A Tale of Two Cities

After reading *A Tale of Two Cities,* complete the following essay prompts. As these are meant to prepare you for the AP Literature and Composition Exam this year, I would like you to handwrite each essay and to limit yourself to 40-50 minutes to complete each essay. All three essays will be scored with the attached AP scoring rubric and will be further discussed in relation to the prompt once all essay have been graded and returned. The composite score of these essays will constitute your first major essay grade of the year, and all of the essays will be due at the start of the first day of class in the fall.

1. The most important themes in literature are sometimes developed in scenes in which a death or deaths take place. Using *A Tale of Two Cities*, write a well-organized essay in which you show how a specific death scene helps to illuminate the meaning of the work as a whole. Avoid mere plot summary.

2. In a literary work, a minor character, often known as a foil, possesses traits that emphasize, by contrast or comparison, the distinctive characteristics and qualities of the main character. For example, the ideas or behavior of the minor character might be used to highlight the weaknesses or strengths of the main character.

Using *A Tale of Two Cities*, consider how one of its minor characters serves as a foil to one of the main characters. Then write an essay in which you analyze how the relation between the minor character and the major character illuminates the meaning of the work as a whole.

3. It has often been said that what we value can be determined only by what we sacrifice. Consider how this statement applies to a character from *A Tale of Two Cities*. Select a character that has deliberately sacrificed, surrendered, or forfeited something in a way that highlights that character's values. Then write a well-organized essay in which you analyze how the particular sacrifice illuminates the character's values and provides a deeper understanding of the meaning of the work as a whole.