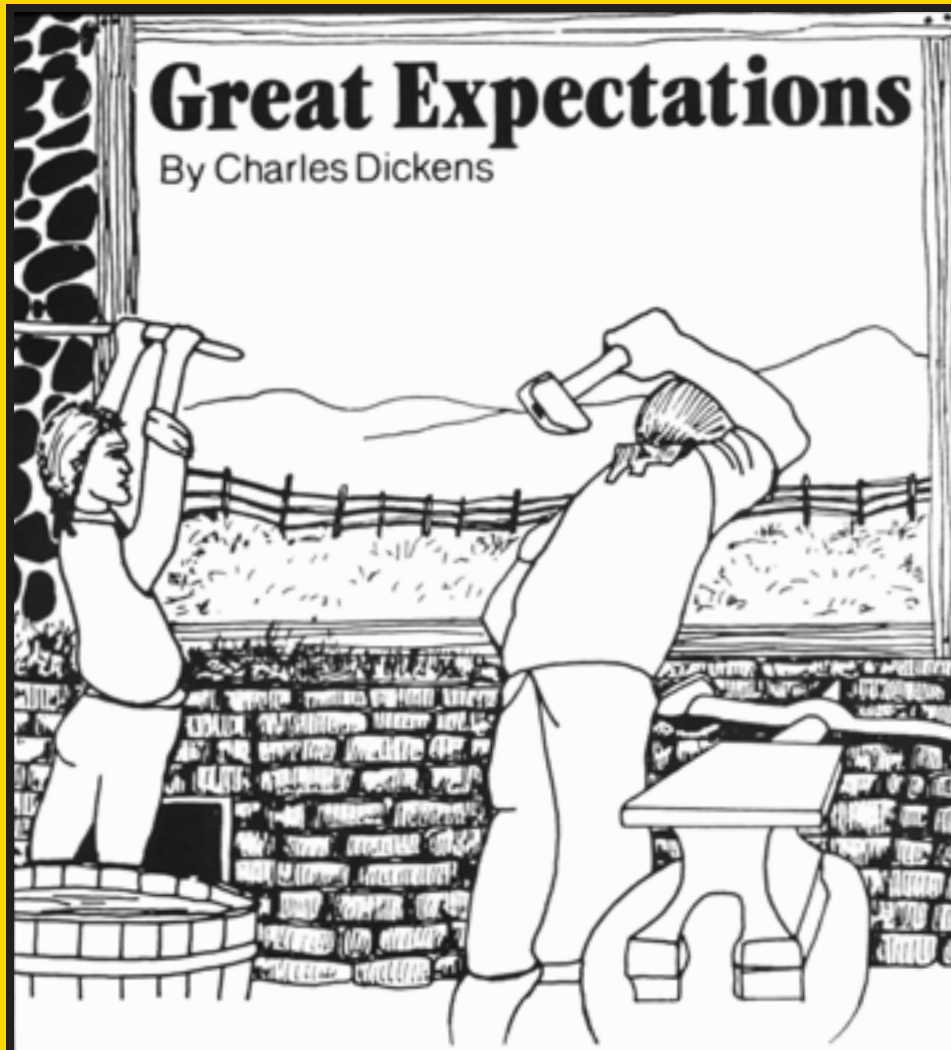


# Novel·Ties



## A Study Guide

Written By Crystal Norris

Edited by Joyce Friedland and Rikki Kessler

**LEARNING LINKS**

P.O. Box 326 • Cranbury • New Jersey 08512

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## For the Teacher

This reproducible study guide to use in conjunction with a specific novel consists of lessons for guided reading. Written in chapter-by-chapter format, the guide contains a synopsis, pre-reading activities, vocabulary and comprehension exercises, as well as extension activities to be used as follow-up to the novel.

In a homogeneous classroom, whole class instruction with one title is appropriate. In a heterogeneous classroom, reading groups should be formed: each group works on a different novel on its reading level. Depending upon the length of time devoted to reading in the classroom, each novel, with its guide and accompanying lessons, may be completed in three to six weeks.

Begin using NOVEL-TIES for reading development by distributing the novel and a folder to each child. Distribute duplicated pages of the study guide for students to place in their folders. After examining the cover and glancing through the book, students can participate in several pre-reading activities. Vocabulary questions should be considered prior to reading a chapter; all other work should be done after the chapter has been read. Comprehension questions can be answered orally or in writing. The classroom teacher should determine the amount of work to be assigned, always keeping in mind that readers must be nurtured and that the ultimate goal is encouraging students' love of reading.

