

Part 1: Analysis

1. How old do you think Pip is? Quote the specific language in the selection that leads you to this conclusion.

Pip is most likely a young boy, between the ages of 7 and 10. He has the maturity of one who is not a little kid, or a toddler, but yet is still quite young. In the selection Pip says *"Pray don't do it, sir"* in response to being threatened, indicating automatic respect to others; something common among people of that age. As well a man describes him as having *"fat cheeks."*

2. Read the following passage and answer the question that follows:

"At such a time I found out for certain, that this bleak place overgrown with nettles was the churchyard; and that Philip Pirrip, late of this parish, and also Georgiana wife of the above, were dead and buried; and that Alexander, Bartholomew, Abraham, Tobias, and Roger, infant children of the aforesaid, were also dead and buried; and that the dark flat wilderness beyond the churchyard, intersected with dykes and mounds and gates, with scattered cattle feeding on it, was the marshes; and that the low leaden line beyond, was the river; and that the distant savage lair from which the wind was rushing was the sea; and that the small bundle of shivers growing afraid of it all and beginning to cry, was Pip."

What is the author's purpose for including such an extraordinary long descriptive sentence?

The purpose of including an extraordinary long descriptive sentence such as this is to make it feel like you are there with Pip as this is happening, and first-hand experiencing what he is describing. As well, the long length helps to intensify feelings of dreariness and terror.

3. Using the same passage as above, list 10 words that produce a frightening tone. Choose synonyms to substitute for the words you selected.

Word	Synonym
Savage	Brutal
Buried	Concealed
Dead	Lifeless
Dark	Black
Bleak	Bare
Cry	Weep

Word	Synonym
Afraid	Frightened
Shivers	Quivers
Lair	Shelter
Overgrown	Overrun

Rewrite the passage using your chosen synonyms:

“At such a time I found out for certain, that this **bare** place **overrun** with nettles was the churchyard; and that Philip Pirrip, late of this parish, and also Georgiana wife of the above, were **lifeless** and **concealed**; and that Alexander, Bartholomew, Abraham, Tobias, and Roger, infant children of the aforesaid, were also **lifeless** and **concealed**; and that the **black** flat wilderness beyond the churchyard, intersected with dykes and mounds and gates, with scattered cattle feeding on it, was the marshes; and that the low leaden line beyond, was the river; and that the distant **brutal shelter** from which the wind was rushing was the sea; and that the small bundle of **quivers** growing **frightened** of it all and beginning to **weep**, was Pip.”

Is your new passage as effective as Dickens’s? Explain why or why not.

This passage is not as effective as the one written by Dickens. Even though these words convey a similar meaning and are strong, sometimes even stronger, they are not all as easy to understand as the ones written by Dickens. For example, one would understand “*were dead and buried*” much more easily than “*were lifeless and concealed*.” Sometimes it is not all about how strong a word is, but instead how it is understood by the audience.

4. Read the following sentences:

"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."

What rhetorical device does Dickens employ in these sentences? What is the effect on the reader?

Dickens employs repetition, combined with imagery, throughout these sentences. He repeats the phrase "*a man*" in phrases such as "*a man with no hat...*" and "*a man who had been soaked in water,*" which assist in creating a parallel structure. He then combines this repetition with imagery, as seen in the previous phrases, to make the description more life-like to the audience; giving the man a frightening and scary image.

5. Reread the dialogue between Pip and the convict. How would you characterize the convict's diction? How does it differ from Pip's word choice? What is the author's purpose for using colloquialism and what is the effect?

Throughout the dialogue between Pip and the convict, the convict speaks in a more informal manner with numerous colloquialisms, while Pip speaks in a more formal and respectful manner with short responses such as "*yes, sir,*" or longer ones such as "*if you would kindly please to let me keep upright, sir, perhaps I shouldn't be sick, and perhaps I could attend more.*" Dickens uses colloquialisms here to add more depth to the conversations, which makes them seem more real and alive to the audience.

Part 2: Argument

George Orwell claimed that Charles Dickens's ability to evoke visual images has never been matched. Develop a position that either supports or refutes Orwell's claim that "When Dickens has once described something you see it for the rest of your life." State your position (thesis) and appropriate evidence to support your argument. Your evidence may include your reading of Chapter 1 or any other Dickens text, your relevant personal experiences, and your observations.

Thesis:

In his work, Charles Dickens makes use of deep and vivid imagery to bring life to the characters and plot of his stories; leaving a lasting impact on the audience.

Reason 1:

Vivid and realistic diction is used by Dickens when describing different locations, which helps to allow the audience to visualize it in their own mind and feel that they are really there within the story. An example of this can be seen when he describes a graveyard by saying *“that this bleak place overgrown with nettles was the churchyard.”*

Reason 2:

The prolonged length of his sentences help to bring the characters to life and make them feel real. Within the passage this is seen when it is said *“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.”* Through this description of the convict, the audience is able to see him through Pip’s perspective.

Reason 3:

The precise diction and level of detail added to the dialogue between characters makes it feel like a conversation you yourself might have with another person, or even if you were apart of the exact conversation within the story. When the man says to Pip, *“Now lookee here, the question being whether you’re to be let to live. You know what a file is?”* you feel as if he is almost speaking to you or that you are within his presence as this is being spoken.

Reason 4:

The precise detail and imagery Dickens uses has helped me specifically to precisely remember details such as one’s appearance or how someone felt at a precise moment. Such as in *A Christmas Carol*, because of this detail and imagery, I have been able to remember the visualizations created in my mind by reading these distinct details throughout the story.

Reason 5:

Through the repeated use of repetition, Dickens is able to add much more depth and detail to his descriptions of people and places, making them more memorable to the audience. For example, he uses repetition in the phrases *“a man with no hat...”* and *“a man who had been soaked in water.”* Instead of just making mention of a man, he is specific in describing what he precisely looks like; helping to create a much clearer image in the reader’s mind.