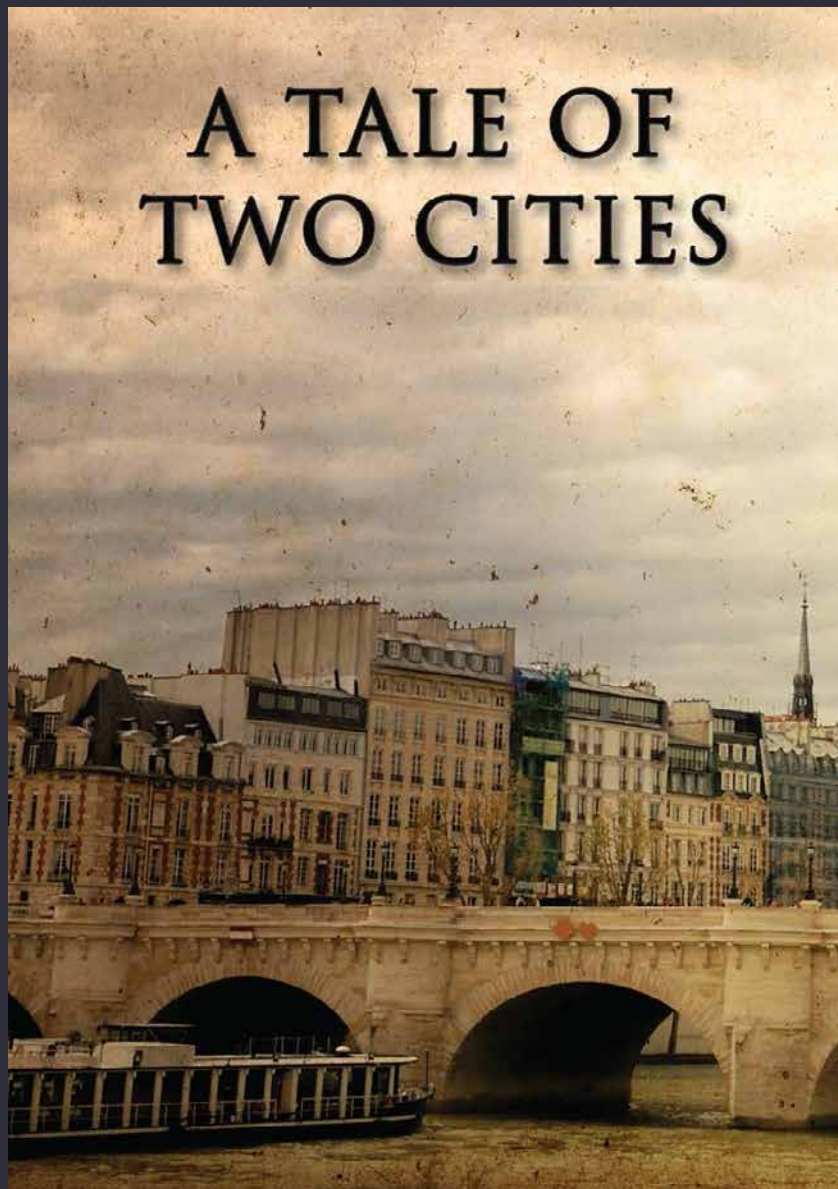


RETOLD CLASSICS

TEACHER RESOURCE  
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Perfection Learning®

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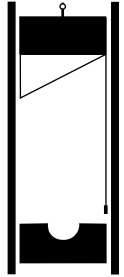
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Name \_\_\_\_\_

# A TALE OF TWO CITIES

## Book 1 Chapters 1-6



### SETTING THE STAGE

This activity will help you get ready to read.  
Prepare to discuss the questions by jotting down  
answers in the spaces provided.

Is time travel possible? In a way, historical novels such as *A Tale of Two Cities* seem to make it possible. Charles Dickens serves as an excellent tour guide to the Revolution in France. But suppose you were your own tour guide to the past.

