

- ❖ **Lesson focus:** To explore the four main women characters, and the part they play in the novel.
- ❖ **Opening exercise:** Create an acrostic for HAVISHAM, with a characteristic beginning with each letter of the name.
 - Repeat for MRS JOE, ESTELLA, and BIDDY.
 - This is not as easy as it sounds, but raises interesting discussion.
- ❖ **Textual examination:** Allocate the four characters, Mrs Joe, Miss Havisham, Biddy, Estella, around the group.
 - Make notes under the following headings:
 - (i) The character's first appearance (where, when, impressions given, their appearance)
 - (ii) A key quotation for her
 - (iii) Her relationship with Pip, her effect on him, and the most significant meeting between her and Pip
 - (iv) Her final appearance (where and when).
 - (v) Your final assessment of the character.
 - Report back. A creative class could report back in role as the character.
- You may be able to complete or improve the acrostics after this exercise.
- ❖ **Recreative task:** Tell the story of Miss Havisham's wedding day, perhaps in her voice, or that of another imagined guest.
- ❖ **Critical task:** Do you agree that Pip's expectations would have been more easily achieved if the women in his life had been more supportive of him?
- ❖ **Extension task:** Students could research the idea of 'the Angel in the House', the Victorian ideal domestic paragon.
 - In *Great Expectations* Charles Dickens presents powerful portraits of calculating and manipulative women, rather than 'angels'.
 - How, and why, do these types seem more appropriate to the novel?