Great Expectations: (a) Pip - Gentleman?

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✍ *refers to links on www.crossref-it.info*

❖ **Lesson focus:** To explore Pip's expectations of being a 'gentleman'.

❖ **Opening exercise:** Cut up and distribute the cards on the worksheet *Great Expectations:* (a)i Pip. Use several sets, depending upon the size of the class.
  ➢ Students organise them into three sets, according to how well they think the words fit the character of Pip: agree, disagree, not sure/sometimes.
  ➢ Discuss the results.

❖ **Textual examination:** Use ✍ Texts in detail > *Great Expectations* > Synopses and commentary > Chapter 7 (and so on for other chapters). Allocate the following chapters around the class.
  ➢ The chapters are: Ch.7, Ch.17, Ch.18, Ch.34, Ch.39, and Ch.57.
  ➢ For their given chapter, students research and answer the following questions:
  (a) What is Pip's situation and state of mind here?
  (b) What hints are given about Pip's future?
  (c) How is Pip compared with specific other characters in the chapter?
  (d) What particular steps does Pip take in his learning to become a 'gentleman'?
  Answers should be reported in note form, but including key quotations. A picture of Pip's progress should emerge.

❖ **Recreative task:** At the end of the novel, Pip has completed his 'education'.
  ➢ Write a school-style reference for him to present to future employers.

❖ **Critical task:** 'However low Pip sinks morally, Dickens makes him present himself with remarkable honesty.'
  ➢ How far do you agree with this statement?

❖ **Extension task:** Refer to ✍ Texts in detail > *Great Expectations* > Social/political context > Pip's education in *Great Expectations* and ✍ Texts in detail > *Great Expectations* > Narrative > A learning novel and ✍ Texts in detail > *Great Expectations* > Structure > Thematic structures.
  ➢ What do you think Dickens' views of education are, judged on this novel?

❖ **Extension task:** 'Although basically a moral fable about Pip's journey towards self-knowledge, it is also about the sort of social insecurity and confusion of values which is familiar to almost every adolescent.' (Anne Barnes)
  ➢ To what extent do you think this is a satisfactory summary of the novel and why?

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