

***Great Expectations* by Charles Dickens (Published by Washington Square Press)**

Approved for use in Communication Arts I, Honors Communication Arts I

Summary

Against the backdrop of 18th century England, a young orphaned boy from the rural marshlands has a surprise encounter with an escaped convict while visiting his parents' graves. The brief interlude begins an epic tale of Pip's "great expectations" from a poverty-stricken blacksmith's apprentice, to a well-do-do London "man about town." However, during Pip's journey, friendships are lost and found, the lessons of wealth and its promises and failures are plentiful, and the enduring power of the strong bonds of family is emphasized. These are some of the many themes woven through this classic British novel.

Connection to the Curriculum

This novel perfectly connects to the freshman honors level concepts. First, the search for identity through great adversity, a coming-of-age story, is an enormous part of this novel. Further, the following themes are carefully explored: the power of friendships and family, the value of redemption, and the discovery of truth despite profound illusions. Finally, this novel works well regarding the discussion of characterization; Dickens is famous for his multitude of complex characters. At this level, students are expected to develop the critical reading skills necessary to follow both a complicated plot and the subtle nuances of well-developed characters.

Standards

Course Objectives (Benchmarks)

Reading: 1.2- The students read fluently. 1.3- The students expand vocabulary. 1.4- The students comprehend a variety of texts.

Literature: 2.1-The students use literary concepts to interpret and respond to text. 2.2- The students understand the significance of literature and its contributions to various cultures.

Writing: 3.2- The students use the writing process that includes preparing, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing.

Possible Skills Taught (Indicators)

Reading:

1.1.2- The student adjusts reading rate in order to support comprehension.

1.4.10- The student generates and responds logically to literal, inferential, evaluative, and critical thinking questions before, during, and after reading the text.

Literature:

2.1.1- The student identifies different types of character (protagonist, antagonist, round, flat, static, dynamic) and analyzes the development of characters.

2.1.3- The student analyzes and evaluates how the author uses various plot elements (e.g., conflict, crisis/turning moment, climax, resolution, rising action, falling action, subplots, parallel episodes) to advance the plot and make connections between events.

Writing:

3.2.5- The student uses the writing process in order to further understanding of various modes of writing including persuasive, expository, narrative, and poetry.

A Note on the Text: (The best way to evaluate and understand a novel is to personally read the book in its entirety.)

Dickens' classic tale of Pip includes some mild violence (including abuse at the hands of his guardians and the convict) and mental instability (Miss Havisham). These scenes are instrumental in the development of the characters and conflicts.

AP Connections

Dickens is a reputable British author who has been referenced on AP exams in the past. This classic is a source of allusion in modern writing.

Additional Unit Design Connections

Coming soon:

To be completed during future curriculum development activities