



Great Expectations: (c) Friendship

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- ❖ **Lesson focus:** What picture of friendship is presented in the novel? How central to the plot is this theme?
 - Is there any other Biblical/religious reference in this chapter? Note that Magwitch's first name is Abel. See  and search for 'Abel'.
- ❖ **Opening exercise:** Draw up a spider diagram, with Pip at the centre and the other major characters around.
 - Link any pairs of characters who have some sort of friendship, and write along the joining line what kind of friendship they have.
- ❖ **Discussion ideas:** Look at some of the more significant friendships on the diagram. Ask the following questions.
 - How does this friendship change through the novel?
 - Does this friendship lead to happiness?
 - Is this a one-way friendship, at least some of the time?
- ❖ **Textual examination:** Look at Ch.56. By now Pip has learned about the true value of friendship.
 - List the ways in which Dickens shows a genuine sense of friendship between Magwitch and Pip in this chapter.
 - The chapter ends with a reference to the New Testament of the Bible, Luke Chapter 18. What does this reference suggest?
- ❖ **Recreative task:** Write either a court report for the trial of Magwitch, or a newspaper obituary for him.
 - If possible, make this sound as if it is from a Victorian newspaper.
- ❖ **Critical task:** 'Ever the best of friends,' writes Joe (Ch.57).
 - How does Joe show his friendship to Pip through the novel?
 - In what ways does Pip deserve Joe's friendship?
- ❖ **Extension task:** Compare the two endings which Dickens wrote.
 - In terms specifically of the novel's picture of friendship, which ending seems to you to be the most suitable and satisfactory? See  Texts in detail > *Great Expectations* > Critical approaches > the two endings of *Great Expectations*.