

Investigate!

Great Expectations: Volume I, Chapters 1-5

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❖ Chapter 1:

- Look for evidence in this chapter of the depth of Pip's terror, and of the criminal's feelings when he is not threatening and terrorising Pip
- Look for evidence of Pip's sense of guilt, both moral and legal
- Look for indications of Pip's pity for the convict.

❖ Chapter 2:

- Re-read the paragraph beginning 'Conscience is a dreadful thing when it accuses man or boy.'
 - How does the writer present Pip's feelings?
- Look in this chapter for indications that Pip's account is given by the older Pip looking back to his childhood
- How would you describe Pip's relationship with Joe?
 - How does Mrs. Joe treat them?
- As you go through the novel, look out for characters who might be seen as substitute parents to Pip.

❖ Chapter 3:

- Re-read the paragraph beginning "Why, see now!" said he. 'When a man's alone...'
 - What is your reaction to the situation the convict describes?
 - How does the language used create this reaction?
- How does Dickens make use of the setting and the weather to suggest tone and mood?
- How does Dickens dramatize Pip's feelings towards the convict?

❖ Chapter 4:

- Look back over the chapter
 - What does the reader learn about Joe's character and his place in the family?
- Read the account of the birth of Christ in Luke 2: 1-14
 - Compare it with the account of Pip's Christmas.
- Read the parable of the Prodigal Son Luke 15: 1-32
 - Compare it with the Christmas dinner in this chapter.
 - In what ways is Dickens satirizing the Victorian practice of religion?

❖ Chapter 5:

- Re-read the paragraph beginning 'As I watched them while they all stood clustering about the forge ...'
 - What is Pip's attitude to the convict?
- Look for further evidence of Pip's sensitivity to the attitudes and behaviour of the people around him at the forge:
 - What is the source of this sensitivity?
- Look in the last paragraph at the ways in which Dickens describes the convicts' return to the prison ship:

How does this contribute to the themes of the novel?