



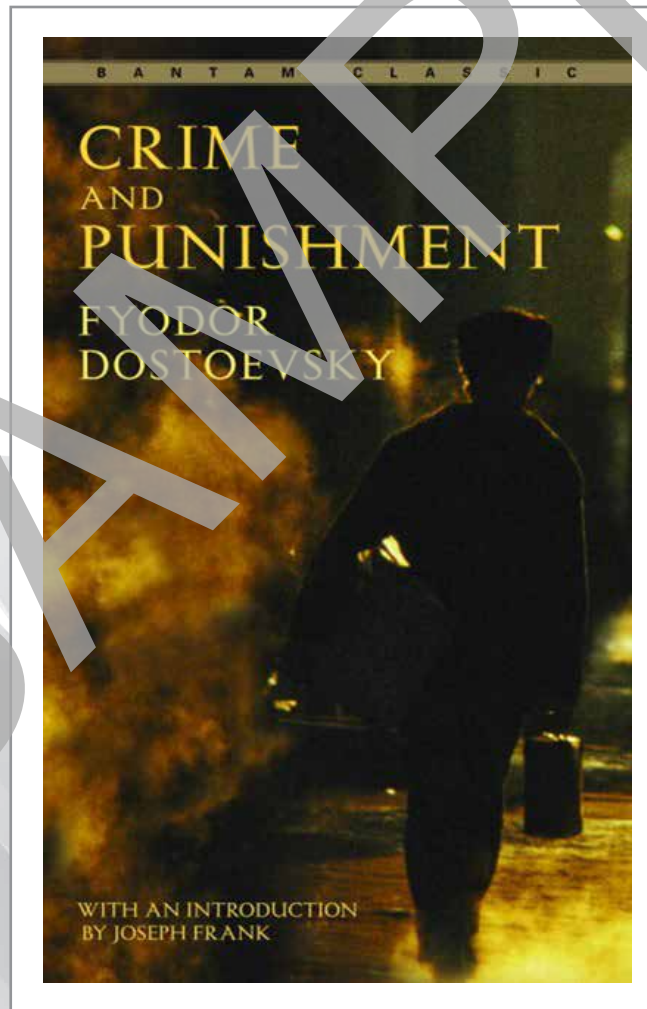
**TEACHER GUIDE**

**GRADES 9-12**

COMPREHENSIVE CURRICULUM BASED LESSON PLANS

# Crime and Punishment

Fyodor Dostoevsky



**READ, WRITE, THINK, DISCUSS AND CONNECT**

# Crime and Punishment

Fyodor Dostoevsky

## TEACHER GUIDE

**NOTE:**

The trade book edition of the novel used to prepare this guide is found in the Novel Units catalog and on the Novel Units website. Using other editions may have varied page references.

Please note: We have assigned Interest Levels based on our knowledge of the themes and ideas of the books included in the Novel Units sets, however, please assess the appropriateness of this novel or trade book for the age level and maturity of your students prior to reading with them. You know your students best!

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## Skills and Strategies

### Comprehension

Cause/effect,  
prediction, summarization

### Writing

Poetry, newspaper article,  
opinion essay, resume,  
eulogy

### Literary Elements

Characterization, theme,  
mood, tone, simile,  
metaphor, allusion, inference,  
irony, sequence

### Thinking

Analysis, compare/  
contrast, research

### Vocabulary

Target words, definitions,  
application

### Listening/Speaking

Discussion, interview,  
oral presentation

### Across the Curriculum

Art—collage, poster;  
Drama—script; Music—  
appropriate selection;  
Current Events—articles,  
pictures; Multi-media—slide  
show, video presentation

**Genre:** fiction

**Setting:** St. Petersburg, Russia; a prison in Siberia; 1860s

**Date of First Publication:** 1866

**Point of View:** third-person omniscient

**Style:** narrative

**Themes:** the human condition, e.g., guilt, conscience, alienation, pride, suffering, sacrifice; family relationships; nihilism; fate/chance; redemption/resurrection; social order, e.g., scientific vs. traditional values, gender, social class

**Conflict:** person vs. self; person vs. person; person vs. society

**Mood:** fatalistic, tragic

**Tone:** solemn, ironic

## Summary

Rodion Romanovitch Raskolnikov, a young, destitute former student in St. Petersburg, Russia, plots and carries out a plan to murder a detestable pawnbroker—an unloved old woman. In his own mind, he justifies the murder because he feels superior to other humans and believes he can transgress moral law because he is ridding humanity of a “louse.” In the course of carrying out his plan, he also murders the pawnbroker’s sister, an innocent victim. Unable to face the enormity of his crime, he begins a psychological journey into guilt and torment. He eventually confesses and is sentenced to eight years in a Siberian prison. Sonia, a young woman who had been forced into prostitution because of her family’s poverty, guides Raskolnikov on a gradual path to redemption. She follows him to Siberia, and their love for each other sustains them as they anticipate a happy future.

