

THE BROTHERS KARAMAZOV

by Fyodor Dostoevsky



THE AUTHOR

Fyodor Dostoevsky (1821-1881) was born into a lower middle class family in Moscow, the son of a former army surgeon, and experienced a strict religious upbringing. His education was poor, and at age seventeen he entered a military engineering school that he found insufferably boring. He read voraciously in his spare time, and resigned from the military shortly after graduation to pursue a career as a writer.

His first literary effort, *Poor Folk*, was published in 1845 to widespread critical acclaim. His succeeding efforts received little public attention, though through them he continued to polish his craft. In 1847, he joined one of the many secret societies that abounded in Russia during the repressive reign of Nicholas I. He found it exciting and thought its activities somewhat innocuous, but the czar did not agree. In 1849, Dostoevsky was arrested and, with several others of his circle, sentenced to be shot for sedition. The czar allowed preparations for the execution to continue to the very last moment before commuting the sentence. Dostoevsky was then exiled to Siberia for four years of hard labor, followed by six years as a common soldier in the army. In Siberia, the intense suffering he experienced made a deep impression that was later reflected in his most famous works; in addition, the relationships he developed with his fellow prisoners, most of whom were poor and uneducated, gave him a lifelong appreciation for the downtrodden of society. It was also during his years in Siberia that he was converted to the Christian faith.

He left the army in 1859, and entered the period of his greatest literary productivity. He edited a series of literary magazines, using them as vehicles to publish his novels in serial form. These novels included *The House of the Dead* (1862), *Notes from the Underground* (1864), and his great classics, *Crime and Punishment* (1866) and *The Brothers Karamazov* (1880). He died at the height of his fame in 1881, and was given a massive public funeral by a grateful public.

His personal life was filled with struggles. His first marriage, to a tubercular widow in 1857, was an unhappy one, though after she died in 1864, he married his young stenographer (1867), and she not only bore his children and sustained his home life, but also very ably managed his literary career. He struggled throughout his adult life with epileptic seizures and compulsive gambling.

PLOT SUMMARY

BOOK I - The book begins by describing the character of Fyodor Karamazov, the father of the titular brothers. He is a vicious and debased drunkard who is abused by his first wife Adelaide, conducts outrageous orgies in his home, and neglects his sons and allows them to be reared by others. He is nonetheless extremely wealthy. By the time the story begins, Dmitri is 27, Ivan 24, and Alyosha 20. All have returned to their home town, and Alyosha has entered the local monastery as a novice.

BOOK II - Fyodor and his sons, along with Peter Miusov, gather in Zossima's cell to discuss family problems. Fyodor makes a fool of himself, then Zossima leaves briefly to minister to penitents and petitioners who have gathered to see him. Among these is Madame Hohlakov and her handicapped daughter Lise, who pays considerable attention to Alyosha. Meanwhile, an intense debate is going on in the elder's cell; Ivan is debating with the monks about the jurisdiction of ecclesiastical courts - more to the point, about the appropriate relationship between church and state. When Zossima returns, he joins the debate. Then Dmitri, a late arrival, enters, apologizes for his lateness, and the debate continues. Soon an argument breaks out between Fyodor and Dmitri over money and a girl Dmitri had been seeing (Grushenka), and the combatants storm out of the room. As Alyosha walks toward a dinner at the Father Superior's to which his family had been invited, the theological student Rakitin meets him and begins to mock the behavior of his family, suggesting that Alyosha too shares their sensuality, though he hides it well. When they arrive, they find the dinner has been broken up as a result of a scene made by his father, who barged in and started insulting the Father Superior.

BOOK III - The narrator begins by describing at some length Gregory and his wife Marfa, the poor Lizaveta, and the birth of her illegitimate son Smerdyakov, raised by Gregory and Marfa. Earlier, Katerina, Dmitri's former fiancée, had asked Alyosha to visit her. On his way to do so, he meets Dmitri, who tells him of his promiscuous past. He then narrates his attempt to seduce Katerina while he was serving in her father's regiment; at the last moment, he rescued her father from disgrace instead. Katerina later offered to be his bride out of gratitude for having saved her father's honor; Dmitri agreed, though thinking he was not worthy of her and that she really loved his brother Ivan and he loved her. His despair led him to try to break off the engagement and seek a marriage with Grushenka, an immoral woman of the town with whom Fyodor was also infatuated. He had also stolen 3000 rubles of Katerina's money and spent it on Grushenka. He begs Alyosha to ask his father for the money, knowing he will refuse, and tell Katerina he wished to break off the engagement. When Alyosha arrives at his father's house, he finds Smerdyakov engaged in a sophistical argument in which he asserts that he would not be condemned by God for denying his faith in the face of threatened torture. After Fyodor sends the servants away, he becomes very drunk and tells Ivan and Alyosha about how he used to mistreat their mother. At that point, Dmitri bursts into the room. Believing that Grushenka is in the house, he attacks his father, but is pulled off by his two brothers. After he leaves, Ivan asks Alyosha if it is wrong to wish for the death of an evil person. Alyosha then goes to Katerina's and finds her there with Grushenka. Katerina has been led to believe that Grushenka is willing to give up Dmitri for a former love who has returned, but Grushenka tells her that she has only been toying with her, and only Alyosha's restraining arm keeps Katerina from attacking Grushenka. On the way back to the

monastery, Alyosha meets Dmitri and tells him everything that happened. Dmitri, in despair and knowing fully Grushenka's true character, determines to go to her. When Alyosha returns to the monastery, he finds Father Zossima gravely ill. Before retiring, he reads a letter he had received from Lise Hohlakov, which turns out to be a profession of her love for him.

