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❁ PARTS ONE-THREE ❁

PRE-GRAMMAR | Preparation

Prepare the student for understanding the Central One Idea by drawing upon his or her prior knowledge or experience.

1. What principles are important for a family to live by in order to be healthy and happy?

GRAMMAR | Presentation LOGIC | Dialectic

In the Grammar section, the student is presented with and discovers essential facts, elements, and features of the novel through the Reading Notes, Words to Be Defined, and Comprehension Questions.

In the Logic section, the student reasons with the facts, elements, and features of the novel; sorts, arranges, compares, and connects ideas – and begins to uncover and determine the Central One Idea.

Part One · Chapters I-VIII

READING NOTES

1. **valet** (p. 4) – personal attendant to a gentleman
2. **barb** (p. 7) – an intentional insult or putdown
3. **progenitor** (p. 7) – an ancestor, parent, or forbear
4. **shamming** (p. 9) – pretending; lying
5. **chiffonier** (p. 10) – a tall chest of drawers usually used to store various odds and ends
6. **scriveners** (p. 15) – record keepers or other literate employees holding various administrative duties
7. **provincial** (p. 15) – rural areas outside or away from the city or capital of a country

8. **adjutants** (p. 17) – administrative assistants to the commanding officers
9. **coterie** (p. 18) – a small, exclusive association or syndicate
10. **imperial aide-de-camp** (p. 22) – a confidential, personal assistant to a member of the royal family or other high ranking official
11. **polemics** (p. 23) – admonitions, critiques, or debates
12. **materialists** (p. 23) – Materialism was a Russian philosophical movement that began in the 1860s. Valuing science over theology, materialism undermined traditional religion and the established monarchy. Its tenets comprise elements of naturalism (the belief that everything arises from nature instead of God) and causal determinism (the belief that every event is determined by prior events). The movement often opposed established authority and traditional values. Materialism was a forerunner to communism; its ideas and philosophers were highly revered by Lenin and the other communist leaders through the twentieth century.
13. **promissory note** (p. 26) – a signed legal document that serves as a written promise to pay a debt, either on demand or at a specific date
14. **epigraph** – A motto, phrase, or quotation set at the beginning of a literary work (or one of its divisions). The epigraph usually suggests the theme, subject, or mood of the work.

WORDS TO BE DEFINED

1. passionate; lustful
2. disdainful; scornful
3. compensate; make amends
4. conscientious; meticulous
5. squandered; wasted
6. warm; agreeable
7. respect; courtesy
8. embarrassed; humbled
9. apprehensively; fearfully

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. Oblonsky's wife, Dolly, has found out that he has been having an affair with the French governess. For three days the household has been turned upside down: Dolly won't leave her rooms; the children are running all over the house as if lost; the English governess is quarreling with the housekeeper and asking for a new place; the cook has left the premises; and Oblonsky is quarantined in his study, sleeping on the sofa.
2. Stiva is a truthful man concerning himself. "He could not deceive himself into believing that he repented of his behavior" (p. 3). He is handsome and amorous, but he does not feel amorous for his wife, "the mother of five living and two dead children" (p. 3). He repents only that he didn't manage to conceal things better from her.
3. The telegram reveals that Stepan's sister, Anna Arkadyevna, is coming to visit without her husband to help contribute to a reconciliation of Dolly and Stepan. Dolly is unmoved that Anna is coming; she says she is leaving and Stepan can do as he pleases.
4. The thought that he might be seeking reconciliation with his wife because of the wealth of her woods.