1. Imagine you are walking down a street in London or Paris in the late eighteenth century. Jot down the type of information you might be able to gather from each of these sources. To help you get started, an example is given.

a. newspaper reporter

    *famous recent events, current rulers*      
\_\_\_\_\_

b. tavern keeper

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

c. jailer

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

d. lord or lady

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

*continued*

Name \_\_\_\_\_

**A TALE OF TWO CITIES**  
**Book 1**  
**Chapters 1-6**

e. minister

---

---

f. doctor

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---

g. common worker

---

---

h. politician

---

---

i. food seller

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2. Pick two of the sources above and explain how their pictures of the time period would be different. Why would each person give you different information?

Source: \_\_\_\_\_ Source: \_\_\_\_\_

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*continued*

Name \_\_\_\_\_

# A TALE OF TWO CITIES

## Book 1

### Chapters 1-6

3. If you were going to choose one of the above sources to star in a historical novel, which would you pick? Why?

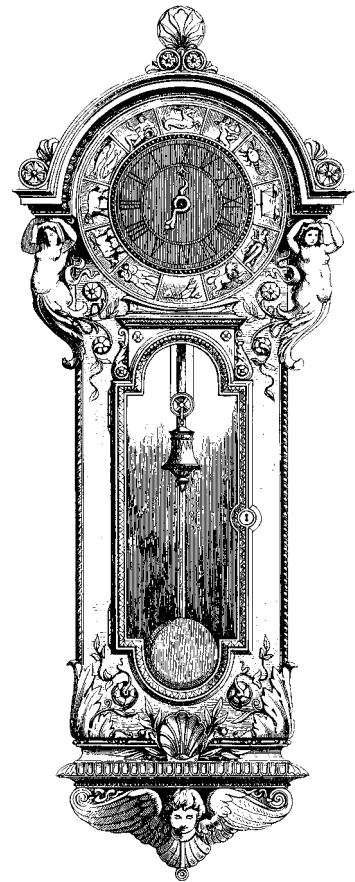
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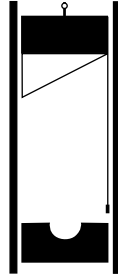
As you read, notice how Dickens provides information about the time period he explores. Also, decide which characters give you the best insights into the era.



Name \_\_\_\_\_

## A TALE OF TWO CITIES

### Book 1 Chapters 1-6



### IT HAPPENED LIKE THIS

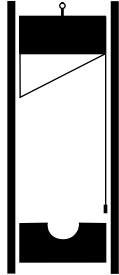
Write the letter of the best answer on the line.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. As Dickens describes it, the year 1775 is a period of  
a. steady progress and exciting ideas.  
b. disturbance and sharp contrasts.  
c. religious devotion and obedience.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Mr. Lorry's reply to the message he receives near Dover is  
a. "Recalled to life."  
b. "Life in danger."  
c. "Danger is past."
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Mr. Lorry contacts Miss Manette to tell her that  
a. she's inherited a great deal of money.  
b. a friend of hers has been jailed for debt.  
c. her father is still alive.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. In France, the common people are  
a. hungry and desperate.  
b. drunken and uncaring.  
c. ignorant and happy.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. With some of the spilled wine, the joker writes the word  
a. "Life."  
b. "Liberty."  
c. "Blood."
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. Monsieur Defarge has looked after Dr. Manette because  
a. Manette saved Defarge's son.  
b. he was once Manette's servant.  
c. Mr. Lorry has paid him.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. When Miss Manette reunites with her father, she finds that he is  
a. almost dead from fever.  
b. greatly disturbed in his mind.  
c. afraid he will be murdered.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. Old memories seem to reawaken in Dr. Manette when he sees  
a. Mr. Lorry's watch.  
b. Defarge's knife.  
c. his daughter's hair.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. As he did when he was a prisoner, Dr. Manette still  
a. keeps a detailed diary.  
b. begs his "jailer" for food.  
c. makes shoes.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. Despite the doctor's condition, his friends decide to  
a. take him out of France.  
b. ask the French officials to release him.  
c. leave him where he is for the time being.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

## A TALE OF TWO CITIES

### Book 1 Chapters 1-6



### VOCABULARY REVIEW

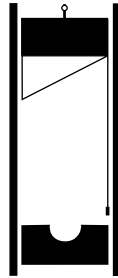
These sentences are taken from the novel. Circle the answer that comes closest in meaning to each word in **dark type**.