BOOK IV - Father Zossima, believing he is about to die, is given extreme unction and addresses the monks in his cell. He entrusts Alyosha to the care of his friend Father Paissy. Alyosha then briefly visits his father, who is in a foul mood and speaks a lot of contradictory nonsense. After leaving his father's house, he meets a group of schoolboys, six of whom are throwing stones at a single boy, Ilusha, who then begins to throw stones at Alyosha for no discernible reason and bites his finger. Alyosha then goes on to Madame Hohlakov's house, where he tells Lise that he will marry her when she comes of age since Father Zossima told him that he should leave the monastery and go into the world. He then goes into another room to speak to Ivan and Katerina. Katerina, though Ivan loves her, has determined to remain loyal to Dmitri, even if he marries the wretched Grushenka. Ivan insists that Katerina has never loved him, but only used him as a way of getting revenge on Dmitri for his cruelty to her. Katerina then gives Alyosha 200 rubles and asks him to give it to the captain who had been attacked by Dmitri in a tavern a few days earlier. When Alyosha visits the captain and his family, he finds that the captain's son is the boy who bit his finger. When he offers the captain the 200 rubles from Katerina, he gladly accepts them with effusive gratitude, but then suddenly throws them down and angrily rejects such charity.

BOOK V - Alyosha returns to Madame Hohlakov's house to tell Katerina what happened with the captain, but finds her seriously ill and unconscious. He then tells Lise about what happened, and they speak of their love for one another and their hope of marriage for the future; Alyosha even kisses Lise. Madame Hohlakov, who was eavesdropping, is very displeased and thinks Alyosha is merely humoring her invalid daughter, but Alyosha insists he is not. He then goes to find Dmitri, and arrives at his house only to find Smerdyakov playing the guitar and singing to Dmitri's maid Maria. Smerdyakov tells Alyosha that Ivan and Dmitri have met for dinner at a tavern, but when Alyosha goes there, he finds Ivan dining alone. As they talk, Ivan declares his relief at having broken off his relationship with Katerina, and then turns to the subject of belief in God. Much to Alyosha's surprise, he says he believes in God (though he knows nothing about Him), but cannot accept the world because of the impossibility of loving one's neighbor and the horrible cruelty of man to man. After giving several terrible examples of cruelty directed toward children, Ivan challenges Alyosha to respond to the problem of evil as manifested in human cruelty; Alyosha responds by speaking of the death of Christ as the answer to the problem of evil.

Ivan then tells Alyosha a story he has made up called "The Grand Inquisitor." In the story, which takes place in Seville in the sixteenth century, Jesus appears in the city, thrilling the people, and soon raises a little girl from the dead. The Grand Inquisitor appears and orders Him arrested. He then comes to Jesus in the prison and informs Him that He will burn Him at the stake the next day, with the connivance of the people. The Inquisitor explains that this must happen because Jesus, in resisting the devil's temptations in the wilderness, failed to give the people what would really make them happy - bread that would satisfy their hunger for someone to worship, miracles, mystery, and authority that would remove the pain of freedom, and a worldwide earthly kingdom that would give them unity. Jesus' only response is to kiss the Inquisitor on the forehead, after which he releases Him with a warning never to return. On the surface, the story is a critique of

Roman Catholicism, which is pictured as having chosen the devil's way rather than Christ's, but it also leads to Ivan's final conclusion - that if God does not exist, all things are permitted.

After Ivan leaves Alyosha, he returns to his father's house feeling depressed but not knowing why. He sees Smerdyakov and realizes how much he hates the man. Smerdyakov then tells him how he mediates for both Fyodor and Dmitri, giving them information and using secret signals to let them know if Grushenka ever appears. He then tells Ivan that he expects to have a seizure the following day, and that both Gregory and his wife will be sound asleep after taking one of Marfa's home remedies. He advises Ivan to leave town, implying that no one will be able to stop Dmitri if he tries to kill his father. Before Ivan leaves the next day, his father asks him to stop at a town on the way to make a business transaction for him. Ivan agrees, but during the trip changes his mind, goes straight to Moscow, and sends a message to his father saying he had not fulfilled his request. Meanwhile, Smerdyakov has the predicted seizure, Gregory is laid up with lumbago, and Fyodor is left alone in the house, expecting as usual that Grushenka will come to him.

BOOK VI - Alyosha finally arrives at the monastery to see his dying mentor, Father Zossima. The old man tells Alyosha that he is dear to him because he reminds him of his brother, who had died long ago at the age of seventeen. Father Zossima's final conversation was later written down by Alyosha, and that written account makes up the remainder of Book VI. It deals with the elder's life up to the time he entered a monastery, and with diverse subjects concerning the Christian life.

BOOK VII - After Father Zossima's death, a large crowd gathers at the monastery, many bringing sick children in the hope that they will be healed by the remains of the holy man. However, the mood changes when, later that afternoon, the smell of the decaying body begins to fill the cell. The enemies of the old man begin to spread the word that he must not have been holy after all because the truly holy are preserved from decay by God. Led by the mad monk Ferapont, they slander the fallen Zossima. Alyosha is greatly affected by all this, and leaves the monastery without a word to anyone. After several hours of silence during which Alyosha mourns the unfair treatment accorded his mentor, he is interrupted by Rakitin, who invites him to come with him to Grushenka's house. When they arrive, they find Grushenka excited because she has heard from the officer who had wronged her five years before, leaving her to a life of sin. She is debating whether to forgive him or kill him, but Alyosha's kindness and pity convince her to answer his summons; she tells Alyosha to beg Dmitri's forgiveness for the way she had toyed with him. After they leave, Rakitin angrily stalks off, ashamed because he had hoped to see Alyosha ruined by Grushenka. Alyosha then returns to the monastery and begins to pray in Father Zossima's cell. He falls asleep and dreams of the wedding at Cana, and sees Father Zossima among the guests, inviting him to join them. He senses that Christ loves the poor of the earth and loves their joy, and when he awakes, he leaves the monastery, ecstatically embraces the earth, and three days later makes his way out into the world.

