

A Tale of Two Cities by Charles Dickens One-Pager (Worth: 25 points)

A one pager is a single-page response to your reading of a poem, novel, or other piece of writing. It is a way to communicate your understanding of the material in a unique way. A one-pager allows you to be creative & experimental - to respond to your reading imaginatively and honestly.

Directions: After reading *A Tale of Two Cities*, answering the Responding Questions (25 pts) & completing a Dialectical Journal (20 points), complete the activities below on a separate sheet of computer paper (**no lined paper!**). Use plenty of **color** and design to illustrate your thoughts & ideas clearly and creatively (example on back). Include the author's name & title of the novel you are addressing. On the second day of school, you will submit the One-Pager, Responding answers & journal, then take a 40-question test on the novel in AP English Literature (110 points total). Be prepared: this assignment will have a significant impact on your first quarter grade!

Activities: (5 points each)

Include **2 notable quotes** that jump out at you. Write them down anywhere on your page. Use different colors or writing to make them stand out. These quotes must give significant insight to the story.

Use **3 visual images**, either drawn, cut out from magazines, or printed online which create a "visual focus" on your one-pager. Pictures should represent what you have visually in mind about the reading.

Make a **personal statement** about what you have read. What did the reading mean to you? What is your opinion, final thought, big question, or personal connection? (5-6 sentences long)

Ask **2 questions** and answer them. Ask one important question about the plot (What happened when...?) and one question about a concept or idea (Why does the protagonist...?) Then answer each question.

Be creative. Communicate your understanding or interpretation of the reading. Create in a way that your audience will understand something about the literature piece.

Fill the page up. Make it rich with quotes, images, color, etc.

Do not:

Summarize (discuss personal insights, not simply the plot)
Think half page will be enough (fill the page as much as possible)

Alfred

A detailed drawing of a muscular, anthropomorphic tiger or panther in a dynamic, crouching pose. The creature has orange and brown fur, a long tail, and is wearing a red collar with a bell. It is surrounded by a large, dark, swirling mass.

Quote

"And so Beowulf's followers rode,
mourning their beloved leader,
crying that no better king had
ever lived, no prince so mild, no
man so open to his people, so
deserving of praise." (p. 64)

12: What does Grendel's mother's death mean in religious world?

2A: Both the death of Grendel and his murder means the death of pagan and the revive of christianity. Beowulf, the symbol of the holy and ~~also~~ courageous figure, defeated the monster world just as God showed us the light and drove

A Tale of Two Cities: Dialectical Journal

Directions: Follow the model below by citing a quote on the left hand side (you can place page # and chapter at the end of the quote or in a middle column), then provide comments about that quote on the right hand side. Be sure your comments move beyond the plot by choosing one quote that exemplifies each of the following: 1. The author's style (comment column should explain why this quote is typical of the author's style). 2. Motif (explain the motif used in the quote and its impact on the story). 3. Foreshadowing (explain what the quote foreshadows and its effect on the story). 4. Characterization (explain whether the quote uses direct or indirect characterization & what it reveals about the given character). 5. Theme (explain the theme the quote touches upon and what the quote reveals about the theme).

Be sure to type the journal in Times New Roman, 12-point font with your name, AP English Literature, and the first day of school date in the heading. It should be approximately two pages in length (single spaced entries). Avoid online answers; I want to hear your voice.

Nicholas Opromollo

Period 1

A Tale of Two Cities: Dialectical Journal

Quote	Page # & Chapter	Response
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 the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity, it was the season of Light, it was the season of Dark, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair, we had everything before us, we had nothing before us, we were all going direct to Heaven, we were all going direct the other way- in short, the period was so far like the present period, that some of its noisiest authorities insisted on its being received, for good or for evil, in the superlative degree of comparison only.	P3, Ch1	The first paragraph, to me felt like Dickens' way of introducing the atmosphere and general feelings that people felt about the period within the plot's setting. The religious reference with the quote meant to myself that the people in this time period always internally had good intentions, but their actions never reflected them. (The road to Hell is paved with good intentions type of thing). The sentence itself reveals conflicting ideals that contradict one another and depict a place where things don't seem to make much sense.
Yet even when his eyes were opened on the mist of the rain, on the moving patch of light from the lamps, and the hedge at the roadside	P13, Ch3	This quote to me has the sense of ambiguity and darkness around it. Dickens has already revealed at this point some interest of the

Introducing the Novel

It was the best of times, it was the worst of times . . . it was the season of Light, it was the season of Darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair . . .

