

**Lesson
Eight****Exploring Creative Writing:
Imagined Experiences****Aims**

The aims of this lesson are to enable you to:

- consider the skills required for imaginative writing
- distinguish between alternative forms of written English
- communicate effectively, adapting form, tone and register of writing for specific purposes and audiences
- write clearly, using a range of vocabulary and sentence structures
- to use appropriate paragraphing and accurate spelling, grammar and punctuation.

Context

Paper 1 Section B of your exam includes a choice of writing tasks to demonstrate your ability to explore, imagine and entertain. To make this writing come alive, you will need to write imaginatively, with detail that makes the experience seem real. We will be looking closely at such writing in this lesson and, hopefully, give you help with writing in this way yourself.

The last lesson emphasised some of the different ways in which accounts of actual or imagined experience (what people feel and do) can be written.

In this lesson we will look closely at extracts from **Great Expectations** which demonstrate effective setting, characterisation and dialogue.

Introduction

In previous lessons we have looked at writing about an actual experience, and also about crafting an imagined experience, looking at the description, points of view, and personal feelings expressed.

For this lesson, you will be undertaking close analysis of a range of extracts from *Great Expectations* by Charles Dickens. These have been selected to provide models of specific literary techniques, such as sensory description, irony, hyperbole and characterisation through dialogue.

In this lesson, in looking again at an imaginative piece of writing, we will be giving you the opportunity to choose appropriate vocabulary to describe scenes and the characters' feelings. You will also practise writing dialogue and a letter, in order to be able to express personal reactions, and to use language appropriate to these forms of writing.

Source Text:

Pip arrives at Barnard's Inn (from Charles Dickens, *Great Expectations*, chapter 21)

We entered this haven through a wicket-gate, and were disgorged by an introductory passage into a melancholy little square that looked to me like a flat burying-ground. I thought it had the most dismal trees in it, and the most dismal sparrows, and the most dismal cats, and the most dismal houses (in number half a dozen or so), that I had ever seen. I thought the windows of the sets of chambers into which those houses were divided, were in every stage of dilapidated blind and curtain, crippled flower pot, cracked glass, dusty decay, and miserable makeshift; while To Let To Let To Let, glared at me from empty rooms, as if no new wretches ever came there, and the vengeance of the soul of Barnard were being slowly appeased by the gradual suicide of the present occupants and their unholy interment under the gravel...

Thus far my sense of sight; while dry rot and all the silent rots that rot in neglected roof and cellar — rot of rat and mouse and bug and coaching-stables near at hand besides — addressed themselves faintly to my sense of smell, and moaned, 'Try Barnard's Mixture'. So imperfect was this realisation of the first of my great expectations that I looked in dismay at Mr. Wemmick. 'Ah' said he, mistaking me; 'the retirement reminds you of the country. So it does me.'

Note Dating back to the fourteenth century, Barnard's Inn was an inn of chancery in Holborn, London, where students studied law. By the nineteenth century it had become dilapidated and run down. No longer an inn of chancery, the rooms were let out as residential chambers (or bed-sits as we would call them today).

Activity 1**Responding To Texts: Pip at Barnard's Inn**

In the extract above, Pip describes his arrival at Barnard's Inn, a group of old buildings in the City of London.

Try to analyse the passage you have read, and identify its purpose and its important features, in terms of writer's choices and how the reader may respond to these choices.

When you have done this, compare your answers with the suggested responses at the end of the lesson.

**Setting**

Choosing the right setting for your narrative is crucial. If you want to seize the reader's interest you must capture their imagination and make them care about the world you are describing enough to read on.

Setting can guide reader's expectations, particularly in genre-based writing. In crime, horror or mystery fiction, it can enhance your effectiveness if you select a setting which helps to create an apt mood.

It can increase tension and suspense if you place your character or narrator in an unfamiliar or threatening environment. If your protagonist is weak or vulnerable it will create empathy and engage the reader's curiosity.

Isolated locations also increase dramatic effectiveness as a character can be shown to be alone and unable to seek help easily and quickly if a problem should occur.

Wherever type of setting you choose for your imaginative response, you must describe it in vivid detail to make the place come alive in the reader's mind. To do this you should aim to describe the place in a multi-sensory way. Effective description appeals to all senses and conveys the character's emotions. Dickens has illustrated this in his reference to the sights and smells that greet Pip as he enters the Inn.

Activity 2

Writer's Techniques

In this activity you will answer a number of short questions which ask you to identify and examine the effects of the writer's techniques of description:



- Barnard's Inn, where the passage is set, is initially described by Pip as a *haven*. Look up the word 'haven' in your dictionary, and explain with reference to the passage whether or not 'haven' is an appropriate word to describe Barnard's Inn.

Suggest why Pip used this word.

