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TEACHER'S PET PUBLICATIONS

LITPLAN TEACHER PACK™

for

Great Expectations

based on the book by
Charles Dickens

Written by
Mary B. Collins

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ISBN 978-1-60249-761-0
Item No. 304708

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A FEW NOTES ABOUT THE AUTHOR CHARLES DICKENS

DICKENS, Charles (1812-70). On a pier in New York Harbor in 1841 a crowd watched a tall sailing ship from England being towed to the pierhead. There was no ocean communication cable as yet and the ship brought the latest news. A question was yelled from the pier to the ship: "Is Little Nell dead?" Little Nell was the heroine in a serial called 'Old Curiosity Shop'. The latest installment was on the ship, and the people were anxious to learn how the story came out.

The author who could stir people to such excitement was Charles Dickens, then a young man of 29. The next year, on his visit to America, he received a reception second only to that of Lafayette in 1824. Six years before, with his 'Pickwick Papers', he had become the world's most celebrated writer.

Charles Dickens was born on Feb. 7, 1812, in Portsmouth. His father, John Dickens, was a minor clerk in the navy offices, a friendly man with a large family (Charles was the second of eight children) and only a moderate income. The family drifted from one poor home in London to another, each shabbier than the last. Presently John Dickens ended up in the Marshalsea Prison for debt and took his wife and younger children with him.

Meanwhile young Charles worked in a ramshackle warehouse, lived in a garret, visited his family in prison on Sundays, and felt that his life was shattered before it had begun. For a fictionalized account of his early life, read 'David Copperfield'. Then a timely inheritance restored the family to something like comfortable means, and Charles had a few quiet years at a private school.

Later he immortalized his father, for whom he always had a great love, as Mr. Micawber. When his own rising fortune and fame gave him control of a great newspaper, he put his father on the staff to preside over the dispatches and bought him a small country house. Dickens' mother, unsympathetic and unconscious of his genius, meant less to him; she begrudged his leaving work to go to school. He made her immortal as Mrs. Nickleby.

Dickens made his own career. A few years of secondary school was his basic education. He never attended college. His real education came from his reading and observation and daily experience. Except for the English novels of the 18th century, he knew little of great literature. Of history and foreign politics, he knew practically nothing. His novels all deal with his own day and his own environment, except for his two historical novels-'A Tale of Two Cities' and 'Barnaby Rudge'-and these were set in the recent past of the French Revolution and the Gordon Riots.

The qualities that made up Dickens' genius did not depend on formal education for development. Dickens had a reporter's eye for the details of daily life and a mimic's ear for the subtleties of common speech. Further, he had the artist's ability to select what he needed from these raw materials of observation and to shape them into works of enduring merit.

Preparation for a Career

By teaching himself shorthand, Dickens secured the position of court reporter in the old Doctors' Commons, a survival from Elizabethan days that handled marriage, divorce, wills, and other "ghostly" causes. This experience gave Dickens a peculiar dislike of law that never left him; forever after it seemed either comic as in "Bardell vs. Pickwick" or terrible with tragedy as in 'Bleak House'. Dickens moved up in 1831 to the Reporters' Gallery of the "old-the unburned and unreformed-House of Commons." He also went to other cities and towns to report election speeches, transcribing his notes on the palm of his hand "by the light of a dark lantern in a post-chaise and four." This experience gave him a detailed and sometimes cynical view of government. To him the voters were often represented by the Eatanswill Election in 'Pickwick', parliamentary government by Doodle and Foodle and Coodle ('Our Mutual Friend'), and civil service by the Circumlocution Office ('Little Dorrit').

Thus equipped, Charles Dickens set out to conquer the world. The stage was his first dream. Night after night for two or three years he sat entranced with the melodrama of the London theaters-lurid with love, battle, treachery, and blue fire, in which a heroic young man would knock over 16 smugglers like ninepins. Melodrama put a stamp on Dickens for life. His characters, if they get excited, drop into the ranting language of the old Adelphi Theatre. On the other hand, Dickens' intense concentration on acting helped to give him that weird, almost hypnotic, power that he showed in the public reading of his works.

However, fate led him to a different career. He had a passion for creative writing, and he has told of his great joy, of his eyes dimmed with tears when a manuscript sent anonymously to an editor appeared in print. So he began writing sketches under the name of "Boz," the family nickname of a younger brother. To "Boz" came sudden and great success. The publishers, Chapman and Hall, had a plan for some serial pictures of cockney sportsmen, a Nimrod club, having all sorts of misadventures. The humor of the period turned very much on such horseplay. An artist named Seymour had drawn one or two pictures. They asked young "Boz" to write a set of stories to go with the pictures. Knowing nothing of sport, Dickens suggested changing the activities of the Nimrod club from sport to travel. When the publishers agreed, then, says Dickens, "I thought of Mr. Pickwick," which is all that has ever been known of the origin and genesis of one of the greatest characters in humorous literature. The young author was to receive 14 guineas (about \$70) for each monthly installment.

