The French Revolution

- Began July 14, 1789

- A mob stormed the Bastille, an infamous prison that housed political prisoners sent there by members of the aristocracy.

- July 14 is now celebrated as “Bastille Day” by the French just as we celebrate July 4.
The French Revolution (cont.)

- After the government’s overthrow, a revolutionary committee of middle-class citizens governed Paris.

- During this period, the peasants burned the castles of the lords in order to destroy the papers which contained the records of their manorial rights.
The French Revolution (cont.)

- In 1792, royalty was abolished, and a republic was proclaimed.

- In 1793, the Reign of Terror began, and thousands of aristocrats were killed by the guillotine.
Reasons for the Revolution

- Oppression of the masses by the aristocracy
- Working conditions that were no better than slavery
- Unfair taxes that put additional burden on those struggling to survive
- Hunger and poverty of the masses in stark contrast to the indulgent life of the aristocracy
Charles Dickens (1812-1870)

- Dickens was very popular in his own time and read his stories to large, appreciative audiences.

- His works were written in weekly installments and were eagerly awaited by his audience.
Charles Dickens (1812-1870)

- During his childhood, his father was sent to debtor’s prison.
- During this time, Dickens developed a fascination with prisons and his interest in the needs of the poor.
Charles Dickens (1812-1870)
Other Works Include:

*Oliver Twist*

*Great Expectations*

*A Christmas Carol*

*David Copperfield*
A Tale of Two Cities

- Historical Novel that takes place during the French Revolution
- Presents the French Revolution as the natural or fated consequence of the social ills of the times.
- The growing poverty in which the masses of people lived and the oppression they suffered at the hands of the aristocracy were the proximate causes for the civil unrest that led to the French Revolution.
A Tale of Two Cities

- Keep in mind that Dickens originally wrote the novel for a weekly publication.
- Notice how he maintains the suspense and interest of his readers by providing cliff-hangers at the end of many chapters.
- The opening and closing lines are some of the most well-known in literature.
Objectives
By the end of this unit, I expect you to be able to:

- Recognize Dickens’ style and identify examples
- Relate incidents in the story which illustrate the author’s views on the following:
  - Capital punishment
  - The horrors of prisons
  - The dangers of mob rule
  - The ideal woman
  - Horrible ways to die
- Cite events from the novel to support that Dickens believes in fate and show that the events in the protagonist’s life are inevitable consequences resulting from the tide of history.
- Explain the author’s use of foreshadowing to heighten suspense and create interest in the following ways:
  - Using imagery to set the mood for the action to come
  - Suggestively titling each chapter
  - Including cliff-hangers to end many of the chapters
Objectives
By the end of this unit, I expect you to be able to:

- Recognize the changing point of view
- Trace the development of the major theme in this story, rebirth through sacrifice, as it applies to several of the characters.
- Identify caricatures
- Find examples of epithets
- Identify and explain the following symbols:
  - Water as a symbol for life
  - The color red as a symbol for blood
  - Lucie’s hair as a symbol for home
Objectives
By the end of this unit, I expect you to be able to:

- Support or refute the following statement by citing examples from the story:
  - “As a force of nature, love is more powerful than hate.”
- Discuss how mob rule can lead to violent excesses.
- Discuss the societal abuses that bring on the revolution and comment on the revolution’s human face.