- The storyteller imagines the influence of the original Barnard, after whom Barnard's Inn is named, in two figures of speech.

The first is a *simile*, the second is a *metaphor*. In the case of a simile, a writer says something is like something else (e.g. 'he eats like a horse'; 'she looked as if she was stone'...); a metaphor is similar, but here a writer talks about something as if it *were* something else, without using words like 'like' 'as' and so on which make it obvious there is a comparison (e.g.: 'he is a horse when he eats; 'she turned to stone'...). The first figure of speech, the simile, likens Barnard's influence to that of his soul still haunting the premises.

The second figure of speech, the metaphor, refers to an imaginary 'Barnard's Mixture' as the cause of the smells and atmosphere of the Inn.

Explain in a bit more detail and in your words, what effect the soul of Barnard is described as having on the tenants of Barnard's Inn.



Secondly, explain in your own words what real things Pip is describing as the imaginary 'Barnard's Mixture'.

Finally, be sure you grasp the difference between a metaphor and a simile.

Irony and Hyperbole

Irony is a figurative device in which a word, phrase or tone is used to mean its opposite. For instance, 'what lovely weather' to describe bad weather. It is often conveyed by the tone of voice of the speaker. When analyzing the writer's attitude, we need to consider whether he or she is being ironic about a person, place, event or outcome. The 'soul of Barnard' is imagined to be taking revenge on, or having an evil influence on, the people who live in Barnard's Inn.

While the reality is that people have moved away from the area, Pip imagines Barnard's ghost has driven them to suicide and that their bodies are buried under the gravel. In an extract rich in sensory description, Pip then imagines that the rotten smells which exist in Barnard's Inn are speaking to him with voices, as if they are a strong-smelling concoction or mixture, made by an imaginary Barnard.

Like the irony used in the choice of the word 'haven', these extended similes comparing real things (at least, real within the world of the novel) with imaginary things are ways of producing a very *exaggerated* or *powerful* description or emphasis. This figurative use of language is called **hyperbole** (pronounced high-*purr*-bo-lee, with the stress on the second syllable). It is not meant to be taken literally.

The activity that follows will enable you to explore the feelings of Pip, the narrator of the passage. You will be asked to present your understanding of why Pip reacts as he does to Barnard's Inn. Pip is being taken to Barnard's Inn by Mr Wemmick because he is going to live there.

Activity 3**Narrative Perspective**

Consider these questions, then write a paragraph in your own words, but supporting your statements from the passage. You should deal with these points:



- Has Pip visited this place before?
- Is he accustomed to big cities?
- How might he have been feeling just before he sees the place where he is going to live?
- The 'retirement' (seclusion) of Barnard's Inn reminds Mr Wemmick of the countryside. Does Barnard's Inn remind Pip of the countryside?

Narrative Perspective: First and Third Person Perspective

The two most familiar ways of presenting a story are to write from the First Person or the Third Person perspective.

First Person narrative is where all the action is seen through the eyes of the main character, and it is written as though he or she is writing. It resembles non-fiction texts, particularly autobiography. Pip in *Great Expectations* directly addresses the reader as he recounts the story of his life and 'expectations'.

As a writer, one advantage of using first person perspective is that it can feel easy and natural as a writer, and usually does not demand very complex grammar, although this is not always the case, as with the presentation of Pip, whose formal and convoluted syntax often reflects his own social aspirations.

The disadvantage of first-person narrative is that your reader can only know what your main character knows. If something happens somewhere where your character is not present, you

cannot 'know' about it unless someone else in the story tells your character about it. In this way, it can be a restricted narrative.

Some writers use this potential limitation for particular effect, as with F Scott's Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*, where the narrator's admiration of Gatsby's romantic outlook make him an unreliable and biased narrator of the events leading to Gatsby's death.

Third Person narrative is where the action is seen through the eyes of the storyteller. This persona is omniscient as they have a privileged view of events and are even able to comment on the thoughts and motivations of a range of characters.

The third-person or omniscient narrator presents events in a similar way to a television or film camera and the reader is given information on everything that is going on. There are practical advantages when using third-person perspective. The main character does not have to be involved in every interaction. The author and the reader can 'know' things that the main character does not know.

Activity 4

Imaginative Writing: Nouns and Adjectives

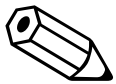


This activity continues from the one you have just completed. It will help you to develop your insight into Pip's feelings and his personal experience. You are going to write about Pip's feelings before and after seeing Barnard's Inn for the first time. To help you do this, read through the following list of nouns taken from the passage, of the things he dislikes about the place:

- dilapidation
- decay
- dirt
- overcrowding

Then read through the following list of adjectives which he uses to describe what he doesn't like about the place:

crippled cracked dusty small dismal
miserable flat melancholy neglected



Go through the list of adjectives again, and for each one find an adjective which has an opposite meaning. For instance, for 'crippled' you might choose 'healthy', 'strong', 'vigorous' or 'sturdy'.

