

## II MA ENGLISH

### III SEMESTER STUDY MATERIAL

#### UNIT - IV & V

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#### UNIT - IV

##### David Copperfield Essay Questions

1.

**How important is the role of the father in the novel? Is David affected by the absence of his father in his life? If so, how? If not, how does he manage to overcome this?**

**Answer:** The role of the father appears to play a key role in the novel, for the two most morally questionable characters, Steerforth and Uriah Heep, grew up without a father figure in their lives. Steerforth even verbally laments this at one point in the novel, envying Ham for this reason, despite Ham's lower-class status. One can argue that David was affected by his lack of a father, with the lack of guidance resulting in the long, arduous journey he must undergo in order to finally find happiness. On the other hand, he was not affected the way Steerforth and Uriah were, for he eventually did find this happiness. This could be due to replacement father figures in David's life, such as Peggotty and Mr. Dick.

2.

**Mr. Micawber's character has intrigued many literary analysts over the years, especially due to the fact that he was easily relatable to many during Dickens' time. Why is this so, and what lessons can be learned from this character?**

**Answer:** Mr. Micawber has a very large family, as was common during Dickens' time. Additionally, he is harangued by creditors, as were many who lived during the Age of Industrialism. He moves from place to place trying to escape his debts, and his view of his situation is far removed from reality. In the end however, he teaches readers that the best way to deal with these issues is to face them head on and to deal with the consequences. No matter how many times he moves, he can never escape from his troubles, providing a lesson for readers.

3.

**How does Dickens challenge the accepted views of women during his time to promote the idea of the empowered female?**

**Answer:** During the time when the novel was written, women were supposed to be obedient housewives, caring for the home and following their husbands all but blindly. David and Dora easily accept that she can be a doll, a child-wife. But the novel immediately opens with a family whose male figurehead is already dead, and despite this fact, the family is content. In fact, the situation sours once a new male figurehead, Mr. Murdstone, appears in their lives. The positions of other single yet strong women in the novel, such as Peggotty and Miss Betsey, are important; consider, for instance, how Miss Betsey endures her ex-husband's extortion.

4.

**Does Dickens equate high social class with low moral character and vice versa? Does he equate low social class with unhappiness? Explain with examples from the text.**

**Answer:** Dickens does not seem to show a correlation between class and character, for Agnes comes from a wealthy family and yet is one of the kindest characters in the novel. Tommy Traddles is the same way: wealthy, yet extremely kind. Uriah Heep, on the other hand is not wealthy but is the novel's villain. Furthermore, Dickens does not seem to equate poverty with unhappiness. The Peggottys are a prime example, especially Ham: poor yet hardworking and, ultimately, happy. The unhappiness and lack of ethics displayed by characters such as Steerforth and the Micawbers stems from greediness and discontentment with their current situations. Dickens reminds us that an individual is responsible for his or own choices, not being a simple product of one's situation.

5.

**What role does Australia play in the novel?**

**Answer:** The land of Australia is a safe haven, a place where people can go and prosper in freedom and with a new life and identity. In the novel it is as more of a reward than a solution to problems or an escape. People only go there once they have faced and solved their problems in England. This can be seen in the case of the Micawbers, who first solve their debt and relational issues and then save enough money to go to Australia. It is also illustrated by Emily, who must return and face the family she ran away from before Mr. Peggotty, who welcomes her back and forgives her, can take her to Australia, where she can start a new life.

6.

**Although David is narrating his story as an adult, his memories, as he says, are similar to those of a child. Why does Dickens choose to narrate the story in this way, and how does it affect the way in which it is told?**

**Answer:** Dickens had a fascination with children and the childish mind, admiring it for its ability to recall many details. In fact, this enables him to fill the novel with many small, seemingly unimportant details that in fact greatly add to character and situational descriptions. An example of this, among many others, is his description of Mr. Murdstone as having "black hair and whiskers" and "ill-omened black eyes." An adult might record these things as well, but they are especially meaningful to a child. Dickens also describes Mr. Murdstone with a childlike fear and mystery that uniquely enhance the character. Furthermore, making David seem more childlike makes him more likeable and associates him with other childlike characters in the novel, such as Ham and Traddles, both of whom are happy and respected in the story. This narration seems generally reliable

7.

