

A Tale of Two Cities

Book the First – Recalled to Life

Chapter 1

The Period

*"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 Darkness,
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."*

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ANAPHORA – a figure of repetition

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ANTITHESIS: *contrasting opposites*



*"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 Darkness,
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."*

Chapter title: "The Period" Paragraph theme: the period

Moves from the era through the seasons and to the present moment.

*"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 Darkness,
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.*

*"It was the _____ of _____, it was the _____ of _____,
it was the _____ of _____, it was the _____ of _____,
"It was the _____ of _____, it was the _____ of _____,
it was the _____ of _____, it was the _____ of _____,
"It was the _____ of _____, it was the _____ of _____,*

*we had _____ before us,
we had _____ before us,*

*we were all going direct _____,
we were all going direct _____,*

PARALLEL CONSTRUCTION

ISOCOLON = *a succession of equal and balanced phrases*

*This opening paragraph raises
the important themes of:*

- repetition
- antithesis
- time
- and parallelism

A TALE OF TWO CITIES

is a novel:

- of repetition
- of antithesis
- that travels back & forth through time
- that parallels people, societies, choices

A TALE OF TWO CITIES

As you read pay close attention to:

- where you are in time
- where you are in terms of location

Also be sure to notice:

- doubling
- parallels
- antithesis

These rhetorical strategies not only occur at the level of syntax; they also play out in the construction of characters, scenes, chapters, and plot.