## Characters

**Raskolnikov (Rodya):** 23-year-old protagonist; intelligent, handsome, impoverished former student; commits murder (the crime) and lives in psychological terror and alienation (the punishment)

**Dounia:** Raskolnikov’s sister; intelligent, compassionate; willing to marry a wealthy man she does not love to help her mother and brother

**Pulcheria Alexandrovna Raskolnikov:** Raskolnikov’s mother; devoted to her son; willing to sacrifice Dounia’s happiness for him; unable to accept his guilt

**Alyona Ivanovna:** the miserly pawnbroker; murder victim

**Lizaveta Ivanovna:** Alyona’s subservient sister; murder victim

**Marmeladov:** self-deprecating former public official whom Raskolnikov meets in a tavern; knows his alcoholism is destroying his family but is unable to stop

**Katerina Ivanovna:** Marmeladov’s wife who is dying from consumption; proud of her aristocratic heritage

**Sonia:** Marmeladov’s frail, lovely teenage daughter; deeply religious; becomes a prostitute to save her family from starving to death; aids Raskolnikov in his search for redemption

## Characters With Character

**Directions:** A person's **character** is evaluated by his or her actions, statements, and by the way he or she treats others. For each of the attributes listed in the center of the page, write the name of one character from the novel who has that trait and the name of a character who does **not** have that trait. After each character's name, give an example of an action or statement that proves you have properly evaluated the character.

Has This Trait		Doesn't Have This Trait
	tells the truth	
	keeps promises	
	considers consequences of actions	
	sacrifices for others	
	listens to others without pre-judging them	
	is a good person	
	is kind and caring	

**Note:** Examples of similes and metaphors found in each section are included in the Supplementary Activities. Guide students to identify these devices as they read the novel. In addition, Dostoevsky employs allusions throughout the novel. These are identified at the beginning of each applicable section.

## Part I, Chapters I–II, pp. 1–25

Raskolnikov experiences mental conflict as he contemplates his “project” and visits the pawnbroker. He meets Marmeladov, who introduces him to Sonia and Katerina Ivanovna.

**Allusions:** yellow passport or ticket (p. 12)—a passport identifying a person as a prostitute; Bedlam (p. 15)—place of noise and confusion, an asylum for the mentally ill in London where people paid to watch patients on exhibit (as in a zoo)

Vocabulary	
axiom (2)	
languid (11)	
magnanimous (13)	
consumption (13)	

### Discussion Questions

1. Discuss Raskolnikov and his actions as he first appears in the novel. Analyze his thoughts about his “project” and note the significance of the setting. *(At first he is identified only as a young man. He is self-absorbed and isolated from everyone. He is crushed by poverty, handsome but shabbily dressed, and hopelessly in debt. He lives near the Hay Market, the poor section of St. Petersburg that is filled with establishments of ill repute. The*

*heat and smell emanating from this area add to his nervousness. His purpose on this particular day is to rehearse “it,” a project that fills him with great fear and doubts as to his ability to complete it. pp. 1–4)*