The very week that the 'Pickwick Papers' began their monthly appearance, in April 1836, Dickens married Catherine Hogarth, one of the three pretty daughters of a newspaper associate. The young couple moved into rooms in Furnival's Inn. They did not realize that one day they would separate with bitter words because they believed they had made a love match. Dickens looked on Catherine, beautiful and silent, and saw nothing but the reflection of himself. Catherine looked at Charles and did not realize that genius and egotism often lie close together. Dickens indeed was not so much in love with Catherine as in love with love.

At first the 'Pickwick Papers' failed to sell more than a few hundred copies a month. Then the serial introduced the character of Mr. Sam Weller, polishing boots at the White Hart Inn. The narrative took off on the wings of imagination, down English lanes, past gabled inns, and along the highways as varied and as cheery as a flying coach at a gallop, and the world was at the author's feet. The phenomenal 'Pickwick Papers' and the books that followed steadily lifted young "Boz" to the height of success, from poverty to wealth, from obscurity to fame, all in a few brief years. The great novels of this period were 'Oliver Twist' (published in 1838), 'Nicholas Nickleby' (1839), 'Old Curiosity Shop' (1841), and 'Barnaby Rudge' (1841).

Dickens in America

Dickens now looked around for other worlds to conquer. America had welcomed his books from the start, in part because the lack of international copyright permitted American publishers to print them without paying him. Dickens, in his youth a radical who hated Toryism and aristocracy, longed to study America and its freedom at first hand. Leaving their four children at home, he landed with his wife in Boston in January 1842. The town blazed with excitement; society was thrilled; there were dinners, receptions, adulation. Young Dickens, dressed in a bright velvet waistcoat, reveled in his new and adoring audience and wrote home of the freedom of America and the comforts of the workers. H.W. Longfellow, William Ellery Channing, and others of the New England elite joined in the welcome. Young Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes was one of those who helped to organize it.

Dickens found in Boston friendships that he never lost, even when bitterness and disillusion altered his view of America. From Boston he went to New York and a "Boz" ball of 3,000 people; to Philadelphia and a huge public reception; then to Baltimore and to Washington, where he met President John Tyler and the Congress; then to Richmond, which offered him a taste of Southern culture. Such was the triumphant progress of the young author, only a few years before a member of the shabby-genteel class of London.

Always ready to raise his voice in defense of a cause he believed in, Dickens spoke everywhere of the need for an international copyright agreement that would protect the rights of both American and British writers. He felt that it was unfair and unjust that American publishers should print and sell his books without permission from him and without paying him any royalties. Dickens did not speak of himself as the sole victim of this practice. He pointed out that all British authors were equally victimized; he also acknowledged that American authors, such as Edgar Allan Poe, suffered from the pirating of their works in England.

The newspapers in America attacked these forthright statements and accused Dickens of bad taste and of abusing American hospitality. In time Dickens' rosy view of America faded. The proof of his disillusion and disgust is revealed in his 'American Notes' (published in 1842), his letters to friends, and 'Martin Chuzzlewit' (1844). From Dickens' viewpoint, Americans all seemed to chew tobacco. They kept slaves, whom he never stopped to compare with the factory slaves of England. American government seemed all plunder and roguery. Then he went West, traveling as far as Cairo, Ill. His vision of the West contained nothing but foul and reeking canal boats, swamps, bullfrogs, and tobacco juice.

Dickens lacked the eye to see the pageant of America, the great epic of the settlements of the West; the eye to compare the canal boat with the raft and the scow of earlier settlers. He became peevish, impatient of small discomforts, resenting the fact that hotelkeepers dared to talk to him. He spent two weeks in Canada, consoled there by the presence of friends at the English garrison in Montreal. Then he returned home to discredit America with his pen.

Fame and Fortune

The years that followed Dickens' return from America—the middle period of his life—were filled with more activity, fame, and success. In 1851 he took a fine residence at Tavistock Square and lived in great style. His friends were the leading authors, artists, and actors of the day. Later on, his purchase of a country house at Gad's Hill fulfilled an ambition of his childhood. His books, appearing in monthly serial parts, enjoyed a popularity that slackened only to rise again. It is generally thought that 'David Copperfield', written as a serial in 1848 and 1849, when he was at the height of his powers, is the greatest of his novels. Contrasted with the 'Pickwick Papers', it shows the transition of Dickens' genius from the exuberance of youth to the somber acceptance of middle age.

