

Great Expectations End of Unit Essay Prompts

The essay prompts for this unit will center around the four themes we have been exploring since the beginning of the unit. Answer one of the following essay prompts in a well-developed, five paragraph essay that answers ALL PARTS of the prompt. Please read the prompts carefully. Additionally, all essays should include:

- an introduction,
- three body paragraphs (in the two chunk paragraph format)
- a conclusion
- relevant quotations that support your thesis
- transition words that aid in clarity

Option One

Great Expectations is a novel in which many people and situations are not what they initially appear to be. What are these instances in which appearance and reality are incongruous and what is Dickens trying to teach us about life and assumptions?

Option Two

In Great Expectations, there are some powerful and unusual examples of parent/child relationships. What lasting effect does the behavior of parents (adopted and real) have over the young people in this novel? What is Dickens saying about the responsibility of parents in general?

Option Three

The shadow of prison and the criminal justice system hang over the entirety of Great Expectations. No matter what station Pip is in life, he is always touched by crime and criminals. What is Dickens trying to tell us about that system during Victorian times? Would he evaluate this system as being effective and moral? Why or why not?

Option Four

Despite the fact that much of Great Expectations deals with pain and longing against a bleak backdrop, there are bright spots in this novel that center around the power of friendship to transform and redeem lives, even those who are seemingly too far gone to save. What are the examples of this and what does this suggest about human nature?