BOOK VIII - Dmitri at this point was fretting about his competition with his father to win Grushenka's hand. He was determined to carry her far away, if she consented, using his own money, but first had to repay the money he had stolen from Katerina. Fully aware that his father would not give him another penny, he turns to Grushenka's protector, Kuzma Samsonov, and makes a business proposition, which the old man turns down. He then sends Dmitri to the peasant

businessman Lyagavy, telling him that he might be willing to give him the money, but inwardly knowing that he was setting Dmitri up to be made a fool of. Dmitri sold his watch to get money to find Lyagavy, who preferred to be called Gorstkin, but when he finally reached him he was drunk and unconscious. The next morning he was still drunk, and Dmitri realized he had been played for a fool by old Samsonov, and quickly returned home, hoping to find Grushenka. He had arrived at Grushenka's home, but she had gotten rid of him by asking him to escort her to Samsonov's house and telling him that she would be there all evening helping him go over his books. Dmitri, still desperate for money, had gone to his last hope - Madame Hohlakov. He begged her to lend him 3000 rubles, but all she could talk about was a gold mine that would surely earn him a fortune if he were to work it for a few years. Dmitri left her in despair and went to Samsonov's house, only to find that Grushenka had only been there for a few minutes. He rushed to his father's house, expecting to find her there, but quickly realized that his father was alone. As he was leaving, however, he was found by Gregory, who tried to stop him, only to have Dmitri strike him with a brass pestle, opening a gash in his head. Dmitri then ran to Grushenka's and discovered that she had already left to meet her officer, with no intention of ever returning. Ten minutes later, Dmitri goes to see Peter Perhotin, a young officer with whom he had pawned his pistols in order to visit Lyagavy. He is covered with blood from the encounter with Gregory, and clutches 3000 rubles in his hand, which he claims came from Madame Hohlakov. He obviously intends to use the money and the pistols to pursue Grushenka and her officer, desiring to see her one more time before taking his own life. After he leaves, Perhotin goes to Grushenka's house to find out where the money came from and how Dmitri had gotten covered with blood. When he arrives at the inn in Mokroe where Grushenka and her officer are staying, he prepares to throw a party for them as a last gesture. As the party progresses, they become increasingly drunk, talk nonsense, and begin to gamble. Grushenka's officer cheats at cards and wins money from Dmitri. Dmitri begins to perceive that Grushenka is disgusted with her officer, and he offers the man money to leave and never come back. The officer refuses indignantly, but when he tells Grushenka what happened, she rejects him and sends him away, and Dmitri throws him and his friends out of the room. The party becomes increasingly wild and everyone gets drunk. Grushenka then professes her love for Dmitri and offers to go with him anywhere, and to pay off the money he stole from Katerina. As they kiss and lay in one another's arms, the police enter and arrest Dmitri for the murder of his father, Fyodor Karamazov.

BOOK IX - Perhotin, startled by his encounter with the blood-stained Dmitri, begins to investigate what had happened that night. He first goes to Grushenka's and speaks to her maid, discovering that Dmitri had taken the pestle and later returned covered with blood and without the implement. He then goes to see Madame Hohlakov and confirms that she had given Dmitri no money that night. Perhotin then hurries to the home of Makarov, the police captain, and finds that they had just heard from Fyodor Karamazov's neighbor Maria that the old man was lying dead on the floor of his library with his skull bashed in. When all go to the house to investigate, they find an empty envelope that had contained 3000 rubles, intended for Grushenka had she agreed to marry Fyodor. The police immediately go to the town of Mokroe to arrest Dmitri while the doctor conducts an autopsy on the body. After his arrest, Dmitri shouts his innocence and Grushenka says she is at fault and offers to share his punishment. Dmitri continues to insist that he did not kill his father, though he admits to having attacked Gregory (and is overjoyed to hear that he is still alive), threatened to kill his father, beaten his father severely a few nights before, and claimed that the

3000 rubles his father intended for Grushenka was his by right. He then goes on to describe the events of the last three days in detail, though he refuses to tell for what debt he wanted the 3000 rubles. He admits to wanting to kill his father, but he continues to deny having done it. As the narrative continues, Dmitri omits three pieces of information - he forgets to mention that he climbed down from the fence to examine Gregory out of pity for having struck him, and deliberately refuses to say where he got the money in his possession or how much he had obtained. At this point a contradiction appears; Dmitri had said the door to his father's room was locked, but Gregory had testified that it had been wide open. Dmitri then accuses Smerdyakov of the murder, though he had earlier asserted that the valet was incapable of the deed because he was too much of a coward. After the police order Dmitri to undress and confiscate his clothes because of the bloodstains on them, Dmitri finally agrees to tell them where he got the money in his possession. He insists that the money was the remainder of what he had taken from Katerina, that he had had it in his possession for a month, and that the amount was 1500 rubles. This information contradicted two statements - he had told everyone that he had spent all of Katerina's money - 3000 rubles - on a spree with Grushenka a month earlier, and had that very night told several people that the pile of bills in his hand amounted to at least 3000 rubles. He now insists that both statements were lies, spoken out of bravado, but the police clearly do not believe him. Next the witnesses are examined, and all agree that Dmitri had spoken of 3000 rubles on both occasions. Given their testimony, the police remand Dmitri to custody and he is taken off to prison. Before he leaves, Grushenka vows to follow him anywhere.