One of his books, 'Dombey and Son', is a sort of epic of great sorrow. Dickens' books indeed appealed to his generation of readers as much for their tears as for their laughter.

Reformer-Journalist

Book writing did not entirely satisfy Dickens' ego. The onetime reporter wanted to be a newspaper editor. Dickens felt the need to reform all England. The way to do it, he felt, was to control and edit a great daily newspaper, where he should preside like Jupiter handing out lightning. Enthusiastic friends subscribed £100,000 and founded the Daily News. In January 1846 Dickens threw himself eagerly into the editorial chair of the fledgling publication and threw himself out again in 19 days. He found that in the newspaper business the lightning hits in two directions. So in 1850 he founded instead a weekly journal, Household Words, and carried on with it and a later magazine, All the Year Round (1859), until his death. Several of his own stories, 'Christmas Stories', 'A Tale of Two Cities', 'Great Expectations', and others ran in his magazine.

Dickens as Actor and Lecturer

Another activity, and this a special delight to him, was amateur theatricals that carried on Dickens' love of the stage. He himself had incomparable dramatic power. With it he had a great talent for management and an energy and enthusiasm that carried all before it. On May 16, 1851, at a performance that was given at the duke of Devonshire's London house for a charity, the young Queen Victoria and her Prince Consort and the duke of Wellington were in the audience. The queen came to a later performance in 1857 and graciously "commanded Mr. Dickens' presence"-an invitation of great honor-after the show. Mr. Dickens being in "farce" dress asked to be excused from appearing, thus defying all royal precedents.

To theatricals he soon added public lectures and readings from his works. This activity began after he had read one of his famous Christmas stories to a group of friends who received it enthusiastically. He made a number of successful tours in England, Scotland, and Ireland-from 1858 to 1859, 1861 to 1863, 1866 to 1867, and 1869 to 1870.

Relief in Work

Dickens separated from his wife in 1858. Georgina Hogarth, his wife's younger sister, had lived with the couple since 1842. She remained with Dickens until his death. His will provided for both women.

Dickens sought relief from a public curious about his personal life in the excitement of work. He made a second American tour in 1867 to 1868. It was an overwhelming success but extremely fatiguing. At home again, he resumed lecturing. His last appearance was in March 1870.

In retirement he struggled with his last task, 'The Mystery of Edwin Drood', a tale of night and storm and murder. The book was still unfinished on June 9, 1870, when Dickens died.

In the opinion of many, Dickens is England's greatest creative writer. The names and natures of his characters are unforgettable. His humor is unsurpassable, not only in the laughter that lies on the surface, but in the warmth of human kindness below. His books are still being read all over the world. 'A Christmas Carol', conceived and written in a few weeks in 1843, is the ultimate, enduring Christmas myth of modern literature.

--- Courtesy of Compton's Learning Company

INTRODUCTION

This unit has been designed to develop students' reading, writing, thinking, and language skills through exercises and activities related to *Great Expectations* by Charles Dickens. It includes eighteen lessons, supported by extra resource materials.

The **introductory lesson** introduces students to one main theme of the novel through a bulletin board activity. Following the introductory activity, students are given a transition to explain how the activity relates to the book they are about to read. Following the transition, students are given the materials they will be using during the unit. At the end of the lesson, students begin the pre-reading work for the first reading assignment.

The **reading assignments** are approximately thirty pages each; some are a little shorter while others are a little longer. Students have approximately 15 minutes of pre-reading work to do prior to each reading assignment. This pre-reading work involves reviewing the study questions for the assignment and doing some vocabulary work for 8 to 10 vocabulary words they will encounter in their reading.

The **study guide questions** are fact-based questions; students can find the answers to these questions right in the text. These questions come in two formats: short answer or multiple choice. The best use of these materials is probably to use the short answer version of the questions as study guides for students (since answers will be more complete), and to use the multiple choice version for occasional quizzes. If your school has the appropriate equipment, it might be a good idea to make transparencies of your answer keys for the overhead projector.

The **vocabulary work** is intended to enrich students' vocabularies as well as to aid in the students' understanding of the book. Prior to each reading assignment, students will complete a two-part worksheet for approximately 8 to 10 vocabulary words in the upcoming reading assignment. Part I focuses on students' use of general knowledge and contextual clues by giving the sentence in which the word appears in the text. Students are then to write down what they think the words mean based on the words' usage. Part II nails down the definitions of the words by giving students dictionary definitions of the words and having students match the words to the correct definitions based on the words' contextual usage. Students should then have an understanding of the words when they meet them in the text.