**The novel was written by Dickens as something of an autobiography. What elements of the novel coincide with Dickens' own life? Why do you think Dickens made the story deviate from his own life at certain points?**

**Answer:** Simple research reveals many similarities between the lives of David and Dickens, including their careers as political writers-turned-novelists, troublesome relationships with Dora Spenslow and Maria Beadnell respectively, and time spent working under harsh factory conditions. Of course, their stories are not identical. For example, among other things, Dickens only worked for four months in the sweatshop, while David spent more time there. These elaborations and differences could make Dickens' own feelings about these times in his life more clear to readers, as well as give him some room to

comment on the social injustices of his era and achieve his other goals as a novelist.

8.

**What significance does David's marriage to Dora have in the novel? Why do you suppose that Dickens chose to have the marriage end with Dora's death?**

**Answer:** David's marriage to Dora reveals the theme of the "undisciplined heart." David knows even before he has married her that she is not mature and cannot handle household duties; nevertheless, he lets his passion dictate his actions. The marriage cannot last, not least because Dora is used to having her freedom. She, unlike the typical Victorian woman, cannot be bound and trapped by household chores and tasks, but being bound in this way, it is only expected that she must escape it, one way or another. In a society where divorce is frowned upon, a novelist often chooses death as a way for someone to get out of a bad marriage.

9.

**There are many references to the sea throughout the novel; what significance do these references have?**

**Answer:** The sea has a mystical role from the beginning of the novel, when David is born with a caul, which supposedly protects people from death by drowning. It is vast and unpredictable, both beneficial and deadly, for while people like the Peggottys earn a living from the ocean, it also has the power to take away lives, including the fathers of Ham and Emily. It takes Steerforth's life, and when Ham tries to intervene, it takes Ham's life as well.

10.

**What role does Uriah Heep play in the novel? Why does Dickens characterize him in the way that he does?**

**Answer:** Uriah Heep plays the novel's villain and serves as a warning to the readers. He is the quintessential slimy social-climber, who fakes humbleness and humility while going behind people's backs in attempts to boost his own status and demean others. This is seen both physically, through Uriah's slimy appearance, and through the use of foreshadowing, which Dickens uses to predict Uriah's betrayal. Note that Uriah finally seems to experience some moral correction after society (represented first of all by his victims) stands up for a better morality, sends him to prison, and works to make prison truly correctional for him.

## David copperfield summary

The novel traces the life of David Copperfield from the time of his birth to his mature manhood, when he is married and familiar with the vicissitudes of life. His early years are enjoyable with his mother — who was widowed shortly before his birth — and with her servant, Peggotty. Life is happy for David until his mother decides to marry Mr. Murdstone; afterward, life becomes unbearable for David. He is soon sent to a miserable school where he becomes friendly with James Steerforth, a fellow student.

When David's mother dies, he is taken from school and put to work by Mr. Murdstone in a London warehouse. Although David enjoys the company of the impoverished Micawber family, with whom he boards, his other associates and the work are intolerable, so, without money or property, he runs away to his Aunt Betsey Trotwood in Dover. Despite a stern exterior, Aunt Betsey treats him well, adopting him and sending him to a good school. While at school, he boards with a Mr. Wickfield and his daughter Agnes. (Throughout the novel, David retains a fond, sisterly affection for Agnes.) After graduation, David works in the law office of Spenlow & Jorkins and soon falls in love with Mr. Spenlow's daughter, Dora.

About this time, Em'ly, the Peggottys' beloved niece, runs off to marry Steerforth, whom David had innocently introduced to her while she was engaged to Ham, a nephew of the Peggottys. The family is saddened by this development, but Mr. Peggotty sets out to find her and bring her back. David uses his spare time doing clerical and literary work to help Aunt Betsey, who now finds herself without financial resources. He marries Dora, only to find that he has a "child-wife" who knows nothing of housekeeping and cannot accept any responsibility.

Meanwhile, Uriah Heep, an "umble" clerk in Mr. Wickfield's employ, whom David dislikes, has deceitfully worked his way into a partnership, aided by Mr. Wickfield's weakness for wine. In addition, David also discovers that his old friend Mr. Micawber has gone to work for Heep. David has remained fond of the Micawbers, and it troubles him that his old friend is working for a scoundrel. Eventually, however, Micawber has a grand moment of glory when he exposes Heep as a fraud, helping to save Mr. Wickfield and restoring some of Aunt Betsey's finances.