BOOK X - This section of the story begins by introducing Kolya Krassotkin, an intelligent and arrogant boy of fourteen, the son of a widowed mother with whom his schoolmaster is in love. He is the boy stabbed with a penknife by Ilusha for teasing him, leading to the stone-throwing incident in which Alyosha had earlier become involved. One day in November, Kolya is babysitting for two neighborhood children when he leaves them with the maid to go out. Kolya, taking his dog with him, stops to pick up a young friend of his, then goes toward the house of Ilusha, who has become increasingly ill after having the rock fight with the boys. When he gets there, he asks his friend to send Alyosha, who had been trying to bring peace among the boys, out to see him. He explains to Alyosha that he had originally been Ilusha's friend, but had cut him off after he, at the instigation of Smerdyakov, had fed a dog a piece of bread with a pin in it, sending the dog running off howling in pain. Relationships with the other boys deteriorated after this, leading up to the rock-throwing incident. Kolya then goes in to see Ilusha, who is dying. He brings with him the very dog Ilusha thought he had killed, but which Kolya had trained to do tricks. Ilusha is much encouraged by Kolya's visit and the presence of the dog. Then a doctor from Moscow, hired by Katerina, who had taken pity on the captain and his family, arrives. While the doctor examines Ilusha, Alyosha and Kolya converse. Kolya tries to impress Alyosha, claiming to be an atheist and socialist, but Alyosha accuses him of simply parroting what he has heard and read from others. Kolya admits as much, and develops a respect for Alyosha that he holds for no one else. When the doctor emerges, he says that he cannot help the sick boy, and advises the father to take his family to healthier climates and expensive specialists, which they cannot possibly afford.

BOOK XI - Alyosha visits Grushenka, who is concerned about Dmitri's mental state on the day before his trial. She tells Alyosha that Dmitri has received several visits from Ivan, and that the

two share a secret that has upset Dmitri. She fears that the secret is that Dmitri has transferred his love back to Katerina and no longer loves her, but Alyosha assures Grushenka that this is not so. He then goes to visit Lise, but is intercepted by Madame Hohlakov, who tells Alyosha that she has been receiving visits regularly from Perhotin and Rakitin, both showing interest in her. Rakitin was obviously interested in her money (he tried to woo her by writing a bad poem about her injured foot!), and after she threw him out and told him not to come back, he wrote an article about the murder for a gossip column in the newspaper that made her look particularly bad. She then tells Alyosha that Dmitri is sure to get off because he has an "aberration" (temporary insanity, a new idea in those days). She thinks Gregory, whose testimony about the open door is very damaging, has an aberration because of his head injury, and that Lise, who has been acting very bizarrely despite the fact that she has improved enough to be able to walk, also has an aberration. Alyosha then goes to see Lise, and finds her much changed - pale and weak, speaking of crazy things, and determined to set aside her promise to marry Alyosha when she comes of age. She wants nothing but to destroy herself and others. Her self-hatred manifests itself after Alyosha leaves, when she deliberately slams her finger in the door and holds it there, then watches it bleed. Alyosha then goes to the prison to see Dmitri, who tells him that he is in despair because he has lost God. Rakitin has explained to him that life is "all chemicals," and Dmitri cannot stand the implications of such a philosophy. Dmitri says he is willing to suffer punishment, go to Siberia, work in the mines, even though he is not guilty, if he can only marry Grushenka and take her with him, but he is afraid the authorities will not allow it. Ivan has been visiting him, and Dmitri now reveals their secret to Alyosha - it is an escape plan, basically involving bribing the officials and fleeing to America with Grushenka, which Ivan will be glad to arrange. Dmitri then asks Alyosha if he believes him to be innocent, since everyone else clearly believes him guilty. Alyosha affirms that he does. Alyosha then goes to Katerina's house, where he meets Ivan. Katerina is distraught about the nature of the testimony she will need to give in court the next day; she and Ivan have just quarreled about it. When they leave, Alyosha rather cryptically assures Ivan that he (Ivan) did not murder his father (since he was in Moscow at the time, this seems fairly obvious). Ivan becomes angry, tells Alyosha he never wants to see him again, then rushes off to visit Smerdyakov.

The narrator tells us that this is the third time that Ivan had visited Smerdyakov since he had returned from Moscow. The first time, Ivan, already convinced of Dmitri's guilt, was assured by Smerdyakov that he could not have faked the seizure that had incapacitated him on the night of the murder - a fact with which the doctors agreed. But Ivan continued to wonder about the fact that Smerdyakov had predicted both the time and the place of the seizure the day before. During the second visit, Smerdyakov is feeling much better, and accuses Ivan of wanting his father dead; in fact, he charges that Ivan, suspecting his father would be murdered by Dmitri, had deliberately left town rather than trying to prevent it. Ivan, examining his own heart, realizes that this is true. He then goes to Katerina, and she shows him a letter written by Dmitri the night before the murder in which he says he will murder his father and take the money due him if he can get it no other way. Filled with guilt and convinced he is as culpable as Dmitri, Ivan later plots to help Dmitri escape should he be convicted during the trial. Ivan's last visit to Smerdyakov occurs the day before the trial. Smerdyakov, again seriously ill, tells Ivan that he had murdered Fyodor Karamazov, and that he had simply served as Ivan's instrument in doing so. He proves his guilt by showing Ivan the 3000 rubles taken from the old man. Smerdyakov had indeed faked his seizure (he had had a real one the next day that had severely incapacitated him); after Dmitri

attacked Gregory and left, Smerdyakov had gone to the window and told Fyodor that Grushenka was waiting for him. When the old man opened the door, Smerdyakov had hit him three times on the head with an iron paperweight, fracturing his skull, then stolen the money and hidden it. Ivan then tells Smerdyakov that he will reveal the truth in court the next day, but Smerdyakov says he will back down because he values his reputation and his inheritance too much to allow it to be sullied with Smerdyakov's testimony about Ivan's convenient trip. Besides, Smerdyakov insists that he will deny everything he just said to Ivan in court. Ivan then returns home and begins to hallucinate (he is seriously ill with brain fever). He dreams the Devil visits him in his room. The two converse, with the Devil trying to convince Ivan that he really exists, while Ivan insists that the Devil is nothing but a projection of his own ideas, and outdated ones at that. When Ivan wakes up, he is convinced that the Devil really was in his room. Then Alyosha arrives to tell him that Smerdyakov hanged himself an hour before. Ivan tells Alyosha about the Devil's visit, and of his determination to tell the truth at the trial even though no one will believe him, since Smerdyakov is dead. The Devil had been taunting Ivan with the idea that he would speak up in court only because he wanted the praise of those who would think him noble for doing so. He continues raving and finally falls asleep, while Alyosha prays for him and for Dmitri.