After each reading assignment, students will go back and formulate answers for the study guide questions. Discussion of these questions serves as a **review** of the most important events and ideas presented in the reading assignments.

After students complete reading the work, there is a **vocabulary review** lesson which pulls together all of the fragmented vocabulary lists for the reading assignments and gives students a review of all of the words they have studied.

Following the vocabulary review, a lesson is devoted to the **extra discussion questions/writing assignments**. These questions focus on interpretation, critical analysis and personal response, employing a variety of thinking skills and adding to the students' understanding of the novel.

The **group activity** which follows the discussion questions has students working in small groups to discuss the main themes of the novel. Using the information they have acquired so far through individual work and class discussions, students get together to further examine the text and to brainstorm ideas relating to the themes of the novel.

The group activity is followed by a **reports and discussion** session in which the groups share their ideas about the themes with the entire class; thus, the entire class is exposed to information about all of the themes and the entire class can discuss each theme based on the nucleus of information brought forth by each of the groups.

There are three **writing assignments** in this unit, each with the purpose of informing, persuading, or having students express personal opinions. The first assignment is to give students the opportunity to express their own personal opinions by defining what the word "success" means to them. This also helps to set up the individual project that goes along with this unit. The second writing assignment is to inform: students write an actual plan by which they could achieve their own personal goals. The third assignment is to persuade: students persuade an employer to hire them.

This unit is actually a dual-unit. While students are getting through the reading of the book, most class time is spent on activities related to helping students fulfill their own great expectations. There is a great deal of emphasis put on how to find and keep a job. These activities include role-playing interviews, resume' writing, learning about financial planning, learning what kinds of jobs are available, and learning what education is needed and finding places to get that education.

In addition, there is a **nonfiction reading assignment**. Students are required to read a piece of nonfiction related in some way to *Great Expectations*. After reading their nonfiction pieces, students will fill out a worksheet on which they answer questions regarding facts, interpretation, criticism, and personal opinions. During one class period, students make **oral presentations** about the nonfiction pieces they have read. This not only exposes all students to a wealth of information, it also gives students the opportunity to practice **public speaking**.

The **review lesson** pulls together all of the aspects of the unit. The teacher is given four or five choices of activities or games to use which all serve the same basic function of reviewing all of the information presented in the unit.

The **unit test** comes in two formats: multiple choice or short answer. As a convenience, two different tests for each format have been included. There is also an advanced short answer unit test for higher level students.

There are additional **support materials** included with this unit. The **extra activities section** includes suggestions for an in-class library, crossword and word search puzzles related to the novel, and extra vocabulary worksheets. There is a list of **bulletin board ideas** which gives the teacher suggestions for bulletin boards to go along with this unit. In addition, there is a list of **extra class activities** the teacher could choose from to enhance the unit or as a substitution for an exercise the teacher might feel is inappropriate for his/her class. **Answer keys** are located directly after the **reproducible student materials** throughout the unit. The student materials may be reproduced for use in the teacher's classroom without infringement of copyrights. No other portion of this unit may be reproduced without the written consent of Teacher's Pet Publications, Inc.

UNIT OBJECTIVES - *Great Expectations*

1. Students will study the theme of wealth as a corrupting influence.
2. Students will demonstrate their understanding of the text on four levels: factual, interpretive, critical and personal.
3. Students will trace Pip's development through the novel to see the effects of wealth and education upon him.
4. Students will create a plan by which they could achieve their own great expectations.
5. Students will read biographical information about successful people to see how they became successful and to find role models.
6. Students will be given the opportunity to practice reading aloud and silently to improve their skills in each area.
7. Students will answer questions to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of the main events and characters in *Great Expectations* as they relate to the author's theme development.
8. Students will enrich their vocabularies and improve their understanding of the novel through the vocabulary lessons prepared for use in conjunction with the novel.
9. The writing assignments in this unit are geared to several purposes:
 - a. To have students demonstrate their abilities to inform, to persuade, or to express their own personal ideas
Note: Students will demonstrate ability to write effectively to inform by developing and organizing facts to convey information. Students will demonstrate the ability to write effectively to persuade by selecting and organizing relevant information, establishing an argumentative purpose, and by designing an appropriate strategy for an identified audience. Students will demonstrate the ability to write effectively to express personal ideas by selecting a form and its appropriate elements.
 - b. To check the students' reading comprehension
 - c. To make students think about the ideas presented by the novel
 - d. To encourage logical thinking
 - e. To provide an opportunity to practice good grammar and improve students' use of the English language.