David's wife, Dora, becomes ill and dies, and David is troubled until Em'ly, the Peggottys' niece, returns to her uncle. David has felt guilty for some time for having introduced Em'ly to Steerforth. After a reconciliation is accomplished, Em'ly, along with some of the Peggottys, and the Micawbers leave for Australia to begin new lives. Before they leave, David witnesses a dramatic shipwreck in which Steerforth is killed, as is Ham in attempting to rescue him. Still saddened by the loss of his wife and other events, David goes abroad for three years. It is only after he returns that he realizes that Agnes Wickfield has been his true love all along, and their happy marriage takes place at last.

## Character List

- **David Copperfield**

The protagonist and narrator of the novel. David is innocent, trusting, and naïve even though he suffers abuse as a child. He is idealistic and impulsive and remains honest and loving. Though David's troubled childhood renders him sympathetic, he is not perfect. He often exhibits chauvinistic attitudes toward the lower classes. In some instances, foolhardy decisions mar David's good intentions.

- **Agnes Wickfield**

David's true love and second wife, the daughter of Mr. Wickfield. The calm and gentle Agnes admires her father and David. She suffers patiently through David's other romances, and although she loves David, she is not overcome by jealousy. Agnes always comforts David with kind words or advice when he needs support.

- **James Steerforth**

A condescending, self-centered villain. From his boyhood, Steerforth possesses a restless energy that he can neither satisfy nor divert. He charms both women and men for the feeling of power it gives him. He also abuses David, although David is too enraptured with him and too grateful for his patronage to notice.

- **Clara Peggotty**

David's nanny and caretaker. Peggotty is gentle and selfless, opening herself and her family to David whenever he is in need. She is faithful to David and his family all her life, never abandoning David, his mother, or Miss Betsey. In her kind motherliness, Peggotty contrasts with the cruel and unloving Miss Murdstone.

- **Little Em'ly**

Peggotty's unfaithful niece, who is sweet but also coy and vain. Little Em'ly's desire to be a lady causes her to disgrace herself by running away from her family.

- **Uriah Heep**

A two-faced, conniving villain who puts on a false show of humility and meekness to disguise his evil intentions. Uriah is motivated by his belief that the world owes him something for all the humiliations he suffered as a young man. Ultimately, Uriah's veneer of humility proves as empty as his morals.

- **Miss Betsey Trotwood**

David's eccentric, kind-hearted aunt. Although Miss Betsey's intentions are mysterious at the beginning of the novel, her generosity toward David soon becomes clear, and she acts as David's second mother.

- **Dora Spenlow**

David's first wife and first real love. Dora is foolish and giddy, more interested in playing with her dog, Jip, than in keeping house with David. Because David cannot bear to displease Dora, he permits her to retain the pouty habits of a spoiled child.

- **Mr. and Mrs. Wilkins Micawber**

An unlucky couple crippled by constantly precarious finances. Although Mr. Micawber never succeeds at supporting his own family, he is generous and industrious in serving others. Mrs. Micawber stands by her husband despite his flaws and regardless of the hardships they suffer.

- **Tommy Traddles**



Young David's simple, goodhearted schoolmate. Traddles works hard but faces great obstacles because of his lack of money and connections. He eventually succeeds in making a name and a career for himself.

- **Clara Copperfield**

David's mother. The kind, generous, and goodhearted Clara embodies maternal caring until her death, which occurs early in the novel. David remembers his mother as an angel whose independent spirit was destroyed by Mr. Murdstone's cruelty.

- **Mr. Edward Murdstone and Miss Jane Murdstone**

The cruel second husband of David's mother, and Murdstone's sister. The Murdstones are strict and brutal not only toward David, but to his mother as well. Together, they crush David's mother's spirit.

- **Mrs. Steerforth and Rosa Dartle**

Steerforth's mother and her ward, the orphan child of her husband's cousin. Mrs. Steerforth and Miss Dartle are cruel and bitter toward the world and also haughty and proud, as evidenced by their overwhelming fondness for Steerforth and their disdain of David.

- **Mr. Peggotty, Ham, and Mrs. Gummidge**

The simple relatives of David's nurse, Clara Peggotty. Mr. Peggotty, Ham, and Mrs. Gummidge represent the virtues of simple people. Mr. Peggotty and Ham are sailors, Mrs. Gummidge a sailor's widow. They are devoted and loving to each other and David.

- **Doctor Strong and Annie Strong**

A man and woman who exemplify the best of married life. Doctor Strong and Annie are faithful and selfless, each concerned more about

the other than about himself or herself. Their deep love for each other enables them to survive Uriah's attempts to disrupt their bliss.

