

A Tale of Two Cities
Study Guide

Book the First: Recalled to Life

On the line next to each chapter title, explain why it is an appropriate title for the chapter.

Chapter 1: The Period _____

1. What is the setting of *A Tale of Two Cities*?
2. How is the opening passage an example of parallelism?
3. What does Dickens establish with his list of parallel contrasts (also called antithesis)?
4. Identify two reasons that conditions were bad in France.
5. Identify two reasons that conditions were bad in England.
6. What method of execution was used in France? In England?
7. What allusions does Dickens make to the approaching French Revolution?
8. In the last paragraph, what does “the creatures of this chronicle” refer to?
9. What is foreshadowed by the fact that Dickens begins the novel with the description of the period?

Chapter 2: The Mail _____

1. What is the Dover Road?
2. What month and time of day is it? What is the weather like?
3. What were the people in the coach worried and suspicious about?
4. What elements of this suspenseful opening scene imply suspicion and danger?
5. What passenger did the rider want?
6. What was the rider’s name? What was his job?
7. What message did the rider give the passenger?
8. What response did the passenger give the rider to return to “T. and Co.”?
9. What is Mr. Lorry’s occupation?

Chapter 3: The Night Shadows

1. What effect does Dickens achieve with his occasional lapses into first-person narration?
2. By what name does the bank messenger refer to himself?
3. What is “Temple Bar”?
4. What kind of bank was Tellson’s?
5. In the stagecoach, the passenger (Mr. Lorry) dozes and dreams of a ghost. What does he ask the ghost?
6. How does the ghost reply? What is Mr. Lorry going to show the ghost?

Chapter 4: The Preparation

1. What simile is used to describe the inside of the coach that carried Mr. Lorry over the Dover Road?
2. Describe Mr. Lorry.
3. Who is Mr. Lorry to meet at the Royal George Hotel?
4. What has Mr. Lorry told Lucie Manette in order to get her to go to Paris with him?
5. Why does Mr. Lorry always refer to himself as “a man of business”? What does he mean when he says he is a “speaking machine”?
6. Who is the French gentleman (the customer) Mr. Lorry refers to?
7. What hints are there that Mr. Lorry’s secret mission resurrects some issues from his own past?
8. Why does Mr. Lorry relate these characters and events to Lucie in such a hypothetical way?
9. According to Mr. Lorry, how did Lucy’s mother die and why did Lucie end up in London?
10. Why did Lucie’s mother want her to believe her father was dead?
11. Describe Miss Pross.
13. What are the blank forms for consignment mentioned in this chapter? How do they contribute to Mr. Lorry’s secrecy and his need to use the code “Recalled to Life”?
14. How do Dickens’s stock characters conform to the literary conventions of his day?

Chapter 5: The Wine Shop

1. Where does this chapter take place?
2. Why are people so eager to get the wine?
3. What does the wine symbolize? What does it foreshadow?
4. Describe the atmosphere of St. Antoine.
5. Why is *Hunger* capitalized? (What point is Dickens making by doing so?)
6. Paraphrase this: “The trade signs were, all, grim illustrations of want.”
7. In all the poverty and dirge, “some things were represented in a flourishing condition.” What?
8. Who is the scarecrow? Who is the bird? What does this have to do with the story?
9. Name and describe the keeper of the wine shop.
10. Name and describe the wife of the wine-shop keeper.
11. Why do all four men call themselves “Jacques”?
12. Why are Jarvis Lorry and Lucie Manette at the wine shop?
13. Where does Defarge take them?
14. Name the prisoner behind the locked door. What is he doing?
15. What is the connection between Defarge and Dr. Manette?

Chapter 6: The Shoemaker

1. Describe the prisoner.
2. What is “One Hundred and Five, North Tower”?
3. What characteristic of Lucie’s causes the prisoner to reach toward her?
4. What does the prisoner have in a folded scrap of rag around his neck?
5. While Lucie remains with her father, what do Defarge and Mr. Lorry do?
6. What does it mean that Madame Defarge “leaned against the doorpost, knitting, and saw nothing”? (In actuality, she saw everything, so why does Dickens say she saw nothing?)
7. Where are Lucie and Mr. Lorry taking the prisoner?
8. How has the prisoner been “recalled to life”?