The passage you have read *implies* or *suggests* how Pip feels by showing how he sees the scene he describes, but it does not directly describe his feelings.

Write a paragraph from Pip's point of view, describing his feelings, using the first person, 'I'. You should describe first of all his feelings of anticipation/expectation before he sees Barnard's Inn. Remember that he was brought up in the country and this is his first visit to the city. He is about to see the place where he is to live. You should then describe how he feels about the crowded city buildings. You should also say what sort of surroundings he was used to before. In your answer, make use of the adjectives you have listed, to describe what sort of environment Pip was used to.

Activity 5

Writer's Craft

In this activity you will examine the writer's use of repetition and choose adjectives appropriate for a particular effect.



'I thought it had the most *dismal* trees in it, and the most *dismal* sparrows, and the most *dismal* cats, and the most *dismal* houses (in number half a dozen or so), that I had ever seen.'

Try re-writing this sentence, substituting for 'dismal' four other adjectives that mean something similar. Try to fit the replacement adjective in each case to the object(s) it describes.

You should choose from the following list:

*gloomy miserable brooding unlucky dreary joyless
dull pathetic glum depressing unhappy
grim sorrowful mournful fateful unfortunate*

When you have chosen the adjectives you think are most appropriate, and checked the list given in the answer to see if you can find any that are more suitable, write a sentence suggesting why the writer chooses to use the word 'dismal' four times in one sentence. What effect do you think he was trying to achieve?

Then write a sentence suggesting reasons for the use of the word 'rot(s)' four times in the following sentence: 'Thus far my sense of sight; while dry rot and all the silent rots that rot in neglected roof and cellar — rot of rat and mouse and bug and coaching stables near at hand besides — addressed themselves faintly to my sense of smell...' Again you should consider what effect the writer intended to have on his audience.

There are a number of possible answers here, all of which might be true. For instance, the writer may be seeking to emphasise or exaggerate one thing by repeating a word over and over again; he may wish to make the word stick in our minds. However, he is also telling us about Pip's reaction to what he sees, and giving the impression that Pip is so disgusted that he is lost for words, and has to keep using the same words. The repetition is also intended to make the reader visualise or imagine the same quality over and over again, so that we have a feeling of the repetitive monotony, the lack of variety, in the scene that is being described.

You will read about some more types of repetition that occur in the passage, and consider their intended effect. To appreciate this effect, you will be asked to read the passage aloud to yourself.

You have probably noticed that the writer uses long sentences, and that many of the sentences consist of a series of clauses linked by commas or by 'and'. For instance:

'I thought the windows of the sets of chambers into which those houses were divided, were in every stage of dilapidated blind and curtain, crippled flower pot, cracked glass, dusty decay and miserable makeshift...'

Part of this sentence is a long list, and most of the other sentences are repetitive in their structure. Like the other special features in this passage; irony, hyperbole or extended similes, repetition of certain words, this repetitive use of lists is intended to build up a strong emphasis and to exaggerate details about the place described. The sentences of this passage build up through repetition to climaxes and crescendos. Each sentence is designed gradually to express more and more feelings of dislike and aversion as it progresses.

To appreciate the **dramatic effect** of this writing, you should read the passage aloud allowing your voice to express more and more distaste as each sentence progresses. Start each sentence

in an ordinary, calm way and put more feeling in your voice, building up to the end of the sentence. The writer of the passage, Charles Dickens, wrote his books to be read aloud to a listening audience. Reading it aloud will enable you to experience the dramatic potential of the passage.

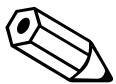
The activities will help you to develop your appreciation of the **dramatic intention** and effect of this passage. This will also increase your understanding of the reactions, feelings, and points of view of the narrator, Pip. To appreciate the purpose and effect of this piece of writing, it is important to consider it as a story told to an actual audience. Pip tells the story of his childhood and youth in the novel *Great Expectations* by Charles Dickens.

The story is told in such a way as to teach many lessons about life, and to warn listeners about Pip's mistakes. Therefore, the story has two purposes: to entertain and to instruct. It is helpful to imagine Pip telling his story to a young listener; this would explain why he uses the variety of figurative language and dramatic storytelling devices you have learnt about in the previous activities. He wants to keep his listener entertained, but he also wants to make his meaning very clear.

Activity 6

Transforming Texts: Creating Dialogue

Your task is to re-write the passage, transforming it from a piece of descriptive narrative to a dialogue between Pip and his listener, a child or a young person. This is an example of how it could begin:



'What was it like, Uncle Pip, when you got there? Was it as good as you expected? Was it really grand? Was it a big house on the main street? How did you find it?'

