



CEC READING LIBRARY • MIDDLE 2 • R3 CHALLENGE

Great Expectations

18 Chapters

Day 1-18

W25-W30

Read the story. Then think about each question.



Chapter 1: The Graveyard on the Marsh

On a cold, misty evening, a small orphan boy named Pip walked alone into the churchyard on the marshes of Kent. He was looking for the graves of his parents, whom he had never known. He read the names on the stones, and a lonely feeling came over him. The wind blew across the flat land, and the gray sky pressed down on the old tombs. Suddenly a rough voice cried, "Hold your noise!" A man in coarse gray clothes, with an iron chain on one leg, jumped out from among the graves and seized him. His hair was wet, and his shoes were torn. Pip trembled with fear. The man asked who he was and where he lived. Pip told him he lived with his sister, Mrs. Joe Gargery, and her husband Joe, the village blacksmith. The stranger said he was starving, and he wanted a file to cut off his chain and some food. If Pip did not bring them, he warned, terrible things might happen. Pip promised, because he had no choice. It was a significant moment, though he could not yet see its consequence. The boy ran home as fast as he could, afraid to look back. Later he would investigate his own feelings about that evening and determine why it mattered. That day established a chain between them that no file could break. It was a real challenge for a child. The marsh was wide and flat, with a few lonely gates and a gray river that curved toward the sea. In the distance a lighthouse blinked, and far off, a gun sounded from the prison ships. Pip had been taught that such sounds meant that a prisoner had escaped, and a shiver ran through him. He looked at the nameless graves of his five little brothers and thought how small and alone he was. Even the cattle in the marsh seemed to watch him. ★ A young boy met a stranger in a graveyard.

THINK What was Pip looking for in the churchyard?

Read the story. Then think about each question.



Chapter 2: The Stolen Pie

Pip lived in a small cottage next to the forge. His sister, Mrs. Joe, was sharp-tongued and strict, and she had brought him up "by hand," as she liked to say. Joe Gargery, the blacksmith, was big and gentle, and he and Pip were close friends, almost like two children together. That evening Pip sat quietly through supper, hiding a slice of bread inside his trouser leg. When no one was looking, he slipped it away. In the middle of the night, while the house was asleep, he crept down to the kitchen. His heart thumped. He took bread, cheese, a bottle of brandy, a meat pie from the pantry, and a file from Joe's forge. He felt very guilty about stealing from his own family, but his fear of the stranger was greater. In the dark he ran across the marsh toward the old battery, a place the man had named. Fog rose around his feet like smoke. The challenge was to keep calm, for the consequence of being caught would be very serious. He had to determine where the man was hiding in the mist. He soon began to investigate every sound. Then he saw a shape sitting with his head down. This was a significant risk, but he went forward. He wanted to establish that the man was real. Mrs. Joe was busy preparing the Christmas pudding, and the whole kitchen smelled of spice. Joe, at the table, gave Pip a sidelong smile and whispered that he looked pale. Pip nearly confessed everything. ★ A young frightened boy met a frightening stranger in a dark graveyard.

THINK Who was Joe Gargery?

Read the story. Then think about each question.



Chapter 3: The Convict Is Taken Away

The man ate the food as fast as a hungry dog and drank the brandy in huge gulps. He thanked Pip in a rough voice. Then he started to file his chain, and Pip, afraid, ran home before sunrise. At Christmas dinner, as Pip sat at the table, a group of soldiers knocked at the door and asked Joe to mend a pair of handcuffs. Pip feared they had come for him. Joe worked at the forge, and then everyone went out to the marsh to watch the search. On the misty ground the soldiers found two men fighting in a ditch. One was Pip's convict, the other was another escaped man, and the two were wrestling in the mud. The soldiers pulled them apart and led them away. As he left, Pip's convict told the soldiers that he had stolen some food from the blacksmith's house. Joe said kindly that the man was welcome to it. The man gave Pip a long, strange look. It was a small moment, but it had a great consequence. Pip would not forget it. Years later he would investigate his memory of the marsh, trying to determine what the man had really meant. It was a significant turning point, and it would establish a bond between them. The challenge for the boy was to stay honest with Joe, and to forgive himself. Pip would remember the convict's last look for the rest of his life, and he wondered whether kindness shown to a stranger would ever come back to him. ★ A young frightened boy met a frightening stranger in a dark graveyard, and this one brief meeting would quietly change his entire life.

THINK What did the soldiers ask Joe to mend?

