

INDEPENDENT STUDY COMPANION

GREAT EXPECTATIONS



A LIVING BOOK STUDY - LEARNING BOOKLET

Name: _____

Week 1 - Chapters 1-3: The Marshes

READ:

Pip, an orphan, meets a terrifying escaped convict in the churchyard and is forced to steal food and a file for him.

NARRATION:

Describe Pip's meeting with the convict. How does Dickens make it so frightening?

EXTENSION:

Discuss: why does Pip help the convict, and how does it make him feel afterwards?

Your response:

Week 1 - Chapters 4-6: Christmas and the Soldiers

READ:

The Christmas dinner is interrupted by soldiers hunting the convicts, who are recaptured on the marshes.

NARRATION:

Retell the Christmas dinner and the arrival of the soldiers.

EXTENSION:

Discuss: the convict takes the blame for the stolen food. Why might he choose to do this?

Your response:

Week 1 - Chapters 7-9: Satis House

READ:

Pip is sent to 'play' at Satis House, where he meets the strange Miss Havisham and the proud, beautiful Estella.

ART:

Draw the stopped-clock room at Satis House, with its rotting wedding feast.

EXTENSION:

Discuss: Estella makes Pip feel 'common'. Why does this affect him so deeply?

Your response:

Week 1 - Chapters 10-12: A Change in Pip

READ:

Pip keeps visiting Satis House, and begins to feel ashamed of his home and his future at the forge.

DISCUSS:

How does Pip start to change because of Estella and Miss Havisham?

EXTENSION:

History: research what daily life was like for a poor Victorian family.

Your response:

Week 1 - Chapters 13-15: The Forge

READ:

Pip is apprenticed to Joe the blacksmith, but instead of feeling proud, he feels trapped and discontented.

DISCUSS:

Pip is ashamed of the forge and of Joe. Is he being fair? What do you think Dickens wants us to feel?

EXTENSION:

Science/DT: research the work of a village blacksmith and how a forge works.

Your response:

Week 2 - Chapters 16-18: Great Expectations

READ:

After a violent attack on Pip's sister, the lawyer Jaggers arrives with astonishing news: Pip has 'great expectations' from a secret benefactor.

NARRATION:

What are Pip's 'great expectations', and what will they allow him to become?

EXTENSION:

Discuss: Pip assumes he knows who his secret benefactor is. Is he right to jump to conclusions?

Your response:

Week 2 - Chapters 19-21: To London

READ:

Pip leaves the forge - and Joe - behind and travels to London to begin his new life as a gentleman.

NARRATION:

Describe how Pip feels leaving home, and his first impressions of London.

EXTENSION:

Geography: map Pip's journey from the Kent marshes to the city.

Your response:

Week 2 - Chapters 22-24: A New Life

READ:

Pip settles into London, befriends the cheerful Herbert Pocket, and learns the manners of a gentleman.

DISCUSS:

How is Herbert Pocket different from Pip? What does Pip learn from him?

EXTENSION:

History: research what it meant to 'be a gentleman' in Victorian London.

Your response:

Week 2 - Chapters 25-27: Joe's Visit

READ:

Joe travels to London to visit Pip, but Pip is embarrassed by his old friend's plain manners.

DISCUSS:

What does Pip's embarrassment reveal about the person he is becoming?

EXTENSION:

Writing: write Joe's private thoughts about the visit, in his own gentle voice.

Your response:

Week 2 - Chapters 28-30: Home Again

READ:

Pip returns to his home town, behaving grandly, and encounters Estella once more.

DISCUSS:

How has Pip changed since he left? How does he treat the people of his old town?

EXTENSION:

Discuss: what effect does Estella still have on Pip?

Your response:

Week 3 - Chapters 31-33: London and Estella

READ:

London life continues: the theatre, Wemmick's world, and the task of escorting Estella about the city.

DISCUSS:

What is the relationship between Pip and Estella? Is it love, or something more painful?

EXTENSION:

Art: illustrate a scene of London life as Dickens describes it.

Your response:

Week 3 - Chapters 34-36: Debt and Coming of Age

READ:

Pip and Herbert slide into debt as Pip comes of age at twenty-one.

DISCUSS:

What does the book say about money and status through Pip's spending?

EXTENSION:

PSHE: discuss living beyond your means - the risks then and now.

Your response:

Week 3 - Chapters 37-39: The Benefactor Returns

READ:

On a stormy night, the convict Magwitch returns and reveals the shocking truth: HE is Pip's secret benefactor.

NARRATION:

Describe the stormy night and Magwitch's return. Why is it such a shock to Pip?

EXTENSION:

Discuss: how do Pip's 'great expectations' look now the truth is known?

Your response:

Week 3 - Chapters 40-42: Magwitch's Story

READ:

Pip hides Magwitch and learns the story of his hard life and his enemy, Compeyson.

NARRATION:

Retell Magwitch's life story in your own words.

EXTENSION:

History: research the prison 'hulks' and transportation to Australia.

Your response:

Week 3 - Chapters 43-45: Danger

READ:

Estella is to marry the brutish Bentley Drummle, and Pip learns his own life may be in danger.

DISCUSS:

Why might Estella choose to marry Drummle of all people?

EXTENSION:

Discuss: how does the mood of the book change as danger closes in?

Your response:

Week 4 - Chapters 46-48: The Plan

READ:

Pip and his friends secretly plan to smuggle Magwitch out of England to safety.

NARRATION:

Describe the plan to get Magwitch away. What are the risks?

EXTENSION:

Discuss: Pip's feelings for Magwitch are changing. Why?

Your response:

Week 4 - Chapters 49-51: Fire and Secrets

READ:

Miss Havisham begs Pip's forgiveness and is caught in a terrible fire; the secret of Estella's real parents comes to light.

DISCUSS:

What has Miss Havisham finally realised about what she did to Pip and Estella?

EXTENSION:

Discuss: why does the secret of Estella's real parents matter so much?

Your response:

Week 4 - Chapters 52-54: *The River*

READ:

The tense attempt to get Magwitch away by river, and Orlick's deadly trap for Pip.

DRAMA:

Act out the moment Orlick lures Pip into the trap.

EXTENSION:

Narration: retell the river journey and how it goes wrong.

Your response:

Week 4 - Chapters 55-57: Loss and Kindness

READ:

Magwitch is caught and dies before trial; Pip falls gravely ill and is nursed back to health by the faithful Joe.

DISCUSS:

How do Pip's feelings about Magwitch change by the end? What has he learned to see?

EXTENSION:

PSHE: Joe quietly nurses Pip through his illness. What does this show about true goodness?

Your response:

Week 4 - Chapters 58-59: *The Reckoning*

READ:

Humbled and poorer, Pip returns home a changed man; years later, he meets Estella one final time.

WRAP-UP:

What has Pip finally learned about what it really means to be a 'gentleman'?

EXTENSION:

Read about Dickens' two different endings. Which do you prefer for Pip and Estella, and why?

Your response:

MY READING JOURNAL

Keep your own journal as you read - note what happens, and how your feelings about Pip change from chapter to chapter.

Chapters	What happened	What I thought of Pip

CHARACTER TRACKER

Great Expectations is full of memorable characters. Note what each one is like, and how they change.

Character	What they are like	How they change
Pip		
Joe		
Estella		
Miss Havisham		
Magwitch		
Herbert		