogance we cannot hate Estella. We know that her personality and haughty character are the consequences of Miss Havisham's selfish desire to seek revenge on men and, therefore, we sympathise with her. When she talks about growing up in Satis House, her repetition of the phrase 'you were not' suggests a jealousy of Pip for the fact that he has not had to suffer the effects she has had to. The first time we see Estella, we are introduced to her emotions and her history. She is implicitly explaining her coldness for her cold-heartedness and meanness. She is using it as a way to tell Pip that she does not feel compassion. However, the first action Pip does is kiss her on the cheek.

Discussion Prompt

How do you feel about Estella and Miss Havisham? Does what you know of the reasons for their behaviour make you feel more sympathetic towards them? Why or why not?

Estella talks about the fact that both she and Pip are not in control of their own destinies. 'We have no choice, you and I, but to obey our instructions' and 'We are not free to follow our own devices, you and I.' Pip hopes she is referring to Miss Havisham's plans for their marriage, but she is referring to how she is bound to Miss Havisham and must do as she instructs, while Pip is bound by his benefactor who provides him with money and insists he become a gentleman. Estella is imprisoned by Miss Havisham.

Despite this, the reader is also led to feel mixed emotions for the spinster Miss Havisham. We cannot hate her for loving someone so strongly that when her heart is broken she is irreversibly broken and forever in a state of misery and disarray.

Active Learning Task

Write a diary entry as if you were Estella, giving her perspective on the time she spends with Pip in the country.



Exam extract focus

How does Dickens present the character of Estella here?

In her furred travelling-dress, Estella seemed more delicately beautiful than she had ever seemed before. Her manner was more winning than she had cared to let it be to me before, and I thought I saw a change.

We stood in the Inn Yard while she pointed out my luggage to me, and when it was all counted, she forgot everything but herself in a moment - that I knew nothing of her destination.

"I am going to Richmond," she told me. "Our lesson is, that there are two Richmonds, one that mine is, and one that yours is. The distance is ten miles. I am to have a carriage, and you are to pay my charges out of it. Oh, you must take the purse! We have no choice, we are not free to follow our own devices, you and I."

As she looked at me in giving me the purse, I hoped there was an inner meaning in her words, but not with displeasure.

"A carriage will have to be sent for, Estella. Will you rest here a little?"

"Yes, I am to rest here a little, and I am to drink some tea, and you are to take care of me. She drew her arm through mine, as if it must be done, and I requested a waiter who had been who had never seen such a thing in his life, to show us a private sitting-room."

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Chapter 34

In this chapter Pip reflects on his terrible behaviour towards Joe and Biddy and believes that if he had never have been introduced to Miss Havisham he would have 'honest' forge alongside Joe. Pip falls in to debt and brings Herbert down with him. He continues to spend copious amounts of money. As Herbert and Pip settle down to life in the border and seal falls through the letter box. In it is written the news that Mrs Joe's presence is requested at her funeral the next Monday.

Analysis

These past few chapters Pip's spirits have been noticeably down. Ironically his rise in society has led to his decline emotionally. His great expectations have not led to happiness as he has not yet, but to pain and misery as he struggles with debt and his unreciprocated love for Estella. His feelings of guilt have been reinforced – an indication that being rich is not happiness ('As I had grown accustomed to my expectations, I had insensibly begun to disguise myself and those around me. Their influence was disguised from my recognition as much as that it was not all good. I lived in a state of guilt for my behaviour to Joe.'). He also feels guilty of his influence on Herbert Pocket: 'My lavish expenses that he could not afford, corrupted his peace with anxieties and re-



Discuss Prompt

What impression does Dickens give us of Pip and Herbert in this chapter?
How does the older narrator affect the impression we get here?

Chapter 35

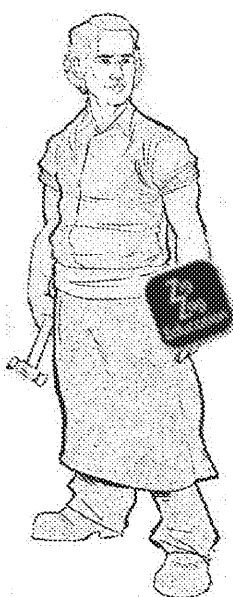
Pip welcomes the death of his sister as the image of her sitting in her chair by the fire haunting him. He returns home for the funeral where he finds Joe who is noticeably keeping the house in order. After the funeral Joe, Pip and Biddy have a cold dinner. The atmosphere is strained as Joe is evidently trying to please Pip at the table with his food. After dinner when Pip requests to sleep in his old bed Joe relaxes and is pleased with the request. Before bed, Pip and Biddy converse in the garden. He asks about Orlick pursuing Biddy and regularly watches her from behind a tree in the garden. Pip promises to do something about it.

Pip also promises to come back and visit Joe regularly as he will now be living alone. He is apprehensive and questions the likeliness of him doing so. Pip is shocked but deep-

Analysis

The conversation between Pip and Biddy shows us that Biddy is aware of Pip's attitude towards them now that he has money. She refers to her situation and how she believes Pip thinks it inferior to hers ('"Ah! Except in my bad side of human nature," murmured Biddy.'). We also get the sense that even though everything at home has changed, it is also the same as well. This is shown in Biddy's emphasis on the word 'used': '"No, don't echo," I retorted. "You used not to echo me." "O Mr Pip! Used."'

Dickens draws the chapter to a close using the weather to reflect uncertainty and ambiguity again, as he has done throughout the whole book: 'Once more, the mists were rising as I walked away. If they disclosed to me, as I suspect they did, that I should not come back, and that Biddy was quite right, all I can say is—they were quite right too.'



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Chapter 36

Pip looks forward to his 21st birthday believing that his benefactor will be revealed where he is told that he will receive a regular income from his benefactor until he dies. Pip is incredibly excited and relieved and asks repeatedly if his benefactor will be revealed. Unsurprisingly, he refuses to answer. Pip still entertains the idea that Miss Havisham is his benefactor.

Analysis

Dickens continues to make sure that the convict is still in our minds, especially at times when Pip is discussing money or his anonymous benefactor: 'As I sat down, and he preserved his attitude and bent his brows at his boots, I felt at a disadvantage, which reminded me of that old time when I had been put upon a tombstone.'

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Discussion Prompt

Why do you think Dickens keeps referring back to Pip's encounter with the convict? Is this an effective strategy?

We hear in this chapter for the first time that Pip desires to help Herbert in his quest for commercial life ("This friend," I pursued, "is trying to get on in commercial life. He finds it difficult and disheartening to make his way, and I want to somehow to help him to a beginning." "If he is so behaved," Dickens suggests here that he

Chapter 37

Pip visits Wemmick at his home in Walworth the next day to discuss his intentions to take a small yearly income and buy him partnership in a firm. Previously whilst in Jaggers' office for the same advice but he advises against it. However at home he offers the opportunity to find a young merchant in search of money and a partner. Herbert is ecstatic at his name of the person he will be working in partnership with, and Pip feels quietly satisfied to do so.

Analysis

Dickens uses the older narrator here to create foreboding: 'A great event in my life, the turning point of my life, now opens on my view. But, before I can proceed to narrate it, and before I pass on to all the challenges it involved, I must give one chapter to Estella. It is not too much to give to

Discussion Prompt

Why do you think Pip wished to remain anonymous when helping out Herbert?

the theme that so long filled my heart. I do not know what 'the turning point' of his life is, but I know how strong his feelings for Estella are. This is written as an example again of the older narrator's view of his younger self.

This chapter is the first time we see Miss Skiffins. We can assume from Pip's description of her appearance that she is going to be a comical character: 'In her dress from the waist upward, both before and behind, made her figure very like a boy's kite; and I might have pronounced her gown a little too decidedly orange, and her gloves a little too intensely green.'

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Chapter 38

This chapter is dedicated to Pip's time with and feelings for Estella, 'the theme that describes how when he dies he would not be surprised if his spirit haunted the house (staying) because his mind so frequently imagines what Estella is doing there.

Pip accompanies Estella to parties, fêtes, and dinners but she still treats him with contempt and warns him about her inability to love. She tells him that Miss Havisham wishes him to marry her. It is on this visit to Satis House that Pip fully realises Miss Havisham's twisted intention: to use Estella to wreak revenge on men and that Pip, himself, was only part of the plan. For the first time we experience part of Estella's nature that we have never seen before. Miss Havisham cannot break men's hearts but it results in Estella treating her as coldly as she treats men. Estella cannot understand how she can act that way towards her after all she has done for her. Miss Havisham becomes gradually upset and irritated: her health declines, Estella holds her contempt for her, and we finally discover the full extent and motive of Miss Havisham's wish for revenge. Pip wanders around the ruined garden until he is late enough to return. When he does, he finds Estella in peace, with Estella finding some of the stitches of Miss Havisham's dress. Pip returns to Satis House but, haunted by the memory of Miss Havisham and unable to sleep, he decides to leave. He can clear his mind no more. On his way he sees Miss Havisham walking back and forth, moaning and crying. It is not until daylight comes that he is able to find his way back to the city. The things seen and felt between the two women, though Pip senses fear from Miss Havisham, are

At a dinner party where Drummle is also part of the company Pip discovers to his surprise that Estella is his half-sister. Pip tries to warn her of Drummle's nature and reputation but she does not listen. Pip imagines that his future is a heavy slab of stone about to come crashing down on him.

Analysis

The opening paragraph, with Pip reflecting on what might happen after his death, is morbid and sets the tone for the action that follows.

In the section at Satis House, Dickens makes use of the metaphor of light and dark when it comes to Miss Havisham. Estella makes a long speech where she tells Miss Havisham about love. She explains that Miss Havisham first raised her expectations by telling her about sunlight and then expected her to understand it despite knowing the metaphor to mean that it was as though Miss Havisham told her about sunlight and then reacted with resentment and disappointment when Estella did not naturally understand the metaphor. The metaphor is an apt one as Miss Havisham shields herself from daylight. Estella concludes that she is only what Miss Havisham made her.

Discussion Prompt

Why do you think Estella doesn't listen to Pip when he tries to warn her about Drummle?

The description of Miss Havisham in red on the ground, reflecting death: 'Miss Havisham lay upon the ground, among the other bridal sights to see.' It implies that she has given up and revealed to her the horrid outcome of her revenge on men and Miss Havisham sees

We also get the first indication in this chapter that Estella respects Pip: "Do you turn suddenly with a fixed, serious, if not angry look, 'to deceive and entrap him, Estella?'" "Yes," and many others—all of them but you. Here is Mrs. Br. cannot bring herself to be false and lie about her feelings to him because she can never love him because she is unable to do so.

Pip uses a heavy slab of stone hanging above his head to symbolise how uncertain the work, near and afar, that tended to the end, had been accomplished; and in a and the roof of my stronghold dropped upon me.' This quote suggests that all the leading up to his future with Estella but now that is unlikely and suddenly his future



Essay Question

How does Dickens present the relationship between Miss Havisham and

Chapter 39

Summary

Time has moved on and Pip is now 23. He has moved into a new area where he is currently living alone now that Herbert has moved to France for business. It happens that one wet and stormy night Pip hears a footstep upon the stair outside his apartment. He opens the door to find a man that he cannot identify; however the stranger seems pleased and amazed to see him. Finally Pip recognises him as his convict and is astonished but also horrified that he has made an appearance. From the convict Pip learns how his situation came to be. The convict, Magwitch, was sent away to Australia where he made a huge fortune as a sheep farmer. Pip's compassion towards him when they first met in the misty churchyard moved him to such an extent that he returned his gratitude by using his money to make Pip a gentleman. Pip cannot believe that the convict, Miss Havisham, is his secret benefactor and that she was never intended to marry Estella at all.

Discussion

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Active Learning

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Analysis

This chapter brings together all the themes and action of Volume Two.

Dickens foreshadows what might happen in this chapter using the weather, as he describes a wretched weather; stormy and wet, stormy and wet; mud, mud, mud, deep in all night has definite negative connotations.

He also hints at who the unknown person is that Pip is about to encounter from the description 'he had long iron-gray hair'. The 'iron gray' hair is a clue as the iron is a reference to a convict's leg iron.

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Volume Three: Chapters 40

Chapter 40

While pondering over what to do about his unwanted guest (the convict), Pip stuns his apartment. Bizarrely the stranger eludes his touch and will not talk. Pip runs for return the suspicious stranger has disappeared. Pip questions the watchman to try learns that a second man in 'dust-coloured' clothes also entered a little after Pip's the two to be together. The convict finally introduces himself as Provis, though his The two men converse and Pip finally learns a little bit about his benefactor's background. Magwitch did not enter with anybody else he knew. Pip is anxious to keep Magwitch learns he is still wanted by the police and will be hanged if he is found. Much to that he can easily disguise himself and plan to stay with Pip for good. He is very Magwitch and is intensely curious to know the crime he committed. For clarity of trip to Jaggers. Jaggers assures him that Magwitch is his benefactor and that Miss

One night, as Magwitch is napping, Herbert enters and is introduced to Pip's unwanted guest.

Analysis

The change in the convict's name adds deeply to the change in his character. No longer is he the wicked-sounding 'Magwitch' but the newly named 'Provis' which connotes ideas of providence, provision and goodness. However, Pip's description of him eating like 'an old dog' echoes the description of Magwitch eating the food in Chapter 3 'just like the dog'. This suggests that, unlike Pip, Magwitch has



Discussion Prompt

What options do you think are open to Pip at this point? What might he decide to do about Magwitch?

Magwitch is presented as a compassionate wealth to another in order to make the country fur to see my gentleman spend That'll be my pleasure. My pleasure 'ull do it.' However, he also says 'blast you everyone, from the judge in

his wig, to the colonist a stirring up the dust, I'll show a better gentleman than the whole kit on you put together!', suggesting that perhaps he has other reasons for making Pip a gentleman. He wishes to prove something to the higher classes in society; he wants to prove that he, a convict, can make a villager a gentleman and that he earned enough to do so honestly.

Chapter 41

That night while Magwitch is out walking Pip and Herbert discuss the situation and to the conclusion that Pip will cease spending Magwitch's money and the two of the country. Pip also tells Herbert how he first met Magwitch in the marshes and the convict. The two men discuss Magwitch about this incident and he sits down to tell

Analysis

Dickens creates an atmosphere of tension in this chapter. Pip conveys his own fears ('Never quite free from an uneasy remembrance of the man on the stairs, I had always looked about me in taking my guest out after dark, and in bringing him back; and I looked about me now.') and this heightens our own paranoia. The ending of the chapter also creates suspense as we, the readers, feel as though we too are sat around the fire about to listen in on the story of Magwitch's history.



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Chapter 42

This chapter is dedicated to the story of Abel Magwitch. He was born an orphan; day one he had to steal in order to survive. As a boy he had tried to get jobs but was homeless and working. When he was older he met a man named Compeyson who was going to be a gentleman. We discover he is also the man with whom Magwitch met in the misty marshes of Pip's home town. Compeyson was incredibly fraudulent, using stolen bank notes for a living. Compeyson is friends with a rich man in decline who comes into some money but Compeyson, being a gambler, had betted the money away. The rich man of Compeyson's house is dying and in a terrible state when Magwitch meets him. The man tells his wife about seeing a woman dressed in white with white flowers in her hair and a dagger at the end of his bed and blaming Compeyson for it. Arthur warns Magwitch about Compeyson. The two start working together. Soon enough Magwitch and Compeyson are caught. Magwitch who has been previously convicted gets 14 years in prison; however Compeyson, the man who lured Magwitch into helping him, only gets seven years. The judge takes into account Compeyson's background and education and is disappointed. Herbert passes a note to Pip that Miss Havisham's half brother and Compeyson was her fiancé.

Analysis

Dickens tells us that, as a young boy, Magwitch lived on the streets ('there warn't many insides of furnished houses known to me'). He describes how Magwitch felt people judging him: 'Then they looked at me, and I looked at them, and they measured my head, some on 'em—they had better a measured my stomach'. In the Victorian period some people believed that you could distinguish a criminal from others by the length of their limbs or features. One way of doing this was by measuring the head and identifying facial characteristics. This idea of judging people by appearances and background is further explored in the

Discussion

How does Dickens use physical description to judge people?

Discussion Prompt

How significant are the extra details that Herbert adds?

account of his trial: 'When the prosecutor was put short, beforehand, I noticed how light on him.' Compeyson, who is a lighter sentence than Magwitch, indicates their different social classes differently according to their class.

In Arthur's description of his vision of the woman who appears to him as he is dying, Miss Havisham again stands as a symbol of death: 'He rested pretty quiet till it might want a few minutes of five, and then he starts up with a scream, and screams out, "Here she is! She's got the shroud again. She's unfolding it. She's coming out of the corner. She's coming to the bed. Hold me, both on you—one of each side—don't let her touch me with it. Hah! she missed me that time. Don't let her throw it over my shoulders. Don't let her lift me up to get it round me. She's lifting me up. Keep me down! Then he lifted himself up hard, and was dead'.

