Tale of Two Cities Study Guide

BOOK 1, CHAPTER 1
1. What was the attitude of British and French nobility concerning the future of their rule?
2. In France, what was a common punishment for not kneeling to honor monks?
3. What was the crime situation in England at this time?

BOOK 1, CHAPTER 2
4. How did passengers on the Dover mail interact with each other? Why did they act this way?
5. What was the guard’s initial reaction to the arrival of Jerry Cruncher?
6. Who is Cruncher’s message for, and what is this gentleman’s occupation?
7. What was Cruncher’s message, and what was the reply? What do you think these messages mean?

BOOK 1, CHAPTER 3
8. What is Cruncher’s reaction to the message he is to take to Tellson’s?
9. What question does Mr. Lorry ask the spectre? What is the spectre’s answer? What do you think this means?

BOOK 1, CHAPTER 4
10. Describe Mr. Jarvis Lorry’s dress and physical appearance.
11. Who is Mr. Lorry waiting for in Dover?
12. Have Mr. Lorry and the young Lady met before? If so, when and under what circumstances?
13. What news does Mr. Lorry have for the young Lady?
14. What is her reaction to the news?

BOOK 1, CHAPTER 5
15. What are the people’s reactions to the broken wine cask?
16. The spilled wine is a symbol of what?
17. What is the power that has ground the people down? What does this tell us about conditions in France?
18. Describe Defarge and his wife.
19. Why do the men in the wine shop refer to each other as Jacques? (Look up the word “jacquerie” for a hint.)
20. Why have Mr. Lorry and Miss Manette come to Defarge’s wine shop? Why was Defarge chosen for this duty?
21. Why do you think Defarge shows Dr. Manette to the Jacques?

BOOK 2, CHAPTER 1
22. Describe Tellson’s bank. What is the bank’s attitude toward change?
23. How does Tellson’s treat the young men in its employ?
24. What behavior of Mrs. Cruncher makes Mr. Cruncher angry? Why does this anger him?
25. What physical characteristic of his father’s does young Jerry wonder about? Can you make a guess about it?

BOOK 2, CHAPTER 2
30. What does Mr. Cruncher think is “Barbarous”? Do you agree or disagree with him? Why?
31. What is the “old Bailey” and what is it famous for?
32. Who is being tried, and what is the charge against him?
33. Who is present in the courtroom to act as witnesses for the prosecution?

BOOK 2, CHAPTER 3
34. Where did Mr. Lorry, Miss Manette, and Dr. Manette first meet Charles Darnay? What was Lucie’s opinion of him?
35. What did the wigged gentleman who was looking at the ceiling point out to the counsel, Mr. Stryver, on the piece of paper that he threw to him?
36. What does Mr. Stryver say about Mr. Basard and Mr. Cly?
37. What happens in the courtroom to prove that Mr. Carton is much more observant than his manner lets on?
38. What personal service does Carton do for Charles Darnay? What do you think this hints at for the future?
39. What is the verdict?

BOOK 2, CHAPTER 4
40. What do you think Carton’s and Darnay’s toast foreshadows?
41. What is Sydney Carton’s opinion of himself?

BOOK 2, CHAPTER 5
42. What is Carton’s job?
43. Describe his working routine. Include when, where, and how.
44. After reading this chapter, describe Sydney Carton’s life and tell how you think he feels about it.
BOOK 2, CHAPTER 6
45. Where does Mr. Lorry go most Sundays? Why?
46. What kind of housekeeper is Lucie?
47. Describe Miss Pross as she appears on the surface and how she really is once you get to know her?
48. How does Miss Pross describe the Doctor’s mental condition? What does it take to soothe him?
49. Who are the “hundreds of people” that visit the Manette’s on Sundays?

BOOK 2, CHAPTER 7
50. What kinds of people associate themselves with the Monseigneur? What does this say about what it takes to get ahead in France at this time?
51. Describe the “accident” that befalls the Monsieur the Marquis in the streets of Paris.
52. What is the Marquis’s attitude toward this “accident”?

