UPPER LEVEL

Our Mutual Friend by Charles Dickens

A Before Reading

- 1 Look at the chapter headings in the Contents on the third page.
 - (a) Which chapters might be exciting?
 - (b) Which chapters might be sad?
 - (c) Which chapters might be happy?
 - (d) Are there any headings which are puzzling?

B While Reading

- 2 Keep a 'Reading Diary' while you are reading the book.
 - (a) Read the Preface Coming Home. Make a prediction how do you think the story will end?
 - (b) Read the story in sections.

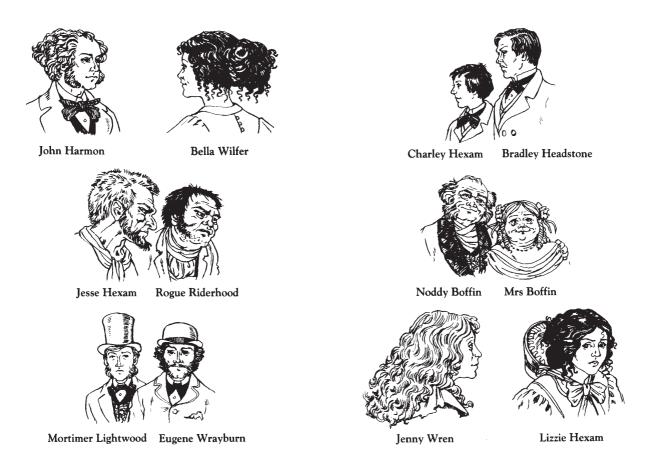
First Section: Chapters 1 to 4
Second Section: Chapters: 5 to 9
Third Section: Chapters 10 to 14
Fourth Section: Chapters 15 to 19

After you read each section write in your diary:

- (1) Write the most important things that happened. Do not write in great detail.
- (2) Explain which characters were important in the section.
 - Did any new characters appear?
 - Did any characters from an earlier section not appear?
- (3) Choose three important paragraphs from the section. Explain why you think each paragraph is important. (eg Does the paragraph tell you something important about a character? Or does it tell you something important about the story?)
- (4) Sections 1, 2, 3, 4: Make predictions explain what you think will happen next.
- (5) Sections 2, 3, 4, 5: Did you make good predictions in your last answer to (4)?

C After Reading

- 3 Here are the pictures of the main characters from pages 4 and 5. You have read the story now.
 - (a) Re-arrange the characters. Move them into different groups. Draw lines between pictures of characters who should be together. Think about relationships between people eg about marriages, friendships and deaths. (You do not have to move all of the characters.)
 - (b) Explain what you have done.



- 4 The River Thames appears many times in this story. Why is the river important?
- 5 (a) John and Bella have a child. One day, when the child is fourteen years old, he/she says to John and Bella, 'Tell me about when you met. Tell me about your lives before I was born.'

 What do they tell their child? Write the conversation as a script. (Decide if the child is a boy or a girl.)
- or (b) Imagine that Lizzie and Eugene also have a child. He/she also asks them about their past. What do they tell him/her?

Bleak House is another Upper Level reader by Charles Dickens. You might also enjoy **Precious Bane** by Mary Webb or **The Return of the Native** by Thomas Hardy.