Active Learning Task

Write a newspaper report of Magwitch and Compeyson's trial. Choose whether to write from the perspective of Compeyson (using language to imply that Magwitch is the criminal) or in a way that is sympathetic to Magwitch (implying that Compeyson led him astray). The lighter sentence is clearly a result of his social class.

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Chapter 43

Pip calls for Estella only to discover that she is not home and is visiting Satis House but, before he leaves, requests that Herbert not tell Magwitch of their plan.

When Pip arrives at the Blue Boar, the hotel where he will be staying, he is surprised to find two men at first pretend not to see each other but eventually talk, though neither

Analysis

Dickens suggests in this chapter that Pip is feeling uncertain and uses **rhetorical** questions to reflect his disordered state of mind: 'Why should I pause to ask how much of my shrinking from Provis might be traced to Estella? Why should I loiter on my road, to compare the state of mind in which I was when I was in the prison before meeting her at the coach-house, with the state of mind in which I was when I was in the abyss between Estella in her pride and disdain, and the returned transport whom I had seen none the smoother for it, though I would be none the better for it; he would not be able to realise that Pip's great expectations have only brought him pain and misery: 'I was on my journey from my face and hands, and went out to the memorable old house that it would have been so much the better for me never to have entered, never to have seen.'

Rhetorical – is a question asked without the expectation of a reply

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Chapter 44

Pip finds Estella and Miss Havisham at Satis House in the room where he first met her. He explains to her that he has found out who his real benefactor is. Miss Havisham having led him on when he believed she was his benefactor. She is not at all embarrassed by this. Pip also asks Miss Havisham if she would do one favour for him. He urges her to help Herbert Pocket now that Pip cannot do so. He stresses that though Herbert is related to Sarah (Miss Havisham's relatives who are only interested in her money) he is not like them. He has the same desires or wishes, neither does his father, the loyal Matthew Pocket. After talking to Miss Havisham, Pip turns to Estella and confesses his love for her. Estella in reply says she would not listen; she does not say this harshly, only coldly. Pip then discovers that Estella is the daughter of Drummle, his rival. It seems that Miss Havisham too is unhappy about this and Pip is devastated. Pip, in a state of devastation and unhappiness, walks the whole way back to his room. He receives a note written by Wemmick reading 'Don't Go Home'.

Analysis

The fact that Pip asks Miss Havisham to help Herbert shows us how naturally loyal and compassionate Pip is, one of his traits that we witness constantly throughout the novel. We also see the maturity of the older narrator as he forgives Miss Havisham for all the hurt she has caused: 'It would have been cruel of Miss Havisham, though it was cruel, to practice on the susceptibility of a poor boy, and to torture me through all these years with a vain hope and an idle dream, if she had reflected on the gravity of what she did. But she did not. I think that in the endurance of her own trial, she forgot mine, Estella.' He realises that he is not the only tormented one and actually begins to empathise with Miss Havisham's character. Dickens suggests for the first time here that Miss Havisham actually feels something. The figure of Miss Havisham, her hand still covering her heart, seemed all resolved in remorse.'

Vocabulary Guide

Spectral – ghostly

Many of the main mysteries of the novel have been revealed now. To ensure readers keep reading Dickens, the author uses danger and suspense. The unexpected cliffhanger serves this purpose.

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Chapter 45

Pip, scared and confused finds a room at a seedy inn called The Hummuns. He arranges in order to catch Wemmick before he leaves his house. In a roundabout way Wemmick reveals that Compeyson is living and is in London pursuing Magwitch. Herbert has hidden Clara's house.

Analysis

Dickens demonstrates how miserable Pip is in this chapter, using exclamation marks to suggest the extent of this: 'What a doleful night! How anxious, how dismal, how long!' His description of the room and the bed furthers this, particularly the way in which he uses personification to make the bed seem like an unrelenting force. 'It was

a sort of vault on the ground, with a door at the back, with a despotic monster straddling over the whole place, putting its arms into the fireplace and another into the doorway, and a washing-stand in quite a Divinely Righteous

Discussion Prompt

How has Pip's opinion of Magwitch changed? How does he feel about him now?

Chapter 46

Pip sets off in search of Clara's house. When he arrives he discovers that Clara's father is happy that he has secretly helped Herbert and Clara escape him. Pip and Herbert plan to help get Magwitch out of the country. Herbert suggests that they take up a life of crime, which becomes routine and no one will question them. Then one night they will take Magwitch out of the country and nobody will think anything of it. Pip has become increasingly attached to Magwitch when they have to part. He is full of fear that Magwitch will be discovered and so they continue on with their plan, buying a boat and training every day.

Analysis

Dickens presents Pip as showing affection for Magwitch here, rather than the fear and disgust he used to feel. He does not want to part with him but must do so for his safety: "I don't like to leave you here," I said to Provis, "though I cannot doubt your being safer here than near me. Good bye!"

We also see Pip again feeling fear and paranoia in this chapter: 'But I thought with dread that it was flowing towards Magwitch, and that any black mark on its surface might silently and suddenly take him.' His distrust suggests a foreboding.

Active Learning Task

List any examples of foreshadowing that you can find in this chapter.

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Chapter 47

Summary

A number of weeks pass with the same routine and Pip's debts start to add up. However he feels morally wrong taking anymore of Magwitch's money. Pip knows that Estella must be married by now but he does not wish to have it confirmed so avoids the newspapers and refuses to speak of her. Pip, in low spirits, decides to go to the theatre to watch a performance that Mr Wopsle is in. He notices that Mr Wopsle is eagerly trying to catch his eye but Pip cannot determine why. After the performance he goes backstage and discovers that Mr Wopsle had seen one of the convicts that had been fighting in the marshes all those years ago Compeyson. Pip becomes aware that Compeyson is falling for him. He writes a letter to notify Wemmick and Herbert.



Vocabulary

Rent – to pay
Boatswain – the crew on a ship
Swab – soap
Confute – to defeat
Antipodes – the opposite side of the world

Discussion

Do you think Pip should take any more of Magwitch's money? What is your view on his debt and how he should deal with it?

Analysis

The fact that Mr Wopsle describes Compeyson as 'sitting behind [Pip] there like a mystery and a shadow' suggests that Compeyson is a dangerous and mysterious figure.

Chapter 48

Pip is invited to dinner at Jaggers' house with Wemmick and when he arrives he is shocked by the atmosphere. Wemmick hints that Pip should leave as soon as possible and he agrees.

Jaggers implies that Drummle is brutal and is likely to beat Estella. Pip is disgusted by Drummle's behaviour. Drummle is selfish and mean, Pip does not believe that Drummle would do that. Pip then reminds him of Estella. He questions Wemmick about it after dinner who tells him that Drummle is accused of murdering a woman over jealousy for her husband and that she had been pregnant with his child. Pip is certain that Estella is Molly's lost child.

Analysis

Dickens hints at the horrible marriage that awaits Estella by referring to Drummle's strength: 'The stronger will win in the end, but the stronger has to be found out first. If he should turn to, and beat her—'

Discussion Prompt

Pip believes Molly to be Estella's mother. Why does he come to this conclusion?

This chapter is important as it is here that Pip is beginning to piece together the last part of the puzzle, the question of Estella's parentage.

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Chapter 49

Pip makes the visit to Miss Havisham where she questions him about his plans for supporting Herbert's business and eventually she grants him the money. Miss Havisham does not seem delighted by his upset as she would have been before. Pip discovers that Estella intended to bring up Estella the way she did; she only wanted to strengthen her heart, which is easily broken as hers was. Miss Havisham begs for Pip's forgiveness which he gives her as she had good intentions. To clear his head Pip goes for a walk around the garden. The garlands hanging from the same beams as before, the image of a dead Miss Havisham haunting his mind, he returns to see if Miss Havisham is alright; he finds her lying near the hearth and a yellowing bridal dress catches fire and she is consumed by flames. Pip runs to help her though he has burnt his own hands without realising. Help arrives and he is told that the damage it is mainly the shock that was causing her harm but that she could be treated. He is clearly and can recall what has happened but gradually her condition worsens until she dies. The same three sentences in the same order repeated.

Analysis

In this chapter, we read about deeper emotions and witness another side to Miss Havisham's character. We see that she had started off with only good intentions, wishing to save Estella by not letting her have a heart that could be as easily broken and injured as hers: "Yes, yes, I know it. But earnest womanly compassion for me in her new affection. "My dear! Believe this meant to save her from misery like my own. At first I meant no more."

Discussion Prompt

Do you think the fire is an accident or penance / suicide attempt by Miss Havisham for the cruelty she has shown towards Pip and Estella?

Dickens extends the metaphor used in a
'But that, in shutting out the light of day
more.' Miss Havisham has shut love out
with sunlight. He continues the associati
an ominous tone: 'For I had a presentim
again, and I felt that the dying light was
is the last time Pip will see Miss Havish

furthered when Pip again thinks he sees Miss Havisham hanging from the beam, image is even more striking now that he is an adult and not a frightened little boy up such terrors.

Chapter 50

Pip's arms were badly burnt by the fire but his good friend, Herbert attends to him regularly. One evening Pip and Herbert discuss Magwitch and both agree that to help him. Herbert had conversed with him for two hours the previous evening and had learned that he had a child with a woman who was acquitted of a jealous murder. He all together and reveals that Magwitch is in fact Estella's father.

Analysis

Dickens shows us in this scene that Pip is noticeably guilty and upset about the encounter. The text unfolded: 'If I dozed for a minute, I was awakened by Havisham's cries, and by her running at me with all that height of life above her head.'

Discussion Prompt

Do you think Pip should tell Magwitch about his daughter or not? Why?

He also keeps us aware of the importance of making her the last point of reference in myself. And the man we have in hiding is Father.'

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Chapter 51

Pip is consumed with the desire to discover all about Estella's parentage so he sees Mr. Jaggers. He does so reluctantly – Pip has to tease it out of him. Jaggers tells him that Estella is the daughter of a convict; however he is surprised to hear that Magwitch is the father.

Analysis

In this chapter two of the main plot lines collide: Satis House and all that it represents and Magwitch. Both of the plots have one common character, Estella. Though Satis House symbolises wealth and status it

Discussion Prompt

What side of his nature does Jaggers show us in this chapter?

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Estella that all his efforts are consumed by her, and she has much more of an influence over his life than we first suspected. As a young man Magwitch was moved by Pip's gratitude and by how much he reminded him of his own daughter (Estella) that he vowed to make Pip a gentleman by giving him all the money he earned. What he did not know was that Pip already had great expectations as a result of wanting to be worthy of Estella. However hard he tries Pip cannot separate himself from Estella.

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Chapter 52

Pip secretly finalises Herbert's part in the partnership and learns that business will take Clara to the Middle East. Herbert fantasises about his time out there and imagines of them taking a trip up the Nile. Pip enjoys listening to Herbert fantasise as he likes making his dreams come true. One morning Pip receives a letter from Wemmick and Magwitch within the next two days. Pip and Herbert decide that they will ask Starbuck as he is strong and reliable. When Pip returns home he finds a note which requests that he go to the marshes either that night or the night following. The writer claims to have information and resolves to go that evening and manages to catch the last coach there. Pip stays at the inn and regrets how badly he has treated Joe. He thinks that out of everything he has lost, losing Joe. That night he leaves the inn humbled and in search of the mysterious person who wrote the letter.

Analysis

In this chapter, Dickens uses boat imagery to connote freedom: 'And now indeed I felt as if my last anchor were loosening its hold, and I should soon be driving with the winds and waves.' It is so significant as Pip believes that he and Magwitch will soon be free.

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Active Learning

Read the extract below and discuss with a partner what is suspicious about the letter and why.

If you are not afraid to come to the old marshes to-night or tomorrow night at Nine, and to come to the little sluice-house by the lime-kiln, you had better come. If you want information regarding your uncle Provis you had much better come and tell no one and lose no time. You must come alone. Bring this with you.

Dickens shows how Pip appreciates Joe, especially when Pumblechook is struck at so late as Joe, as through Pumblechook is meaner he, than



Chapter 53

Pip makes his way to the stone quarry where he suddenly finds himself in darkness. He is in agony due to the pressure of the rope on his injured arm. Out of the darkness, a figure appears and says 'I have got you' and leaves Pip struggling. In the darkness the stranger strikes a flint and is illuminated. Pip was not expecting Orlick but is aware that he is in a dire position. Orlick wants to get rid of him for many reasons but mainly because he came between him and Estella. Orlick reveals that he was the shadowy figure lurking in Pip's stairwell and that he has been drinking with Magwitch. It is suggested that Compeyson asked Orlick to kill Pip so that Magwitch would be free. Orlick is very drunk and each time he drinks he becomes more menacing. Pip is scared for himself and his loved ones will never know his feelings for them and how he wishes to make everything right. Orlick approaches Pip with a heavy stone hammer in his hands. Pip makes one last attempt to escape but causes as much noise as he can. His screams are heard and in a flash of light and sound, Orlick is gone. Unfortunately Orlick escapes through an open window but Pip is safe and is now back in the city and the tailor's apprentice. Herbert and Estella find out he had found the note and came to the city. They prepare themselves for the morning task of getting Magwitch out of the country.

Analysis

Dickens begins by setting the scene and uses the landscape to create dramatic tension. Once again we witness a dismal, dark, misty evening which emphasises and reflects Pip's miserable mood: 'It was a dark night, though the full moon rose as I left the enclosed lands, and passed out upon the open sea. A line there was a ribbon of clear sky, hardly broad enough to hold the red large moon.'

Discussion Prompt

How realistic do you think Orlick's motives for attacking Pip are?

Orlick doesn't really have any solid and understandable reason for wanting to hurt Pip; he is just the embodiment of evil, a two-dimensional character. Dickens suggests that he is more animal than human in the way that he laps up the last drops of liquor.

Active Learning Task

In pairs, look more closely at the imagery Dickens uses in this chapter. What does this tell you about the situation Pip is about to face and about the character of Orlick?

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Chapter 54

It is a bright spring morning as Pip prepares for the long journey he is about to take. Only items he feels are necessary. At this point he has no idea where in the world he will stay there for. Herbert and Pip begin the journey and meet Magwitch by Chislehurst, delighted to be free and eternally grateful to Pip for doing this for him. As night falls at the inn where a worker tells them of a mysterious boat that has been loitering around the river. Herbert take a look at the boat and discuss what to do. They conclude that they must leave in the evening and leave within an hour of the ships leaving time when they will be able to escape. After settling on this the three men make their way to bed. When Pip wakes up, in the morning, he takes a look out of the window and discovers two men looking into his bedroom. He saw them and they decide that Pip and Magwitch should leave earlier and meet them at the river.

Herbert and Pip part with teary eyes as they finally see the boat to Hamburg take out of the country and lead them to freedom. It is just as they are leaving that Pip finds them. The boat is occupied by the police who call for Magwitch's arrest. He notices the boat and the two fall into the water fighting. The people on board the boat notice the difficulty but the ship is nowhere to be seen. Magwitch is unsure what happens but that he found Compeyson and tried to get away but when he resurfaced Compeyson was gone. Magwitch has been badly injured, his breathing is laboured and his head has been hurt. Pip feels greatly for Magwitch now and is allowed to accompany him back to London. Magwitch's money will go to the crown but he is unfazed by this and chooses not to care.

Analysis

The imagery of the sunlight upon the water as the men start their journey is important. As we have seen frequently, Dickens uses pathetic fallacy to foretell coming events and mirror Pip's emotions. Like the weather here, the future is uncertain: 'It was one of those March days when the sun shines hot and the wind blows cold: when it is summer in the light, and winter in the hopes but there are still underlying negative connotations: 'The air felt cold upon

Providence – refers to God's activity and involvement in the world

and the sunshine was very cheering.' In this sunlight may suggest, Magwitch is caught in a sunshine is actually an allusion to Magwitch in Chapter 56. He dies happily but pays for this by committing believing his death to be a sign.

of God's forgiveness. The same imagery is shown in Chapter 55 in the courtroom when the rays of sunlight shine down on the courts and **providence** is mentioned explicitly. The theme of religion is not alluded to often but it seems that Magwitch as a convict needs to be redeemed, not only in the eye of the reader but in the eye of God as well.

Magwitch compares their journey and his fate to the river, their path is no clearer or easier to see than the bottom of the river. So far their journey has flowed softly and pleasantly like the water, they sail on. They continue for a while but as they move into the marshes, around London, Dickens begins to hint that their journey will not turn out as well as we might have first believed: the journey becomes more strenuous and Pip and Herbert struggle with the rowing. The mood darkens as the water becomes muddy and the landscape becomes monotonous, heightening the sense of foreboding.

Discussion Prompt

What feelings is Magwitch expressing here? What does he mean by "easy-going" and "pleasant through the water"? What does he mean by "pleasure" and "pleasure"?