WORDS TO BE DEFINED

Definitions Bank

apprehensively; fearfully	passionate; lustful
compensate; make amends	respect; courtesy
conscientious; meticulous	squandered; wasted
disdainful; scornful	warm; agreeable
embarrassed; humbled	

1. a thirty-four-year-old, handsome, **amorous** man, did not feel amorous with his wife, *adj.* (p. 3)
2. she stopped, looked at the door and vainly tried to give her face a stern and **contemptuous** expression. *adj.* (p. 10)
3. "I'm guilty, so punish me, tell me to **atone** for it." *v.* (p. 11)
4. Stepan Arkadyich remembered his joke about this **punctilious** bald-headed man, *adj.* (p. 13)
5. Yet, despite his **dissipated** life, none-too-high rank and none-too-ripe age, *adj.* (p. 14)
6. something that physically made an **amiable** and cheerful impression on the people he met. *adj.* (p.15)
7. The secretary came in with familiar **deference** and a certain modest awareness, *n.* (p. 19)
8. The **abashed** secretary withdrew. *adj.* (p. 20)
9. "Why?" Levin asked **timorously**. *adv.* (p.20)



Read Chapters I-VIII, marking the text in key places according to the method taught in "How to Mark a Book."

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. Why is the Oblonsky household in disfunction and turmoil? Describe some of the activities occurring in the house.
2. What does the opening of Chapter II reveal about Stiva? Include a quotation.
3. What news does Matvei's telegram bring? What is Dolly's response to the telegram?

5. Answers will vary. Stepan did well in school due to his natural smarts, but he could have done much better if he hadn't been lazy and mischievous. His brother-in-law, Alexei Alexandrovich Karenin, got him a distinguished and well-paid post in one of Moscow's offices, though a hundred other well-connected people could have gotten him the position. Stepan is liked by everyone who knows him because of his "kind, cheerful temper and unquestionable honesty ... his handsome, bright appearance, shining eyes, black brows and hair ... that physically made an amiable and cheerful impression on the people he met" (p. 15).

The Russian aristocracy is steeped in connections and wealthy perks: they look out for their own, distributing high positions and salaries to each other. "Half of Moscow and Petersburg were relatives or friends of Stepan Arkadyich. He had been born into the milieu of those who were or had become the mighty of this world" (p. 14).

4. *This wood had to be sold; but now, before his reconciliation with his wife, it was out of the question.* (p. 6)
What thought about himself is offensive to Stepan regarding this issue of the wood on his wife's estate?
5. *He had been born into the milieu of those who were or had become the mighty of this world.* (p. 14)
List some details you learn about Stepan in the first couple pages of Chapter V. What do you learn about the Russian aristocracy during this time?
6. Briefly describe Levin, as well as his relationship with Oblonsky. How are they different?
7. Why has Levin come to Moscow? Briefly describe the old noble Moscow houses of Levin and Shcherbatsky. What about the Shcherbatskys appealed to Levin?

SOCRATIC DISCUSSION QUESTIONS (LOGIC | Dialectic)
May be verbally discussed or answered in written form in your Literature Notebook.

1. *Vengeance is mine; I will repay.* – Epigraph of the novel
Where does the **epigraph** at the beginning of the novel come from? What **theme** does it suggest?
2. *All happy families are alike; each unhappy family is unhappy in its own way.* (p. 1)
How does the opening sentence **foreshadow** the **thematic structure** of the novel?
3. *– his face involuntarily ... smiled all at once its habitual, kind and therefore stupid smile.* (p. 3)
What are the implications of Stiva's reaction to his wife finding the note? Could it **foreshadow** anything?
4. What are Sergei and the philosopher arguing about? Why is Levin frustrated?

6. Levin is strongly-built, broad-shouldered, with a curly beard; he is wearing a lamb-skin hat. He is about the same age as Oblonsky (thirty-four); he is the comrade and friend of his early youth. They love each other despite the differences in their characters and tastes. Levin is a man of the country; Oblonsky is a man of the city. Each thinks his life is the only real life, and inwardly despises the other's manner of life.
7. Levin has come to Moscow to propose to Kitty Shcherbatsky, Dolly's sister. The two houses are friendly and close with one another. Levin's mother and father died, so he looked to the Shcherbatskys as the old, noble, educated, and honorable family that he was deprived of. To Levin, the Shcherbatsky sisters were mysterious and wonderful to him; he admired their femininity and beauty (pp. 21-22).