Read the story. Then think about each question.



Chapter 4: Satis House

When Pip was about eight or nine, his uncle Pumblechook arranged for him to visit a rich, strange old lady named Miss Havisham, who lived in a large, dark house called Satis House. The windows were barred, and the air smelled of dust. A beautiful girl named Estella led Pip through the corridors with a candle. In a dim room lit only by candles, Pip met Miss Havisham. She wore a yellowed wedding dress and had only one shoe on. Her white hair and ancient veil were thin and gray, and the flowers in her hair had withered. On a table nearby lay a tray of lovely things, covered with dust. Pip noticed two clocks. Both had stopped at twenty minutes to nine. She told him that she wanted a boy to play, and she asked him to amuse her. Pip was confused and afraid. Everything in the room seemed old, and the whole house felt as if it had been asleep for years. In truth, she had been wounded long ago, and she had stopped every clock on that day. It was a significant mystery. Pip wished to investigate it, and he could not determine what the house was hiding. The consequence of her grief was a home without change. He knew it was a challenge to understand it. Nothing there seemed to move forward. The room smelled of old perfume and damp cloth. A dressing table stood nearby, covered with jewels, gloves, and half-folded lace, as if she had been dressing for a day that had never arrived. Pip noticed that her watch had also stopped, and he had the odd feeling that the whole world outside had gone on without her. ★

Time seemed to stop inside Miss Havisham's house.

THINK Who led Pip through the corridors?

Read the story. Then think about each question.



Chapter 5: The Wedding Cake

Miss Havisham led Pip to a long, grand room where a huge table was set for a feast. At its center stood a great cake, as old and gray as a heap of stones, thick with dust and cobwebs. Spiders crawled in and out of it, and mice scuttled in the corners. "This is where I will be laid when I am dead," she said. "But we will not talk of that." Pip felt a shiver run down his back. She explained, in a low voice, that the cake was meant for her wedding day. She had been waiting for a groom who never came, because on the morning of the wedding she received a letter telling her he would not marry her. In shock, she had stopped every clock at that very minute and had refused to change a thing. She still wore the dress. Pip was a little afraid, yet he also felt sorry for her. He wanted to investigate the whole story, but he knew it was not his place. It was a significant day for the boy. He understood that the consequence of a broken heart might be long and heavy, and that people could be held captive by their own sorrow. That seemed a hard challenge. He could not determine what to say, and so he simply stood still. A strange feeling began to establish itself in him. Estella watched from the doorway with her chin raised, as if she found the whole scene amusing. Pip tried to look at the cake again, and for the first time in his life he understood that the past could be a heavy thing to carry. ★ Time seemed to completely stop inside the old strange house.

THINK What stood in the center of the table?

Read the story. Then think about each question.



Chapter 6: Frozen at Twenty to Nine

Pip visited Satis House again and again. Every time, the rooms looked just the same: curtains drawn, candles burning in the daytime, and a thick layer of dust on every surface. Miss Havisham would walk slowly around the long table, leaning on a crutch-stick, and sometimes she asked Pip to walk with her. She seemed to take a strange pleasure in having a young person nearby. The clocks still said twenty minutes to nine. Pip learned that her half-brother and a clever man named Compeyson had once tricked her, taking her money and her heart. She could not forgive and could not forget. The decay in the house was her way of refusing to move forward. A young boy could see that this was unhealthy, but he could not say so. Pip began to understand that grief can become a prison, and that holding on to old pain has a serious consequence. It was a significant lesson. He decided to investigate whether kindness might help, but Miss Havisham only grew more bitter. She would determine her own path. The challenge for anyone who loves her was great. In time she would establish a plan that used Pip and Estella as part of her revenge. The long days there left their mark on him, for he began to measure everything by the cold, quiet silence of that house. ★ **Time seemed to completely stop inside the old strange house, where all the clocks had shown the very same hour for many bitter years.**

THINK What time did the clocks show?

Read the story. Then think about each question.