## David Copperfield Essays

### [Discipline In Charles Dickens' "David Copperfield"](#)

#### [David Copperfield](#)

In "David Copperfield", Charles Dickens reveals that discipline is like a weapon: those who misuse it are cruel, unjust, and a danger to everyone around them, while those who fail to use it at all endanger themselves and lower their defenses.

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### [Two Different Portrayals of Orphans in Dickens](#) Anonymous [David Copperfield](#)

Victorian literature is over-populated with orphans. The Bronte sisters, Trollope, George Elliot, Thackeray and Gaskell all positioned orphans as leading characters in their novels. This trend continued into the Edwardian period, as Frances.

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As simplistic and politically impartial as Victorian novels and their common familial themes of love and companionship may seem, there is customarily a greater sociopolitical concern inserted within the narrative for the reader of the time to have.

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### [David Copperfield as the Bildungsroman Reflecting the Victorian Values](#)

Created in the Victorian epoch, Charles Dickens's novel *David Copperfield* is one of his most famous masterpieces scrutinizing how a person transits from childhood to adulthood. On the example of the protagonist, the author explores different...

# Autobiographical elements in Charles Dickens' "David Copperfield" 11th Grade

## David Copperfield

"David Copperfield" is an autobiographical novel, a family chronicle, which is written from a child's viewpoint rather than an adult's. As all things seem to be larger in the eyes of a kid, children tend to be more sensitive to what is happening...

### OBJECTIVE TYPE QUESTION

#### 1. Who is Littimer?

- Miss Betsey's husband
- Agnes's uncle
- Steerforth's servant
- Mr. Spenlow's assistant

#### 2. . Where does David meet Steerforth?

- At Salem House
- At Miss Betsey's house
- At Agnes's
- In the forest

#### 3. . Which of the following characters does David initially trust but then come to distrust?

- Agnes
- Dora
- Mr. Spenlow
- Steerforth

#### 4. With whom does David live while he works at the wine factory?

- Mr. Micawber
- Miss Betsey
- Steerforth
- Mr. Wickfield

**5. Where does David first meet Traddles?**

- At Miss Murdstone's
- At Blunderstone
- At Yarmouth
- At Salem House

**6. . Who is David's primary good influence?**

- Dora
- Agnes
- Miss Betsey
- Peggotty

**7. Who is David's primary bad influence?**

- Traddles
- Uriah
- Steerforth
- Doctor Strong

**8 Whom does Uriah try to poison against his wife?**

- Mr. Wickfield
- Doctor Strong
- Jack Maldon
- Mr. Creakle

**9. In whose house does David slap Uriah?**

- Mr. Micawber's
- Miss Betsey's
- Mr. Wickfield's

- Doctor Strong's

**10. How does David end up at Miss Betsey's?**

- He runs away from home
- He runs away from Salem House
- He runs away from the wine factory
- He runs away from Mr. Micawber's

**11. How does Steerforth meet Little Em'ly?**

- Ham introduces them
- He sees her on the beach
- Mr. Peggotty introduces them
- David introduces them

**12. Which of the following characters is a dwarf?**

- Miss Mowcher
- Mr. Barkis
- Peggotty
- Little Em'ly

**13. Why is David sent to Salem House?**

- To fetch some milk and eggs
- To see his grandmother
- Because he bites Mr. Murdstone
- Because his mother dies

**14. Why is Mr. Dick unable to finish the Memorial?**

- He runs out of ink
- He can't stop writing about King Charles I
- He can't stop playing with his kite
- It makes him too sad

**15. Who is Ham?**

- Clara Peggotty's nephew
- Mr. Peggotty's nephew
- Little Em'ly's future husband
- All of the above

**16. Which of the following is *not* a reason that Traddles waits to marry Sophy?**

- She is in love with someone else
- She is the fourth of ten daughters
- He is poor
- Her mother is ill

**17. Who is Miss Betsey Trotwood?**

- David's aunt
- Peggotty's sister
- Clara's sister
- Agnes's mother

**18. Who declares to David his intention to marry Agnes?**

- Traddles
- Steerforth
- Uriah
- Jack Maldon

**19. Who is Jack Maldon?**

- Annie's brother
- Miss Betsey's sister
- Uriah's father
- Annie's cousin

**20. Which facial feature does Uriah lack?**

- Lips

- Eyebrows
- Nose
- Eyelashes

**21. Which of the following does Uriah most resemble?**

- A giraffe
- An elephant
- A dog
- A snake

**22. Why does Miss Betsey keep running out of her house?**

- Because Mr. Dick hides in the bushes
- Because there are donkeys on her lawn
- Because she is losing her mind
- Because David makes her angry