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Chapter 55

Upon arriving back in London Pip visits Jaggers who is certain that the judge and Compeyson is found washed up miles away from where he died. His body is so identified by the items in his pockets. They find notes that indicate that he was too for bringing back Magwitch.

One evening Herbert returns home and announces to Pip that he is to leave for C feeling very low and this worsens his spirits. Herbert is worried that Pip will be lost clerk for his company however Pip hesitates and does not reply with a definite answer with the events that have recently occurred. Herbert tells Pip that Clara's drunken will be married as soon as this happens.

On his way back to his house one afternoon Pip comes across Wemmick. He invites When Pip arrives the two of them take a walk through Lambeth and stumble on wedding ensues and Wemmick and Miss Skiffins are happily married.

Analysis

Again here, the older Pip commenting on the events occurring in the narrative is creating suspense by hinting at what is to come: 'Yes! Secondly, there was a vague something lingering in my thoughts that will come out very near the end of this slight narrative.'

Discussion
Why
Herbert

Discussion Prompt

How do you think Pip is feeling throughout this chapter?

Dickens employs humour to lighten the mood (comic relief) in various places throughout the book and the characters Wemmick and Miss Skiffins are part of it. To relieve dramatic tension, usually after a tragic event of some kind, Dickens will

include a humorous event, such as the wedding in this chapter. Dickens has purposefully placed this scene to relieve the tense and miserable atmosphere. The quotation 'the stairs I encountered Wemmick, who was coming down, after an unsuccessful application of his knuckles to my door' is an example of how Dickens implicitly employs humour.

Vocabulary Guide

Querulous – irritable

Discussion Prompt

Do you think comic relief works?
Do you think Dickens uses comedy at the expense of reality?

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Chapter 56

Summary

Magwitch has been taken to prison but spends his time there in the infirmary due to the injuries he received in the fight with Compeyson. Pip feels obliged to read to him as he is too ill to converse. Day by day Magwitch's condition worsens. As Jaggers predicted Magwitch is taken to court and found guilty, and to Pip's horror he is sentenced to death. Over the following weeks Pip fervently tries to appeal to the courts but to poor effect.

Ten days before Magwitch is due to be executed Pip makes one last visit to see him. Magwitch reveals that he is thankful that Pip never deserted him. Pip notices that Magwitch is slowly slipping away. In these last moments he tells Magwitch that his daughter (Esther) is still alive and very beautiful and that he loves her. With one last effort Magwitch holds Pip's hand to his lips and kisses it, his head then falls to his chest and he is dead.

Analysis

Pip's dedication and concern for Magwitch in this chapter show us how deep his sarcasm as a dig at people's perception that all convicts are evil and cannot possess 'malefactors, but not incapable of kindness, GOD be thanked!').

As in Chapter 54, Dickens uses light imagery again: 'The sun was striking in at the great windows of the court, through the glittering drops of rain upon the glass, and it made a broad shaft of light between the two-and-thirty and the Judge, linking both together, and perhaps reminding some among the audience, how both were passing on, with absolute equality, to the greater Judgment that knoweth all things and cannot err.' Here it indicates God, a reminder that there is a higher authority than the courts.

Active Learning

Draw a graph to show the relationship between Pip and Magwitch. The x-axis should list the key events in their relationship. The y-axis should plot the closeness of their relationship against the events.

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Chapter 57

Pip, now alone, decides to leave his apartment and let it for money. He has fallen in love with Estella, but recent events has led to illness. He is delusional and cannot differentiate between reality and his delusions. Past events and people haunt him day and night. Then one night he finds two strangers in his apartment that have come to arrest him for debt. He is removed but is unsure of where he has been. He continues and each day he envisions Joe's face. Eventually he asks aloud whether the man he is seeing is actually Joe and discovers to his amazement that it is. Joe is ecstatic that Pip recognizes him and reproaches him for this, asking Joe to hit him or be angry with him for all the ingratitude he has shown over the years.

Joe has been taught to read and write and sends a letter home to Biddy describing enough courage to ask Joe about Miss Havisham and he learns that she recently inherited her property and that she also left a large sum of money to Matthew. Pip learns that Orlick has been sent to prison for robbingumblechook's shop. With this restores health. Pip and Joe regularly take walks around London but Joe finds life becomes increasingly homelike. Eventually leaving London without telling Pip. Before does one more thing for Pip – he pays off all of Pip's debts. Pip resolves to go back for forgiveness. Joe thanks him for all he has done over the years. He also tells Biddy he loves her and ask for her hand in marriage.

Analysis

The misery Pip has gone through is beginning to creep upon him and make him weak and ill: 'For a day or two, I lay on the sofa, or on the floor—anywhere, according as I happened to sink down—with a heavy head and aching limbs, and no purpose, and no power.' This is the beginning of his downward spiral. Dickens further heightens our awareness of Pip's physical and mental weakness through the repetition of 'whether' in the following quotation: 'Whether I really had been down in Garden-court in the dead of the night, groping about for the boat that I supposed to be there; whether I had two or three times come to myself on the staircase with great terror, not knowing how I had got out of bed;

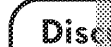
whether I had found myself lighting the lamp, possessed by the idea that that the lights were blown out; whether I was harassed by the distracted talking of someone, and had half suspected making; whether there had been a corner of the room, and a voice had again, that Miss Havisham was coming; whether I tried to settle with myself that I had settled on my bed.

Active Learning Task

Draw a graph to chart the ups and downs of the relationship between Pip and Joe. You should list the key events in the development of their relationship along the bottom axis and then plot the closeness of their relationship at each event against the vertical axis.



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Chapter 58

The news of Pip's decline in society has reached his home village and the villagers stay at the Blue Boar where he is put into a smaller, less luxurious room than usual.

While he waits for his breakfast Pip takes a trip to Satis House and discovers it is building materials. When he returns to the hotel he finds Pumblechook talking to him to be Pip's benefactor; Pumblechook leaves and an astonished Pip goes on his way. He strolls towards Biddy's schoolhouse but it is closed so he walks towards Joe's for notices in the window of his little house that the curtains are white and decorated. He then sees Joe and Biddy arm in arm and an overexcited Biddy reveals to him that he is shocked but happy and decides to take up the job with Herbert overseas. He quits the ladder and eventually Clarriker reveals to Herbert Pip's involvement in the business.

Analysis

In this chapter, Dickens shows us that it is not coming to the conclusion that having money does mean you will have better experiences: 'But, I had a good sleep in that lodging as in the most superior accommodation the Blue Boar could have given me, and the quality of my dreams was about the same as in the best bedroom.' Pip can sleep just

as happily in this room as in any other. He now recognises that being 'good and true' is all that matters in life and is disgusted with the way he acted towards people in the past. He hopes that if Biddy and Joe have a child, that it will be a boy, and that he will make mistakes and 'grow up a much better man' than he is now.

Discussion

How does Pip feel about his life? What does he want?

Vocabulary Guide

Clemency – mercy
Behoof – benefit

Chapter 59

Eleven years later Pip returns to England content and happy with his life. When he meets Joe and they have a little family and one boy in particular reminds Pip of himself. Pip has learned that Estella led a life of luxury and tries to convince Biddy as she wishes him to marry. Biddy asks if Pip has forgotten her though he plans to visit Satis House for her sake. He has learned that Estella led a life of luxury but that he had died two years previously. This is all he knows. That night he visits Satis House and finds that there is no house there now. He walks into the land where the mist he makes out the shape of a woman and discovers Estella. They discuss the past and recently she has thought of him often. The two leave the grounds of Satis House but they shall never again be parted from her.

Analysis

In this final chapter, Dickens shows us that the journey of Pip's life has come full circle by having him return to visit the churchyard just as he did in the first chapter.

Discussion Prompt

If Pip had never visited Satis House, how would his life have turned out? Was his journey fulfilled? Think about it.

Active Learning Task

The book follows the maturing of a young Pip into adulthood. In pairs, make notes on what you think he has learned by the end of the novel. You might want to look at his ideas on **class, crime and punishment, good and evil and innocence and guilt.**

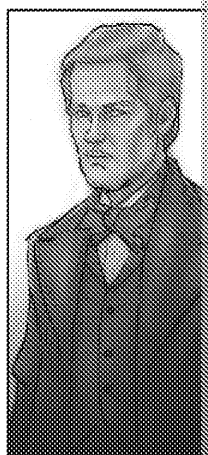
Dickens' description of the night is very different to other descriptions of a night. 'The silvery mist had veiled the afterglow, yet up to scatter it. But, the stars were out, and the moon was coming dark.' This scene is eerie yet beautiful. The darkness in this scene do not represent hope but hope.

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Below is the original ending which was changed by Dickens on the advice of a friend.

It was two years more before I saw herself. I had heard of her as leading a most independent life, separated from her husband, who had used her with great cruelty, and who had been the cause of a compound of pride, brutality, and meanness. I had heard of the death of her husband consequent on ill-treating a horse, and of her being married again to a Shropshire squire, who, out of interest, had once very manfully interposed on an occasion when he was in possession of Drummle, and had witnessed some outrageous treatment of her. I had heard that she was not rich, and that they lived on her own personal fortune. I was in England again, walking along Piccadilly with little Pip – when a servant came running after me to ask was I a carriage who wished to speak to me. It was a little pony carriage, which the lady and I looked sadly enough on one another. 'I am greatly obliged, I know; but I thought you would like to shake hands with me, and to see me, Pip. Lift up that pretty child and let me kiss it!' (She spoke of the child, I think, to be my child.) I was very glad afterwards to have had the interview; for in her face and in her voice, and in her touch, she gave me the assurance that suffering had not done her any harm, and that she was still the same. She had given me the assurance that she had not changed, and that she was still the same. She had given me the assurance that she had not changed, and that she was still the same. She had given me the assurance that she had not changed, and that she was still the same.



Exam extract focus

Re-read the section describing Pip's return to Satis House. What techniques does Dickens use to describe this setting to also tell us about Pip's life and the people that live there?



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Characterisation

Brief Character Summaries: Character List

Dickens has often been criticised for creating **caricatures** as opposed to believable characters, though his over-the-top personas help to enhance a character's personality.

This character list has been arranged in order of appearance.

Philip Pirrip begins the novel as a young, naïve orphan who narrates the tale. He is 'by hand' in Kent by his older sister Mrs Joe Gargery and believes he is going to be a blacksmith by his sister's husband. He is a rather romantic, often immature child who wants to improve his position.

Joe Gargery is Pip's loving brother-in-law who assumes the role of the father figure. Joe that Pip is always honest, hard, good natured, and sweet tempered' (p. 10) so throughout the story despite his domineering, violent wife, with whom he only has a protective relationship. Joe is described as being fair with curly blonde hair and blue eyes' (p. 10).

Mrs Joe Gargery is a short-tempered woman who raises her orphaned brother Pip with her parents. Their relationship is strained and she is deeply dissatisfied with her situation. She has a hatred of being a blacksmith's wife and Pip's surrogate mother in front of the young Pip. She is greatly in both personality and looks to that of her husband Joe. She is rather coarse with her hair and eyes' (p. 8).

Magwitch is an escaped criminal that Pip first encounters in the cemetery. He has been 'lamed by stones, and cut by flints' and badly hurt by all the natural elements he has encountered. He asks a scared Pip to provide him with food and shelter. Pip's compassion has a profound effect on him and subsequently Magwitch, after escaping from the **prison boat**, returns to England as a sheep farmer and stock breeder, secretly becomes Pip's benefactor for elevating him into higher social circles. He is also known as 'the convict' to Pip with 'Provis' and 'Mr Campbell' later on in order to conceal his identity.

Compeyson is another convict whom Pip initially believes to be Magwitch due to their similar appearance when they meet. He is in fact Magwitch's enemy. We discover through the course of the novel that he is Havisham's intended husband and planned to rob her of her fortune.

Uncle Pumblechook is Joe Gargery's uncle but he is known to both Mrs Joe and Pip. He is an arrogant, pompous and intrusive man who constantly reproaches Pip and praises him for his progress to raise a child like him. He repeatedly advises Pip to 'be grateful, to them which have done much for you' much to Mrs Joe's pleasure and Pip's annoyance. Uncle Pumblechook is the first to introduce Pip to Havisham and thus plays a small but important part in the novel. Throughout, he remains in the same fortune and subsequently rises through the social circles despite having nothing to recommend him.

Mr Wopsle is the church clerk in Pip's town. We meet him for the first time later in the book when he is in order to pursue a career in acting. His stage name is 'Mr Waiendengarver'.

Mr and Mrs Hubble are a simple middle-class couple from Pip's home town.

Estella is the adopted daughter of Miss Havisham. We later discover that Molly, her biological mother, was a lover of Magwitch, her father. Estella is a beautiful young girl who is the object of her romantic feelings throughout the novel only to be shunned by her. She was raised to be cold hearted and repeatedly warns Pip that she cannot return his feelings. She represents the social status that Pip aspires to.

Miss Havisham is one of the most famous characters in any of Dickens' novels. She is a **spinster** that occupies Satis House near Pip's home town, 'everybody for miles round her' Miss Havisham uptown – as an immensely rich and grim lady who lived in a large and comfortable house, and who led a life of seclusion'. As a young woman Miss Havisham was married to a man who was a robber, and who led a life of seclusion. This experience had a substantial effect on her. She takes Pip on as a companion and eventually has plans to have Estella, her ward, avenge her and the hatred she feels for all men. She is a secret benefactor.

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Biddy is a gentle, moral, and caring girl that teaches Pip at the evening school she represents the opposite of Estella. Pip is oblivious of her affection for him as he is. When Mrs Joe Gargery is attacked she moves into their house to become her carer.

Camilla is an ageing relative of Miss Havisham who does not care for her but only wealth. She is also the sister of Matthew Pocket.

Cousin Raymond is the husband of Camilla and shares similar views of Miss Havisham but is also only interested in her money.

Sarah Pocket is another ageing relative of Miss Havisham who desires her wealth.

Mr Jaggers is the London lawyer 'of an exceedingly dark complexion, with an enormous head and a correspondingly large hand' (p. 83). He is Miss Havisham's lawyer and Pip's secret benefactor.

Dolge Orlick is a tough, rude journeyman blacksmith at Joe Gargery's forge. He is not interested in other people for his own ends but it is he who makes the grievous attack on Miss Havisham in murdering Pip's father.



Herbert Pocket

Herbert Pocket is Matthew Pocket's son. Pip first meets Herbert at his family estate as a young boy. Years later they are reunited in London where Herbert and Matthew Pocket and quickly become close friends. He gives Pip a letter from his father.

Matthew Pocket becomes Pip's tutor and teaches him the ways of the world and the relation of Miss Havisham but is not, unlike the majority of her relatives, interested in her wealth.

Startop, along with Pip, Herbert Pocket and Bentley Drummle takes tutelage with the friend of Pip and Herbert and later helps them with Magwitch's escape.

John Wemmick is Jaggers' clerk. He is the mediator between Pip and Jaggers and later helps Pip in London.

Bentley Drummle is another of Matthew Pocket's students. He is oafish and unimpressive but must rely on his status and money to assist him in high class society. This gives him a sense of superiority making him hostile towards Pip and others. To Pip's disappointment he marries Estella. It is believed he mistreats her and she is unhappy in their marriage. After Drummle's death eleven years later Pip and Estella reunite. Bentley Drummle is Pip's rival and therefore an **antagonist**.

Georgiana is the cousin of Matthew and Camilla Pocket. She is another ageing relative who is hungry for her wealth.

Molly is Jaggers' housekeeper whom he saved from the gallows for murder. In Chapter 12 she is Estella's biological mother.

Miss Skiffins is the eventual wife of Wemmick.

Arthur Havisham is Miss Havisham's younger brother. He planned, along with Compeyson, to give out of large sums of money to his wife, leaving her marry Compeyson. He dies before the end of the novel by the guilt he feels.

Clara Barley is a poor girl who lives with her father. She eventually becomes the wife of Pip.

Caricature – refers to an exaggerated or distorted representation of a person.

Contrast – is an obvious difference between two things when compared.

The Prison Boat – refers to the boat that sailed convicts to Australia where they were to be executed.

Spinster – refers to a woman that has never married.

Antagonist – refers to the rival or opponent of the protagonist.

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Analysis of Major Characters

Dickens is famous for his **characterisation**. This means the way that he creates a like, through detailed description of their appearance, speech and mannerisms.



Pip

Great Expectations is a **Bildungsroman**; it follows the development and growth of our young protagonist Philip Pip from childhood into adulthood.

There are essentially two Pips in *Great Expectations*. The first Pip is the young boy experienced everything. The second Pip is the man who is telling the story. The third Pip is the man who is reflecting on his life.

Great Expectations begins by establishing a relationship between Pip and his father figure, Joe. Pip is portrayed as a 'small bundle of shivers' and Joe instinctively feels sympathetic to and protective of him. As the narrator pokes fun at his younger self, this comic emphasis on poor little Pip's naivety and innocence.

