

Book Two

Chapters 7–9

Prereading Activity:

Look up the meaning of the titles *monsieur*, *monseigneur* and *marquis* (or *marquess*). Compare their meanings.

Vocabulary:

Write down the definition of each of the words below. Then use each in a sentence to demonstrate your understanding of the meaning.

1. **foisted:**
2. **abject:**
3. **affably:**
4. **patrician:**
5. **contemptuous:**
6. **inanimate:**
7. **propitiate:**

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8. **clemency:**
9. **feliculously:**
10. **obsequiousness:**
11. **imperturbable:**
12. **poniard:**

Questions:

1. What incident inconveniences Monsieur the Marquis's coach?
2. What is the attitude of the people around the fountain toward the Marquis, and what is the attitude of the Marquis toward the people?
3. Why was the mender of roads looking under the coach as the Marquis passed him on the road?
4. Who is the Marquis's guest, and what relation is he?

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5. Who does the Marquis question Darnay about at the end of their conversation? What is suggested by this?

6. What “stone face” had been added to the château during the night? What was the message attached to the knife, and who was it from?

Analysis:

7. How does Dickens use verbal irony in his description of the Monseigneur’s chocolate ritual?

8. An *allusion* is a reference to an historical or literary person, place, or event with which the reader is assumed to be familiar. An allusion will often add a fuller meaning to a passage as connections are made between the allusion and the events of the story.
In Chapter 7, Dickens writes, “The text of [the aristocrats’] order . . . ran: ‘The earth and the fulness thereof are mine, saith Monseigneur’” This is an allusion to Psalm 24:1. What is Dickens implying with this allusion? Find a similar allusion in the first paragraph of Chapter 7. How might this explain the privileged class’s attitude toward other people, as illustrated in Chapters 8 and 9?

9. In Chapter 8, Dickens frequently makes the allusion that the Furies are following or escorting the Marquis. Who are the Furies? What meaning is added by this allusion?

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10. Another allusion Dickens uses is a reference to the Gorgon's head. What is the Gorgon? What is Dickens implying at the beginning of Chapter 9 when he says the Gorgon surveyed the château when it was finished, 200 years ago?

11. Both Darnay and the Marquis speak of their philosophies of honor. How do their two philosophies differ?

12. At the beginning of Chapter 8, Dickens begins to foreshadow the eventual fate of the Marquis:

The sunset struck so brilliantly into the travelling carriage when it gained the hill-top, that its occupant was steeped in crimson. "It will die out," said Monsieur the Marquis, glancing at his hands, "directly."

With this image we picture the Marquis bathed in crimson light which may suggest being covered in blood. Find at least two more instances from Chapters 8 and 9 where the fate of the Marquis is foreshadowed.

Dig Deeper:

13. It appears from these chapters that the French aristocrats owned almost all of the land and held almost total authority over the people of France. According to these chapters, how were they exercising that ownership and authority?

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Read Genesis 1:28, 2:15; Isaiah 34:1–4; and Matthew 20:25–28. According to these verses, how should authority be exercised? How should rulers rule?

14. Putting kindness and charity aside and viewing their situation pragmatically, are these French aristocrats being good managers? Why?

15. The aristocrats in these chapters clearly believe they are better than the peasants and deserve privileges. Read Deuteronomy 8:17–19; Romans 12:3; 1 Corinthians 4:6, 7; and Philippians 2:3, 4. Where do these verses say a person's worth comes from? What do they say about how we should view ourselves?

16. What similarities or differences do you see between our society and the French society described in these chapters? Are they of the same degree? Are their attitudes or actions?