**23. Who appears to lose all of Miss Betsey's money?**

- Mr. Wickfield
- Uriah Heep
- Doctor Strong
- Mr. Dick

**24. Who flies a kite with David?**

- Uriah
- Doctor Strong
- Mr. Dick
- Mr. Wickfield

**25. Who brings the Stronges back together?**

- Uriah
- Steerforth
- Mr. Dick
- Mr. Wickfield

1. What is the name of David's house?
  - blunderstone rookery.
  - yarmouth boathouse.
  - salem house.
  - limestone aviary.
  
2. What does the sign that David is forced to wear during his stay at boarding school say?
  - "beware of dog"
  - "beware, i bite."
  - "take care of him. he bites."
  - "violent boy / take care of him."
  
3. Which of the following is NOT a characteristic of David's birth?
  - he was born with a caul.
  - he began crying right at the stroke of midnight.
  - everyone thought that he would be a girl.
  - he was born on a friday.
  
4. What trait does Mr. Murdstone stress to Clara constantly?
  - cruelty.
  - forgiveness.
  - firmness.
  - submission.
  
5. Why did Miss Betsey storm out on the night that David was born?
  - she found the doctor to be very rude and insulting.
  - she was offended by a comment made by david's mother.
  - she was shocked by the young age of her brother's widow.
  - she was upset that david turned out to be a boy.
  
6. David's earliest memory is of what?



- his father.
- peggotty and his mother.
- his aunt, miss trotwood.
- his home.

7. During his first stay in Yarmouth, David stays where?

- a hotel.
- a large house.
- a boat.
- a cabin.

8. Where does Mr. Mell's mother live?

- in a poorhouse.
- in a secluded house.
- in a boat.
- in a mansion.

9. What does Dora ask David to call her?

- little-wife.
- child-wife.
- young-wife.
- simple-wife.

10. Which of the following does NOT die at sea?

- steerforth.
- mr. barkis.
- ham.
- little em'ly's father.

11. Mr. Wickfield suffers from what?

- alcoholism.
- chronic illness.
- cancer.
- insomnia.

12. How did Miss Dartle get her scar?
  - from an accident out at sea.
  - from fainting and falling down.
  - from Steerforth throwing a hammer at her.
  - from a fight with Mrs. Steerforth.
  
13. Dora always has the following at her side:
  - her dog.
  - her guitar.
  - her paints.
  - flowers.
  
14. Who does NOT go to Australia at the end of the novel?
  - Mr. Omer.
  - Mr. Peggotty.
  - Martha.
  - Mrs. Grummidge.
  
15. David eventually decides that he wants to be what?
  - a lawyer.
  - a professor.
  - a proctor.
  - a writer.
  
16. Miss Betsey is obsessed with which of the following?
  - keeping donkeys off of her grass.
  - proper etiquette.
  - sailing and the sea.
  - money.
  
17. Dr. Strong is writing what kind of book?
  - biography.
  - dictionary.
  - autobiography.

- history.
18. Who is Jack Maldon?
- Dr. strong's son.
  - David's schoolmate.
  - Annie's cousin.
  - Mr. wickfield's nephew.
19. Mr. Creakle ends up as what?
- a sailor.
  - a school master.
  - a mortician.
  - a magistrate.
20. What does Miss Mowcher suffer from?
- dwarfism.
  - rheumatism.
  - cancer.
  - alcoholism.
21. What is the last thing Steerforth asks of David?
- to remember him at his best.
  - to throw a dinner party.
  - to visit his mother one more time.
  - to tell little em'ly he loves her.
22. How many times is Mr. Micawber thrown in jail for his debts?
- three times.
  - twice.
  - once.
  - four times.

23. How does Miss Murdstone know Dora?

- she is her stepmother.
- she is her babysitter.
- she is her hired companion.
- she is her tutor.

24. Who is with Dora when she dies?

- agnes.
- her aunts.
- mr. spenlow.
- david.

25. Mr. Dick is Miss Betsey's what?

- husband.
- live-in housemate.
- tutor.
- cook.

---- All the best -----

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