'We entered this haven through a wicket gate, and were disgorged by an introductory passage into a melancholy little square that looked to me like a flat burying-ground.'

'But what were the houses like? Weren't there any gardens with trees?'

'I thought it had the most dismal trees...'

You should observe the rules of paragraphing and punctuation for dialogue used here. Start a new line and paragraph for each speaker. Insert quotation marks around direct speech. Insert a question from the listener at the end of each sentence. You should show that the listener responds to what has just been said, and asks a question which is answered by the next sentence Pip speaks. The questioner is curious, involved in the story and wanting to know all about Pip's feelings and the events he describes. Pip is trying to do two things: he wants his listener to see the scene described as he saw it, and he wants the listener to understand his reaction to it.

The questions the listener asks should include questions about:

- The detailed appearance of the buildings
- Whether there were any people in Barnard's Inn
- The atmosphere of the place
- How Pip felt
- What Pip did

The listener should also react to what Pip says, for example:

'How awful...'

'It sounds horrible...'

'You must have been disappointed...'

When you have written this dialogue, read it through, and you will be able to see how Pip's story would affect a sympathetic audience. You will see that this writing is designed to produce a strong sympathetic reaction from its audience.

Activity 7

Dialogue

The following passage is a piece of conversation from the same novel, *Great Expectations*. In this activity you will use this passage to learn to identify points of view, characters and their reactions.



Read through the following 'conversation' carefully, several times, trying to work out how many people are speaking and when each character is speaking. You may use a number system in *pencil* alongside each piece of speech. So, put 1 against the first speaker, and 2 against the second, and identify who is speaking throughout.

‘Hold your noise! Keep still, you little devil, or I’ll cut your throat!’
 ‘O! Don’t cut my throat, sir. Pray don’t do it, sir.’
 ‘Tell us your name! Quickly!’
 ‘Pip, sir.’
 ‘Once more, give it mouth!’
 ‘Pip. Pip, sir.’
 ‘Show us where you live. Pint out the place!’
 ‘You young dog, what fat cheeks you ha’ got. Darn Me if I couldn’t eat ‘em, and if I han’t half a mind to’t!’
 ‘Now lookee here! Where’s your mother?’
 ‘There, sir! Also Georgiana. That’s my mother.’
 ‘Oh! And is that your father alonger your mother?’
 ‘Yes, sir, him too; late of this parish.’
 ‘Ha! Who d’ye live with - supposin’ you’re kindly let to live, which I han’t made up my mind about?’
 ‘My sister, sir – Mrs. Joe Gargery – wife of Joe Gargery, the blacksmith, sir.’
 ‘Blacksmith, eh? Now lookee here, the question being whether you’re to be let to live. You know what a file is?’
 ‘Yes, sir.’
 ‘You know what wittles is?’
 ‘Yes, sir.’
 ‘You get me a file. And you get me wittles. You bring ‘em both to me. Or I’ll have your heart and liver out.’
 ‘If you would kindly please to let me keep upright, sir, perhaps I shouldn’t be sick, and perhaps I could attend more.’
 ‘You bring me tomorrow morning early, that file and them wittles. You bring the lot to me, at that old Battery over yonder.’
 ‘You do it, and you never dare to say a word or dare to make a sign concerning your having seen such a person as me, or any person sumever, and you shall be let to live. You fail, or you go from my words in any partickler, no matter how small it is, and your heart and your liver shall be tore out, roasted and ate.’
 ‘Now, I ain’t alone, as you may think I am. There’s a young man hid with me, in comparison with which young man I am a Angel. That young man hears the words I speak. That young man has a secret way pecooliar to himself, of getting at a boy, and at his heart, and at his liver. It is in wain for a boy to attempt to hide himself from that young man. A boy may lock his door, may be warm in bed, may tuck himself up, may draw the clothes over his head, may think himself comfortable and safe, but that young man will softly creep and creep his way to him and tear him open. I am keeping that young man from harming you at the present moment, with great difficulty. I find it very hard to hold that young man off of your inside. Now, what do you say?’
 ‘Say Lord strike you dead if you don’t!’
 ‘Now, you remember what you’ve undertook and you remember that young man, and you get home!’
 ‘Goo—good night, sir.’
 ‘Much of that! I wish I was a frog. Or a eel!’

On close examination you will see that there are two people speaking. They usually speak in turn. Check through your numbering, so that next to line 1 you have indicated speaker 1, and next to line 2 you have indicated speaker 2. Line 3 is speaker 1 again, and so on.

