**Writing Task #1**

**Passage**

**Great Expectations was written by Charles Dickens in 1861. The story follows the life of the poor orphan, Pip. In the passage below, Pip has returned from a visit to the home of the wealthy Miss Havisham and Estella, the cruel and beautiful girl Miss Havisham has adopted. They call Pip poor and “common,” pointing out that he is not as well-mannered, educated, or fortunate as they are. Pip has told lies about the experience in order to hide his hurt feelings. Now he confesses to his brother-in-law, Joe, a kind blacksmith.**

**As you read the passage below, consider how Pip’s visit to Miss Havisham’s home affects him.**

**from *Great Expectations***

by Charles Dickens

After Mr. Pumblechook had driven off, and when my sister was washing up, I stole into the forge to Joe, and remained by him until he had done for the night. Then I said, “Before the fire goes out, Joe, I should like to tell you something.”

“Should you, Pip?” said Joe, drawing his shoeing-stool near the forge. “Then tell us. What is it, Pip?”

“Joe,” said I, taking hold of his rolled-up shirt sleeve, and twisting it between my finger and thumb, “you remember all that about Miss Havisham’s?”

“Remember?” said Joe. “I believe you! Wonderful!” “It’s a terrible thing, Joe; it ain’t true.”

“What are you telling of, Pip?” cried Joe, falling back in the greatest amazement. “You don’t mean to say it’s—”

“Yes, I do; it’s lies, Joe.”

“But not all of it? Why sure you don’t mean to say, Pip, that there was no black velvet couch—eh?” For, I stood shaking my head. “But at least there was dogs, Pip? Come, Pip,” said Joe, persuasively, “if there warn’t no weal-cutlets, at least there was dogs?”

“No, Joe.”

“A dog?” said Joe. “A puppy? Come?”

“No, Joe, there was nothing at all of the kind.”



As I fixed my eyes hopelessly on Joe, Joe contemplated me in dismay. “Pip, old chap! This won’t do, old fellow! I say! Where do you expect to go to?”

“It’s terrible, Joe, ain’t it?”

“Terrible?” cried Joe. “Awful! What possessed you?”

“I don’t know what possessed me, Joe,” I replied, sitting down in the ashes at his feet, hanging my head. “But I wish my boots weren’t so thick nor my hands so coarse.”

And then I told Joe that I felt very miserable, and that I hadn’t been able to explain myself to Mrs. Joe and Pumblechook, who were so rude to me, and that there had been a beautiful young lady at Miss Havisham’s who was dreadfully proud, and that she had said I was common, and that I knew I was common, and that I wished I was not common, and that the lies had come of it somehow, though I didn’t know how.

“There’s one thing you may be sure of, Pip,” said Joe, after some rumination, “namely, that lies is lies. Howsever they come, they didn’t ought to come, and they come from the father of lies, and work round to the same. Don’t you tell no more of ’em, Pip. That ain’t the way to get out of being common, old chap.”

When I got up to my little room and said my prayers, I did not forget Joe’s recommendation, and yet my young mind was in that disturbed and unthankful state, that I thought long after I laid me down, how common Estella would consider Joe, a mere blacksmith; how thick his boots, and how coarse his hands. I thought how Joe and my sister were then sitting in the kitchen, and how I had come up to bed from the kitchen, and how Miss Havisham and Estella never sat in a kitchen, but were far above the level of such common doings. I fell asleep recalling what I “used to do” when I was at Miss Havisham’s, as though I had been there weeks or months, instead of hours; and as though it were quite an old subject of remembrance, instead of one that had arisen only that day.

That was a memorable day to me, for it made great changes in me. But it is the same with any life. Imagine one selected day struck out of it, and think how different its course would have been. Pause you who read this, and think for a moment of the long chain of iron or gold, of thorns or flowers, that would never have bound you, but for the formation of the first link on one memorable day.

**Writing Prompt**

1. After you read the passage, write a well-developed multiparagraph essay that explains how certain experiences can affect the way we view our lives and the world that we live in. Use specific details from the passage to support your response.