Dickens must also introduce us to Pip's living conditions. Social class is a theme that runs throughout the novel, implying that Pip lives in the country and that his father figure, is a labourer. Another indication of their class is Joe's **colloquial** language.

As the main character of the novel it is important that we know Pip's character traits, his ambition, and his good conscience. These are established very early on and influence a lot of the action.

Pip's innocent outlook on the world highlights his naturally good conscience. When a convict in need of help, he goes out of his way to do so. He is then torn as his good conscience makes him feel guilty for helping an escaped prisoner and stealing items from his sister.

It helps that Dickens has used the **Bildungsroman** form as it means he begins with an infant mind that is **malleable** and whose **moral reasoning** is unrefined. Because of this, Pip's character evolves, with its foundations beginning the day he enters Satis House.

Pip is incredibly compassionate and quickly falls in love with the proud, beautiful, Estella. Through her he unconsciously adopts some of her values and beliefs. To Pip Estella represents the higher social class and life of luxury that he wishes to achieve. The traits he inherited from her lead him to look down on his closest family and friends. At one point he describes his 'Satis House days' as a 'destructive missile' that ultimately changed his fate. Despite his snobbery towards Joe and Biddy at some point in the book we still sympathise with his character as he regrets and criticises himself for it. This is a further example of his innately good conscience.

Whereas his good nature makes him desire moral improvement his ambition makes him desire social improvement. He has 'great expectations' of himself and tries his hardest to reach them. His expectations are realised when an anonymous benefactor provides him with a large fortune. However, in the end Pip's life experiences lead him to conclude that it is not wealth and success that bring you happiness but being an honest and moral man.

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Estella

Estella is the young and proud girl that bears much affection for much of the book. She influences Pip and plays a key role in the development of the story because of her that Pip forms his great expectations.

Dickens must establish Estella's class as Pip is to become a gentleman. He does this through her dress. She imposes her supposed superiority and making frequent jokes at his expense. Pip can differentiate between the classes in the novel, such as whether to call the Jack a 'Jack' or 'Jackie', she represents Pip's upper class ideal she has as her real father is the escaped convict.

Estella is an orphan, like Pip. She is raised by the wealthy spinster, Miss Havisham, who is cold-hearted and manipulative in order to protect her.

This side of her personality is shown for the first time in the dispute with Miss Havisham we see Estella sympathise with her as we are aware she is through no fault of her own.

As a result Estella grows up with the inability to love and interact normally in society. Not knowing any better, marries Bentley Drummle, a wealthy man who treats her harshly. By doing this Dickens implies that social advancement and wealth do not necessarily lead to well-being.

When Drummle dies Pip and Estella meet once more and she explains how her story has taught her compassion and can now allow her to empathise with Pip.

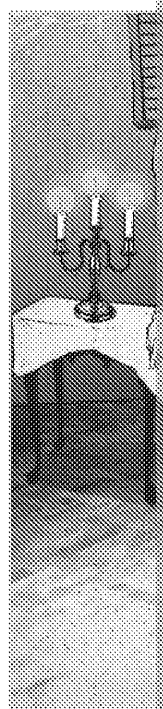
Miss Havisham

Miss Havisham is the eccentric old spinster who owns Satis House. She is crucial to the novel and her role influences much of the action. Miss Havisham is Pip's first encounter with the higher social class and she ultimately alters his fate forever.

We are first introduced to her when Pip is requested to play at her house.

When Pip first meets her he is shocked and frightened by her skeletal appearance. She is dressed completely in white, a colour commonly associated with purity and innocence. However, when Pip looks closer he discovers that the whites are yellowing and that she is wearing a withered, fraying old bridal dress.

Miss Havisham shuns the company of her relatives and barely leaves the candlelit room that Pip first meets her in. This is significant as Dickens uses light, in particular sunlight, as a metaphor for love, it is symbolic that Miss Havisham has kept herself in the darkness as it exemplifies how deeply she has been hurt and how she now shuns love.



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We never hear her addressed by her first name, only by her maiden name, which she is not married and never will be.

Miss Havisham is not cruel, only bitter and raises her adopted daughter to avenge Estella for her own selfish purposes it is difficult to hate her character. Dickens has to feel sorry for her as she is a victim of a very badly broken heart as a consequence she had loved her fiancé.

We feel even more compassion towards her when we learn of the horrendous event that resulted in her misery.

Magwitch

Our first impressions of Magwitch are formed when he tumbles across him the churchyard; he is a fierce young escapee hungry for food and in need of a file. Dickens juxtaposes Pip's innocence with Magwitch's harshness in order to exaggerate it. To further this portrayal Dickens has used the weather.

The misty marshes create an intense atmosphere that frightens Pip but which seem fitting for Magwitch's character. Throughout the book the mist represents uncertainty and ambiguity.

Though at first we believe him to be scary he soon reveals a compassionate side and feels forever indebted to Pip for his kindness.

His gratitude and loyalty are hinted at when he lies in order to protect Pip. Pip also almost manages to bring him to tears twice, showing a compassionate inner nature.

Magwitch's character acts as a contrast to Estella who has the higher social class status but not the inner nobility. It is ironic, then, that the two

Magwitch's impression is always upon the novel and underlies a lot of the action periods where he is reminded of that fateful day in the churchyard which usually money or his benefactor. This foreshadowing is significant when we discover who actually is.

Characterisation – the way that a writer creates a vivid sense of what a character is like of their appearance, speech and mannerisms.

Bildungsroman – novel concerned with the development, education and maturing of a person.

Retrospective – means to look back at past events.

Colloquial – refers to informal phrases used in everyday life but not often written. An example of colloquialisms are often seen in literature.

Malleable – refers to something easily moulded or influenced.

Moral realism – refers to your personal interpretation of things. Not influenced by other people's views.

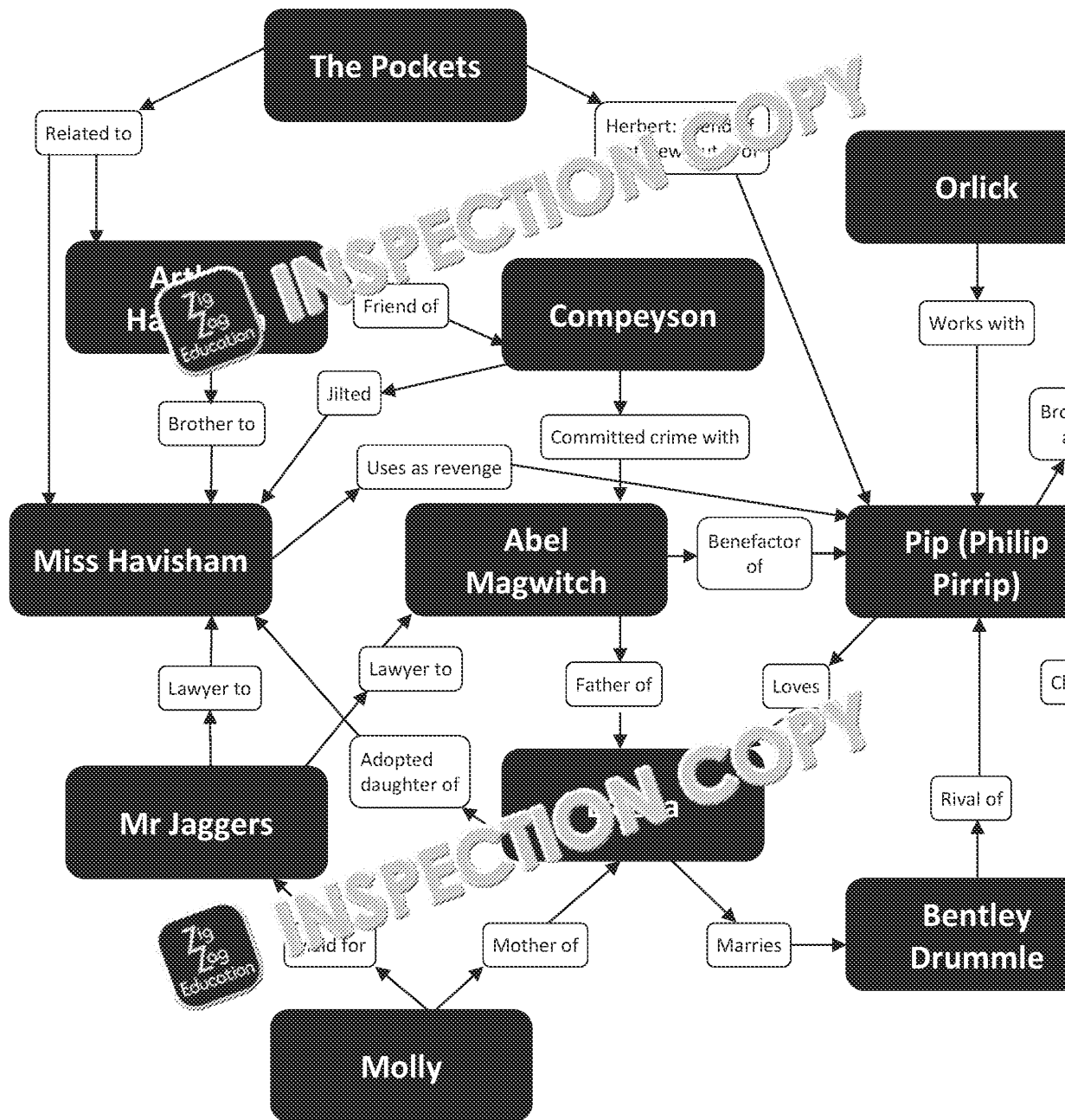
Innate – refers to something you are born with.

Archaic – words are often old fashioned and not used in modern-day language

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Key Relationships



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Analysis of Key Relationships

As is typical of Dickens, relationships between characters in the novel overlap and are connected to each other in many different ways. Dickens uses many of the significant characters to explore some of his key ideas and themes, as well as highlighting aspects of individual characters and their relationships with others.

Pip and Joe

Although Joe is Pip's brother-in-law (as he is married to Pip's older sister) and not a father figure to Pip. Although Joe himself is not particularly well-educated, he teaches Pip about life and trains him to be a blacksmith. Pip learns most from Joe as a result of his close relationship – for example, Joe's forgiving response to Magwitch when the convict tells him to forge directly influences Pip's own attitude to others. Pip's rejection of Joe later in life is a typical adolescent rejection of a parent figure and parental values. In this way, the novel fits into the Bildungsroman genre – Pip rejects Joe as part of the growing-up process and becomes a more matured person. Despite Pip's rejection of him, Joe remains constant in his feelings and his love for his child. He looks after Pip when he is ill and welcomes him back when Pip is ready to return.

Estella and Miss Havisham

Apart from Pip and Joe, Estella and Miss Havisham are the other main parent-child relationships in the novel. Miss Havisham adopts Estella and raises her to be cruel and unfeeling, in order to breed revenge on men for Compeyson's behaviour towards Miss Havisham. Dickens uses Estella to show that despite the fact that people tend to have an innate good or bad nature, this is greatly influenced by the environment during their formative years. Just as Pip's innately good nature is largely thanks to his childhood, Estella's lack of compassion and her inability to love is a direct result of the way she was brought up. Like Pip, Estella eventually rejects her parent. However, where Pip rejects Joe for the loyal and loving person he is, Estella's maturity causes her to realise what her parent has done to her and reject her completely. Too late, Miss Havisham realises that this is a natural consequence of the way she has done.

Pip and Estella

In many ways, Pip and Estella's relationship is the key one throughout the novel. Estella dominates Pip's life from the moment he meets her as he is drawn to Estella, despite the fact that she does not reciprocate his feelings. Although Estella patronises Pip and treats him poorly, he focuses all his energies on improving himself for her sake. As he grows up and matures, he realises that marrying Estella which is his motivation for becoming a gentleman. Pip's feelings for Estella lead him to believe that Miss Havisham may not be his benefactor – he is so desperate to believe that Estella that he chooses to ignore any evidence to the contrary. Even when Estella is revealed to be incapable of loving him, Pip still clings to a shred of hope as he does not simply face reality but deliberately makes the ending of the novel ambiguous so that we are not sure who will have a chance of happiness.

Pip and Magwitch

Pip and Magwitch's relationship opens the novel. Magwitch himself tells Pip that he can be seen as a father figure in many ways. Even from their first encounter, he provides Pip with a sense of purpose for the theft from the forge and, when he makes his fortune, he provides for Pip's education. Pip's rejection of Magwitch can also, therefore, be seen as a rejection of a parent as we see in Pip's rejection of Joe. As Pip realises the error of his ways, he re-establishes a bond with Magwitch and behaves towards him like a son might.

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Settings

The places where the story is set are significant as Dickens uses his description of ideas he wants the reader to be thinking about. In some cases, this is to emphasise a theme; in other cases, the setting is used to reflect the action or the feelings of the characters.

Kent

The story begins in Kent but, specifically, in 'the marsh country, down by the river, some twenty miles of the sea'. This is an area Dickens knew well – he lived in Chatham as a child and later, once he was rich and famous, bought a large house nearby that he called 'The Marshes'. (He wrote *Great Expectations* while living in this house.) This setting allows Dickens to create an ominous setting, making use of the fact that the marshes are often misty as well as the fact that the area had with crime, due to the fact that many ships were moored nearby. However, Dickens associated Kent with some of the happiest times of his life. Although his childhood was not happy (his father was imprisoned for debt), his early childhood was happy. In *Great Expectations*, his Gad's Hill house was his pride and joy, symbolising as it did his childhood dreams. In *Great Expectations*, Pip is relatively content with his lot as a blacksmith's apprentice and only regains his happiness once he returns to Kent as an older man.

The graveyard

This is an ominous place for the story to begin, setting the tone for the narrative. The descriptions of his family members tell us of the hardship and poverty of Pip's life and the harsh conditions of the people at this time. It is a suitably eerie setting for Pip's first encounter with the convict Magwitch. In the book, Pip returns to the graveyard – a reminder that the story has come full-circle – to reflect on the fact that all people will eventually return to a graveyard when their time comes.

The forge

Pip grows up living and working in the blacksmith's forge owned by his brother-in-law, Mr. Pumblechook. The forge is a symbol of the good, honest working-class people who earn a living by the hard work of their hands. It represents a moral code that values honesty, integrity and hard work: one which Pip must learn to become a gentleman and later comes into money. It is perhaps significant too that the forging (or making) metal by bending and shaping it, and parallels can be drawn with the way that Dickens has over children in this novel, forging the type of people they later become.

Satis House

Miss Havisham's house is the most iconic and symbolic of all the settings in the novel. In contrast to the forge, it symbolises the upper class and Dickens uses it to highlight his theme that money doesn't bring happiness: Miss Havisham is the most wealthy person Pip encounters, but she is also the most miserable. As Pip discovers, the name of the house means 'Enough House' and this underlines the fact that, while Miss Havisham has enough money, she does not have enough of everything else in her life. Estella's dismissiveness of the idea that the house would be 'enough' for anyone emphasises her materialism but also her subconscious understanding that Miss Havisham's life is lacking in certain vital areas: love and happiness. The description of the house itself, along with the character of Miss Havisham, represents decay and decline. Miss Havisham has eagerly tried to stop time by stopping the clocks on that fateful day; however, her ageing body and the decay that surrounds her make it clear that Miss Havisham keeps herself hidden away in darkness further emphasises the need for light to survive. Instead, Miss Havisham shuts out the light which is symbolic of life.



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The garden of Satis House is particularly prominent in developing ideas we have of things Pip sees. Nature is commonly perceived as green and as a symbol of life; however, the 'rank' and decaying immediately hint at the nature of the person whose house it is. The imagery used by Shakespeare in his play *Hamlet*. It is used by Shakespeare to create a sense of foreboding. Something mirroring this imagery Dickens is also creating a sense of foreboding. Something

London

At the time of writing, London was the biggest city in the world – not just the capital of the whole of the British Empire. For many people at the time, and for Pip in the novel, London was the place of prosperity – the place you went to seek and make your fortune. However, the reality of London presents is quite different. He lived in London, both as a child during the period of his father's debt and for much of his adult life. As such, Dickens knew London extremely well and painted a realistic picture of the poverty and deprivation that existed in the city life.

Legal London

Dickens uses many locations in the novel which are associated with the legal system. The law office of the lawyer Mr Jaggers, Pip lives with Herbert Pocket in lodgings in the City, which historically, was where law students lived. Pip also accompanies Wemmick on a visit to the notorious of London's prisons. Finally, towards the end of the novel, Magwitch is sentenced to the gallows. Dickens uses all of these settings to highlight his theme of criminality and justice. The scene of sunlight coming into the courtroom which is discussed in the notes on Chapter 54. Dickens' point about the difference between the justice of the legal system and the reality of the sentences given to Magwitch and Compeyson at their initial trial reinforces the theme of justice.