You can distinguish between the two speakers in two main ways:

1. *The way they speak:* 2 uses standard English. 1 sometimes mispronounces words such as ‘partickler’ for ‘particular’, and uses ‘ain’t’ instead of ‘am not’.
2. *The relationship between them:* 1 asks the questions and threatens 2, whilst 2 is afraid of 1, and answers 1’s questions but is sometimes afraid to speak, for instance, between lines 8 and 11.

Structuring Dialogue

Dialogue can be described as the engagement in words of one character with another – so one character speaks and the other replies. However in some texts there may only be one speaking character – the overall inference will still be clear. So the basic pattern of any dialogue is declaration and response – if you think about any conversation you have had today and analyse it you will see how this pans out. In some of the texts you have already studied dialogue reflects verbal mannerisms of speech and also class and dialect; these things give the poem authenticity.

Direct and Indirect Speech

Direct speech is what a character says:

‘John has accepted the position,’ said Tim.

‘Oh that’s good,’ replied Sarah. ‘I hoped he would.’

Tim glared at her and retorted, ‘I think he has a cheek after all he put us through over the last few weeks. When I think of all the wasted evenings talking him through things, I can’t get my head around it!’

‘You invited him,’ replied Sarah, giggling nervously.

Tim stormed out of the room and slammed the door.

The speech is enclosed in inverted commas with a single punctuation mark before they are closed around the text – normally a single comma unless it signifies the end of a sentence when a full stop would be used. Obviously question marks and exclamation marks can also be used.

It is customary to start a new paragraph at the beginning of the sentence which contains dialogue. When the dialogue has ended and the narrative resumed, a new paragraph is commenced.

Dialogue and the use of inverted commas

Inverted commas are also used to identify direct quotations and titles, examples:

He went to see the film ‘The Force Awakens’.

In these instances the full stop comes outside the inverted comma. If a direct quotation comes within a section of dialogue double inverted commas can be used so that it is easily identifiable.

Indirect dialogue does not need inverted commas.

Direct: 'Matt is coming on Friday,' said Claire.

Indirect: Claire said Matt would be coming on Friday.

Activity 8

Characterisation

This activity gives you practice at describing characters. For each of speakers 1 and 2, describe their:



- age;
- gender;
- social class;
- way of using language;
- occupation.

Support all your conclusions with evidence from the text.

Activity 9

Exploring Setting and Plot

This activity asks you to describe the scene and what is happening:

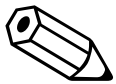


- Try to work out where the two characters (Pip and the man) are. What are their immediate surroundings, what time of day is it, and what general area are they in?
- You should then describe this, supporting your description with evidence from the text.
- Next you should describe what you think is happening between the characters, again using evidence from the text to support what you say.

Activity 10

Dialogue and Characterisation

This activity gives you more practice at writing dialogue. It also asks you to make use of the descriptions you have written of the characters and what is happening. The activity is designed to teach you to explore reactions, and describe characters and a scene, using clear and well-selected detail, as well as to use language imaginatively.



In the extract from *Great Expectations* consisting of the dialogue between Pip and the man, only the direct speech has been presented to you.

Your task is to take the section from line 8 ('Show us where you live...') to line 28 ('...and perhaps I could attend more'), and fill in the descriptions of the actions and kinds of voices which would give a clearer picture of what is going on in the scene. Consider how the characters speak:

loudly timidly quietly fearfully
quickly powerfully threateningly

You should describe what they are doing as they speak. Here is an example, from the beginning of the passage:

'Hold your noise!' cried a terrible voice, as a man started up from among the graves at the side of the church porch. 'Keep still, you little devil, or I'll cut your throat!'

A fearful man, all in coarse grey, with a great iron on his leg. A man with no hat, and with broken shoes, and with an old rag tied round his head. A man who had been soaked in water, and smothered in mud, and lamed by stones, and cut by flints, and stung by nettles, and torn by briars; who limped, and shivered, and glared and growled; and whose teeth chattered in his head as he seized me by the chin.

'O! Don't cut my throat, sir,' I pleaded in terror. 'Pray don't do it, sir.'

'Tell us your name!' said the man. 'Quickly!'

'Pip, sir.'

'Once more,' said the man, staring at me. 'Give it mouth!'

'Pip. Pip, sir.'

You will notice that the story is told in the first person by Pip, and you should continue this. Start a new line and paragraph for each speaker. Before the inverted commas close, you should punctuate with a comma, a full-stop, a question mark or an exclamation mark.

You should only use a comma before closing the inverted commas if a sentence of speech is being broken in the middle. If you break the speech to insert 'said...' or 'shouted...' you should always use a lower case letter, not a capital letter. Speech must always be punctuated before the inverted commas are closed. If in doubt, look at examples in stories like this.

Characterisation

It is often characters rather than events that make stories memorable. One of the most exciting things about reading and creative writing is

the opportunity it provides for readers and writers to imagine what it is like to be someone else, to identify with another character.