BOOK 2, CHAPTER 8
53. What are the conditions in the Marquis’s home village?
54. What unusual sight did the roadmender see? What prediction can you make from this?
55. Who is the Marquis expecting? Can you guess the identity of this person?

BOOK 2, CHAPTER 9
56. Of what does Darnay accuse his uncle?
57. What is the Marquis’s philosophy of keeping the common people under control?
58. What is Darnay’s opinion of his family’s behavior and what does he plan to do about it?
59. What happens to the Marquis, and what does the note tell us?

BOOK 2, CHAPTER 10
60. A year after his uncle’s death, describe Charles Darnay’s professional and personal condition.
61. In proclaiming his love for Lucie, how does Charles show consideration for Dr. Manette?
62. What are the two promises that the Doctor makes Charles?
63. What is the effect on the Doctor of making these promises? Why do you think they had this effect on him?

BOOK 2, CHAPTER 11
64. What future plan does Stryver confess to Carton?
65. What does Stryver advise Carton to do?

BOOK 2, CHAPTER 12
66. Why does Stryver stop in to tell Mr. Lorry of his plans?
67. What is Mr. Lorry’s reaction to Stryver’s news?

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68. What does Mr. Lorry offer to do for Stryver?
69. What is Stryver’s attitude when Lorry comes to the house with information, and why does he act this way?

BOOK 2, CHAPTER 13
70. In his talk with Lucie, what is Carton’s opinion of himself?
71. What does Carton say he would do if Lucie should love him?
72. What memory does Carton want to take with him?
73. What promise does Carton make Lucie? Where do you think this promise will lead him?

BOOK 2, CHAPTER 14
74. Whose funeral procession does the crowd attack? Why do they attack it?
75. What is Jerry Cruncher’s reaction to the mob violence?
76. Describe Mr. Cruncher’s “fishing tackle.” What kind of “fish” do you think he is going for with this type of “tackle”?
77. What name does young Jerry give to his father’s “trade,” and what is Mr. Cruncher’s response when young Jerry says he wants to be in that trade when he grows up? Do you see an irony in “resurrection man” and “recalled to life”?

BOOK 2, CHAPTER 15
78. What was the fate of the Marquis’s killer, and who reported that fate to Defarge?
79. What is the sentence that Defarge and his compatriots give after hearing the fate of the Marquis’s killer? What are the future implications of this sentence?
80. How are these sentences recorded so that they will be kept secret until the appropriate time?
81. Why does Defarge compliment his guest for cheering the king and queen?

BOOK 2, CHAPTER 16
82. What information does Defarge get from Jacques on the police force? Where have you heard of this man before?
83. Why is Defarge depressed, and how does Madame Defarge comfort him?
84. What is the significance of Madame Defarge pinning a rose in her hair?
85. What does the spy learn from the Defarges, and what do they learn from him? Why does the spy’s information disturb the Defarges?

BOOK 2, CHAPTER 17
86. What are the Doctor’s feelings about Lucie’s impending marriage?

BOOK 2, CHAPTER 18
87. What does Charles Darnay tell the Doctor on the morning of his marriage to Lucie?
88. What is the Doctor’s response to the combination of this information and the giving of his daughter in marriage?
89. What two things does Mr. Lorry do in reaction to the Doctor’s condition?

BOOK 2, CHAPTER 19
90. How does Mr. Lorry go about approaching the Doctor about his condition for the nine days without upsetting him?
91. What is the Doctor’s opinion about the future of Mr. Lorry’s “hypothetical” man?
92. What does the Doctor say is the one thing that could bring on another relapse? What does he mean by this?
93. What recommendation does Mr. Lorry make to the Doctor, and how does he talk him into following it?

BOOK 2, CHAPTER 20
94. What request does Carton make of Charles?
95. What does Lucie request of Charles?