Chapter 7: A Beautiful, Cold Girl

Estella was about Pip's age, and she was the most beautiful girl he had ever seen. She had bright eyes and dark hair, and she wore a pretty dress. But when she spoke to him, her words were sharp. Miss Havisham told her to play cards with him. "With this boy? Why, he is a common laboring boy!" said Estella. Pip heard her mock his thick boots and his coarse hands, and he felt tears of shame sting his eyes. She called him a "coarse boy" and laughed at him, while Miss Havisham watched with a satisfied look. Pip was hurt. Until that day, he had never thought his hands and boots were anything to be ashamed of. After the card game, Estella brought him bread and meat on the ground, as if he were a dog, and he cried alone in the yard. He did not yet understand that Miss Havisham was raising Estella to break hearts, as a way to take her revenge on all men. That would be a significant mistake, because it taught the girl to be cold. The consequence was that Pip's feelings changed. He wanted to determine what he had done wrong. He began to investigate his own life, and he felt he must establish a better one. This was his first great challenge. Miss Havisham whispered into Estella's ear, "Break their hearts, my pride and hope!" and Pip never forgot the words. He went away from the house confused, still feeling the sting of the girl's laughter on his cheek. ★ He met a beautiful but very cold girl.

THINK What did Estella call Pip?

Read the story. Then think about each question.

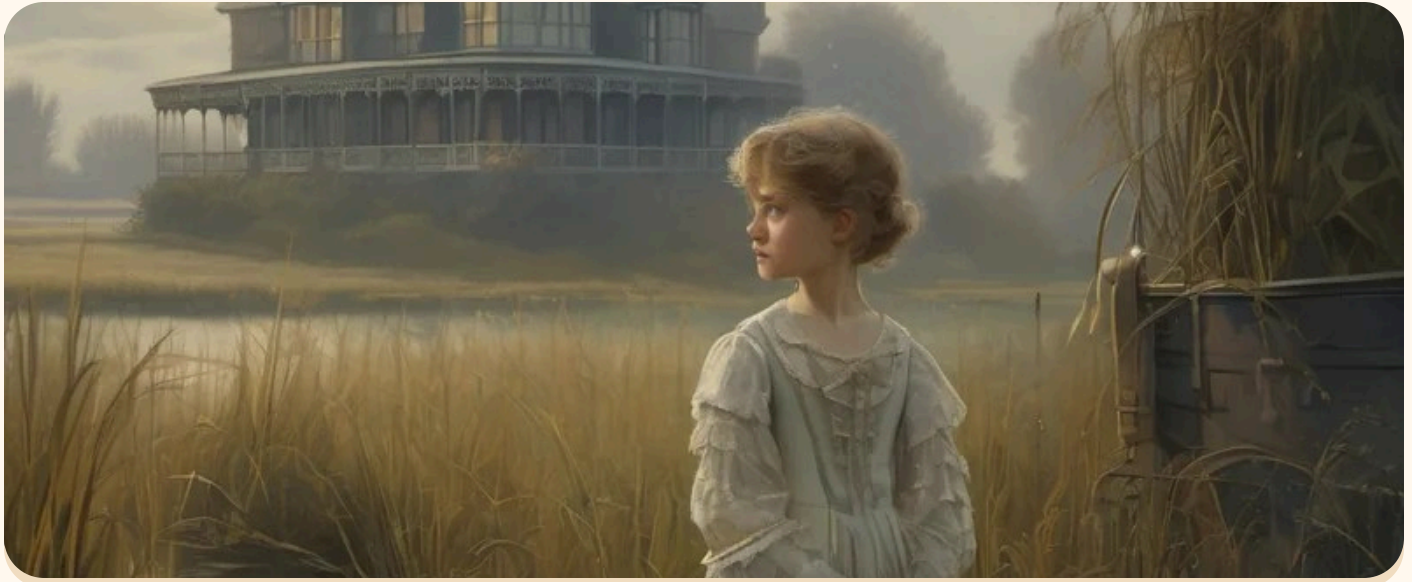


Chapter 8: Ashamed of Home

Pip walked home across the marshes with a heavy heart. For the first time, the little cottage looked small and plain to him. The forge looked sooty, and even his kind friend Joe seemed too rough. He looked at his own rough hands and thick boots and wished he could be a gentleman like those in the stories. Mrs. Joe and Uncle Pumblechook asked him what Miss Havisham was like. Instead of telling the truth, Pip invented a wonderful tale. He said that she rode in a black velvet coach, that dogs fought over veal cutlets in silver baskets, and that flags and swords were waved. It was all a lie, and he felt ashamed of it afterward. Later, Pip confessed the truth to Joe, who listened without scolding him. "Lies is lies," said Joe gently. "Don't tell them, Pip." Pip felt relieved and sorry. The challenge for him was to keep Joe's honest example in front of him. He did not yet see that the quiet blacksmith had the finest heart in the village. The significant mistake of Pip's life had begun, because he wanted to be better than his family. A wrong idea began to establish itself in his mind. The consequence would be pain for those he loved. He would determine to rise. He would investigate how to become a gentleman. Joe patted Pip's shoulder. "One thing, Pip, you must never be ashamed of an honest day's work," he said. Pip heard him, but the words did not sink in just then. ★ He met a strangely beautiful but deeply cold girl.