When we are reading a novel or other story, we identify with characters in the story either because they seem real to us or because they appeal to our dreams and fantasies.

The essential thing about any main character in a story is that he or she should be in some way interesting or intriguing. They must do and say things not just because that's the story, but because they have motives and reasons for doing and saying what they do.

The characters you put into your stories have got to be real to you, otherwise, they won't be real to your readers. This means you must have, in the back of your mind, some idea of every aspect of the lives your main characters at least, even if all we see of the characters is a small slice of their lives, a 'snapshot' taken from the whole.

Here is the full text from Chapter 1 of *Great Expectations* to compare with the one you have written:

"Hold your noise!" cried a terrible voice, as a man started up from among the graves at the side of the church porch. "Keep still, you little devil, or I'll cut your throat!"

A fearful man, all in coarse grey, with a great iron on his leg. A man with no hat, and with broken shoes, and with an old rag tied round his head. A man who had been soaked in water, and smothered in mud, and lamed by stones, and cut by flints, and stung by nettles, and torn by briars; who limped and shivered, and glared and growled; and whose teeth chattered in his head as he seized me by the chin.

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"Once more," said the man, staring at me. "Give it mouth!"

"Pip. Pip, sir."

"Show us where you live," said the man. "Pint out the place!" I pointed to where our village lay, on the flat in-shore among the alder-trees and pollards, a mile or more from the church. The man, after looking at me for a moment, turned me upside down, and emptied my pockets. There was nothing in them but a piece of bread. When the church came to itself — for he was so sudden and strong that he made it go head over heels before me, and I saw the steeple under my feet — when the church came to itself, I say, I was seated on a high tombstone trembling, while he ate the bread ravenously.

"You young dog," said the man, licking his lips, "what fat cheeks you ha' got."

I believe they were fat, though I was at that time under sized, for my years, and not strong.

"Darn Me if I couldn't eat 'em," said the man, with a threatening shake of his head, "and if I han's half a mind to't!"

I earnestly expressed my hope that he wouldn't and held tighter to the tombstone on which he had put me; partly, to keep myself upon it; partly, to keep myself from crying.

"Now lookee here!" said the man. "Where's your mother?"

"There, sir!" said I.

He started, made a short run, and stopped and looked over his shoulder.

"There, sir!" I timidly explained. "Also Georgiana. That's my mother."

"Oh!" said he, coming back. "And is that your father alonger your mother?"

"Yes, sir," said I; "him too; late of this parish."

"Ha!" he muttered then, considering. "Who d'ye live with — supposin' you're kindly let to live, which I han't made up my mind about?"

"My sister, sir — Mrs. Joe Gargery — wife of Joe Gargery, the blacksmith, sir."

"Blacksmith, eh?" said he. And looked down at his leg. After darkly looking at his leg and at me several times, he came closer to my tombstone, took me by both arms, and tilted me back as far as he could hold me; so that his eyes looked most powerfully down into mine, and mine looked most helplessly up into his.

"Now lookee here," he said, "the question being whether you're to be let to live. You know what a file is?"

"Yes, sir."

"And you know what wittles is?"

"Yes, sir."

After each question he tilted me over a little more, so as to give me a greater sense of helplessness and danger.

"You get me a file." He tilted me again. "And you get me wittles." He tilted me again. "You bring 'em both to me." He tilted me again. "Or I'll have your heart and liver out." He tilted me again.

I was dreadfully frightened, and so giddy that I clung to him with both hands, and said: "If you would kindly please to let me keep upright, sir, perhaps I shouldn't be sick, and perhaps I could attend more."

He gave me a most tremendous dip and roll, so that the church jumped over its own weather-cock. Then, he held me by the arms in an upright position on the top of the stone, and went on in these fearful terms:

"You bring me, to-morrow morning early, that file and them wittles. You bring the lot to me, at that old Battery over yonder. You do it, and you never dare to say a word or dare to make a sign concerning your having seen such a person as me, or any person sumever, and you shall be let to live. You fail, or you go from my words in any partickler, no matter how small it is, and your heart and your liver shall be tore out, roasted and ate. Now, I ain't alone, as you may think I am. There's a young man hid with me, in comparison with which young man I am a Angel. That young man hears the words I speak. That young man has a secret way pecoolier to himself, of getting at a boy, and at his heart, and at his liver. It is in wain for a boy to attempt to hide himself from that young man. A boy may lock his door, may be warm in bed, may tuck himself up, may draw the clothes over his head, may think himself comfortable and safe, but

that young man will softly creep and creep his way to him and tear him open. I am keeping that young man from harming of you at the present moment, with great difficulty. I find it very hard to hold that young man off of your inside. Now, what do you say?"

I said that I would get him the file, and I would get him what broken bits of food I could, and I would come to him at the Battery, early in the morning.