SOCRATIC DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Answers will vary. Tolstoy quotes Romans 12:19. The epigraph sets a serious, weighty tone for the novel and introduces the theme of judgment, which will function as a major theme in regard to the actions and consequences of the various families, their roles in society, and society's response to them.
2. Answers will vary. As pointed out in the Basic Features and Background section, the novel features a thematic structure of four families—three unhappy families and one happy family. The sentence introduces (and foreshadows) the theme of family and piques the reader's interest.
3. This reveals quite a bit about Stiva: he is charming, but nonchalant, lacking depth with his wife and his feelings about his infidelity. We do not know if we can fully trust him. He seems to miss the mark on how he should have reacted. It could foreshadow that he may not change his adulterous behavior.
4. The two men are discussing whether a division exists between mental and physical phenomena in human existence. Sergei does not accept that the whole notion of the external world stems from sense impressions. He argues that the concept of being itself is not received through the senses. Levin is frustrated because the men avoid the most important question(s): the spiritual aspect and the meaning of life and death. Sergei and the philosopher cannot face the most fundamental question(s) because they (a little irony present here) do not have enough scientific data.

Part Two • Chapters XXVIII-XXXV

READING NOTES

1. **Spanish toreadors** (p. 208) – Spanish bullfighters
2. *engouement* (p. 225) – infatuation
3. *Fürstin* (p. 225) - Princess
4. *"Maybe," he said, pressing her arm with his elbow. "But it's better to do it so that, if you ask, nobody knows."* (p. 232) – Through this concise reminder, the Prince reveals to Kitty the problem with Mme Stahl. Kitty has become increasingly suspicious of the woman's character, yet due to her naivete and trusting heart, she is incapable of discerning Mme Stahl's pretenses. The Prince, echoing Matthew 6:1-4, teaches his daughter a valuable moral lesson.

"Take heed that you do not do your charitable deeds before men, to be seen by them. Otherwise you have no reward from your Father in heaven. Therefore, when you do a charitable deed, do not sound a trumpet before you as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory from men. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward. But when you do a charitable deed, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, that your charitable deed may be in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will Himself reward you openly." – Matthew 6:1-4

WORDS TO BE DEFINED

1. rolling; billowing
2. patronizingly; snobbishly
3. fawning; ingratiating
4. talkativeness; verbosity
5. theories; speculations
6. rude; impolite
7. overjoyed; enthusiastic

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. Anna sees her husband as condescending and finds it repulsive; she thinks that everything dear to him is for his aggrandizement and success; his smile is cold; his incessant voice is too high and grates on her ear; he has a smile that only reveals his teeth.
2. Betsy responds indifferently, not acknowledging Anna's desperation. She remains cool and coy, and gossips (or flirts) with a general. She is involved in her own extramarital indulgences; perhaps she is unaffected by Anna's affair with Vronsky. But she could also be protecting Anna from the watchful eye of Alexei Alexandrovich—because if Betsy's response mirrors Anna's, that would confirm Alexei Alexandrovich's suspicions. Betsy does "come to Anna's rescue" by promising that she will send word to her concerning Vronsky.
3. The marriage of Anna and Karenin is dead. For Karenin it is the source of his sorrow; for Anna it is the source of her joy. Karenin's marriage and life as he knew them are over. He is no longer a husband; he is "dead" to Anna. By contrast, Anna reacts as if she were standing at the gates of heaven "seeing the light" of her Savior—except it is Vronsky who brings her this light, instead of the God of the universe. Inconsiderate and callous toward Karenin's heart, she tosses him aside.

"But his entire face suddenly acquired the solemn immobility of a dead man" (p. 213).
"My God, what light! It's frightening but I love seeing his face and love this fantastic light... My husband! Ah, yes... Well, thank God it's all over with him" (p. 213).