2. Discuss Raskolnikov’s visit to Alyona Ivanovna and examine what their interaction reveals about both of them. Note what the cigarette case foreshadows. *(She is a withered-up, miserly, severe old pawnbroker whom Raskolnikov has visited before. He probes into whether or not she is usually at home alone or with her sister, Lizaveta. He notes her actions, e.g., her keys, and procedure of getting money for his pawn. He alludes to bringing her a silver cigarette box to pawn, foreshadowing his ploy to return. pp. 4–7)*
3. Examine Raskolnikov’s state of mind when he leaves the pawnbroker and the symbolism of his ensuing actions. Note that the author has not yet revealed the exact nature of the project. *(He is confused and engages in a mental battle where he is repulsed by thoughts of committing such a loathsome act and yet is convinced he must do so. For the first time in his life, he enters a tavern and orders a beer, which he believes clears his mind. His descent into the tavern symbolizes the beginning of a physical, mental, and spiritual downward spiral. pp. 7–9)*
4. Discuss Raskolnikov’s chance meeting with Marmeladov. *(Raskolnikov is drawn to Marmeladov, who is drinking in the tavern, and believes their meeting is a product of destiny. Marmeladov introduces himself, and their ensuing conversation reveals circumstances of Marmeladov’s life. He has lost his job as a government clerk because of his alcoholism, causing his wife and children to live in deep poverty, and his daughter Sonia has become a prostitute to provide money for the family. His wife, Katerina, suffers from consumption. She is an educated and refined woman who does not love him and married him after the death of her first husband only because of her extreme poverty. He tells Raskolnikov that Katerina has a noble heart but also reveals that she is irritable and short-tempered and unjustly beats the children. Marmeladov invites Raskolnikov home with him. After observing the extreme poverty and chaotic living conditions, Raskolnikov leaves his only money for the Marmeladov family, yet he wants to go back and get it. This section introduces the subplot involving the Marmeladov family. pp. 9–25)*

5. Discuss the introduction of the theme of science versus humanity during Raskolnikov's discussion with Marmeladov in the tavern. Continue to look for evidence of this theme throughout the novel. Discuss what personal message Dostoevsky is embedding in his work regarding these ideas. (*Marmeladov refers to Mr. Lebeziatnikov, who will appear later in the novel, and who believes in "modern" ideologies and asserts that compassion is not allowed by science. Discussions will vary but should refer to Dostoevsky's disapproval of traditional Western ideas. p. 12*)
6. Discuss Marmeladov's self-analysis. (*The introduction of his character reveals his paradoxical nature. He acknowledges that he is a scoundrel who neglects his family, yet he will not accept responsibility for his own actions. He reveals that, by default, he has forced his daughter into prostitution, stolen from his wife, begged money from his daughter for liquor, and repeatedly lost jobs because of drinking. He proclaims his anguish for the misfortunes he causes his family, yet he declares that he drinks so he may suffer twice as much. He vows he deserves to be crucified, yet he wants others to pity him. pp. 13–21*)
7. Note the reference to the green shawl with which Sonia covers herself after her first night of prostitution. (*This is a family shawl that Sonia puts over her head and face as if to hide her shame. She then lies, shuddering, on the bed with her face to the wall [p. 16]. The shawl symbolizes suffering, as evidenced by the other times it is mentioned.*)
8. Discuss the introduction of the theme of religion, which will recur throughout the novel. Analyze the biblical allusions (p. 21) to God's forgiveness and the Image of the Beast: Luke 7:47, Revelation 13:16–17. (*Discussions will vary. Marmeladov is talking about Sonia, who has become a prostitute. He believes God will forgive her because she has loved much, just as God forgave the "sinner" woman in the Bible. He refers to himself as a swine, made in the Image of the Beast, but believes God will forgive him, and everyone, even Katerina, will understand all things. Inference*)
9. **Prediction:** What is Raskolnikov's "project," and will he be able to complete it?

### Supplementary Activities

1. Working in small groups, have students prepare a job application and resumé for Marmeladov in his search for a new job.
2. Elicit student response concerning foreshadowing in the novel. Use the Foreshadowing Chart on page 6 of this guide to list examples of foreshadowing.
3. Literary Devices: **Similes**—he would creep down the stairs like a cat (p. 1); her thin long neck, which looked like a hen's leg (p. 4); his chin looked like a stiff greyish brush (p. 10).

### Chapters III–IV, pp. 25–50

Raskolnikov receives a letter from his mother announcing the engagement of his sister, Dounia, to Luzhin and their impending arrival in St. Petersburg. Raskolnikov vows Dounia will not marry Luzhin.

**Allusions:** Bacchus (p. 29)—god of wine in Roman mythology; Golgotha (p. 39)—biblical reference in Matthew 27:33–35, literal meaning is the place of the skull, actual place is the hill on which Jesus Christ was crucified; Schilleresque (p. 41)—Schiller was a leading figure in German literature whose dramas feature pleas for human freedom and dignity; Jesuitical (p. 42)—Jesuits are members of a Roman Catholic religious order; Zeus (p. 43)—ruler of gods in Greek mythology