The benefits of using NOVEL-TIES are numerous. Students read good literature in the original, rather than in abridged or edited form. The good reading habits, formed by practice in focusing on interpretive comprehension and literary techniques, will be transferred to the books students read independently. Passive readers become active, avid readers.

## AUTHOR INFORMATION

Charles John Huffam Dickens was born on February 12, 1812, in Landport, a town on the southern coast of England. His father, John Dickens, worked as a clerk in a navy pay office in the neighboring city of Portsmouth. The Dickenses and their eight children moved frequently as John's job transfers demanded.

In 1816, the family moved to Chatham where the young Charles began his education. In 1821, after a period of relative stability, the Dickenses, out of financial necessity, were forced to leave their Chatham home and move to Camden Town, London.

In 1824, Charles' father was arrested and thrown into Marshalsea Debtors' Prison. The entire Dickens family, except for Charles, later joined him as inmates. Although Charles was spared the humiliation of being incarcerated, he had to suffer the indignity of working at menial jobs to earn his way in the world while his family was imprisoned. Two days before his twelfth birthday, he began working for six shillings a week, labeling bottles in a blacking house at Hungerford Market.

The burden of shame brought on by his family's imprisonment stayed with him for life. He never spoke of this personal tragedy except to confide it to his wife and to his best friend and eventual biographer, John Forster. Shadows of these humiliations, however, darkened the texture of many of his novels, including *Great Expectations*.

At the age of fifteen, Charles secured a position as a clerk for Gray's Inn attorneys. Then in March 1832, Dickens became a reporter for the *True Sun*. In December 1833, *Monthly Magazine* began publishing installments of Dickens' *Sketches by Boz*. Many of his novels were serialized in this way, which took a literary talent of some virtuosity to produce a novel of uniform quality and tone. The seamlessness with which *Great Expectations* hangs together attests to Dickens' skill. His success as a serial novelist is made even more incredible when one considers that he maintained this grueling schedule of publication for the *Evening Chronicle* even as he held a position as a reporter for the *Morning Chronicle*.

In March 1836, Charles Dickens married Catherine Hogarth. They had ten children—three of whom died before their father. In 1858 they were divorced, possibly because of Charles' relationship with Ellen Lawless Ternan, a beautiful young actress, in whom many biographers have seen the inspiration for some of the heroines in Dickens' later works, including Estella of *Great Expectations*.

In the 1860s, Dickens suffered from poor health brought on by his strenuous schedule of public readings from his own work, as well as by his involvement in producing and acting in amateur theatrical productions. On June 9, 1870, Charles Dickens died, leaving the last of his novels, *The Mysteries of Edwin Drood*, incomplete.

## CHAPTERS 1 – 4

**Vocabulary:** Draw a line from each word on the left to its definition on the right. Then use the numbered words to fill in the blanks in the sentences below.

- |                  |  |
|------------------|--|
| 1. fugitive      | a. ambitions; strong desires   |
| 2. elixir        | b. bewilderment; alarm; terror   |
| 3. verification  | c. person fleeing from persecution or jail                                 |
| 4. desolation    | d. friendly; cheerful  |
| 5. vicariously   | e. evidence that confirms the truth of something                           |
| 6. aspirations   | f. experienced by the imaginary participation in another person's activity |
| 7. genial        | g. liquid used medicinally; magical liquid                                 |
| 8. consternation | h. loneliness; wretchedness  |

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- Twelve loud strokes from the clock in the tower were \_\_\_\_\_ that it was now midnight.
- When I saw the man's leg irons and striped clothing, I knew he was a(n) \_\_\_\_\_.
- Even though the young boy was terrified of the convicts, he felt sympathy for their \_\_\_\_\_ and fear of recapture.
- As an orphan being brought up by his sister, the boy had few \_\_\_\_\_ for the future.
- Once the candles were lit and the meal had begun, everyone was in a(n) \_\_\_\_\_ mood once again.
- A look of \_\_\_\_\_ came across my face when I saw soldiers at the door with their rifles raised.
- Mother made me swallow half a pint of \_\_\_\_\_ when she thought I had indigestion.
- Unable to afford a vacation this year, I traveled \_\_\_\_\_ on a trip to Europe.

**Questions:**

- Why was Pip at the churchyard? Why did the man he met there want a file and "wittles"?
- Why did Pip refer to his brother-in-law Joe Gargery as a "Hercules in strength, and also in weakness"?