Wemmick's 'castle'

Dickens describes Wemmick's home in Walworth in vivid detail, making it as curious as it is comfortable, although for opposite reasons. The fact that he calls it his 'castle' plays on the popular notion of a home is his castle' suggesting that, despite his humble status in society, he is the master of his own home. He may again be using this to suggest that it is not riches that bring happiness – Wemmick's domestic life with his Aged Parent and, later, in marrying Miss Skiffins. It is also significant that he lives completely differently at home than he does at work – the advice he gives Pip in the novel is to be different here on the Victorian notion of separate spheres, i.e. public (most often associated with men and the ideal of them as 'Angels in the House'). Wemmick's home is completely separate but the extremity of this perhaps suggests that Dickens is commenting on the practicality, or desirability, of this idea.

The River Thames

The river symbolises freedom, most notably in Chapter 54 when Magwitch begins his escape. The river leads to the sea, it is the route out of the city to the rest of the world and represents a new beginning. However, during Victorian times the river was incredibly polluted and was often referred to as another novel, *Little Dorrit*, as 'a river of rot'. It was also associated with crime, as Magwitch does, both as a means of escape and of transporting stolen goods. But on a fairly recent basis, while some drowned, some had been murdered, added to the river's reputation with criminals. Magwitch's escape fails as a result of the criminal Compeyson tip-off, suggesting that the promise of freedom was only ever a fantasy, far removed from reality.

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Themes

Themes are issues or concerns in a text that are expressed directly or indirectly

Ambition

Dickens uses Pip's ambition as a way of portraying how compassion, conscience is more important than wealth, class and social advancement. Ambition is split into three parts: social, and educational improvement.

At the beginning of the novel when Pip is a young boy the most prominent theme is social improvement. His young mind has clear-cut ideas of good and bad: Magwitch as bad, police, good. This leads to feelings of guilt when he helps Magwitch and from then on as he ages and his mind is preoccupied with social advancement his aspirations for social improvement. At the end of the novel however we can tell that Pip has matured as his ideas of right and wrong have evolved to the test; this is shown when he tells the convict knowing deep down that he is in the wrong. Many of the people he knows. His escape attempt with Herbert and Magwitch shows that his morality has evolved.

Pip's desires for social improvement are not witnessed at the very beginning of the novel as he is of a low station and knows no better. However, the introduction of Satis House, Miss Havisham into his world becomes the catalyst to his desire for social improvement.

The title arises out of this longing as he begins to believe that he may advance in life through 'great expectations'. This wish is realised when a secret benefactor grants him a large amount of money. However, Pip's life as a gentleman is no more satisfying than his previous life and once again his aspiration for moral improvement is at the forefront.

As we have seen in the novel Pip's 'great expectations' are only formed after he is introduced to the world of the gentleman. In order to become a gentleman he must have a full education. As a young boy he is taught to read and write knowing that it will benefit him greatly. As a young man he takes on the role of a gentleman in order to better himself.

As a Bildungsroman *Great Expectations* shows Pip's journey to psychological and moral growth. His ambitious nature and with the help of such moral characters as Joe, Biddy and Mr. Gumbleton educational advancement are not as crucial in life but that ultimately conscience is more worth.

Crime and Guilt

The theme of the law, crime and guilt is not uncommon amongst Dickens' works as he was a lawyer's clerk having experienced it himself as a young boy. This theme is portrayed mainly through the characters of Magwitch, Jaggers, Compeyson and Orlick.

Compeyson's crime is not explored deeply in the novel so readers have an understanding of his character but we do not sympathise with him when we hear about his life story through the words of Jaggers.

It is Compeyson's crime that ultimately destroys Miss Havisham and his dealings with her. Injustice is shown when his gentlemanly appearance in the courts allows him to receive a lighter sentence.

Another criminal in the book is Orlick who, like Compeyson, is a two-dimensional character and because of this we cannot sympathise with him. Even his infatuation with Biddy is shown as menacingly stalks her and watches her secretly whilst hiding from her view. We are told at the end of the novel that he is a murderer.

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Jaggers, the law clerk, is portrayed by Pip as a stern and terrifying man. The constant indication that he is as guilty as the criminals he represents.

Dickens portrays the Victorian law system as unjust. Good men are trapped by their class and not their crime. Lawyers are just as criminal and prison houses are

Social Class

The theme of social class at the time when Dickens was writing was inescapable. His desire to become a gentleman as a means to satirising and critiquing the class system: the low: criminals (Magwitch), the poor village labourers (Joe), the middle class (Miss Havisham). Social class is a major moral theme and a central element in the novel.

Pip ends up rebelling against the class boundaries; once he realises that he is no longer in mind splits the world easily into good and bad. He is now a man that understands that higher social standing does not necessarily equal happiness or morality.

Dickens further explores the themes of class, ambition and self advancement through the characters he created. He has chosen not to include royalists and aristocracy but has characters who have made their money through hard work and commerce.

This book is written just after the Industrial Revolution when an increase in the economy was able to make a fortune by starting factories. The majority of characters in the book are wealthy. Miss Havisham's inherited money came from the brewery attached to her house.

Virtue, Love and Loyalty

Dickens continually reinforces the message that character is not about wealth and status but heart. He explores the idea of what makes a person a gentleman. Dickens' father became bankrupt. Did this mean that he was no longer a good man? Themes of virtue are shown and often combine with ideas of love. Dickens shows that love underlies

To reinforce that a person's worth comes from within, Dickens introduces us to a range of characters from rich to the poor and the criminal. Bentley Drummie is the first obvious character to show an indication of virtue. Estella marries him without feeling any love towards him, leading to a terrible marriage.

Similarly Miss Havisham is wealthy but unstable and manipulative. Love has ruined her life and the altar she no longer functions and slowly decays in her crumbling house alone after her marriage.

Mrs Pocket comes from a wealthy background but is a terrible mother. Satire is used to show the scene with her and her poor baby.

Then we have Pip who, after learning the ways of a wealthy gentleman, loses his sense of self. Pip's unrequited love for the wealthy but cold Estella forms the main backbone of the story. This only causes him to become more of a gentleman.

At the other end of the spectrum we have Magwitch, Joe, and Biddy, the real heroes of the story.

Magwitch devotes his entire life to bettering the life of another and providing him with a home. He has himself.

Joe is patient and loving and never doubts Pip, and Biddy is incredibly wise, kind and hardworking despite a large age gap and live happily married with two children.

Joe, Biddy and Magwitch are all loyal to Pip and eventually through these characters Dickens shows that virtue overrules wealth and that they are not indicative of each other.

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Exam extract focus

How does Dickens present the themes of ambition and social class in this extract?

'Look'ee here!' he went on, taking my watch out of my pocket, and turning towards him recoiled from his touch as if he had been a snake, 'a gold 'un and a beauty: that's a gentleman round with rubies; that's a gentleman's, I hope! Look at your linen; fine and beautiful! Look at your books too,' turning his eyes round the room, 'mounting up, on their shelves, by you? I see you'd been a reading of 'em when I come in. Ha, ha, ha! You shall read 'em to me in languages wot I don't understand, I shall be just as proud as if I did.'

Again he took both my hands and put them to his lips, while my blood ran cold with

'Don't you mind talking, Pip,' said he, after again drawing his sleeve over his eyes and throat which I well remembered - and he was all the more horrible to me that he was so much nor keep quiet, dear boy. You ain't looked at it as I have; you wosn't prepare you never think it might be me?'

'O no, no no,' I said. 'Never, never!'

'Well, it was me, and single-handed. Never a soul in it but my own self and me.'

'Was there no one else?' I asked.

'No,' said he, with a glance of surprise: 'who else should there be? And, dear boy, how there's bright eyes somewheres - eh? Isn't there bright eyes somewheres, wot you love the thought of?'

O Estella, Estella!

'They shall be yours, dear boy, if money can buy 'em. Not that a gentleman like you, is off of his own game; but money shall back you! Let me finish wot I was you, dear boy. From hiring-out, I got money left me by my master (which died, and had been the same as me), and myself. In every single thing I went for, I went for you. 'Lord strike a blight upon it,' I says, for him! It all prospered wonderful. As I giv' you to understand just now, I'm famous for it gains of the first few year wot I sent home to Mr. Jaggers - all for you - when he first come a

O, that he had never come! That he had left me at the forge - far from contented, yet,

'And then, dear boy, it was a recompense to me, look'ee here, to know in secret that I was a better gentleman nor ever you'll be! When one of 'em says to another, 'He was a convict, a common fellow now, for all he's lucky,' what do I say? I says to myself, 'If I ain't a gentleman the owner of such. All on you owns stock and land; which on you owns a brought-up London myself a-going. And this way I held steady afore my mind that I would for certain come one day myself known to him, on his own ground.'

He laid his hand on my shoulder. I shuddered at the thought that for anything I knew he was a convict with blood.

'It warn't easy, Pip, for me to leave them parts, nor yet it warn't safe. But I held to it, I held, for I was determined, and my mind firm made up. At last I done it. Dear boy, I don't

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Ideas and Messages

Ideas and messages are broader topics which contribute to the themes of a text.

Human nature

Dickens suggests that people have an innate nature, which is who they are, regardless of circumstances. This idea underpins the themes about class and virtue which run through the novel. Dickens shows that some people, such as Joe, Biddy and Wemmick, are innately good, despite their low status or the hardships of their life. Pip, meanwhile, is also presented as a character who is good, despite the fact that, at periods of his life, he behaves in ways that he is later ashamed of. His actions demonstrate the point that his innate nature is good. In the end, Dickens shows that his nature remains innately good, despite the fact that he commits crimes. He also shows that other people are innately bad. Estella and Drummle are portrayed as a menace to society, in any way regardless of the wealth or privilege of his background. Even marriage does not change him, as he is violent towards Estella. This suggests that this is a fundamental part of his nature. The Compeysons and Warrington both have immoral natures which remain constant throughout the novel. This is used to illustrate this idea that human nature, once formed, cannot be changed. Miss Havisham's nature is shaped by Miss Havisham to be a cold-hearted and unloving one. Even though she is aware enough to acknowledge these traits as negative ones, she tells Pip that she cannot change because she is unable to consciously transform her innate nature.

Family

Despite Dickens' points about innate human nature, he also suggests that family plays a role in shaping the kind of person someone is. Although Mrs Joe is undeniably harsh to Pip, she is the main influence on him, which is the main one in his young life and which leads Pip to grow up knowing that he is not truly happy until he is reconciled with Joe towards the end of the novel. Pip is also shaped by the influence of her adopted mother, Miss Havisham, who is solely responsible for the cruel and unfeeling girl she becomes. In her case, it is significant that Estella is not truly happy as we believe she may do at the end of the novel, until Miss Havisham is dead and her influence ends. Meanwhile, Magwitch's lack of family could perhaps explain why he falls back on his fundamentally good nature.

Contextually, ideas about the importance of family were prominent in the Victorian era, as families were valued and most of the families in *Great Expectations* conform to these. Mrs Joe and Joe bring in the money. Later, Joe and Biddy follow a similar pattern. Biddy's position is an acceptable job for a woman, as teaching was thought of as a female profession. The Victorian family set-up with Mrs Pocket at home to look after the children and Mr Pocket working. Miss Havisham and Estella's circumstances differ greatly from other family relationships. Miss Havisham's situation as an unloved, unmarried old woman highlights the importance of family.

Justice and revenge

Ideas of justice and revenge also underpin *Great Expectations*. Dickens suggests that the legal system (i.e. punishments handed out by the courts) is artificial and man-made. The difference between the sentences given to Magwitch and Compeyson illustrates this. In the courtroom, when the sun shines through the window, Dickens reminds us that God is the dispenser of true justice. It is this true justice which leads to the brutal deaths of Drummle, Herbert and Clara and Joe and Biddy. Magwitch's death before he is able to be executed is seen as the triumph of true justice over legal justice.

Dickens also uses ideas about revenge in writing the novel. He shows that Miss Havisham's revenge ultimately backfires on her. Similarly, it could be argued that it is Magwitch's desire for revenge that leads to his recapture on both occasions. On the other hand, characters such as Joe, Biddy and Herbert bear grudges and forgive Pip for his actions towards them, end up happiest over the course of the novel.

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Dickens' Use of Language

It is important that when studying English you look at all aspects of a text. It is key that Dickens uses language in the novel.

The term **Dickensian** was coined in recognition of Dickens' unique style.

Dickensian – in Dickens' style; relating to Dickens or his style

Symbolism

Symbolism is when a writer uses something to represent something else either by resemblance or by association.

Characters' Names

Dickens also uses the names of characters to symbolise the nature of that person or character. Certain characters in the novel are instantly recognisable as possessing certain traits simply by seeing or hearing their name.

There are many examples of this throughout the novel. For example, the break down to Pip in the first chapter mirrors changes in his character in the course of the novel, emphasising his age but as a grown-up and a gentleman when he becomes known. An indication of his class. In Chapter 22 Herbert, as a symbol of friendship, gives Pip a watch explicitly says why: 'We are so harmonious and you have been a blacksmith – was a charming piece of music by Handel, called the Harmonious Blacksmith.' To Herbert and background.

We also have the names 'Pumblechook' who is pompous, Jaggers who is stern and whose name connotes ideas of friendship and kindness. Other characters' names are a contrast. Havisham for example whose title 'Miss' forever shows that she is an unmarried woman whose first name 'Abel' refers to the biblical story of Cain and Abel. In this story Abel was the second son of Adam and Eve who is killed by his brother Cain.

Biddy and Estella, the two love interests in Pip's life, have clashing personalities as a result through the difference in their names. Biddy suggests a pleasant country girl who is the opposite. It is interesting to note that 'Estella' means 'star'; her name connotes idealism. Pip is literally reaching for the stars.



Exam extract focus

How does Dickens use language and symbolism in the description of the brewery? Look particularly at the words in bold.

To be sure, it was a **deserted** place, down to the pigeon-house in the brewery-yard, with **its pole by some high wind**, and would have made the pigeons think themselves at sea, not to be rocked by it. But, there were **no** pigeons in the dove-cot, nor horses in the stable, **no** pigeon-house, **no** smells of grains and beer in the copper, and the air **had the uses and scents of a wilderness** with its last reek of smoke. **By a dead, there was a wilderness** of empty casks, **remembrance** of better days, and about them; but it was too sour to be accepted as a comfort, and in this respect I **found** those **recluses** as being like most others.

Behind the farthest end of the brewery, was a **rank** garden with **an old wall** not so high as to hold on long enough to look over it, and see that the rank garden was the garden of the **with tangled weeds**, but that there was a track upon the green and yellow paths, as if so that Estella was walking away from me even then. But she seemed to be everywhere. For, I presented by the casks, and began to walk on them. I saw her walking on them at the end of the back towards me, and held her pretty brown hair spread out in her two hands, and never looked directly. So, in the brewery itself - by which I mean the large paved lofty place in which where the brewing utensils still were. When I first went into it, and, rather **oppressed** by the looking about me, I saw her pass among the **extinguished** fires, and ascend some light iron overhead, as if she were going out into the sky.

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Settings

Dickens uses settings to symbolise the people who live in that place. For example dark and depressing personality while Miss Havisham's dark and decaying house of person she has become. You can find more information on the significance of

Light and Darkness

In Chapter 38, light is used by Estella as a metaphor for love. This use of symbolism Havisham has shut herself away from natural sunlight and love. Darkness is also used to enhance fear. It is often dark when terrifying characters are introduced. The book tricks Pip into accompanying him back to a small hut by the marshes and attempts in literature generally, light and darkness symbolise good and evil and it seems that these ideas.



Exam extract focus

How does Dickens use light as a symbol of love in the extract below?

"Would you wish to return my love?" exclaimed Miss Havisham. "But yes, yes, so
"I beg to thank," said Estella, in a musing way, after another moment of calm wonder
this comes about. If you had brought up your adopted daughter wholly in the dark confinement
let her know that there was such a thing as the daylight by which she had never once seen you
then, for a purpose had wanted her to understand the daylight and know all about it, you would
angry?"

Miss Havisham, with her head in her hands, sat making a low moaning, and swaying
answer.

"Or," said Estella, " - which is a nearer case - if you had taught her, from the dawn of
energy and might, that there was such a thing as daylight, but that it was made to be her enemy
always turn against it, for it had blighted you and would else blight her; - if you had done this
wanted her to take naturally to the daylight and she could not do it, you would have been a failure."

Miss Havisham sat listening (or it seemed so, for I could not see her face), but still made no answer.

"So," said Estella, "I must be taken as I have been made. The success is not mine, the failure
together make me."

Motifs

A motif is a recurring feature or theme.

Doubles

Dickens has used a doubles motif in *Great Expectations* to reveal the extent of the how common human traits can be shared in very different people. Many of the characters are mirrored at some point during the course of the book.

At the very beginning we have two convicts, Magwitch and Compeyson, fighting in the prison. Compeyson's characters are so different from Magwitch's which serves as a way of amplifying Compeyson's eloquent language and class only seem to emphasise Magwitch's position. This also highlights aspects of the Victorian England justice system with Magwitch being a convict and Compeyson being a member of the upper classes.

