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Great Expectations
Charles Dickens



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Prestwick House

P.O. Box 658, Clayton, DE 19938

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Response Journal

To The Student

Although we may read a novel, play, or work of non-fiction for enjoyment, each time we read one, we are building and practicing important basic reading skills. In our ever-more complex society, in which reading has become more and more crucial for success, this, in itself, is an important reason to spend time reading for enjoyment.

Some readers, however, are able to go beyond basic reading techniques and are able to practice higher thinking skills by reflecting on what they have read and how what they read affects them. It is this act of reflection—that is, stopping to think about what you are reading—that this journal is attempting to encourage.

To aid you, we have included writing prompts for each section; however, if you find something that you wish to respond to in the book more compelling than our prompts, you should write about that. We hope you enjoy reading this book and that the act of responding to what you have read increases this enjoyment.

After you read the indicated sections, choose the questions to which you will respond. Keep in mind that there are no right or wrong answers to these prompts, and there is no one direction in which you must go.

Great Expectations

Chapter 1

1. In the opening of *Great Expectations*, the main character, Pip, visits the graveyard where his parents and siblings are buried. A very frightening man approaches Pip and makes demands of him. List at least five reasons why Pip is extremely afraid of him.

Chapter 2

2. We are introduced to Pip's sister, Mrs. Joe, and her husband, Joe, and quickly realize that Pip's sister treats Pip badly, whereas Joe looks out for Pip. Think of a person in your life who has been a menace to you or a person that has always helped you. Describe that person in one paragraph. In one or more paragraphs, describe at least one example where the person either treated you poorly or treated you well. In another paragraph, explain why you believe your relationship with this person was the way it was.

Chapter 3

3. Even though Pip has been very frightened by the man in the graveyard, the author tells us that Pip pitied the man and was glad he enjoyed the food Pip brought him. Imagine yourself as Pip's friend when Pip is telling you about his experience with the man in the graveyard. From your knowledge of the text, write the conversation you would have with Pip; stay in character with the setting of the book. Your conversation might begin as follows:

Friend: I do not understand how you could feel pity for such a scary, old man who eats like a dog.

Pip: I felt as though...

Great Expectations

Chapter 7

7. Joe explains to Pip that Mrs. Joe should not find out that Pip is teaching him, since she will be concerned that Joe will rebel against her. Write a speech that you would deliver to a group of adults who never graduated from high school. In the speech, explain the benefits of education and how it brings empowerment.

Chapter 8

8. Pip observes that Mr. Pumblechook seems to work while watching the saddler across the street, and that the watchmaker is the only one in town who seems completely focused on his work. Interview one or more people about their jobs, and talk about their productivity and that of the others they have contact with. Ask the interviewee(s) for ideas on how to improve diligence at work.

Chapter 9

9. At the end of chapter nine, Pip says the day of his trip to Miss Havisham's was a memorable one, "for it made great changes in me." Think of a memorable day in your life that brought about great change. Write a letter to Pip describing what happened to you that day, what made it outstanding, and how your life would be different if it had never happened.

Chapter 10

10. Authors frequently provide clues to their readers. In this chapter, there are various clues about "the strange man" that provide an uneasy feeling. Write a list of those clues.

Great Expectations

Chapter 21

21. When Pip meets Mr. Pocket, he is shocked to realize that the boy is the one he beat up by Miss Havisham's house. Sometimes we have an impression of someone because we only know the person from one situation; then, when we encounter them in a different situation, we have a completely changed impression. Think of a time that this happened to you. Write some dialogue between you and the person at each of your two meetings.

Chapter 22

22. Pip finally learns something of Miss Havisham's past from Herbert Pocket. Imagine that you are writing a biography of her life. Write at least four paragraphs for that book.

Chapter 23

23. Pip makes it to the Pocket family house, where he meets the parents, servants, and the Pocket children. For someone who has lived a life as an only child, it can be quite an adjustment to be in a home with many people. Imagine you are Pip and are keeping a journal about your new life in London. Write an entry describing what it was like to meet the Pocket household. Your entry might begin as follows:

Date: _____

Today, I went to dinner at the Pocket home. It was quite an experience. Accustomed to being alone, the atmosphere was...