BOOK XII - On the day of the trial, the courtroom is packed, standing room only. After the narrator describes the judge, prosecutor, defense attorney, and members of the jury, the trial begins and Dmitri pleads not guilty. Despite the fact that the defense attorney undermines the credibility of each prosecution witness, the general impression is that Dmitri is clearly guilty and the defense attorney is just showing off his skill. When the medical experts are called to the stand, they all contradict one another regarding Dmitri's mental state. Alyosha, Katerina, and Grushenka then testify on Dmitri's behalf. All insist that he is innocent and Smerdyakov is guilty. Alyosha gives evidence supporting Dmitri's assertion that he had kept 1500 rubles from what he had been given by Katerina, and Katerina told of Dmitri's generosity to her in saving her father when they first met. Ivan testifies next, and is clearly not well. He melodramatically pulls out the 3000 rubles stolen from his father by Smerdyakov when he murdered him. He then has a severe attack of brain fever and begins raving, claiming that he himself had murdered his father. He is then forcibly removed from the courtroom. Katerina then becomes hysterical, and she produces the incriminating letter Dmitri had written to her before the murder. All the bitterness pours out of her in her desire to take revenge on the man who had rejected her in favor of Grushenka. The evidence of the letter is damning, and Grushenka cries out that Dmitri's "serpent" (Katerina) had destroyed him.

The prosecutor then gives his closing summation. It is the speech of his career (he dies of consumption nine months later). He begins by picturing the members of the Karamazov family as typical of the state and character of Russia itself, then turns to an analysis of Dmitri, arguing that such a man could never have carried 1500 rubles around his neck for a month without spending it. He describes Dmitri as driven mad by jealousy, showing a streak of violence, and premeditating the murder and writing his plans in the letter to Katerina. He then analyzes the suggestion that Smerdyakov had committed the murder, but dismisses the possibility, both because of the valet's cowardly character and because no scenario involving him seems to make any sense. He ascribes Dmitri's intention to commit suicide as evidence of his guilt, and sums up by telling the jury that all Russia is depending on them to show that parricide cannot be justified.

The defense attorney Fetyukovitch then comes forward to deliver his closing statement. He focuses on the psychological argument used by the prosecution, noting that no concrete evidence that Dmitri committed the murder existed. He presents alternative psychological explanations for Dmitri's behavior toward the stricken Gregory, and suggests that Fyodor himself had emptied the envelope and left it on the floor, so that no robbery had occurred. Dmitri's letter may prove his hatred toward his father, but it does not prove that he did the deed, or even that the murder had occurred the way it was described in the letter. He seeks to direct suspicion toward Smerdyakov, and argues that not one piece of evidence stands irrefutably against his client. Finally, he concludes by noting that the jury should not be prejudiced against Dmitri for hating his father, since his father in no way merited love, but that the existence of hatred does not make him guilty of murder. Besides, even had Dmitri struck his father, he may not have intended to kill him. After the two lawyers accuse one another of engaging in flights of fancy, Dmitri speaks, maintains his innocence once again, and asks the jury to free him. Despite the fact that the crowd is convinced that the defense attorney made the stronger case and that Dmitri would be acquitted (though some still thought him guilty), the jury quickly brings in a verdict of guilty on all counts.

EPILOGUE - Five days after the trial, Ivan, unconscious from brain fever, has been carried to Katerina's home, where she is nursing him. Alyosha visits him regularly, and Katerina tells him that Ivan has entrusted her with the details of the escape plan. Alyosha then tells her that Dmitri would like her to visit him. Alyosha goes to the prison hospital where Dmitri is confined, and the latter says his intention is to escape to America, but then return in a few years in disguise because he loves Russia so much. Katerina then comes, and the two profess their undying love for one another, despite the fact that Katerina now loves Ivan and Dmitri loves Grushenka. When Grushenka suddenly appears, Katerina begs Grushenka's forgiveness, but she says she will forgive her only if she manages to free Dmitri.

The book ends with an account of Ilusha's funeral - the mourning father, the insane mother, and the group of boys who had once persecuted him but had, with the encouragement of Alyosha, become his friends. At the grave, Alyosha encourages them always to remember the goodness of their friend, and to carry his memory with them wherever they go. They express their love for him, and go together to eat the funeral meal.

MAJOR CHARACTERS

- Fyodor Karamazov - The evil father of the four Karamazov brothers, he is murdered by his son Smerdyakov. The character is based on Dostoevsky's own father.
- Dmitri Karamazov - Fyodor's eldest son and the only child of his first wife Adelaide, Dmitri grows up to be a wastrel and profligate who is unable to control his temper. He is arrested for his father's murder. Dostoevsky himself was much like Dmitri in his youth.
- Ivan Karamazov - The elder son of Fyodor's pure and lovely second wife Sophia, Ivan is the intellectual among the brothers, and an atheist.