There are also two young women in the book who both become love interests of Pip, however it is Biddy's compassion and loyalty that draw Pip to her. These two different women and Pip likes them for two very different reasons; it is therefore enhanced by doubling.

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Surprisingly Mrs Joe and Miss Havisham, two seemingly unrelated characters, have that mirror that of the other:

Doubling effects	Miss Havisham	
Both are women bound to their houses	Willingly after the break-up from her fiancé	As a woman is slave to that she frequently repeats of the novel: 'I may take my apron of mine off since being a blacksmith's wife being your mother' (Chapter 1, p. 10)
Both mother figures	Estella's adoptive mother	Pip's sister but now pitiful
Similar fates	Becomes an invalid after suffering serious burns. Never entirely recovered and eventually dies from the wounds.	Becomes an invalid after recovering and eventually dies
Houses represent character	Lives among dirt and decay	Keeps a spotless and

Antithesis

Building on the doubles motif, Dickens uses the language technique of **antithesis** – the contrast of ideas or words. It can also be the exact opposite.

Antithesis is often used in novels to make fine distinctions or to show the difference in relationship between two opposing objects. In *Great Expectations* one of the best examples of antithesis is when Miss Havisham says, “So new to him,” she muttered, “so old to me; so strange to him, so familiar to me; so melancholy to both of us!” (Chapter 8, p. 59). This sentence is used to develop the distance between Pip and Miss Havisham’s social standing but also to enhance Miss Havisham’s age and miserable character in comparison to the young and sprightly Pip.

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Active Learning Task

Find other instances of antithesis within the novel.



Antithesis can be found not only in imagery and situations. The City of London is the antithesis of the home town and Estella is the antithesis of Pip, which would explain why he could also be the antithesis of Startop.

The title *Great Expectations* can itself be seen as an example of antithesis. Pip becomes a woman of social standing, to be his benefactor. In fact it is her social antithesis, Mr

Anaphora

Anaphora refers to the repetition of a word or a group of words at the beginning

Dickens uses **anaphora** to create emphasis on a phrase and to put forward a message to the reader. This is particularly important in *Great Expectations* where the narrator mentions the character's struggle. Below is an example of anaphora; in this instance repetition is used to enhance the distance and struggle that Magwitch has had to endure. We also see his position in society and our initial impression of him is negative:

A fearful man, all in coarse grey, with a great iron on his leg. A man with no hat, and an old rag tied round his head. A man who had been soaked in water, and smothered in stones, and cut by flints, and stung by nettles, and torn by briars; who limped, and shivered, and growled; and whose teeth chattered in his head as he seized me by the chin.
(Chapter 1, p. 4)

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It is important to note that as *Great Expectations* was first published in his magazine, Dickens has to fill a certain amount of space. It is believed that this is the reason for repetition and listing.



Exam extract focus

In the extracts below identify the use of anaphora and explain its effect.

You bring me, to-morrow morning early, that file and them wittles. You bring the lot to yonder. You do it, and you never dare to say a word or dare to make a sign concerning me, or any person sumever, and you shall be let to live. You fail, or you go from my us, small it is, and your heart and your liver shall be tore out, roasted, and ate.

(Chapter 1, p. 6)

This extract is taken from near the end of the novel when Pip is drifting in and out of consciousness. Whether I really had been down in the court in the dead of the night, groping about there; whether I had truly come to myself on the staircase with great terror; whether I had been lighting the lamp, possessed by the idea that he was a light; whether I had been out; whether I had been inexpressibly harassed by the distracted talk of one, and half suspected those sounds to be of my own making; whether there had been a corner of the room, and a voice had called out over and over again, that Miss Havisham.

(Chapter 57, p. 461)

Pip's first encounter with his convict after being made a gentleman:

No need to take a file from his pocket and show it to me; no need to take the handkerchief round his head; no need to hug himself with both his arms, and take a shivering turn for recognition.

(Chapter 39, p. 317)

Hyperbole

Hyperbole means exaggeration for effect.

Dickens uses **hyperbole** to the same effect as he uses anaphora: to exaggerate and deepen his/her personality. It is often used to comic effect too. Instances of hyperbole:

Jaggers' pointer finger:

'Come!' said the stranger, biting his forefinger at him. 'Don't evade the question. Either know it. Which is it to be?'

He stood with his head on one side and himself on one side, in a bullying, interrogative forefinger at Mr Wopsle—as it were to mark him out—before biting it again.

(Chapter 18, p. 134)

Orlick's slouching:

He was a broad-shouldered loose-limbed fellow of great strength, never in a hurry even seemed to come to his work in a hurry, but would slouch in as if by mere accident. Bargemen to eat his dinner, and away at night, he would slouch out, like Cain or the idea who would never come back. He lodged at a sluice-keeper's working, and would come slouching from his hermitage.

(Chapter 19, p. 112)

And Mrs Joe's red face:

My sister, Mrs Joe, with black hair and eyes, had such a prevailing redness of skin, that I sometimes used to wonder whether it was possible she washed herself with a nutmeg-grater instead of soap.

(Chapter 2, p. 8)

Discussion

Choose a Dickens picture and discuss it.

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Pathetic Fallacy

Pathetic fallacy refers to the assignment of human qualities to inanimate objects. This could be physical qualities such as a human shape, or mannerisms. Dickens uses a substantial amount of pathetic fallacy and sometimes in the form of the weather. He uses it as a way of mirroring Pip's inner world. Below is an example of pathetic fallacy within the text. You will notice how the skylight has the human quality of a head and that the houses that rise above it 'peep' down at Pip, a word usually associated with people.

Discussion Prompt

Dickens employs many characterisations, and his criticism of Dickens is comes at the expense of exaggerates, making occurs less believable. State your answer using yourself up.

Mr Jaggers' room was lighted by a skylight only, and it was a most dismal place; the skylight like a broken head, and the distorted chimneys looking as if they had twisted their necks through it.

(Chapter 20, p. 164)

The weather is used frequently throughout the novel as a way of highlighting Pip's mood. Weather is an indication of stormy, negative and very significant action. The excerpt appears just before Pip discovers something very startling; his terrible mood is reflected in the weather.

It was wretched weather; stormy and wet, stormy and wet; and mud, mud, mud, deep in all day a vast heavy veil had been driving over London from the East, and it drove still, as the Eternity of cloud and wind. So furious had been the gusts, that high buildings in town had lost off their roofs; and in the country, trees had been torn up, and sails of windmills carried off; accounts had come in from the coast, of shipwreck and death. Violent blasts of rain had blown off wind, and the day just closed as I sat down to read had been the worst day of all.

The misty marshes at the beginning of the novel symbolise uncertainty and danger. The novel to the same effect. Towards the end of the novel the change in weather mirrors the change towards life. It seems that the brighter sunnier days appear at the end of the novel when misery has been lifted. It serves as an indicator into Pip's inner world.



Exam extract focus

Annotate and analyse the extracts below. What is the effect of these excerpts?

- As soon as the black velvet pall outside my little window was shot with grey, I got up and went upon the way, and every crack in every board, calling after me 'Stop thief!' and 'Get out!' I was far more abundantly supplied than usual, owing to the season, I was very much out of the heels, whom I rather thought I caught, when my back was half turned, winking.
(Chapter 2, p. 15)
- The June weather was delicious. The country was a balm, the larks were soaring high over the countryside more beautiful and more useful by far than I had ever known it to be yet. My heart would leap at the thought of the change for the better that would come over my character and my life. The simple faith and clear home-wisdom I had proved, beguiled my way. They were for, my heart was softened by my return, and such a change had come to pass, that I was barefoot from distant travel, and whose wanderings had lasted many years.
(Chapter 58, p. 477)

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Semantic Fields

Semantic fields are a collection of words that are grouped by theme.

For example, within a piece of text the theme of love may be expressed through a semantic field. You would, therefore, find words associated with this theme such as happiness, red, heart, warmth, etc. within the text.

Another way of grouping by theme is by using words that have the same meaning words such as adoration, tenderness, etc. These words are also known as **synonyms** words with almost identical meanings; for example, 'cat' and 'feline' or 'student'.

Discussion Prompt

What theme has been created through the use of a semantic field in the opening chapter of *Great Expectations*?

In *Great Expectations*, when the narrator describes the old, decayed, and dilapidated house, he creates a semantic field of death. To the reader, this suggests Miss Havisham's personality and the fate of her daughter.

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Form

Form is the type of writing a text is. To comment on form, you need to comment on the style of writing. *Great Expectations* is, obviously, a novel but it is also a serialised novel and a first-person narrative (see Narrative Voice). Considerations of genre are also part of form (see Genre conventions).

Cliffhanger endings

Great Expectations was originally published in serial format in Dickens' own magazine. Each weekly issue would contain one or two chapters of the novel. Dickens needed to write in a way to keep reading the novel so that they would keep buying each issue of the magazine. He had to make sure that each instalment ended with some element of suspense or mystery so that the reader would want to find out more about. The serial format also explains the repetition in places in the novel. Why characters are often larger than life and make them more dramatic. Dickens needed to ensure that, over the months of publication, readers would not forget what was happening and who was who from week to week.

Narrative Voice

The term 'narrative voice' refers to the persona telling the story. One of the most important factors about the narrative voice in *Great Expectations* is that our narrator, Pip, is able to convey the perspective of both his younger self and that of the older narrator. Rather than passing judgment, Pip exposes his faults in his honest narration. In the detailed chapter analyses, you can find many examples of where we hear the older narrator's voice commenting on events as they happened to his younger self.

Active Learning
Find more examples of how the narrative voice is used through the text and what they tell us about the characters.

By allowing other characters in the novel to speak for themselves, a large number of characters are characterised without changing Pip's narrative style. Though this style of narration is biased, Pip's likes or dislikes of certain characters are not just shown through personal opinion but are convincing as they are shown through the words and actions of these characters. The personality and role in the novel is shown through her speech: "Churchyard!" replied she, "you'd have been to the churchyard long ago, and stayed there. Who brought you back? I. "And why did I do it, I should like to know?" exclaimed my sister.' From this extract we can see that Estella believes Pip is ungrateful, despite the fact that Pip himself is the narrator.

Active Learning Task

Dickens establishes character by letting each persona speak for themselves and each has a unique voice. Below is a list of adjectives that describe the way the characters speak. Match one of these adjectives to each character and explain how the way they speak influence the character's personality.

Characters	Pumblechook	Magwitch	Biddy	Joe	Orlick
Adjectives	placid	rough	snarling	stern	cold

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Genre conventions

It is difficult to pinpoint an exact genre for *Great Expectations*. In many ways, it can be said to be a tragedy in many ways but it can also be seen to be a satirical novel simultaneously criticises certain serious aspects of society. Dickens is most famously defined as 'the literary art of diminishing [...] a subject by making it ridiculous and amusement, contempt, indignation or scorn.' The butt of satire may be 'a person, or even the whole human race' (M H Abrams and G G Harpham, *A Glossary of Literature*, Cengage Learning, 2015).

In the novel Dickens has satirised:

- The legal system – mainly through the characters of Jaggers, Magwitch and Estella
- Class snobbery that forms the basis of the book's plot. Pip's rise through the ranks is an explicit form of satire
- The education system, which is harshly criticised in the earliest chapters of the novel through the worthless teacher, Mr Wopsle's school and aunt
- The treatment of children, represented and satirised by the example of Miss Havisham's orphanage, which is highly cynical and, therefore, a very obvious example of satire

Active Learning Task

There are two types of satire: **Juvenalian** and **Horatian**. Juvenalian satire refers to a direct attack on the author's or narrator's own voice. Horatian satire is gentler and delivered indirectly by characters. Which do you think Dickens uses? Can you find an example within the novel and identify what it is satirising?

For example: In Chapter 56 Dickens uses Juvenalian satire 'malefactors but not incapable of kindness' comments on how all prisoners are perceived as bad and 'incapable of kindness', though this is not true. An example of Horatian satire is the character of Miss Pocket, who highlights the mistreatment of women in the education system.

However, the novel is also clearly recognisable as a Bildungsroman. It tells the story of how Pip's growth and maturity are reinforced throughout the novel. Building on his use of comic relief, Dickens also uses comedy as another way of reinforcing these ideas. He writes with fondness and pokes fun at some of the feelings he expresses.

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Structure

Structure is the way that the parts of a text are put together and organised.

Retrospective narrative order

As we have seen above, one of the key things about the narrative in *Great Expectations* is the voice of an older narrator looking back on past events (a retrospective narrative). This means that the story we are reading is ordered and shaped by the older narrator. Events are important enough for us to be told about, the order in which those events are told, and the relative emphasis which should be placed on different events, are all shaped by the older narrator. Although the story is generally told chronologically, showing us a sequence of events over Pip's childhood and young adulthood, we see examples of the older narrator shaping the order of events in several places. One of the best examples is at the end of Chapter 37 where the narrator explains that he pauses the narrative in order to spend a chapter talking about Estella.

Discussion Point

Can you think of a place where the older narrator shapes the way in which the story is told? Do you think the effect is successful?

Dickens' order

Although the narrator orders the narrative, we must not forget that Dickens himself ordered the narrative. In order to meet the requirements of serial publication, Dickens had to ensure that each instalment was of an appropriate length and, as we have seen in the section on cliffhanger endings above, he had to ensure that readers wanted to continue reading at the end of each instalment. Controlling the information and the order of various plot strands was a key part of this and would have taken careful planning in detail and thought carefully about which chapter to place where. We can see a good example of this where Dickens carefully places the comic relief of Wemmick's wedding immediately after Magwitch's arrest in Chapter 54.

Three-volume structure

After serialisation, Victorian novels were generally published in two or three volumes. When planning the serial instalments, Dickens had to plan the subdivision of the novel into weekly instalments. Dickens had to ensure that readers who bought individual volumes would want to buy the next volume and he therefore ends each volume at a point where we want to keep reading. Volume I ends with Pip about to depart for London to become a gentleman and Volume II ends with Pip's benefactor. However, these points of division are also significant because they divide the story of Pip's life into appropriate sections for the shape of a Bildungsroman. The first volume covers Pip's childhood and adolescence, up to the point when he leaves home. The middle volume covers Pip's journey as he makes his way in the world, unaware of his lack of maturity. The final volume can be seen as his 'coming-of-age': the sequence of events which cause him to realise what is really important in his life.

Exam tip

For the exam, try to comment on form and structure in your essays on *Great Expectations* and language and language techniques Dickens uses.

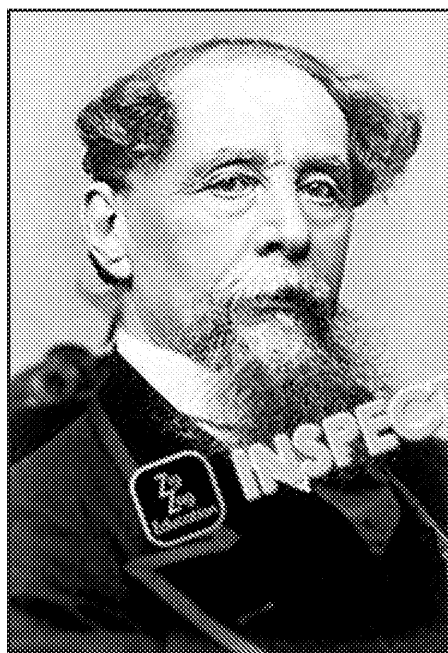
However, you **MUST** make sure that what you say about form and structure is relevant to the question you are being asked. You must also explain what you know about form and structure (or, equally, context) without explaining what the question you are being asked.

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Context



Charles Dickens was born on 7th February 1812, the second child of seven born to John and

His early childhood was relatively carefree. He attended a private school. At the age of 10, he and moved to London.

In 1824, when Charles was 12, his father went to a debtors' prison. His mother and six siblings, Charles, being the eldest boy, was sent to

This was not uncommon, and for three months he was working in a blacking warehouse where he made shoe polish. The conditions were abysmal. This experience inspired Dickens' later novels and essays.

Eventually, after inheriting a sum of money that cleared their debt and left prison. Charles soon re-joined his family and became a law clerk and then a court reporter.

This gave him insight into legal procedures and informed many of his later literary works). In 1836, Dickens' first novel *The Pickwick Papers* was published. From then on he dedicated himself to writing. He wrote 19 novels and many more short stories, essays and plays. He died in 1870.

Literary Context

Charles Dickens became one of the most prolific writers of his time and is still a household name. His comments on poverty and social class are particularly valid as he experienced the conditions himself. This provides an indication to readers today of the horrendous conditions of the poor and their struggles.

Dickens portrays **universal** themes that are relevant to everyone all over the world. His stories are still incredibly exciting and relevant to readers today.

Great Expectations is believed to be semi-autobiographical as Pip's experiences mirror Dickens' own life. An example of this is his dislike for his job and his rise through the ranks. For modern readers, the idea of **social class** was particularly prominent in the 19th century.

