

Please write an analysis essay in academic English. The following excerpts are the opening paragraphs from *Great Expectations* by Charles Dickens, one comment on the writing of the child in Dickens' novels and another on Victorian obsession with child characters. Your knowledge of this novel or Victorian literature is not assumed. You are required to demonstrate in writing how you analyze threads likely to be developed later in the plot and how you could use materials available here to justify your analysis. In addition to the content, how you develop and communicate ideas in English across paragraphs will be evaluated too.

**The opening of *Great Expectations*:**

My father's family name being Pirrip, and my Christian name Philip, my infant tongue could make of both names nothing longer or more explicit than Pip. So, I called myself Pip, and came to be called Pip.

I give Pirrip as my father's family name, on the authority of his tombstone and my sister -- Mrs Joe Gargery, who married the blacksmith. As I never saw my father or my mother, and never saw any likeness of either of them (for their days were long before the days of photographs), my first fancies regarding what they were like, were unreasonably derived from their tombstones. The shape of the letters on my father's, gave me an odd idea that he was a square, stout, dark man, with curly black hair. From the character and turn of the inscription, 'Also Georgiana Wife of the Above,' I drew a childish conclusion that my mother was freckled and sickly. To five little stone lozenges, each about a foot and a half long which were arranged in a neat row beside their grave, and were sacred to the memory of five little brothers of mine -- who gave up trying to get a living, exceedingly early in that universal struggle -- I am indebted for a belief I religiously entertained that they had all been born on their backs with their hands in their trousers-pockets, and had never taken them out in this state of existence.

Ours was the marsh country, down by the river, within, as the river wound, twenty miles of the sea. My first most vivid and broad impression of the identity of things, seems to me to have been gained on a memorable raw afternoon towards evening. 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.

**On the child characters in Dickens' novels:**

The issue of prioritizing facts or fancy as a preparation for maturity is one to which Dickens returned again and again. The problem may, for convenience, be briefly formulated as follows: should the naturally imaginative mind of the child be allowed to develop freely, nourished by romance and fairy tale, or should it be disciplined early to enable it to meet the demands of the real world in which it will have to function as a rational, mature adult? (Malcolm Andrews)

**On children in Victorian literature:**

The tendency to use children as instruments for social engineering, then, worked in two ways. On the one hand, we see behind the reformist rhetoric of the era a conviction that children could be acted upon. *Tabulae rasae*, they might be shaped and molded to middle-class adult specifications to create a new society. . . . . On the other hand, we see simultaneously a conviction that children could themselves accomplish the reformation of their elders, serving as the instrument rather than as the object of character change. If many works of art achieve their emotional power by portraying the child as unable to elicit sympathy from the surrounding adults, this power depends on the assumption that the work's adult audience can and will feel the understanding and concern that the adult characters do not provide; the real world is to profit morally from the flaws of the fictional one. (Claudia Nelson)