WORDS TO BE DEFINED

Definitions Bank

fawning; ingratiating	rude; impolite
overjoyed; enthusiastic	talkativeness; verbosity
patronizingly; snobbishly	theories; speculations
rolling; billowing	

1. She felt her husband's approach from a distance and involuntarily watched him in the **undulating** crowd, *adj.* (p. 207)
2. She saw how he came to the pavilion, now **condescendingly** responding to obsequious bows, *adv.* (p. 207)
3. She saw how he came to the pavilion, now condescendingly responding to **obsequious** bows, *n.* (p. 207)
4. Nor did she understand that Alexei Alexandrovich's particular **loquacity** that day, *n.* (p. 208)
5. interest at the spa now consisted in her observations and **surmises** about those she did not know. *n.* (p. 214)
6. said **impertinent** things to him for not treating him correctly, *adj.* (p. 218)
7. had always been a sickly and **rapturous** woman. *adj.* (p. 219)



Read Chapters XXVIII-XXXV, marking the text in key places according to the method taught in "How to Mark a Book."

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. Identify some characteristics of Alexei Alexandrovich that annoy or repulse Anna.
2. How does Betsy react to Vronsky's fall? What does this reveal about her?
3. Anna confesses to Alexei Alexandrovich that she is in love with Vronsky and that she is his mistress. How do the emotions and responses of Alexei and Anna contrast? Include a few quotations to portray their various emotions.
4. "Besides that, she also could not be attractive to men because she lacked what Kitty had in over-abundance – the restrained fire of life and an awareness of her attractiveness" (p. 215).
5. Kitty's venture to the spa is made with the hope that she will be cured of whatever malady she suffers. Yet the true cause of her suffering is her naivete concerning Vronsky and her foolish rejection of Konstantin Levin. Nikolai's appearance at the spa pricks Kitty's conscience and humbles her into contrition to accept the cause of her misery. Kitty perceives Nikolai as the dark, judging, taunting representation of Levin. When she avoids him, she is running from her mistakes and from the truth.

4. What does Varenka lack that Kitty has in overabundance? Answer with a quotation.
5. *Not so much because of what her mother told her as because this was Konstantin's brother, these persons suddenly became highly disagreeable to her. This Levin, by his habit of twitching his head, now provoked in her an irrepressible feeling of disgust. It seemed to her that his big, frightening eyes, which followed her persistently, expressed a feeling of hatred and mockery, and she tried to avoid meeting him. (p. 216)*
Why do Nikolai Levin and his girlfriend affect Kitty in this negative manner?
6. *It was a nasty day, rain fell all morning, and patients with umbrellas crowded into the gallery. (p. 217)*
How does Tolstoy's use of **imagery** in the description of the spa contrast with the meeting of Kitty and Varenka?
7. List three or four acts of kindness/altruism carried out by Varenka.
8. How does Mme Stahl's acquisition of Varenka reveal a darker side of her character?
9. What important quality of Varenka's does Kitty desire to know about and learn from her? Answer with a quotation.
10. As Prince Shcherbatsky and Kitty stroll through the spa, why does the Prince feel awkward and ashamed?
11. What does the Prince reveal to Kitty concerning Mme Stahl's health? What are several life lessons Kitty learns from her wise father?
12. What does Kitty accuse Varenka of prior to leaving the German spa?

6. One usually thinks of a spa, complete with a water treatment, as a place of respite and serenity. But, ironically, the German spa the Shcherbatskys visit appears to be quite the opposite. It is perpetually crowded with the sick and infirm, and the mood is dull and depressing. In a setting such as this, Kitty's hope for recovery seems futile. But the meeting between two light-filled kindred spirits, Kitty and Varenka, serves as a sharp contrast to this gloomy environment.
7. Varenka escorts a blind Frenchwoman along the length of the gallery. Then she intervenes between the irascible Nikolai Levin and a doctor, and she escorts Levin away. Kitty notices that Varenka is welcoming, considerate, and impartial to Nikolai and his partner. As well, she remains humble and deprecatory when Kitty addresses her charitable behavior. Finally, Varenka insists that she is not too busy to establish a friendship with Kitty as she hurries off to entertain two children of one of the patients.

