

A Tale of Two Cities
Essay and Paragraphs on “Book the Second”

Essay:

Write a well-organized, clearly written essay in which you relate and examine the events of Book the Second (as far as you can) to show the contrast between the picture of touching yet uneasy domestic tranquility (the story of Lucie, her reunion with her father, her suitors, marriage, family) with the rising unrest leading up to the French Revolution. Recall that Book the Second is called “The Golden Thread,” referring to Lucie. How is she a “thread” connecting the events in her small family unit with the events in France?

Paragraphs (Choose two):

1. Describe Madame Defarge. What does she continually do? What impression does her continual activity create? Is she a sympathetic or unsympathetic character at the point where you are reading? Explain your decision.
2. Jarvis Lorry often refers to himself as a businessman (which of course he is) suggesting that he is not emotionally involved with the Manettes. Examine the character and actions of Mr. Lorry to show that he is an admirable character and more than (just a businessman.”
3. What is Jerry Cruncher’s unsavory activity? Why does he do what he does? What kind of role model is he for young Jerry? How does Jerry Cruncher’s activity fit the theme of “recalled to life” that runs through this novel? Do you predict Jerry will change or stay the same? Explain.
4. Examine the character of Sydney Carton. Why is he called a “jackal?” Is his recognition of his unsavory life the beginning of a positive change, or an example of self-pitying? What qualities, if any, do you admire in Carton? Can you relate in any way to Carton’s feelings as he watches the progression of Lucie’s domestic life with Charles Darnay?