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Victorian Culture and *Great Expectations*

Class

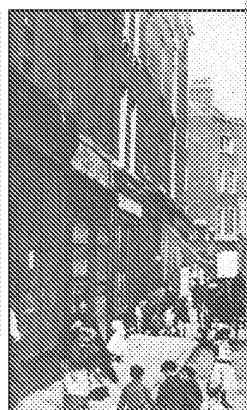
The term '**social class**' refers to a person's status in society. *Great Expectations* is a story in which social class influenced almost every aspect of a person's life.

At this point class was not exclusively limited to a child's birth as it had been before. It was dependent on it. Joe in *Great Expectations* is a blacksmith and Pip's social standing is that of a blacksmith. Blacksmiths were among the working classes but had a higher place in society than most. In the Victorian period, work for the lower classes often involved intensive labour.

In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries the introduction of new machinery as opposed to the manual labour prevalent then brought about a dramatic change in the **economic** and cultural circumstances of the United Kingdom. It enabled **manufacturers** to accumulate vast fortunes and create jobs for all classes. Magwitch, Miss Havisham and Mr Wopsle have all made their money by commerce. None of these characters is from the lower or working classes. Thousands of people migrated from the country to the city in search of work. Similarly Pip moves from his marshland home of Kent to the big city of London where he meets the higher classes.



This scene depicts a Victorian blacksmith's forge. These men worked amongst dirt and grime in a hot smithy.



The city struggled to deal with the huge surges of people migrating every day and working conditions were often atrocious. It is no surprise then that life expectancy was low. Charles Dickens himself wrote of the **plight** of the lower classes: 'wretched houses with rags and paper; every room let out to a different family, and many instances

It was rare for people to rise through the classes, as Dickens and Pip did, but it was difficult to determine what it is exactly that distinguishes the classes. Not only is it the **economic** differences but the **cultural** differences as well. This would explain why Pip not only inherits the 'gentlemanly' arts by Matthew Pocket. In *Great Expectations*, education is closely linked to social class. Although education is compulsory in Britain today, Pip as a poor child in Victorian England struggles but is persistent as he knows that education is key to his becoming a gentleman. Biddy has taught him to read and write by the end of the novel, which he does well. Illiteracy is portrayed in Joe's speech – 'Manners is manners, but still your manners' – phonetically so that the reader can pronounce the words the same way that Joe does.

Although Matthew Pocket trains Pip to be a gentleman, it is difficult to define what a gentleman is. Making the assumption that all gentlemen had the same traits and personalities is a simplification. He is thought of as being kind, rich, gentle, chivalrous and calm, yet we can see in characters like him that these qualities, though expected, were not always present. In comparison Joe is kind and kind-hearted fits all of the characteristics yet is not a gentleman because of his low social status. The inclusion of two such characters and situations is Dickens' way of showing how class affects a person and also a further way of portraying that it should be virtue that makes a man a gentleman.

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In addition to education and wear in the novel indicate the gentleman Pip would have been wearing the clothing that he may never have seen in the city of London. London was, at the time, a fashion capital of the world, and top clothes and hats were displayed in the city as a way of implying status. Typically a Victorian gentleman would wear a frock coat, waistcoat and hat; in fact, it was considered to be seen in public without these items would be considered a disgrace. The 1840s meant that silk became more inexpensive, making it the favourite material for the typical hat of the period was made of silk.

Joe, the blacksmith, wears practical clothes that met the needs of his profession. For Joe, the housewife, wears an apron religiously, which not only stands as a symbol of her position in the household. As a woman she would have been expected to look after the house and all the members she lives with; in this case, Joe and Pip. In contrast, Miss Havisham's rich white laces and fabric act as an indication of her class. Magwitch, meanwhile, wears the uniform of prisoners, a coarse, grey outfit with an iron attached to his leg to stop him from escaping when he is being moved. One of the purposes of a uniform is to deter individuality. It is also a way of setting a prisoner apart from other members in society; it belittles and disparages them.

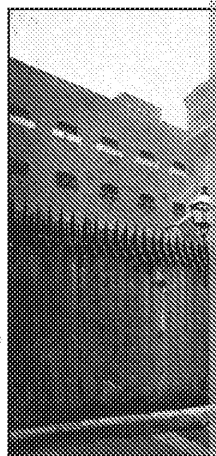
Activity
As you read, identify the different things that are mentioned in the text.

Crime and Punishment

In a lot of Dickens' work he criticises the justice system and we witness this great in Magwitch's storyline.

Magwitch is sent to Newgate Prison, a real-life prison that was situated in the heart of London. It was notorious for its stench and terrible conditions and was said to be 'an abominable sink of beastliness and corruption' by Sir Stephen Jansen, a stationer lord mayor.

Prisons at the time were privately run and thus many items could be bought; for example, a better room with a visiting maid or the freedom to roam the grounds, though many prisoners could not afford these luxuries and were locked up with little light, few clothes and no food. There were two sections in the prison: a 'common area' for the poorer prisoners and a 'private area' for the richer who could afford better standards. These sections were further divided into debtors and felons. Dickens' father was sent to debtors' prison after he became bankrupt, and Charles, were sent to live in prison with him too. Charles was sent to work in a factory. This set-up was not unusual as whole families, including children and even their children who were born in prison to a couple who had met inside were often sent to the same prison.

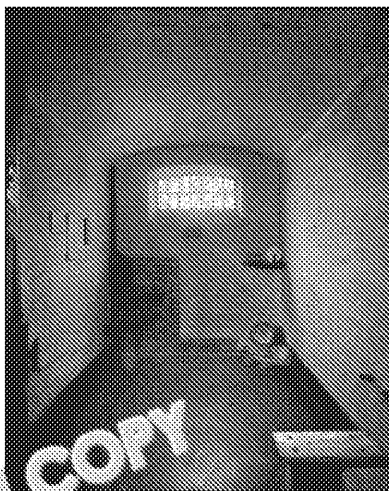


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chances of leading a good life were minimal and their standard of living just as bad. As people could not leave prison until they paid a departure fee, poorer prisoners and debtors were often stuck in prison far longer than they should have been.

Newgate was rife with disease and few prisoners actually made it to their execution day as infectious diseases such as typhus were spread among the inmates through lice and fleas. Families had to pay for the body of a family member who had died inside the prison and until they paid the body was left to rot inside the cell. Newgate had such an overwhelming stench that a ship nearby would have to use its chimney for a summer.



Inside Newgate

Executions, more specifically hangings, were held outside the front of the prison until 1868, however, hangings were moved to within the prison and prisoners were hanged on the gallows inside. The last execution was in May 1902, the year the prison was demolished.

To conclude then, the content of *Great Expectations* has been greatly informed by its **context**. Dickens satirises many aspects of Victorian society, mainly the legal system. By doing this he highlights to his readers flaws in society that he believes must be rectified. It is difficult to understand Dickens' experiences but his writing helps us to at least appreciate them and helps to make his novels as popular today as they were in his lifetime.

Context – in terms of literature, refers to the background affairs in which an incident occurs, often including intertextual or historical references.

Universal – refers to something that is understood worldwide.

Socioeconomic – means something involving economic (financial affairs) and social (human interaction) factors.

Manufacturer – is a producer of goods from raw materials. Goods are usually made on a large scale, not individually.

Industrialist – refers to the owner or top manager in an industry.

Plight – refers to an unfortunate, dangerous or difficult situation.

Cultural/culture – refers to people that share similar beliefs, attitudes and practices.

Illiterate – refers to someone who is unable to read or write.

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Glossary of Key Terms

Key Term	Meaning
Anonymous	means unknown.
Anaphora	refers to the repetition of a word or a group of words in successive sentences or lines.
Antagonist	refers to the rival or opponent of the protagonist.
Antithesis	is the contrast of ideas or words.
Archaic	words are often old-fashioned and not used in modern language.
Bildungsroman	is a novel concerned with the development, education and character of a protagonist.
Caricature	refers to an exaggerated or distorted representation of a person or thing.
Character	is the way that a writer creates a vivid sense of a person through a detailed description of their appearance, speech and actions.
Cherubic	means like a cherub/angel.
Colloquial	refers to informal phrases used in everyday life. An example would be 'ain't nothin'. Colloquialisms are often used to create a sense of realism.
Connote	is to imply something.
Context	in terms of literature, refers to the background in which a text occurs. It can give a reader insight into intertextual references.
Contrast	is an obvious difference between two things which are being compared.
Cultural/culture	refers to people that share similar beliefs, attitudes and values.
Dickensian	means in Dickens' style; relating to Dickens or his writing.
Ensnare	means to follow as a result of something.
Explicit	refers to something that is obvious.
Focalised	means to alter or arrange the focus. In literature, this refers to a narration being told by one character but concerning other characters.
Foreboding	is similar to the word ominous. It implies that something bad is about to happen.
Form	is the type of writing a text is.
Hyperbole	means exaggeration for effect.
Illiterate	refers to someone who is unable to read or write.
Industrialist	refers to the owner or top manager in an industrial company.
Innate	refers to something you are born with.
Intertextual reference	is a subtle reference to another text (novel/play/poem) in a previous parallel.
Journeyman	refers to a dealer or crafter who has completed an apprenticeship.
Juxtaposition	means to place side by side, especially in comparison.
Malleable	refers to something easily moulded or influenced.
Manufacturer	is a producer of goods from raw materials. Goods are often produced on a large industrial scale but sometimes individually.
Moral reasoning	refers to your personal interpretation of things.
Motif	refers to a recurring element.
Ominous	means to give the impression that something bad is about to happen.
Pathetic fallacy	is the act of assigning human traits and emotions to natural elements.
Plight	refers to an unfortunate, dangerous or difficult situation.

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Key Term	Meaning
Plot	is the storyline of a text (novel/play etc.) The plot consists of events which tend to be connected. Other events, which are not connected to the main storyline, can sometimes form an additional storyline, perhaps featuring other characters.
Prison boat	refers to the boat that carried convicts to Australia to serve their jail sentences.
Protagonist	is the main character.
Providence	refers to God's activity and involvement in the world.
Retrospective	means to look back at previous events.
Rhetorical	is a question asked without the expectation of an answer.
Semantic field	refers to a set of words linked together by meaning.
Simultaneous	means at the same time.
Socio-economic	means something involving economic (financial and material) factors, welfare, organisation and interaction.
Spinster	refers to a woman who has never married.
Structure	is the way that the parts of a text are put together.
Symbolism	is when a writer uses something to represent something else, by resemblance or by association.
Themes	are issues or concerns in a text that are expressed.
Universal	refers to something that is understood worldwide.

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Further Reading

Here are some books you might want to read to find out more about Dickens, the Victorian era and ideas about *Great Expectations*.

Books about Dickens and the Victorian era:

- Claire Tomalin: *Charles Dickens: A Life*. London: Penguin, 2012.
This book gives a good account of Dickens' life and works.
- Andrew Sanders: *Authors in Context: Charles Dickens*. Oxford: OUP, 2009.
This book contains lots of useful information about Dickens and the various

Books about *Great Expectations*:

- Nicolas Tredell (ed): *Charles Dickens: Great Expectations (Icon Guide)*. London: Icon, 2012.
This book is a useful guide to literary criticism of the novel from when it was first published to the present day.
- Douglas B. Stovall: *Charles Dickens: Great Expectations (Critical Studies)*. London: Routledge, 2011.
This book is a thorough critical study of the novel, offering some interesting

Here are some websites for you to do some of your own further research on Dickens and the Victorian era.

Websites dedicated to Charles Dickens:

- www.charlesdickenspage.com
This is a site dedicated to the life and literary works of Charles Dickens, very useful for finding out more information on his background.
- www.dickens-online.info
'The Works and Life of Charles Dickens.'

Websites dedicated to the Victorian era:

- www.victorianlondon.org
This website is incredibly useful for furthering your understanding of the period. It contains many newspaper articles, photographs and adverts that cover a large number of topics including: entertainment, murder, punishment, fashion, police, childhood, photography, drink, and education, to name a few!
- www.victorianweb.org
Another website dedicated to many different aspects of the Victorian period. It contains a lot of information on literary genres and techniques popular in the period.

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Discussion prompt

Exam extract focus

Students should explore the connotations of the colours and significance of the word 'and likening of Magwitch to a pirate (a criminal figure) and a dead colour that (so that he sees fear and our impression of him as a frightening and threatening character.

Discussion prompt

Students should discuss how Dickens shows Pip's guilt through the fact that his thoughts he is going to be caught, the fact that he dreams about the consequences, techniques such as the floorboard and his repeated description of the 'mortal terror' Pip finds himself in

Essay question

Students should identify the main idea that, through use of the older narrator, Dickens is providing perspective and commentary on the events the young Pip experiences. Students should use the text to show where we hear the voice of the older narrator and comment on the effect. Below are some examples:

'Since that time, which is far enough away now, I have often thought that few people know young, under terror.' The narrator states explicitly that he is commenting on something that

'No matter how unreasonable the terror, so that it be terror. I was in mortal terror of the and liver'. The repetition of 'my terror' and 'mortal terror' is Dickens' way of imitating a the older narrator poking fun at his younger self.

'I was in mortal terror of my interlocutor with the iron leg; I was in mortal terror of myself been extracted; I had no hope of deliverance through my all-powerful sister, who repulsed think of what I might have done on requirement, in the secrecy of my terror.' The use of *'interlocutor'* shows us that this is an educated voice and not that of a young boy. The effects are hearing the story retrospectively.

Discussion prompts

Discussion should focus on the theme of guilt itself and the idea that characters who feel guilty are more human than those who do not feel guilt (for example, Miss Havisham and Compeyson). Stave 9 highlights his innate good nature and also his naivety.

With regards to the convict, students should note how Magwitch appears as less terrifying. However, his aggression returns when Pip tells him about the other man he saw on the river.

Discussion prompt

Students should consider how Pumblechook is presented as a pompous character throughout the text. They should discuss how our impression of him is affected by the fact that Pip is the one who tells the story (Pumblechook is pompous) and also the way that other characters respond to him, e.g. Mrs. Gargery particularly like or admire, fawns over Pumblechook.

Discussion p

Students should think about what this chapter adds to our understanding of the relation. Structurally, Dickens includes this here, a couple of chapters before Pip's first visit to Satis about Joe before he meets Miss Havisham and Estella.

Essay question

As an overview, students' answers should relate to the closeness of the relationship between comment on some of the following: Pip cares about what Joe thinks of him; Pip loves Joe; truth; Joe cares about Pip (carries him home when he's tired); the contrast between the and the relationship between Pip and Mrs Joe.

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Chapter 7**Discussion prompt**

Students should examine the way that Dickens ridicules Mr Wopsle and his aunt's method of teaching the students. They may also explore the fact that Pip does not seem to be learning much as a result of this method of teaching, which is receiving.

Chapter 8**Discussion prompt**

Students should focus on the way that Dickens creates a mysterious and suspenseful mood in the chapter of Satis House and Miss Havisham herself. The overwhelming fact that we do not know who she is, and we do not get a satisfactory answer in this chapter, also adds to the suspense.

Exam extract focus

Students should explore how the semantic field of death and burial suggests that Miss Havisham is almost dead on the outside). Her life effectively ended when she was jilted at the altar.

Essay question

Students should comment on specific examples of the way Miss Havisham is presented. She wears a dress she wears indicating her class; the dress is white suggesting purity and innocence but is yellowing and damaged; the dress is a reminder of her tragic past; the decay of all the objects around her suggests the significance of her life; she is jilted away from the world and sunlight in the room.

Chapter 9**Discussion prompt**

Students should consider that Pumblechook and Mrs Joe are desperate to believe in the success of the new House, as she is the wealthiest person in the neighbourhood, and they are keen to associate themselves with her.

Chapter 10**Discussion prompt**

Students should discuss how the stranger deliberately uses the file to show Pip that he is a convict. The image of the banknotes in the place Mrs Joe puts them symbolises Pip's guilt over what he has done. Joe's response to the banknotes shows us that he is an honest and hardworking man.

Chapter 11**Discussion prompt**

Students should consider how Jaggers is described in a way which might seem quite intimidating and appear to frighten Pip. This reflects the way that he appears throughout the novel – he is a man of power, but does not terrify. He also seems here to be quite inquisitive and perceptive (as part of his job is to question and interrogate in court). Students should also consider the way that 'nothing' to him at this point: in many ways, Jaggers blends into the background but he is a central figure in the novel as he orchestrates the wishes of his clients and is responsible for organising the marriage of Pip and Estella.

Chapter 12**Discussion prompt**

Students may disagree on whether or not it is reasonable for Pip to assume this. Discussion should focus on the fact that Pip wants to believe it so much that he ignores any evidence which might suggest the opposite.

Chapter 14**Discussion prompts**

Students should consider the fact that the forge is a symbol of Pip's childhood and his work as a blacksmith, which originally Pip saw as a way to 'manhood and independence'. Now, however, it is seen as 'common' as he has been exposed to higher-class attitudes towards manual work.

Students should consider the way that Mrs Joe who unconsciously stops Pip from feeling that he is a blacksmith, and the bond with Joe who does not want to upset him or let him down.