1. “Under the guidance of her Christian ministers, France also entertained herself with **humane** deeds.”  
a. kind                      b. foolish                      c. strange
2. “Playing ‘the Captain,’ the highwayman **gallantly** shot his friend through the head and rode away.”  
a. quickly                      b. bravely                      c. sadly
3. “ ‘My blood!’ exclaimed the **vexed** coachman.”  
a. delighted                      b. annoyed                      c. curious
4. “He left his hold of the door and mounted **nimbly** to his place.”  
a. slowly                      b. clumsily                      c. lightly
5. “Mr. Lorry had been **idle** a long time that evening.”  
a. inactive                      b. tired                      c. quiet
6. “Mr. Lorry’s eyes rested on her, and a sudden **vivid** likeness passed before him.”  
a. odd                      b. familiar                      c. clear
7. “The baker painted only the most imperfect of **meager** loaves.”  
a. burned                      b. skimpy                      c. precious
8. “The signs showed nothing in a **flourishing** condition.”  
a. successful                      b. welcoming                      c. threatening
9. “It wasn’t the faintness of physical weakness, although **confinement** and bad food no doubt had their part in it.”  
a. imprisonment                      b. illness                      c. torture
10. “He looked at the floor on one side of him with a **vacant** air of listening.”  
a. worried                      b. blank                      c. deep

Name \_\_\_\_\_

# A TALE OF TWO CITIES

## Book 1 Chapters 1-6



### LITERARY FOCUS: SETTING

Like a tour guide, Dickens introduces readers to the world of his novel by describing the *setting*. In some novels, setting is so important that it takes on the force of a character. In *A Tale of Two Cities*, the setting determines in large part what happens to the characters.

Setting is much more than just a description of a building or the weather. It involves all these elements:

**Time:** the era (such as Roman Empire), year, month, season, etc.

**Place:** world, nation, state, town/city, urban/rural, climate, geography, etc.

**Atmosphere:** social and political classes and organizations, beliefs and attitudes, culture, economic system, people's life-styles and habits, etc.

Elements of the setting for *A Tale of Two Cities* are listed below. Find evidence from the novel to describe each element. List page numbers to indicate where you found your evidence.

---

### Time

1. Year: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Era: \_\_\_\_\_

### Place

3. Nation(s): \_\_\_\_\_

4. Town(s)/city(ies): \_\_\_\_\_

### Atmosphere

5. Social and political classes: \_\_\_\_\_

*continued*



Name \_\_\_\_\_

**A TALE OF TWO CITIES**  
**Book 1**  
**Chapters 1-6**

6. State of economy: \_\_\_\_\_

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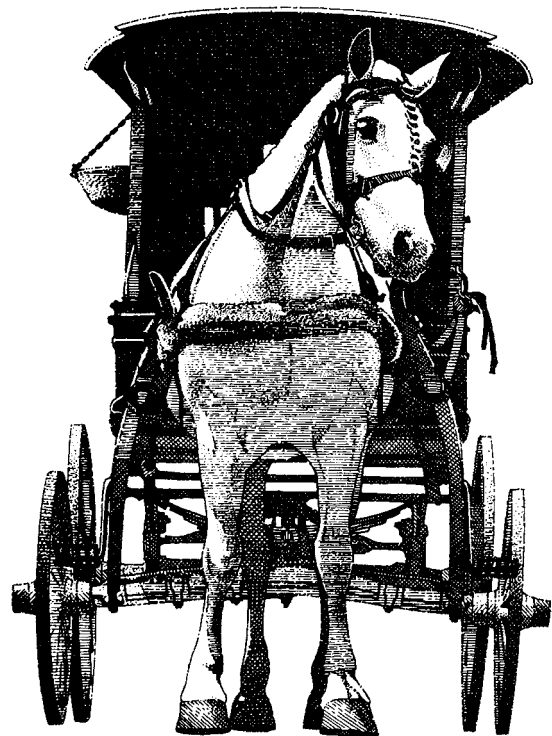
7. Attitudes and morals (sense of right or wrong): \_\_\_\_\_

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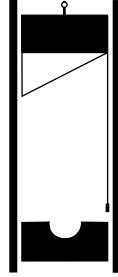
In one passage, Dickens concludes that the time he's describing is very similar to his own. How do you think the era Dickens describes compares to your own? What are the greatest similarities? the greatest differences?



