Tale of Two Cities Discussion Questions

Book 1 Chapters 1-6

Answer all of the following questions. Be prepare to provide text evidence for each answer.

Book 1 Chapter 1

1. Based on history of the French Revolution and the happenings in England, why does the paradox of the first paragraph seem relevant?
2. Who were the king and queen of Franch and of England?
3. What year does the book open upon?
4. What is said about America?
5. How does Dickens show social injustice in France?
6. How does England show social injustice in England?
7. How is the title of the book, Tale of Two Cities, demonstrated in the first chapter?
8. How do the king and queen of both countries feel about the social injustices of their countries?

Book 1 Chapter 2

1. Why is the coachman suspicious of Jerry Cruncher?
2. What is the message Cruncher brings?
3. Why is Dickens being so specific about the coachman’s weapons? (NOT because Dickens was paid by the word)
4. How is Jerry Cruncher and Jarvis Lorry contrasted as two employees of Tellson’s Bank?

Book 1 Chapter 3

1. What is the theme of the first two chapters?
2. What particular details are given about Jerry Cruncher’s appearance? Why does Dickens spend so much time giving us details about Cruncher? (NOT because Dickens was paid by the word)
3. What is Lorry’s connection to Tellson’s Bank?
4. Why did Lorry attempt the journey in inclement weather?
5. What does the quote “Gracious Creator of Day” point to thematically?

Book 1 Chapter 4

1. How does Mr. Lorry’s dress and age exemplify the bank?
2. Dickens’ had an infatuation with an 1859 young blonde, blue eyed actress named Ellen Ternan. How is that reflected in this chapter?
3. Why did Lucie’s mother create a lie about what happened to her father?
4. Why does the brawny, red haired women get angry with Mr. Lorry?
5. How does this chapter elucidate Lorry’s message to Jerry?

Book 1 Chapter 5

1. What is being foreshadowed with the wine cask?
2. How are the citizens of Saint Antoine literally and figuratively like gaunt scare crows?
3. Why did Defarge admonish Gaspard?
4. Why do Defarge and friends call each other Jacques?
5. Why does Defarge exhibit Doctor Manette? Why does Defarge feel as though Lorry could not understand why he does it?

Book 1 Chapter 6

1. Why is Manette’s voice pitiable and dreadful?
2. Why does Doctor Manette give 105 N Tower as his name?
3. Where does Manette believe he is?
4. What connection does Doctor Manette make to Lucie?