8. The fact that Mme Stahl's family stole the infant Varenka from her birth parents in order to appease her after the loss of her own newborn reveals their selfishness and indulgence. And then when Mme Stahl discovered that the child was not hers, she heartlessly continued raising her, but then viewed her more as an orphan or a ward instead of a daughter.
9. *"She is moved only by the wish not to say no and to do something nice for maman. What is it in her? What gives her this strength to disregard everything, to be so calmly independent? How I wish I knew and could learn it from her," Kitty thought" (p. 221).*
10. The Prince is awkward and ashamed because he is in good health and has robust, "fat-enveloped" limbs. He is cogently aware of his own vitality in the midst of the distressed invalids around him.
11. The Prince tells Kitty that Mme Stahl uses a covered wheelchair because she has stubby legs and a bad figure. He suggests that Varenka is aware of this too. Shocked, Kitty protests that Mme Stahl partakes in numerous acts of kindness and is good to everyone. But her father reminds her that it is better to do good in a way that no one knows you are doing it. From this, Kitty learns that many people in the aristocracy are deeply vain, that Varenka is a true Christian servant whose goodness runs deeper than she thought, and that she is humble and obedient. Kitty learns to trust her instinct. Most importantly, she learns that genuine acts of Christian kindness should be done with anonymity.
12. Kitty accuses Varenka of loving her only to save her. Kitty thinks that her own love for Varenka was pure and from the heart, while Varenka's love for Kitty had an underlying motive: to teach or save her.

SOCRATIC DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Answers will vary. Kitty is in the process of introducing her father to Mme Stahl, and she has yet to realize that Mme Stahl is a vain person and deceptive concerning her illness. While the reader begins to see the true nature of Mme Stahl, Kitty does not recognize this until her father exposes the woman. Kitty is gentle with her introduction; the narrator, however, is vicious. By using the pronoun "something," the reader is made aware that this character is almost subhuman and not worthy of the pronoun "she." Her body is propped in the chair instead of sitting. Her dress is unimpressive and drab—if it even is a dress; it could simply be a mass of towels or linens. The narrator's sarcastic description prepares the reader for the revelation that is about to occur.

2. Answers will vary. The cause of Kitty's illness was the result of not discerning the intentions of Vronsky, and not accepting the goodness of her own feelings towards Levin. At the spa, Kitty's greatest change is her improved ability to judge the character of others. Enamored with Varenka, she questions, "What is it in her? What gives her this strength to disregard everything, to be so calmly independent?" (p. 221). Kitty witnesses Varenka's selflessness and wonders how she can behave in a similar manner. She admits that her pride would cause her to seek and expect praise. Kitty becomes enlightened and understands that Varenka's goodness is a deep Christian goodness with a desire to serve others as Christ did. With the help of her father, (analogous to God the Father), Kitty comes to discern the prideful, dishonest nature of Mme Stahl and the inappropriate intentions of the painter Mikhail Alexeevich towards her, and the resulting hurt of his wife. Kitty also recognizes the suffering and brokenness in Levin's brother Nikolai. As well, Kitty's adoration of Varenka is tempered when she sees that even Varenka's intentions are not as pure as she thought. Kitty believes Varenka's love and friendship are tinted with the goal to "save her and teach her." This important discovery reveals that Kitty has matured and that she is able and ready to love based on her own wisdom and accord.

SOCRATIC DISCUSSION QUESTIONS (LOGIC | Dialectic) May be verbally discussed or answered in written form in your Literature Notebook.

1. "And here's Mme Stahl," said Kitty, pointing to a bath-chair in which something lay, dressed in something grey and blue, propped on pillows under an umbrella. (p. 230)

Tolstoy's use of **third person omniscient narration** reveals the intimate thoughts of various characters. Along with this, the narrator sometimes reveals his clever, satirical perspective. How does the narrator's description of Mme Stahl confirm the reader's suspicions concerning Mme Stahl?

2. Throughout the Shcherbatskys' stay at the spa, the reader witnesses Kitty change, mature, and ultimately heal. How has Kitty changed? What has she learned about others, and most importantly, about herself?