Name \_\_\_\_\_

# A TALE OF TWO CITIES

## Book 1 Chapters 1-6



### THE READING-WRITING CONNECTION: UNLOCKING PASSAGES

Answer the questions about these passages taken from the novel. (Go back to the story if you need more clues.) Write your response to part *c* of each question on a separate sheet of paper.

1. “It was the best of times; it was the worst of times. It was the age of wisdom; it was the age of foolishness. It was a time of belief; it was a time of disbelief. . . . In short, the period was a great deal like the present one. Some of its noisiest experts insisted on describing it as either totally good or totally bad.” (page 13)

a. What does the passage mean as used in the story?

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---

b. Is the tone of the passage angry, amused, or something in between? Give reasons for your response.

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c. **Journal writing:** Does Dickens’ description still fit the present? Describe from your own experience what seems best and most hopeful about the present. Then describe what seems worst and most discouraging.

2. “In the hunted air of the people there was yet some wild-beast thought of being trapped. Depressed and sneaking though they were, they didn’t lack spirit. Their pressed lips were white with what they kept inside themselves. And their foreheads were knitted into the likeness of the gallows rope they thought about experiencing or forcing others to experience.” (page 41)

a. What does the passage mean as used in the story?

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*continued*

RETOLD CLASSIC NOVEL: A TALE OF TWO CITIES

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Name \_\_\_\_\_

**A TALE OF TWO CITIES**  
**Book 1**  
**Chapters 1-6**

b. What are the people keeping inside themselves? Why do you think no one in power notices this?

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c. **Journal writing:** Describe a time when you felt trapped and hopeless. Did you think of lashing out at others? Why or why not?

3. “[Defarge said,] ‘He has lived too long, locked up, to have his door left open....’

“ ‘Is it possible?’ exclaimed Mr. Lorry.

“ ‘Is it possible?’ repeated Defarge bitterly. ‘Yes. And a beautiful world we live in when it *is* possible. And when many other such things are possible. And not only possible, but done—done, you see!—under that sky there, every day. Long live the Devil.’ ” (page 47)

a. What does the passage mean as used in the story?

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b. Is Defarge’s bitterness a sign of weakness or a source of strength in your opinion? Give reasons for your view.

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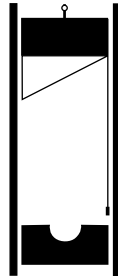
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c. **Journal writing:** Do you think Defarge’s bitterness will lead him to do good or evil? Explain. Think of some displays of bitterness you have witnessed. What were the effects of that bitterness on others?

# A TALE OF TWO CITIES

## Book 1 Chapters 1-6



### CLASS DISCUSSION

1. How does Dickens introduce readers to the world of his novel in the course of the first two chapters? What characters and events does he use to get his story going? What feelings, conclusions, and questions does this opening produce for you? In what ways is the opening interesting and successful? In what ways does it dissatisfy you?
2. Reread some of Dickens' descriptions of characters and events. In what way are those descriptions memorable or remarkable? Do you think the author is more interested in having those descriptions touch your imagination, feelings, or thoughts? Explain, and then give evidence for your opinion.
3. Review the scene where Mr. Lorry tells Miss Manette that her father is still alive. In what ways is the scene suspenseful? touching? humorous? What impression does the scene give you of both Mr. Lorry and Miss Manette?
4. What conclusions can you draw about conditions in France from the scene in which the wine spills? From the statements Dickens makes and the hints he drops, what seems likely to happen in France? How do you think Dickens feels about both present conditions and likely future events? Offer evidence to support your views.
5. What do the responses of Miss Manette, Mr. Lorry, and Defarge to Doctor Manette's condition tell you about their characters? Why does each character find the encounter so difficult? How do they seem to deal with their own feelings? Are their responses likely to help, harm, or simply not affect the Doctor? Explain.

