



GREAT EXPECTATIONS

CHARLES DICKENS

STAGE 2
A2
YOUNG ADULT READERS

ACTIVITY

Speak in pairs about a time when you went to a place you didn't like.
Use some of words in the box to help you.

dark - depressing - dirty - frightened - hot - not friendly
not nice - strange - uncomfortable

The place was _____

The people were _____

I felt _____



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TEST YOURSELF

Complete the description of the customs men coming to get Magwitch.

We rowed 1 _____ the river and then began to see 2 _____ ships. We saw our Hamburg ship in the distance. It was coming 3 _____ us quite fast. We went towards it, and Herbert, Startop and I 4 _____ said goodbye. None of us had dry 5 _____. Then 6 _____, we saw another boat coming towards us. It was coming away from the side of the river. It was 7 _____ very fast. There were four men in it. They looked 8 _____ customs men.

- | | | |
|--------------|----------|------------|
| 1 A to | B down | C by |
| 2 A some | B any | C none |
| 3 A out | B back | C towards |
| 4 A all | B didn't | C about |
| 5 A feet | B eyes | C hands |
| 6 A early | B really | C suddenly |
| 7 A stopping | B moving | C watching |
| 8 A for | B at | C like |



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FOCUS ON...

Dicken's strange names

The development of the characters in Dickens is often considered as one of his greatest achievements. While characters in many novels before had used symbolic names, what Dickens did differently was refine the practice to suggest character traits and their role. Some are obvious - Mr M'Choakumchild, the teacher in *Hard Times*, or ambitious lawyer CJ Stryver in *The Tale of Two Cities*.

In *Great Expectations*, Magwitch has a number of different interpretations - from a magpie representing theft to Magi, a Biblical reference to the wise men. This technique is not innovative as significant writers like James Joyce, Thomas Pynchon, F Scott Fitzgerald and Martin Amis used it.

A couple of the most famous characters have become so recognisable that they have entered the language as nouns - somebody mean-spirited or lacking generosity being described as a Scrooge, for example.

Rather than coming from the author, it is believed to be a slang term for the devil and though its actual origins are unknown, it first appeared prominently in Shakespeare's *Merry Wives of Windsor*, over 200 years before Dickens was born.