READING ASSIGNMENT SHEET - *Great Expectations*

Date Assigned	Chapters Assigned	Completion Date
	1-2	
	3-7	
	8-12	
	13-19	
	20-25	
	26-28	
	29-34	
	35-39	
	40-43	
	44-48	
	49-52	
	53-59	

UNIT OUTLINE - *Great Expectations*

1	2	3	4	5
Introduction PVR 1-2	Study ?s 1-2 Writing Assignment #1 PVR 3-7	Study ?s 3-7 Project Assignment (Writing #2) PVR 8-12	Study ?s 8-12 Jobs Day PVR 13-19	Study ?s 13-19 Jobs Day PVR 20-25
6	7	8	9	10
Study ?s 20-25 Education PVR 26-28	Study ?s 26-28 Education PVR 29-34	Study ?s 29-34 Getting a Job PVR 35-39	Study ?s 35-39 Job Hunting PVR 40-43	Study ?s 40-43 Writing Assignment #3 PVR 44-48
11	12	13	14	15
Study ?s 44-48 Resume` Writing PVR 49-52	Study ?s 49-52 Success PVR 53-59	Study ?s 53-59 Financial Planning	Financial Planning	Nonfiction Reading Library
16	17	18	19	20
Nonfiction Reading Reports	Vocabulary	Extra Discussion ?s	Characters	Project Working Session
21	22	23	24	
Group Activity 1	Reports & Discussion	Review	Test	

Key: P = Preview Study Questions V = Vocabulary Work R = Read

LESSON ONE

Objectives

1. To introduce the *Great Expectations* unit.
2. To distribute books and other related materials
3. To preview the study questions for chapters 1-2
4. To familiarize students with the vocabulary for chapters 1-2
5. To read chapters 1-2

NOTE: Prior to this class period, you need to have put up a bulletin board with pictures of people who have had successful lives. Remember in choosing your pictures that success comes in many different forms to many different people. Some suggestions: Donald Trump, Mother Theresa, Jesus, Michael Jackson, Magic Johnson, Nolan Ryan, Thomas Jefferson, Abraham Lincoln, Bill Cosby, S. E. Hinton, etc. There are literally thousands of people, past and present, from which to choose. Don't forget at least one or two pictures of average people to make the point that one does not have to be famous or rich to be successful. Some average moms and dads work hard to make a good home for their families, and that is a kind of success, too.

If you do not have bulletin board space available, use your classroom walls or a flip-chart on an easel--or just hold the pictures up one by one for students to see.

Activity #1

If you have not identified the pictures on your bulletin board, have students identify as many as they can and have students tell what they know about each person. After you have discussed all of the pictures, ask what all those people have in common. The answer being, of course, that they were successful, each in his/her own way.

Transition: The book we are going to be reading and working with in the next several weeks is about a young, poor boy who, through a benefactor, has great expectations for success in his future.

Activity #2

Distribute the materials students will use in this unit. Explain in detail how students are to use these materials.

Study Guides Students should read the study guide questions for each reading assignment prior to beginning the reading assignment to get a feeling for what events and ideas are important in the section they are about to read. After reading the section, students will (as a class or individually) answer the questions to review the important events and ideas from that section of the book. Students should keep the study guides as study materials for the unit test.

WRITING ASSIGNMENT #1 - *Great Expectations*

PROMPT

We have spent time discussing other people's success and a variety of ideas about what it means to be "successful." Your assignment is to write a composition in which you give your own definition of "successful."

PREWRITING

Stop and think for a minute. Pretend you are old--r e a l l y old. You are looking back over your life. How will you determine whether or not your life has been successful? By what criteria will you judge yourself? Those are the things you want to jot down as a basis for forming your composition. Make that list now.

Next to each item on the list, jot down a few reasons why you have chosen that as a part of your criteria.

DRAFTING

Write an introductory paragraph in which you introduce your definition of success.

In the body of your composition, write one paragraph for each of the items on your list. Use the reasons you jotted down to support and explain the items you have chosen .

Write a concluding paragraph in which you summarize what "successful" means to you.

PROMPT

When you finish the rough draft of your paper, ask a student who sits near you to read it. After reading your rough draft, he/she should tell you what he/she liked best about your work, which parts were difficult to understand, and ways in which your work could be improved. Reread your paper considering your critic's comments, and make the corrections you think are necessary.

PROOFREADING

Do a final proofreading of your paper double-checking your grammar, spelling, organization, and the clarity of your ideas.