THINK What did Pip lie about?

Read the story. Then think about each question.



Chapter 9: Thoughts of Estella

Pip could not stop thinking about Estella. He thought of her when he hammered at the forge, when he walked to the village, and when he lay awake at night. He tried to forget her sharp words, but her bright face stayed in his mind. When Miss Havisham finally asked what he wanted to do with his life, Pip said nothing. Soon after, she helped Joe pay for Pip's apprenticeship, so that the boy would learn the blacksmith's trade. Pip accepted, though in his heart he wished for something grander. Estella, meanwhile, was sent abroad to be taught to behave like a lady. Pip felt as if the one bright light in his life was gone. Many years later he would say that she had been a part of every dream he ever had, even the foolish ones. It was a significant truth, and the consequence was a heart that kept hoping against reason. Pip tried to investigate his feelings, but he could not determine how to put them aside. He knew he had to establish a life of his own, and it was a hard challenge. He worked hard, but his mind was elsewhere. Joe saw the sadness on his face and did not ask questions. At night he looked through the little window at the stars and wondered whether she ever thought of the blacksmith's boy. ★ **He met a strangely beautiful but deeply cold girl, and he simply could not stop thinking about her for a very long time afterwards.**

THINK *Where was Estella sent?*

Read the story. Then think about each question.



Chapter 10: Great Expectations

Four years passed, and Pip was nearly grown. He worked at the forge, but every day he felt unhappy. One evening, at an inn called the Three Jolly Bargemen, a tall lawyer named Mr. Jaggers came to Joe's house and asked for Pip. He announced astonishing news. A secret person, who wished to remain unknown, would give Pip a large fortune. Pip was to go to London at once and be trained as a gentleman. He would have "great expectations." There was only one rule: he must always keep the name Pip, and he must never ask who the helper was until that person chose to reveal himself. Pip could hardly believe it. Joe stood still, looking proud and sad at the same time. Pip said goodbye to him and to the village in a daze. It was a significant day, because everything about his life was about to change. The consequence of this gift would be great, though he did not know that yet. Pip would investigate the mystery in his mind for years. He wanted to determine who his benefactor was, and his dream was to establish a new life in London. The challenge was to remain the same kind person. Mr. Jaggers watched him closely, like a man who knew more than he said. Mr. Jaggers also said that he was paid to keep the name of the helper secret. He repeated the rule slowly, twice, and made Pip promise to accept it without question. Then he left, and the room felt suddenly very quiet. ★ **Someone secretly gave him money to study in London.**

THINK Who is Mr. Jaggers?

Read the story. Then think about each question.



Chapter 11: The Journey to London

Pip left the village with a mixture of joy and sadness. He wore his best clothes, and Joe, who was awkward in his Sunday suit, walked part of the way with him. When they said goodbye, Joe's eyes were wet, and Pip told himself he would write soon. Then he rode the coach to London, where the streets were crowded and loud and the buildings were huge. Mr. Jaggers's office was a dark room with a pair of plaster faces on the shelf. There Pip learned that he would live with a young man named Herbert Pocket, whose father would teach him. Herbert turned out to be cheerful and honest, and he soon became Pip's dearest friend. He taught Pip to use a fork properly and to speak politely, and he did it with such gentleness that Pip never felt humiliated. Pip was grateful. Meanwhile he kept wondering who his benefactor might be. Once, he thought he knew. He felt certain, and the thought gave him a strange pleasure. This was a significant moment for a young man, because he had to determine how a gentleman should behave. The challenge for a country boy was to learn it quickly. The consequence of failing would be shame, and he would investigate every rule. In the evenings Herbert's cheerful talk about the city made the great town less frightening. Pip began to feel that, perhaps, he could belong there after all, and he wrote Joe a short letter that he never sent. ★ Someone gave him money in secret to study in London.

THINK Who was Herbert Pocket?

Read the story. Then think about each question.