- Alyosha Karamazov - The younger son of Fyodor and Sophia, Alyosha is an innocent, accepting of all and caring little for his own advancement, and obsessed with moral purity. At the age of nineteen, he enters the monastery in the town of his father's estate. He is a devout Christian, and the protagonist of the story.
- Smerdyakov - An epileptic valet in Fyodor's house, raised by Gregory and his wife Marfa, who is really the illegitimate son of Fyodor Karamazov and Lizaveta, the mute idiot who dies while giving birth to him. He is silent, contemptuous, cruel and cunning. He murders his father and then hangs himself.
- Peter Perhotin - The officer who initiates the investigation of Fyodor Karamazov's murder.
- Michael Makarov - The police captain in charge of the murder investigation.
- Varvinsky - the district doctor who performs the autopsy on Karamazov's body.
- Ippolit Kirillovitch - The deputy public prosecutor who pursues the case against Dmitri Karamazov.
- Nicholas Nelyudov - The investigating lawyer in the Karamazov case.
- Fetyukovitch - The defense attorney in Dmitri's trial.
- Father Zossima - The elder of the monastery into which Alyosha entered, and the young man's mentor; a holy and godly man.
- Father Paissy - Close friend of Father Zossima, given care over Alyosha when the old monk dies.
- Rakitin - Cynical theological student who despises Alyosha's faith, tries to corrupt him.
- Peter Miusov - Adelaide's brother, and thus Fyodor's brother-in-law. He helped care for Dmitri in his early years. He is a worldly freethinker and atheist.
- Gregory - Old servant of Fyodor Karamazov who cared for his sons after they were rejected by their father.
- Katerina - Dmitri's fiancée, whom he rejected in favor of the immoral Grushenka. She then falls in love with Ivan.
- Grushenka - A beautiful but reputedly loose woman desired by both Dmitri and his father. She ultimately falls in love with Dmitri.
- Kuzma Samsonov - An old merchant who pays for Grushenka's apartment and her favors.

- Madame Hohlakov - A wealthy widow and a friend of the Karamazov brothers.
- Lise - Invalid teenage daughter of Madame Hohlakov, she is in love with Alyosha, but is cruel and hysterical and eventually repudiates him. The character is modeled on Dostoevsky's first wife.
- Captain Snegiryov - A retired officer beaten by Dmitri in a tavern brawl.
- Ilusha Snegiryov - The captain's son, teased by his friends because of what happens to his father; involved in a stone-throwing incident, after which he bites Alyosha's finger, becomes seriously ill, is reconciled with his friends with Alyosha's help, and finally dies.
- Kolya Krassotkin - A proud young boy who initially befriends, later deserts, and again befriends Ilusha.

NOTABLE QUOTATIONS

“Miracles are never a stumbling-block to the realist. It is not miracles that prompt realists to belief. The genuine realist, if he is an unbeliever, will always find strength and ability to disbelieve in the miraculous, and if he is confronted with a miracle as an irrefutable fact he would rather disbelieve his own senses than admit the fact. Even if he admits it, he admits it as a fact of nature till then unrecognized by him. Faith does not, in the realist, spring from the miracle but the miracle from faith. If the realist once believes, then he is bound by his very realism to admit the miraculous also.” (Book I, ch.5, p.34)

“He was to some extent a youth of our past generation - that is, honest in nature, desiring the truth, seeking for it and believing in it, and seeking to serve it at once with all the strength of his soul, seeking for immediate action, and ready to sacrifice everything, even life itself. These young men unhappily fail to understand that the sacrifice of life is, in many cases, the easiest of all sacrifices. They fail to understand that to sacrifice five or six years of their seething youth to hard and tedious study, if only to multiply ten-fold their powers of serving the truth and the cause they have set before them as their goal, is utterly beyond the strength of many of them.” (Book I, ch.5, p.34)

“For socialism is not merely the labor question, it is before all things the atheistic question, the question of the form taken by atheism today. It is the question of the tower of Babel built without God, not to mount to Heaven from earth but to set up Heaven on earth.” (Book I, ch.5, p.34-35)

“I can't give two rubles instead of 'all,' and only go to mass instead of 'following Him.'” (Alyosha, Book I, ch.5, p.35)

“Strive to love your neighbor actively and constantly. In so far as you advance in love you will grow surer of the reality of God and of the immortality of your soul. If you attain perfect self-forgetfulness in the love of your neighbor, then you will believe without doubt. Doubt will

no longer be able to enter your soul. This has been tried. This is certain.” (Father Zossima, Book II, ch.4, p.62)

“Ivan added in parenthesis that the whole natural law lies in that faith, and that if you were to destroy in mankind the belief in immortality, not only love but every living force maintaining the life of the world would at once be dried up. Moreover, nothing then would be immoral, everything would be lawful, even cannibalism. That’s not all. He ended by asserting that for every individual who does not believe in God or immortality, the moral law of nature must immediately be changed into the exact contrary of the former religious law. He said that egoism, even to crime, must become, not only lawful but recognized as the inevitable, the most rational, even honorable outcome.” (Peter Miusov, Book II, ch.6, p.72)

“The awful thing is that beauty is mysterious as well as terrible. God and the devil are fighting there and the battlefield is the heart of man.” (Dmitri, Book III, ch.3, p.106)

“I wasn’t blushing at what you were saying or at what you’ve done. I blushed because I am the same as you are.” (Alyosha, Book III, ch.4, p.108)

“One can love one’s neighbors in the abstract, but at close quarters it’s almost impossible.” (Ivan, Book V, ch.4, p.219)

“I think if the devil doesn’t exist, then man has created him. He has created him in his own image and likeness.” (Ivan, Book V, ch.4, p.220)

“Look at the worldly and all who set themselves up above the people of God. Has not God’s image and His truth been distorted in them? They have science; but in science there is nothing but what is the object of sense. The spiritual world, the higher part of man’s being is rejected altogether, dismissed with a sort of triumph, even with hatred.” (Father Zossima, Book VI, ch.2, p.288-289)

“Yes, yes! People love crime. Everyone loves crime, they love it always, not at some ‘moments.’ You know, it’s as though people have made an agreement to lie about it and have lied about it ever since. They all say they hate evil, but secretly they all love it.” (Lise, Book XI, ch.3, p.528)