"Say, Lord strike you dead if you don't!" said the man.

I said so, and he took me down.

"Now," he pursued. "You remember what you've undertaken, and you remember that young man, and you get home!"

"Goo-good night, sir," I faltered.

"Much of that!" said he, glancing about him over the cold wet flat. "I wish I was a frog. Or a eel!"

At the same time, he hugged his shuddering body in both his arms — clasping himself, as if to hold himself together — and limped towards the low church wall. As I saw him go, picking his way among the nettles, and among the brambles that bound the green mounds, he looked in my young eyes as if he were eluding the hands of the dead people, stretching up cautiously out of their graves, to get a twist upon his ankle and pull him in.

When he came to the low church wall, he got over it, like a man whose legs were numbed and stiff, and then turned round to look for me. When I saw him turning, I set my face towards home, and made the best use of my legs.

Suggested Response to Activities

Activity 1: Responding To Texts: Pip at Barnard's Inn

In your answer, you might have mentioned that this passage is a piece of fictional narrative, in which a character narrates his experience in the first person. The piece contains specially chosen descriptive vocabulary such as 'disgorged', 'dilapidated', 'makeshift' and 'interment'. (Make sure you understand these words: if you do not, look them up in your dictionary). Dickens evokes both the sights and sounds experienced by Pip.

The main part of the text is the first long, descriptive paragraph. This is followed by a second short paragraph which introduces the beginning of a dialogue between Pip the narrator and Mr. Wemmick.

The attitude of the writer is one of aversion towards the scene described. The purpose of the text is to give the reader a vivid and imaginative impression of a scene. The writer is seeking to influence the reader to see the scene as unpleasant.

Activity 2: Writer's Techniques

'Haven' means a place of retreat, shelter or security. This is not an appropriate word to describe Barnard's Inn, because Pip finds the place unpleasant and even repellent so he would not choose it as a place to find shelter or security. In short, he would not like to live there. He calls it a haven in order to be *ironic*. He says what the place is not, but what he would have liked it to be. Calling it a haven is an *ironic* way of pointing out the contrast between what he hoped for, and the disappointing reality.

Irony is a figure of speech in which a word is used to mean its opposite. For instance, 'what lovely weather' to describe bad weather. It is often conveyed by the tone of voice of the speaker. When analyzing the writer's attitude, we need to consider whether he or she is being ironic about a person, place, event or outcome.) The 'soul of Barnard' is imagined to be taking revenge on, or having an evil influence on, the people who live in Barnard's Inn.

Most have moved away, but Pip imagines that this evil influence or ghost has made them kill themselves, and that their bodies are buried under the gravel. Pip also imagines that the rotten smells which exist in Barnard's Inn are speaking to him with voices, as if they are a strong-smelling concoction or mixture, or medicine made by an imaginary Barnard.

Like the irony used in the choice of the word 'haven', these extended similes comparing real things (at least, real within the world of the novel) with imaginary things are ways of producing a very *exaggerated* or *powerful* description or emphasis.) This figurative use of language is called hyperbole. It is not meant to be taken literally.

Activity 3: Narrative Perspective

You can guess that Pip has not visited this place before because of the detail with which he describes the smells and sights as if they shock him, and he refers to what he ‘thought’ about the place, rather than what he knew. It seems that he is not accustomed to big cities, as he cannot imagine how the ‘present occupants’ of the place can bear to live there. The trees and animals seem miserable and pathetic to him, and he may be comparing them in his mind to the trees, birds and cats he has seen in the country. He also seems surprised at the cramped conditions in which people live, noticing that the houses are ‘divided’ into ‘sets of chambers’. He refers to his ‘great expectations’, suggesting that he had high hopes, or anticipated something special.

He may have thought that his new residence would be much smarter and more prosperous in appearance. Mr Wemmick ‘mistakes’ him, or misunderstands his disappointed reaction. It seems likely that Pip finds this place very different from the country. Pip’s own reaction is one of ‘dismay’.

Activity 4: Imaginative Writing: Nouns and Adjectives

This activity begins a section of the lesson which helps you develop lexical choices.

Your answer might have been along these lines:

As I approached the place where I was to live I felt anxious and excited. I was expecting something *impressive / grand / awe-inspiring/ dignified / fashionable* as my new home. I was optimistic and my hopes were high. However, when I saw my future home I was outraged and felt as though I had been deceived. I had been used to *cheerful / spacious / hilly / open* surroundings. I had always lived in a *clean / fresh / cultivated / cared-for / healthy* place and I had not realised how *dismal* and *dingy* the city would be. I had imagined that it would be a prosperous, comfortable and smart place and I felt *disappointed / horrified / shattered / mortified / outraged / frustrated / cheated / utterly downcast* by the grim reality of Barnard’s Inn. The miserable sights and the decaying smells that met me were completely unexpected and not at all what I had anticipated. I felt *repelled / depressed / sickened / put off / nauseated* within the first few seconds of my arrival, I was determined that I would not and could not stay there.