Chapter 15**Essay question**

As an overview, students should identify that Orlick is presented in a negative light in this chapter. Specific details to show how Dickens has done this: the way his name (Dolge Orlick) sounds; the way Dickens draws between Orlick and Cain / the Wandering Jew; Orlick's attitude towards his work and behaviour towards Pip; Orlick's attitude and behaviour towards Mrs Joe; the hints that he is the man who attacked Mrs Joe; the way Orlick speaks; the fact that he appears out of the darkness.

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Chapter 16**Exam extract focus**

Students should explore how Dickens ridicules the abilities of the police as well as their manner, including the way that they 'take their drink' rather than 'taking' the person who commits the crime.

Discussion prompt

Students might consider that Mrs Joe is trying to indicate that Orlick is the one who has attacked her, and whether she is trying to appease him because she is still frightened of him.

Chapter 17**Discussion prompt**

Students might explore whether Pip has feelings for Biddy at this point in the novel, which is suggested by his own words. They might consider whether Estella is simply a fantasy for Pip at this point and how this affects his relationship with Biddy.

Chapter 18**Discussion prompt**

Students may disagree on whether or not Miss Havisham is responsible for Pip to believe this. They might consider whether choosing to ignore the evidence which does not suit what he wants to believe. His feelings about Miss Havisham and her plan to marry her.

Chapter 19**Discussion prompt**

Students might consider the extent to which it suits Miss Havisham to let Pip believe she has a chance to marry Estella to keep believing he has a genuine chance with Estella so that he will be even more hurt when she marries her.

Students should discuss how the tone varies in these last two pages. In many ways, there is a sense of optimism as Pip embarks on his adventure. However, there is also a definite sense of sadness at the end of the chapter, as if a way. The older narrator adds to this sense as we get the feeling that he is judging his young self for leaving home.

Chapter 20**Discussion prompt**

Students should focus on how Jaggers' office is described here and how it makes him seem powerful. They should focus on the way that his array of clients behave towards him and how this adds to our sense of his power. His manner of dealing with them also makes us more aware of his precision and intelligence, and of the secrets he keeps.

Chapter 21**Discussion prompt**

Students should consider the coincidence of Pip meeting Herbert again at this point, when he is at Satis House. Again, they should discuss whether Pip is merely choosing to believe that Miss Havisham is his friend because he wants this to be true.

Chapter 22**Discussion prompt**

Students should discuss how Herbert clearly doesn't think much of Miss Havisham and Estella, and is quite blunt in his opinion of them.

Students should discuss how Mrs Pocket is presented as a fairly comic character but that the depiction of her as someone who is completely self-centred, to the extent that she is unaware of her own faults, adds to the comedy.

Chapter 23**Discussion prompt**

Students should consider how Mr and Mrs Pocket conform to traditional gender roles. Mr Pocket is further depicted in this chapter but, as above, the more serious suggestion that she is a bad mother to her children is also implied. Students might wish to draw comparisons between the relationship between Mr and Mrs Pocket and the relationship between Joe and Mrs Joe.

Chapter 24**Discussion prompt**

Students should consider how Jaggers is presented as an authority figure here and the sense of his character is strengthened when he is seen in action in the courtroom.

With regards to Wemmick, students should consider how he is presented as loyal to Mr Jaggers. He seems to be an honest and hard-working person, much like Joe, although his type of work is different. However, he is obviously gossiping with Pip here and students might explore whether this is a character trait he is committed to as he seems to be.

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Chapter 25**Discussion prompt**

Discussion should focus on how the castle, like Wemmick's domestic life, is used for comfort. How it is over the top, much like Wemmick himself in terms of his attitude towards keeping secrets. Discussion might also focus on the significance of Wemmick's home as the highlight of his life. Most he can ever achieve as a clerk, and he values it much more highly than it is actually worth.

Exam extract focus

Students should focus on exploring how Drummle is presented in an over-the-top way and how his personality is exaggerated. The metaphor of him as an amphibious creature creeping out of the water is a sinister element to his character and the idea of him sneaking up on Pip reflects the way he is engaged to Estella behind Pip's back.

Chapter 26**Discussion prompt**

Obviously, Molly's wrists are suspicious as we do not know what has happened to her. Her situation makes it more suspicious and the fact that we do not know much about her background adds to the mystery.

Chapter 27**Discussion prompt**

Students should consider how we feel sympathy for Joe here: he clearly tries to make things work for his family. We get a sense of his love for Pip in this chapter. Pip's harsh response and attitude towards him is sympathetic towards him.

Chapter 28**Exam extract focus**

Students may comment on any of the words and phrases in bold. They should focus, in the extract, on how Pip feels physically affected by the presence of the convicts (suggesting his fear of them), the 'marrow' and eating away at him ('acid'). Students may also discuss Pip's paranoia here.

Discussion prompts

Students should understand that Pip is not particularly surprised to discover that Pumblechook has lost his fortune.

In considering the reasons for Pip's sense of fear and guilt here, discussion should aim to explore his feelings towards Joe, the encounter with the convicts or his impending visit to Miss Havisham.

Chapter 29**Discussion prompts**

Students should consider how the portrayal of Miss Havisham as a witch here makes her a more sinister figure than just a sad and lonely old woman. It is worth considering whether anything in the text is sympathetic towards her.

Students should be able to justify their choice for the emotions they choose.

Chapter 30**Essay question**

Students should comment on some of the following: the fact that Pip's relationship with Estella, which suggests worship rather than real love; Pip is materialistic because he wants to marry Estella and Clara have a mutual love for each other; Herbert and Clara are thinking practically about what needs to happen before they can marry; Herbert knows he needs to achieve a certain status to be able to marry Clara; Herbert is not materialistic when it comes to choosing a wife; both Pip and Herbert feel miserable as they know Estella doesn't return their feelings, Herbert because he can't marry Clara at this stage.

Discussion prompt

Students should consider how Pip is trying to suggest that Pip is ungrateful and wants to be happy with what has been given.

Chapter 31**Discussion prompt**

Students should consider how the fact that it is a bad performance means Pip fails to be happy in the last chapter. It is playing on his mind because, deep down, he is aware that he has done nothing to advance himself. The tragic element of the play also adds to Pip's unease – the play ends in a feeling far from upbeat.

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Chapter 32

Discussion prompt

Students should consider how Pip's visit to the prison, which repulses him and makes him think about the way he views Estella: he is attracted to her and almost worships her. However, it is also clear that his exposure to Estella also taints him in terms of his attitude towards life.

Chapter 33

Discussion prompt

Students may differ in their opinions here. Some may feel that Estella is the victim here, while others may feel that Miss Havisham is.

Exam extract focus

Students should focus on the impression created of Estella through the way she appears and the impression Pip has of her. Some points might include:

- The fact that Pip notices her 'furred travelling-dress' first, which symbolises her wealth.
- His admiration of her as 'beautiful' but also 'delicate', suggesting he senses her vulnerability and perhaps has a desire to protect her.
- The way she quickly returns to her position of ordering Pip around ('she pointed her finger at me').
- The effect Estella has on Pip: when she is around, he forgets 'everything but herself'.
- The way she speaks to him – 'This is my purse, and you are to pay for the things you take care to do this while'.
- The fact that she acknowledges that, although Pip has no choice but to do as she says, neither do they: 'We have no choice, you and I, but to obey our instructions. We are not free to do as we like.' This is her first open acknowledgement of the fact that they are both pawns in Miss Havisham's plan.
- The significance of the fact that Estella says this 'slightly, but not with displeasure' – although she is dismissive of Miss Havisham's plans, she has not yet reached the point of open rebellion.
- Estella conducts herself in a robotic way, without involving herself emotionally in her situation: 'I am only a machine, as if it must be done'.

Chapter 34

Discussion prompt

Dickens presents Pip and Herbert as immature characters here, who are financially inexperienced and lack practical skills. The concept of them ordering expensive food and drink to fortify them with wine is deliberately ridiculous, as is the idea that Pip feels he is accomplishing something simply by repaying them. The older narrator adds to this sense of ridicule as he is effectively saying that we do not feel as unsympathetic as we otherwise might.

Chapter 36

Discussion prompt

Students should consider that Dickens wants to keep the convict storyline alive in the resolution of the plot. The fact that this is often mentioned in relation to Pip's fortune and foreshadowing what he will discover later. Students may differ in their opinions about whether it is worth discussing the significance of the fact that the book was initially published in serial form, as readers would, therefore, be more likely to forget characters and events from earlier chapters.

Again, students may disagree in their opinion of Pip at this point. The fact that he wants to marry Estella is the argument that he is innately a good person, although others may argue that it is Pip's first place.

Chapter 37

Discussion prompts

Students may consider whether Pip is doing the right thing, rather than just for credit. He may also want to help Herbert but be worried that Herbert is too proud to accept his help. Students should also consider the comic aspects of the way the relationship between Wemmick and Herbert develops. However, they should also note that their relationship seems to be a quietly contented one, in contrast to Pip's relationship with Estella.

Chapter 38

Essay question

As an overview, students should identify that the relationship between Miss Havisham and Estella is central to the novel and there is tension between them in this chapter. They may comment on some of the ways Estella behaves towards Miss Havisham; the sunlight metaphor Estella uses to describe the effect of her presence on Miss Havisham; Miss Havisham's surprise when Estella behaves towards her with coldness; the effect of Estella's presence on Miss Havisham; the impression we get of why both Miss Havisham and Estella behave in the way they do in the relationship between Miss Havisham and Estella; the fact that the two women appear to be the only women in the chapter.

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Discussion prompt

Again, students may disagree here. Some may feel that Estella might not believe Pip because of her and may be jealous of Drummle. Others might feel that Estella simply doesn't care either because she is incapable of loving anyone she ends up marrying. Students might also consider whether she feels that she deserves to be married to someone like Drummle, rather than hurt someone else.

Chapter 39**Discussion prompt**

Students should explore how this quote suggests Pip has a very black-and-white view of good and evil, it's worth considering how this contrasts with what Dickens suggests his own view is in the novel.

Chapter 40**Discussion prompt**

Students should discuss the range of options open to Pip, from helping Magwitch escape to staying in London. They should be able to justify what they think Pip will do next.

Chapter 41**Discussion prompt**

Students should consider how Herbert's attitude towards Magwitch is fairly similar to Pip's, but he is more open to judging him on his criminal past.

Chapter 42**Discussion prompts**

Students, in general, should identify how the story Magwitch tells here makes us (as well as Pip) more sympathetic towards him. They should consider how Dickens uses the story to suggest that Magwitch is not necessarily to blame for having fallen into a life of crime. Dickens is making here about how people (such as Pip and Herbert in the previous chapters) often judge people without knowing the full facts of their case.

The extra details bring the different strands of the plot together. Students should also consider how this makes us feel less sympathetic towards Compeyson and, perhaps, more sympathetic towards Magwitch.

Chapter 43**Discussion prompt**

Students may vary in their opinions here. Some may feel that Pip returns because he is desperate, or that he is worried about what might happen to him in helping Magwitch escape. Others might feel that, now he knows the truth about his benefactor, he never sees Estella again. Others might feel that, now he knows the truth about his benefactor, he never sees Estella again. Others might feel that, now he knows the truth about his benefactor, he never sees Estella again.

Chapter 45**Discussion prompt**

Students should focus on how Pip's feelings towards Magwitch have clearly changed here.

Chapter 46**Discussion prompt**

Students should explore the general sense of unease that pervades this chapter. Despite making plans to help Magwitch escape, we cannot help but feel that these will go wrong.

Chapter 47**Discussion prompt**

Students' opinions are likely to vary here and this should be an interesting topic for discussion.

Chapter 48**Discussion prompt**

Students should identify the facts about Molly's past which match with what Pip knows about her parentage, as well as the hints we have had when Pip sees both Molly and Estella and then when he meets her. It would be worth students discussing whether Pip is more rational in coming to this conclusion than Miss Havisham. Is his conclusion about Molly based on evidence or is it just a guess?

Chapter 49**Discussion prompt**

Again, this is an open topic for discussion and students' opinions are likely to vary. They should consider whether Miss Havisham feels guilty enough to commit suicide or whether it is an accident, which Dickens suggests is natural justice in the world. It would also be worth discussing why Dickens leaves it unclear.

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Chapter 50**Discussion prompts**

As in Chapter 48 above, students should consider what has led Pip to come to this conclusion.

Students' opinions may, again, vary widely but they should be able to argue their case.

Chapter 51**Discussion prompts**

Students should discuss how Estella's origins are a commentary on how class is a construction in the novel, she has been perceived as a wealthy member of the higher classes, when in actuality she is a member of the criminal underclass. Her class is, therefore, a social construction and the result of her education, rather than the class she was born into. Dickens is using this to make a point as far as possible. In a similar way, her origins as the child of criminals make an interesting point about how more good-natured than Estella has been raised to be, despite the fact that it should be the opposite. Both these ideas about class and virtue to make a point about how society judges people about them, their background and their character.

Students should discuss how we further see Estella's ability to keep secrets and confidence in the knowledge and understanding that she has.

Students may consider the extent to which Pip wants to protect Estella from finding out about her origins and how concerned about the way she will react to it or the way that society will view her.

Chapter 52**Discussion prompt**

Students should discuss what has changed to make Pip regret his behaviour towards Joe. He now has an option to leave the country here and begins to feel nostalgic towards his childhood. He has found out about Estella's heritage and the realisation that class and virtue are not what he thought them to be. Additionally, it may be as a result of the increased sympathy he now feels towards a parallel character to Joe (as a father figure to Pip).

Chapter 53**Discussion prompt**

Again, students may disagree in their opinions here. Discussion should focus on the fact that his motives do not seem particularly realistic. However, it is worth considering that Orlick is a character who embodies evil rather than a fully convincing character in his own right.

Chapter 54**Discussion prompt**

Students should consider how Magwitch is suggesting that the future is impossible to predict and that the content here to let things happen as they will.

Chapter 55**Discussion prompts**

Students should consider how Pip feels that he has a bond with Magwitch and a loyalty to him, despite taking Herbert up on his offer.

Students should also explore how Pip is feeling despondent throughout this chapter, as a result of his feelings for her.

Opinions may vary here about the effectiveness of this technique.

Chapter 57**Discussion prompt**

Again, students may vary in their opinions of Pip's feelings for Biddy. It is worth discussing whether he has a sense or whether he just has a very strong affection for her, as a childhood friend and someone who has helped him. Does he want to marry her because she stands for stability and domesticity?

Chapter 58**Discussion prompt**

Discussion should focus on Pip's sense of nostalgia and homecoming here. It is significant that he has changed on this return compared to his previous trips home and feels that he has undergone a transformation. This clearly symbolises the personal journey of growing up and discovery that he has actually completed. It is with the parable of the Prodigal Son in the Bible where the repentant child returns home and his father welcomes him with open arms.

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Chapter 59

Discussion prompts

Students' opinions will vary but they should consider what each ending suggests and how the reader.

Again, this is an interesting topic for discussion!

Exam extract focus

Students should focus on the way that the setting is symbolic in both a negative and a positive crucial element here; for example, in the description of the weather. The setting is also symbolic of new plants.

Themes

Exam extract focus

Students should focus on how Dickens highlights the themes of ambition and social class in some of the following points:

- Magwitch's admiration of Pip's possessions – in his view, material things indicate the success of his ambition.
- Magwitch's belief that Pip's books (which symbolise his education) also show that he is ambitious.
- Magwitch's tale of persistence in the face of hardship reflects his ambition to achieve his goal. The extract indicates the tension he feels at having achieved his ambition.
- The idea that people like Judge Magwitch for his origins suggests that he realises he has achieved his goal. Social mobility can only come through what he does for Pip.
- Magwitch's idea that he is the 'owner' of a gentleman and that this reflects on him, which defines the difference between the classes.
- The fact that Pip is repulsed by Magwitch suggests that, like the people Magwitch meets, he is defined by his origins and social class. This reflects the prejudices of society and implies that it is not enough to allow for social mobility.

Settings

Exam extract focus

Students should comment on how Dickens uses the language of decay, neglect and isolation that symbolises Miss Havisham in this extract. They may comment on any of the highlights.

Light and darkness

Exam extract focus

Students should comment on the use of language and how light is used as a metaphor for love.

- 'the dark confinement of these rooms' – love is shut out from Satis House and Estella is the house. The 'dark' is symbolic of a life without love.
- 'the daylight by which she had never once seen your face' – the suggestion here is that love really are and love, too, allows people to know each other properly.
- 'to understand the daylight and know all about it' – the idea here is that you cannot know love unless you have been exposed to it, however natural a thing it is (as both the daylight and love are). Estella is naturally to it' later in the extract, emphasising that there should be a natural instinct to love. Havisham has destroyed this.
- Estella then continues to explore how Miss Havisham has taught her that love will hurt. This is a metaphor. Students should comment here on the choice of words such as 'blight'.

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