—from *A Tale of Two Cities*

With these famous words, Dickens begins *A Tale of Two Cities*. In 1859, the year in which *A Tale of Two Cities* was published, Dickens was probably the most popular author of his time.

Dickens had grown increasingly dismayed at the social and economic inequality of British society—the terrible living conditions of the urban poor, an arrogant and uncaring ruling class, and the ravages of the Industrial Revolution. The novels he wrote just before *A Tale of Two Cities*—*Bleak House* (1852–53), *Hard Times* (1854), and *Little Dorritt* (1855–57)—reflect his darker view of society. While it was the best of times for England's wealthy, with their town homes and country estates, Dickens believed that times had never been worse for the nation's poor. Hunger, disease, poverty, and ignorance characterized the daily fabric of their lives. Dickens had little hope that a social upheaval, like the one that shook France just half a century earlier, could be avoided.

Even though Dickens's mind was troubled during this period of his life, all was not gloomy. He had met and fallen in love with a young actress named Ellen Ternan. She was a petite blonde-haired, blue-eyed woman whom scholars feel is the model for Lucie Manette in *A Tale of Two Cities*. New beginnings—like the ones in Dickens's life—became an important theme in *A Tale of Two Cities*. The title of the first book of *A Tale of Two Cities*, “Recalled to Life,” probably had special meaning for Dickens in the late 1850s.

The novel tells the story of people whose lives are interrupted or wasted, then reawakened with a new purpose. It shows how the mistakes of the past and the evil they cause can be turned into triumphs through suffering and virtuous actions.

Stylistically, *A Tale of Two Cities* was something new for Dickens. Unlike most of his novels, the book is not set in the England of

Dickens's own time, and it is his only book that takes place mostly in a foreign country. More importantly, the book lacks the huge comic gallery of whimsical and eccentric characters that made Dickens famous. There is no Scrooge, no Fagin, and no Mr. Pickwick. There is very little of the humor that made Dickens's readers laugh, and few of the touching sentimental episodes that made them weep.

Instead, Dickens chose to make the plot the centerpiece of this novel. He called it “the best story I have written.” Critics have praised the way all the events relate to the progress of destiny. Several of the characters are symbolic representations of ideas rather than real-life individuals. One such character does not even have a name. The novel is rich in its detailed descriptions, its panoramic sweep of history, and its suspense, mystery, and terror. It is not surprising that *A Tale of Two Cities* has been filmed so many times.

Dickens hoped to make the wider historical events of the French Revolution understandable by portraying the personal struggles of one group of people. In the preface to the novel, however, he also gives readers a clue about the meaning the book had in his personal life:

Throughout its execution, it has had complete possession of me; I have so far verified what is done and suffered in these pages, as that I have certainly done and suffered it all myself.

It is not hard to read into these lines Dickens's own feeling of being trapped by overwhelming duties and responsibilities. But the lines may also express the liberating emotion Dickens felt at being, like Dr. Manette of the novel, “recalled to life.”

THE TIME AND PLACE

The action of *A Tale of Two Cities* takes place over a period of about eighteen years, beginning in 1775 and ending in 1793. Some of the story takes place earlier, as told in the flashback. A **flashback** reveals something that happened before that point in the story or before the story began. It provides information to help explain key events in the story.

