**CRIME AND PUNISHMENT**

**Λιτεραρψ Τεξτ**


**Οργανιζατιοναλ Παττερν**

The book is divided into six parts and an epilogue. Each part is divided into between six and eight chapters averaging 15 pages each. Part I introduces the reader to Rodion Romanovitch Raskolnikov, the protagonist, and other key characters and ends with Raskolnikov committing the murder. Part II covers Raskolnikov’s immediate reaction to the murder and the beginning of the psychological torment he struggles with for the remainder of the story. Also included in Part II are the other character’s discovery of and reactions to the murders, Raskolnikov’s failing health and the introduction of his mother, sister, her fiancé and Sonia, as well as Raskolnikov’s struggle between his desire to confess the murder and his desire to remain free. Parts III-VI contains the rising action of Raskolnikov’s interaction with other characters, his mounting psychological stress and ultimate confession of his crime. The epilogue takes place after his trial and sentencing.

**Ισσυεσ Ρελατεδ το τηε Στυδψ οφ Λιτερατυρε**

**Setting**—The story takes place in St. Petersburg, Russia, in the late 19th century. Raskolnikov often roams the streets of the city, and the reader is given a good picture of some of the tenements, taverns and basic living conditions of the lower classes at that time.

**Plot**—Raskolnikov, a university student living in Russia struggles with a theory he has: there are certain extraordinary individuals who should not be subject to the laws of society. Believing he is one of these extraordinary individuals, a superman, Raskolnikov commits a murder. The rest of the story shows his inner struggle between wanting to confess and wanting to remain free from punishment. Ultimately, Raskolnikov is discovered and confesses his crime.

**Point of View/Narrative voice**—The story is told in third person limited omniscient voice. The narrator follows different characters and tells the thoughts of the character being focused on.

**Foreshadowing**—The murder is foreshadowed as Raskolnikov rehearses it in Part I the end of Chapter I. His confession is foreshadowed several times throughout Parts II-VI as he contemplates confessing his crime and comes very close when he is in the police station being questioned in Part II Chapter I, pg 125. —“He went in like a man condemned to death.” (Part I, Chapter V, pg 76)
**Themes**

--Extraordinary People vs. Ordinary People
- Introduction to beginnings of Raskolnikov’s theory of extraordinary individuals with overheard discussion between student and officer in tavern. (Part I, Chapter VI, pg 79-81)
- Explanation of Raskolnikov’s theory published in his article “On Crime” through a conversation with Porfiry. (Part III, Chapter V, pg 305-312)

--Alienation from Society
- “He had become so completely absorbed in himself, and isolated from his fellows that he dreaded meeting, not only his landlady, but any one at all.” (Part I, Chapter I, pg 2.)
- “Something was happening to him entirely new, sudden and unknown. It was not that he understood, but he felt clearly with all the intensity of sensation that he could never more appeal to these people in the police-office with sentimental effusions like his recent outburst, or with anything whatever; and that if they had been his own brothers and sisters and not police-officers, it would have been utterly out of the question to appeal to them in any circumstance of life. He had never experienced such a strange and awful sensation.” (Part II, Chapter I, pg 125)

--Psychology of Crime and Punishment
- Several instances of wanting to confess his crime. (Part II, Chapter I, Chapter V)
- Returning to the scene of the crime. (Part II, Chapter VI)

--Influence of Dreams
- “. . . he had been lost in dreams. At the time he had put no faith in those dreams and was only tantalizing himself by their hideous but daring recklessness. Now, a month later, he had begun to look upon them differently . . . to regard this ‘hideous’ dream as an exploit to be attempted . . .” (Part I, Chapter I, pg 4)
- “Raskolnikov had a fearful dream.” The dream of villagers beating the dead mare follows. (Part I, Chapter 5, pg 67-73)
- Dreams the police inspector is beating his landlady. (Part II, Chapter II, pg 138-139)

**Αφεχτισε Ισσυεσ Ρελατεδ το τηε Τεξτ**

--Many high school students who read *Crime and Punishment* may relate to Raskolnikov’s theory of a superman. Do they see themselves, or someone they know, as one of Raskolnikov’s extraordinary individuals, who should be exempt from the laws of our society.

--Sonia’s personal degradation to save her family may strike a chord with an increasing number of students due to the many struggling single parent families. Have any of the students in class had to make personal sacrifices to help support their family?

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One of the most difficult issues regarding vocabulary while reading this novel pertains to the Russian nomenclature. Dostoyevsky refers to each character by several different names, which can create confusion, because many of the names have similar beginnings and endings.

An occasional Russian exclamation or phrase may need to be researched or translated.

One major concept in this work is the questioning of societal constructs, such as the justice system and crime. I think it is good for students to discuss and to ponder their own society, and to question some of its constructs. However, the danger in this discussion and thought process is that some students may engage in dangerous rebellious and dangerous behavior as a result of their questioning society.

The elitist philosophy plays a major role in this story as well. I think discussing with students Raskolnikov’s theory of extraordinary people who should not be subject to the laws of society will be helpful, but I would have to be sure to point out the difficulties with this theory. Students need to see the dangers of believing this theory, regardless of whether it is true or not.

A little information on Russia in the 1860’s may help students understand some of the events, but the context of the book is easy to understand.

There is no real diversity portrayed in this novel. All characters are Russian, and all seem to originate in the same social class, although some have lost their fortunes and are now a bit less well off than others, none of the main characters is particularly rich or poor. Although, students of diversity may identify with Raskolnikov’s alienation from society.

The main gender issue present in the novel is the subjugation of women in 19th century Russia. One particular example occurs when Dounia, acting against her own wishes, obediently breaks off her engagement with Luzhin simply because Raskolnikov commands it.

*Crime and Punishment* poses the interesting question: are laws just arbitrary human constructs or are there psychological laws which govern our behavior in societies? This debate is seen more dramatically in the views of Raskolnikov (who believes

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laws to be constructs of society) and Porfiry (the police detective investigating the murder who believes we are governed by our own psyche).

Research Ισσυεσ/Προφεχτ Ιδεασ

--Research punishment for crimes in various cultures
  -Make a poster of particular methods of punishment, or prison conditions in different cultures
--Research history of punishment for crimes for particular country/culture
  -Make a poster or diagram showing progression of change in punishments
  -Write a paper comparing different methods.
--Research Russian culture (fashion, education, government, literature, etc.) for the time period.
--Research any studies on the connection between dreams and crime, or dreams in general.
--Keep a personal dream log. Cite any interesting connections between personal dreams and real-life events.

Informationα/Φυνχτιοναλ Τεξτσ