BOOK 2, CHAPTER 21
96. What is the significance of the “echoing footsteps”? 
97. What sad thing befell Charles and Lucie during this time period?
98. What has happened to Carton and Stryver over the years?
99. What happened in Paris on July 14, 1789?
100. Where did Defarge demand to be taken first? Why?
101. How does Madame Defarge show her merciless strength?

BOOK 2, CHAPTER 22
102. Who is Madame Defarge’s lieutenant in leading the women, and what does this “nickname” imply about her?
103. Who was Old Foulon and what was his fate?
104. What has begun?

BOOK 2, CHAPTER 23
105. What is the symbol of the revolutionaries?
106. What happens at the Marquis’s villa? What is this an example of?

BOOK 2, CHAPTER 24
107. In the year 1792, where was the headquarters for the “Monseigneur” in Paris?
108. Why is Mr. Lorry going to France? What is his mission?
109. What is Gabelle’s urgent plea?

BOOK 3, CHAPTER 1
110. What type of reception does Charles receive in France?
111. What is the “emigrant decree,” and how does it affect Charles?
112. What is Defarge’s reaction to Charles’s plea for help, and why does he act this way?

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113. Who is this La Guillotine who has become the new darling of France?
114. What about Charles’s detention makes it worse than general imprisonment? Why do you think this is worse?

BOOK 3, CHAPTER 2
115. Who orchestrates Charles’s acquittal, and is his defense built on fact or emotion?
116. What is the mob’s reaction to Charles’s acquittal, and why is this surprising?

BOOK 3, CHAPTER 3
117. Why do Charles and his family stay in France, and what is their style of living there?
118. What happens to Charles during his first night of freedom?
BOOK 3, CHAPTER 8
135. Who do Miss Pross and Jerry Cruncher run into while shopping?
136. Who does Carton know this man as?
137. How does Carton get this man to help him?
138. What startling information does Mr. Cruncher have concerning the death of Roger Cly, and how does this information help Carton?

BOOK 3, CHAPTER 9
139. What is Barsard going to do for Carton? What do you think Carton’s plan is?
140. What memory gives Carton comfort as he wanders the Paris streets, and what does it tell us of why he turned out the way he did?
141. Who are Charles’s accusers? Why is one of them particularly surprising?
142. What is the form of Dr. Manette’s accusation?

BOOK 3, CHAPTER 10
143. Who are the twin brothers who need the Doctor’s services?
144. Who is the sick woman, and what is wrong with her?
145. What does this say about the brothers’ character?
146. What was the boy’s last act, and how has it turned out?
147. What was the Marquis St. Evermonde’s wife’s request of the Doctor? Whose mother was she?
148. Who had the Doctor put in prison and why?
149. What was the last thing the Doctor wrote in his account, and what effect does its reading have?

BOOK 3, CHAPTER 11
150. Why didn’t Lucie collapse when Charles was condemned, and what does this say about her?
151. Why did Carton encourage Dr. Manette to continue his efforts to free Charles? What does this say about Carton?

BOOK 3, CHAPTER 12
152. Why did Carton go to Defarge’s wine shop?
153. What are Madame Defarge and Defarge arguing over?
154. Why is Madame Defarge so merciless towards Charles and his family?
155. What is the Doctor’s condition when he returns, and what is its cause?
156. What papers does Carton give Mr. Lorry to hold?
157. Why does Carton instruct Lorry to be prepared to leave the next day? What do you think is Carton’s plan?

BOOK 3, CHAPTER 13
158. What does Charles write in his “last” letter?
159. How does Carton get Charles to go along with his plan?
160. How does Carton get Charles out of prison?
161. How is Carton going to keep the promise he made to Lucie years before?

BOOK 3, CHAPTER 14
162. What is Madame Defarge’s plan and what does Defarge think of it?
163. What plan are Miss Pross and Mr. Cruncher following and why?
164. What happens between Miss Pross and Madame Defarge?

BOOK 3, CHAPTER 15
165. At the execution, what do they say about Carton?
166. What does Carton foretell for Charles and Lucie, and how does their future bring honor to his name?