This suggested answer suggests a series of adjectives that you might have used in your answer. Re-read your own answer and improve it by inserting some of these adjectives into it to make it more fully descriptive of Pip’s feelings.

Activity 5: Writer’s Craft

You have probably noticed that the writer uses long sentences, and that many of the sentences consist of a series of clauses linked by commas or by ‘and’.

Part of this sentence is a long list, and most of the other sentences are repetitive in their structure. Like the other special features in this passage; irony, hyperbole or extended similes, repetition of certain words, this repetitive use of lists is intended to build up a strong emphasis and to exaggerate details about the place described.

The sentences of this passage build up through repetition to climaxes and crescendos. Each sentence is designed gradually to express more and more feelings of dislike and aversion as it progresses.

Activity 6: Transforming Texts: Creating Dialogue

Guidance on ways in which to transform texts is provided within the lesson materials.

Activity 7: Dialogue

On close examination you will see that there are two people speaking. They usually speak in turn. Check through your numbering, so that next to line 1 you have indicated speaker 1, and next to line 2 you have indicated speaker 2. Line 3 is speaker 1 again, and so on.

You can distinguish between the two speakers in two main ways:

1. *The way they speak:* 2 uses standard English. 1 sometimes mispronounces words such as ‘partickler’ for ‘particular’, and uses ‘ain’t’ instead of ‘am not’.
2. *The relationship between them:* 1 asks the questions and threatens 2, whilst 2 is afraid of 1, and answers 1’s questions but is sometimes afraid to speak, for instance, between lines 8 and 11.

Activity 8: Characterisation

Speaker 1:

Age and Gender:

Adult, male,: Pip refers to the speaker as ‘sir’ (line 3), and he must be older, since he regards Pip as young.

Social Class and Language Use:

You can deduce something about speaker 1’s social class from the way he speaks. He pronounces ‘point’ as ‘pint’ (line 8), ‘particular’ as ‘partickler’ (line 34), and ‘vain’ as ‘wain’ (line 41). He uses colloquial language such as ‘ye’ for you (line 15), ‘lookee here’ for ‘look here’, or literally, ‘look you here’ (line 19), and ‘to be let to live’ for ‘to be allowed to live’ (line 20). There are many other examples that suggest speaker 1 has a regional accent and the fact that he speaks colloquially combines with the regional accent to suggest he comes from a working class background.

Occupation:

All we can deduce is that speaker 1 is in hiding, as he tells Pip not to ‘say a word’ (line 31) to anyone about having seen him, and to get him a file and some food (‘wittles’ = victuals). From this we can guess that he may be in trouble and hiding from the law.

Speaker 2:**Age and Gender:**

Young, male: he is referred to as 'little devil' (line 2), 'young dog' (line 9), and his name is Pip. Later, when speaker 1 is trying to frighten him, he talks about what his friend will do to 'a boy'. Speaker 2 is a boy.

Social Class:

Pip lives with his sister who is the wife of the blacksmith (line 18), so he belongs to the rural craftsman or artisan class.

Language Use:

Pip's use of language is polite and grammatically correct. He uses standard English.

Occupation:

As he is looked after by his sister and her husband, either he does not have an occupation, or he is the blacksmith's assistant.

Activity 9: Exploring Setting and Plot

They are in a graveyard, where Pip points out to the man the graves of his parents, 'Also Georgiana' his mother, and his father, 'late of this parish'. The actual inscription on the gravestone is 'Philip Pirrip, late of this parish, and also Georgiana wife of the above.'

It is evening or night, as Pip wishes the man good night in line 53. They are probably out in the country, as no-one else is around. In line 54 the man says 'I wish I was a frog or a eel.' From this we can deduce that they are in a wet place such as a marsh.

The man is threatening Pip with a knife (line 2), and is holding him. In line 26, Pip asks him, 'let me keep upright', so we can deduce that the man is holding Pip upside down, making him feel sick. The man makes Pip tell him who he is, where he lives, and with whom.

When he discovers that Pip lives with a blacksmith he tells him to get him a file and some food and bring them to him in his hiding place in the old battery (an old gun placement). He threatens Pip and tells him about a vicious 'young man' hiding with him. He says this man will kill Pip if he dares tell anyone what has happened. Pip sets off, frightened, to do what he is told. We can tell he is frightened because he stammers 'Goo—good night' in line 53.

Activity 10: Dialogue and Characterisation

To check your response, read the original version of the extract from *Great Expectations*. You will find this at the end of the lesson materials.