Chapter 12: Pip Is Certain

Pip soon became sure that his secret helper was Miss Havisham. After all, she was rich, she lived near his village, and she had always treated him like a toy. He believed she planned for him to marry Estella, and the idea thrilled him. As his confidence grew, he started to spend money freely. He bought fine clothes, ate in expensive restaurants, and ran into debt. He also began to feel embarrassed about Joe, who once came to London to visit him, wearing his best coat and holding his hat in an awkward way. Pip was cold and impatient, and Joe left quietly with a sad face. Pip felt a pang of regret but did nothing about it. It was a significant error in judgment. When he was with Estella, who was now a young woman, he felt certain that she and Miss Havisham would approve of him. Estella told him plainly that she had no heart, and that she would never love him. Pip refused to believe it. The consequence of his pride was loneliness. Only Herbert stayed loyal. To determine the truth, Pip would have to investigate his own motives. He could not establish what was real. It was the greatest challenge of his young life. Herbert once warned him gently that he was spending too fast, but Pip only laughed and ordered another dinner. **★ Someone gave him money in complete secret to study in London, and Pip felt absolutely certain he already knew exactly who it was.**

THINK Whom did Pip believe his helper was?

Read the story. Then think about each question.



Chapter 13: The Stranger on the Stairs

On a wild, stormy night in November, Pip, now twenty-three, sat alone in his rooms in London. Wind rattled the windows, and the rain fell in sheets. Suddenly he heard heavy footsteps on the stairs. He took up a lamp and held it over the banisters. Up the dark stairs came a rough, weather-beaten man in a long coat, with iron-gray hair. He reached out both hands. "Don't you know me?" he said. Pip did not. The man then spoke of a marsh, a file, a pie, and a boy who had kept a promise. Pip's heart nearly stopped. It was the convict from the graveyard. He was older, and his face was brown from the sun. The man said, "You're my boy. I've made a gentleman of you." Pip stood frozen. His mind raced, for he had always been certain that Miss Havisham was his helper. The room spun around him. The shock was so strong that he almost fell. It was a significant moment, and the consequence of those few words would shake his world. He could not investigate, determine, or establish anything at all. Only the storm seemed to make sense. The challenge now was to face a truth he had never imagined. He let the man sit by the fire, and neither of them spoke for a long time. The man's hands shook as he pressed Pip's, and tears stood in his eyes, which only made the scene stranger. Pip stepped back and touched the table to steady himself. ★

The shocking truth was completely unexpected.

THINK *What was the weather like?*

Read the story. Then think about each question.



Chapter 14: Magwitch's Secret

The man's name was Abel Magwitch. He told Pip his story slowly, sitting by the fire with a pipe between his teeth. After the marsh, he had been sent far away across the sea to Australia, where he worked as a shepherd and a farmer. He saved every coin. All those years, he remembered the small, frightened boy who had brought him food and a file when he was starving. "That boy," he said, "was the only kind person I ever knew." He had decided to use his money to make that boy into a gentleman, and he had sent it through Mr. Jaggers. Though he risked a great danger by returning to England, because he had been banished, he wanted to see his gentleman with his own eyes. Pip felt his heart sink. He had hoped the money came from Miss Havisham and had dreamed of marrying Estella. Now he saw that his rise had been paid for by a man he had feared. The truth was a significant shock. The real helper was not rich or refined but rough and weathered. The consequence was that Pip's dreams were broken. He did not know how to investigate his own feelings, and he could not determine what to do. He tried to establish calm, but his mind was in a whirl. His greatest challenge was ahead. Magwitch laid a heavy purse of banknotes on the table and said that there was more where that came from, and that he would work all his life to give Pip everything a gentleman could desire. Pip could not look at him and stared into the fire. The man's pride in him was so deep and so honest that, in spite of his dismay, Pip could not bring himself to speak a harsh word. He rose and walked slowly to the window. Outside, the rain was still falling on the dark river. ★ **The real truth turned out to be completely shocking.**

THINK *Where had Magwitch been sent?*

Read the story. Then think about each question.



Chapter 15: A Hidden Helper

Pip lay awake all night, feeling both shame and fear. The man was a returned convict, and if he was discovered in England, he would be arrested. Pip had no wish to keep taking his money, and yet he could not hand him to the law. The next morning he hid Magwitch in rooms nearby, and Herbert helped him. Pip also visited Mr. Jaggers, who quietly confirmed that Magwitch was the benefactor and that Miss Havisham had never been involved. Pip then visited Satis House for the last time before going further. Miss Havisham, upon hearing that he now knew the truth, seemed troubled. He told her that he had mistaken her for his helper, and she admitted she had let him believe it. It was a significant confession. He also told her that Estella was about to marry a cruel, wealthy man named Drummle. Pip begged her to prevent it, but it was too late. The old lady's face showed deep regret. Pip began to see how many mistakes had piled up. The consequence of misjudging people was a loss of years. He chose to investigate his duty to Magwitch, and he determined to treat him kindly. It was the challenge of his life to establish honor. Pip walked home along the empty streets in the early morning, thinking that kindness may come in the strangest coats. ★

The real truth turned out to be completely shocking and totally unexpected, because the true helper was actually the frightening stranger from the dark graveyard.