“But what will become of men then, without God and immortal life? All things are lawful then, they can do what they like.” (Dmitri, Book XI, ch.4, p.534)

“Because we are all responsible for all. For all the ‘babes,’ for there are big children as well as little children. All are ‘babes.’ I go for all, because someone must go for all.” (Dmitri, Book XI, ch.4, p.537)

“One cannot exist in prison without God; it’s even more impossible than out of prison.” (Dmitri, Book XI, ch.4, p.537)

“For if there’s no everlasting God, there’s no such thing as virtue, and there’s no need of it.” (Smerdyakov, Book XI, ch.8, p.573)

“Nothing human is beyond the possibility of Satan.” (The Devil, Book XI, ch.9, p.579)

“What’s more, even if this period never comes to pass, since there is anyway no God and no immortality, the new man may well become the man-god, even if he is the only one in the whole world. Promoted to his new position, he may lightheartedly overstep all the barriers of the old morality of the old slave-man, if necessary.” (The Devil, Book XI, ch.9, p.589)

“Conscience! What is conscience! I make it up for myself. Why am I tormented by it? From habit. From the universal habit of mankind for seven thousand years. So let us give it up, and we shall be gods!” (The Devil, Book XI, ch.10, p.592)

“God, in whom Ivan disbelieved, and His truth were gaining mastery over his heart, which still refused to submit.” (Book XI, ch.10, p.594)

“They all desire the death of their fathers. One reptile devours another.” (Ivan, Book XII, ch.5, p.621)

“He [Fyodor Karamazov] was an example of everything that is opposed to civic duty, of the most complete and malignant individualism.” (Ippolit Kirillovitch, Book XII, ch.6, p.630)

“Outraged nature and the criminal heart bring their own vengeance more completely than any earthly justice.” (Ippolit, Kirillovitch, Book XII, ch.9, p.649)

ESSAY QUESTIONS

Discuss the following in a five-paragraph essay:

1. Analyze Ivan’s argument concerning the relationship of church and state in Book II of Fyodor Dostoevsky’s *The Brothers Karamazov*. Is his approach biblical? Is it practical? Why or why not?
2. Respond to Ivan’s argument concerning the problem of evil in Fyodor Dostoevsky’s *The Brothers Karamazov*, Book V, chapter 4. How can one satisfactorily explain the kinds of cruelty cited by Ivan in the chapter? What do you think of Alyosha’s response? How does the Bible address the issue?
3. Analyze the critique of Roman Catholicism found in the story of “The Grand Inquisitor” in Fyodor Dostoevsky’s *The Brothers Karamazov*. Is Ivan’s assessment of the Catholic Church an accurate one? Does he rightly describe the direction taken by Christ, and by implication His true followers? Why or why not? Support your answer from the book and from Scripture.

4. Discuss the analysis of the temptation of Jesus by Satan found in the story of “The Grand Inquisitor” in Fyodor Dostoevsky’s *The Brothers Karamazov*. Are the major issues raised by Ivan in the story the real issues at the heart of the temptation narrative? Why or why not? Support your answer from the book and from Scripture.
5. Discuss the role of free will in Ivan’s parable of “The Grand Inquisitor” in Fyodor Dostoevsky’s *The Brothers Karamazov*. What does Ivan think about free will? What does Dostoevsky think about it? How can you tell?
6. Some have argued that the parable of “The Grand Inquisitor” in Fyodor Dostoevsky’s *The Brothers Karamazov* is a cautionary allegory against the true evils of the totalitarian state, such as existed under the Russian czars. In what sense may the story be read in this way? If this is a legitimate interpretation, what are the evils of totalitarianism that Dostoevsky considers to be most horrifying?
7. In Fyodor Dostoevsky’s *The Brothers Karamazov*, Ivan twice addresses at considerable length the issue of the relationship between the church and the state, first during the debate in Father Zossima’s cell and later in his story of “The Grand Inquisitor.” Is Ivan’s view of the relationship between church and state consistent, or does he contradict himself? Compare and contrast his approaches to the subject in the two extended discourses.
8. Discuss the last words of Father Zossima in Fyodor Dostoevsky’s *The Brothers Karamazov*, giving particular attention to the story of the redeemed murderer. In what ways do they serve as a powerful contrast to the story of “The Grand Inquisitor” in the previous section of the novel? What do the two stories say about the major theme of the conflict between faith and doubt that pervades the novel?
9. Evaluate Father Zossima’s defense of monasticism at the beginning of Book VI, chapter 2 of Fyodor Dostoevsky’s *The Brothers Karamazov*. To what extent is his defense biblical, and in what ways does it partake of the weaknesses of any monastic movement? Be specific.
10. Discuss Ivan’s conversation with the Devil in Fyodor Dostoevsky’s *The Brothers Karamazov*. Based on the conversation in the chapter, do you think that Dostoevsky believes that the Devil exists or that he is simply an extension of the evil within man? Support your conclusion with specifics from the chapter.
11. Compare the Devil’s discourse on man and morality in Book XI, chapter 9 of Fyodor Dostoevsky’s *The Brothers Karamazov* with the justification Raskolnikov gives for murdering the pawnbroker in the same author’s *Crime and Punishment*. Relate the thinking expressed in these incidents to the philosophy of nihilism, and evaluate the arguments biblically.