In *A Tale of Two Cities*, the key events take place just before and during the French Revolution. The novel is set mostly in London and Paris, with some chapters set in rural France

and the English port city of Dover. The novel—Dickens's twelfth—was published in the author's new magazine, *All the Year Round*, from April to November 1859, and in book form the same year.

Did You Know?

The French Revolution was one of the most important events of the 1700s, and its influence was still strong in Charles Dickens's time. The revolution began in 1789 with the attack on the notorious prison, the Bastille—a key event in *A Tale of Two Cities*.

Throughout the revolution's different phases, various elected bodies ruled France, but none enjoyed total support of the people. Several forces resorted to terrorism to defeat their political opponents.

In addition to national turmoils, France was struggling with other countries in Europe. France's revolutionary government frightened Europe's monarchs, who feared that the spread of democratic ideas would bring an end to their power. The European monarchs sent troops to end the threat to their thrones.

Wars raged for six years. The French government had many problems to deal with, including opposition from some French citizens. In 1799

certain political leaders plotted to overthrow the current government. They chose the French general Napoleon Bonaparte to help them. Bonaparte quickly took power and crowned himself emperor a few years later.

Though historians may disagree on some points, they generally cite five reasons why the revolution occurred: France could not produce enough food to feed its people; the newly wealthy middle-class was without political power; peasants hated the ancient feudal system, in which they were forced to work for local nobles; new ideas about social and political reforms were spreading; and the French

Responding

A Tale of Two Cities

Book the First

Personal Response

How do you think Dr.

Manette feels? What might you like to say to him?

Analyzing Literature

Recall and Interpret

1. What is the significance of the title of Book the First, "Recalled to Life"?

2. What is the subject of Jarvis Lorry's dream? How does this relate to the literal events of the story?

3. With whom has Dr. Manette been staying since his release from prison? In what activity does his hostess constantly engage?

Responding

A Tale of Two Cities

Book the Second, Chapters 1–13

Personal Response

What is your first impression of Sydney Carton?

Is he the type of person with whom you would like to be friends? Why or why not?

Analyzing Literature

Recall and Interpret

1. To what person does the title of Book the Second, "The Golden Thread," refer? Why is this title a good one?

2. Why has Charles Darnay given up his inheritance? What is his uncle's reaction to his decision?

3. What does Sydney Carton say he would do for Lucie at the end of the last chapter of this section? Do you think he is trustworthy?

Responding

A Tale of Two Cities

Book the Second, Chapters 14–24

Personal Response

How did you feel at the end of the section when Charles decides to leave for France?

What would you have said to Charles if he had asked you for advice on returning to the country of his birth at such a time?

Analyzing Literature

Recall and Interpret

1. What is Jerry Cruncher's secret nighttime activity? What important theme of the novel does this activity reinforce?

2. What hidden function does Madame Defarge's constant knitting serve? In what way does it affect the life of Charles Darnay?

3. Where does Monsieur Defarge ask a guard to take him during the attack on the Bastille? What does he do there?

Responding

A Tale of Two Cities

Book the Third, Chapters 1–6

Personal Response

Do you believe at the end of this section that Darnay is finally safe from the Revolution? Why or why not?

Analyzing Literature

Recall and Interpret

1. What is the significance of the title of Book the Third? In what earlier scene did Dickens refer to an approaching storm?

2. What effect does Madame Defarge have on Lucie when the Defarges visit Lucie's apartment? How does Dickens symbolically show this effect?

3. How is Dr. Manette changed by saving Charles Darnay? How does he now look on his long years of imprisonment?

Responding

A Tale of Two Cities

Book the Third, Chapters 7–15

Personal Response

How do you feel about Sydney Carton's final sacrifice? Do you find it believable or not believable? Explain.

Analyzing Literature

Recall and Interpret

1. At what points in the story does Dickens change from the past tense to the present tense, and from third-person to first-person narration? What do these changes accomplish?

2. What explanation does Dr. Manette's letter provide for the actions and vengefulness of Madame Defarge?

3. What does Miss Pross do to protect Lucie and her child? What sacrifice must she make to defend them?