THINK Who confirmed the benefactor?

Read the story. Then think about each question.



Chapter 16: Pip Chooses Kindness

Pip made up his mind. Whatever Magwitch had once been, he had given everything to help a child who had been kind to him. Pip decided to repay that kindness. With Herbert and a friend named Startop, he planned to take Magwitch down the River Thames in a rowboat, to meet a steamer bound for a safe country. For weeks Pip rowed on the river to practice, so that no one would be suspicious. The plan was risky, but Pip kept his courage and his temper. Before leaving, he visited Miss Havisham one last time. She knelt in front of him in tears, and she said, "What have I done?" She asked him to forgive her for hardening Estella's heart and for letting him dream. Pip, who had learned some pity, took her hand and told her he forgave her. It was a significant act of kindness. He was beginning to understand that a gentleman is measured by his heart. The challenge was great, and the consequence of failure would be grave. He had to determine the best moment to act and establish a secret route. He chose to investigate the river carefully before dawn. The old lady wept for a long time, and Pip stayed by her until she grew calm. When he left, the house seemed a little less dark than it had before. ★

A true gentleman is defined by kind actions.

THINK Where did Pip plan to take Magwitch?

Read the story. Then think about each question.



Chapter 17: The River at Dawn

Early on a gray morning, Pip, Herbert, and Startop rowed along the river with Magwitch in a coat and hat. The water was cold and still. They hoped to reach a steamer heading for Hamburg. As they passed along the river's edge, a boat with police officers came out of the mist, and an informer, who had followed the old convict for years, pointed him out. In the struggle that followed, the boat tipped. Magwitch was pulled from the water, hurt and weak, and taken into custody. The law said that his property now belonged to the Crown, so Pip's money was gone as well. Pip did not care about the money. He went to see Magwitch every day in the prison infirmary, where the old man grew weaker. He held his hand and spoke to him gently. "Dear Magwitch," he said, "I will never leave you. You were kind to me when I was a child, and I will be kind to you." Magwitch smiled and thanked him with a quiet word. Pip felt more love than he had ever felt before. It was a significant moment of change. The consequence was that Pip's pride fell away. He had set out to determine his purpose and establish a good life, and he began to investigate what mattered. The challenge was deep. The gray light spread slowly over the river, and the gulls cried over the water. For a moment Pip thought he saw the whole of his old marsh in the mist, and the small boy he once was. He lifted the old man's head to make him more comfortable, and a warm silence fell between them. ★ A true gentleman is defined by genuinely kind actions.

THINK Who followed Magwitch for years?

Read the story. Then think about each question.



Chapter 18: The True Gentleman

Soon after, Pip fell gravely ill with fever, and when he opened his eyes, he saw a familiar figure sitting by his bed. It was Joe Gargery, who had hurried to London and had been nursing him day and night, without a word of complaint. Joe had even paid Pip's debts to keep him from being arrested. Pip wept with shame and gratitude. "Dear Joe," he said, "I have been so unkind to you." Joe only smiled and said, "Old chap, you and me was always the best of friends." When Pip grew strong again, he went home to the village and apologized to everyone he had hurt. He came to see how foolish his old dreams had been, and that the best man he had ever known was the blacksmith. Pip then worked hard for years in Herbert's trading firm abroad, earning an honest living. Many years later, he walked among the ruins of Satis House, where he met Estella. She, too, had been softened by sorrow. They took each other's hands and walked out of the garden in the evening light. It was a significant ending. The challenge of life, Pip knew, was to be good and true. The consequence of his journey was wisdom. He had to determine his own worth, establish honesty, and investigate his heart. They sat together on a broken bench in the old garden, and neither of them said much. The sun went down slowly behind the ruined walls, and the evening mist rose from the ground. Pip felt that at last, after so many mistakes, he stood on honest ground. ★ **A true gentleman is defined by genuinely kind actions and real inner goodness, not by expensive clothes or a proud and wealthy family name.**

THINK Who nursed Pip?