12. Fyodor Dostoevsky has much to say about the power of the human conscience in both *The Brothers Karamazov* and *Crime and Punishment*. Compare and contrast his treatment of the subject in the two novels. Does the longer work, written later, show development of the author's thought? In what sense is this the case?
13. Imagine that you are part of the jury at the trial of Dmitri in Fyodor Dostoevsky's *The Brothers Karamazov*. Would you have found the closing summation of the prosecutor convincing? Why or why not? Evaluate the way he handled and presented evidence.
14. Imagine that you are part of the jury at the trial of Dmitri in Fyodor Dostoevsky's *The Brothers Karamazov*. Would you have found the closing summation of the defense attorney convincing? Why or why not? Evaluate the way he handled and presented evidence.
15. Imagine that you are part of the jury at the trial of Dmitri in Fyodor Dostoevsky's *The Brothers Karamazov*. Had you known only what those in the courtroom knew about the case, which attorney would you have found more convincing, and why? Would you have voted for conviction or acquittal?
16. In Matthew 5, Jesus tells His disciples that anger and harsh words break the commandment against murder. "Anyone who is angry with his brother will be subject to judgment" (Matthew 5:22). In Fyodor Dostoevsky's *The Brothers Karamazov*, Dmitri Karamazov hates his father, rages against him, and beats him severely. Is he then rightly judged guilty of murder? Why or why not?
17. According to James 4:17, "Anyone, then, who knows the good he ought to do and doesn't do it, sins." In Fyodor Dostoevsky's *The Brothers Karamazov*, was Ivan then right to declare himself guilty of the murder of his father, since he could have prevented it but chose not to do so because he wanted his father dead? Why or why not?
18. When Fyodor Dostoevsky wrote *The Brothers Karamazov* in 1880, the discipline of psychology was in its infancy. In the trial scene in particular, Dostoevsky shows great insights into human psychology, as the two lawyers present competing psychological analyses to compensate for the lack of compelling evidence in the case. Discuss the author's grasp of human psychology. In what specific ways does Dostoevsky show real insight into the human mind and heart? Are his insights Christian ones?
19. When Fyodor Dostoevsky wrote *The Brothers Karamazov* in 1880, Russia had just begun to permit trials by "a jury of one's peers." Discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the jury system as they are displayed in the novel. Use specifics to support your conclusions on the subject.
20. In Fyodor Dostoevsky's *The Brothers Karamazov*, the author argues repeatedly that without God, morality is not possible. Do you agree? Is this sentiment biblical? Support your conclusions from the novel and from Scripture.

21. One of the greatest characteristics of Fyodor Dostoevsky is his love for his country and its people. How is this love shown in *The Brothers Karamazov*? To what extent does he recognize his country's weaknesses as well as its strengths? Be specific.
22. Most of the characters in Fyodor Dostoevsky's *The Brothers Karamazov* are highly emotional, crying and getting hysterical at the least provocation. The author obviously believes that such behavior is deeply ingrained in the Russian character. From the perspective of an American reader, do these portrayals give you insight into what Russians are really like, or do they make the characters less credible? Be sure to support your arguments with specific examples from the novel.
23. In Fyodor Dostoevsky's *The Brothers Karamazov*, the author argues in numerous contexts that, if God does not exist, then all things are lawful. Jean-Paul Sartre later stated that this simple affirmation is at the root of French existentialism. To what extent is this statement by Dostoevsky an appropriate summary of existentialism? Was the Russian author voicing these words as a commentary on the actual state of things, or as a caution against the consequences of atheistic philosophy? Support your conclusion with specifics from the novel.
24. In Fyodor Dostoevsky's *The Brothers Karamazov*, the three legitimate sons of Fyodor Karamazov represent three distinct personality types. Describe the personality types depicted by Dmitri, Ivan, and Alyosha, and analyze the strengths and weaknesses of each. Use specifics from the novel to support your analysis.
25. In Fyodor Dostoevsky's *The Brothers Karamazov*, the author tells us clearly that Alyosha is the protagonist of the story, yet he stands apart from much of the action of the novel. Instead, he reacts to the things that happen to others - not a common trait of a protagonist. Why do you think Dostoevsky presented Alyosha in this way? How does a passive protagonist help the author to communicate the main themes of the novel?
26. To what extent does the philosophy enunciated by Ivan in Fyodor Dostoevsky's *The Brothers Karamazov* contribute to the murder of his despicable father? To what extent does it contribute to his eventual madness? What do these consequences tell us about Dostoevsky's assessment of atheism?
27. In what ways does the character of Ivan in Fyodor Dostoevsky's *The Brothers Karamazov* illustrate the truth that anyone who espouses a non-Christian worldview will ultimately find it impossible to live it out consistently? In what ways does Ivan's professed view of the world come into conflict with reality? What are the consequences for him when this happens?
28. The two older brothers in Fyodor Dostoevsky's *The Brothers Karamazov* reap the consequences of their sins by the end of the novel. But Dostoevsky is a Christian, and his stories indicate that sin is followed by redemption. To what extent is this the case in *The Brothers Karamazov*? Does Dostoevsky lead us to believe that Dmitri and Ivan will find redemption in the end? Why or why not?

29. Discuss the concept of free will in Fyodor Dostoevsky's *The Brothers Karamazov*. Does the author portray human free will as a blessing or a curse? How does it function in the lives of the three Karamazov brothers? Why is each affected differently by it? Use details from the story to support your argument.
30. Fyodor Dostoevsky's *The Brothers Karamazov* emphasizes the idea of communal responsibility - that everyone is responsible for everyone else and for every action that is committed. How does the story itself illustrate this belief? Is the concept biblical? Why or why not?
31. Fyodor Dostoevsky's *The Brothers Karamazov* emphasizes the idea of communal responsibility - that everyone is responsible for everyone else and for every action that is committed. Relate this idea to the concept of original sin presented by Paul in Romans 5. To what extent would Paul agree with Dostoevsky's idea of the unity of the human race in sin? Would Paul agree with the way Dostoevsky develops it? Why or why not?
32. In Fyodor Dostoevsky's *The Brothers Karamazov*, the author frequently argues that people are not capable of passing judgment on one another - that only God can judge, so that people should always forgive one another and never judge the behavior of others. How do the philosophical arguments in the novel support this idea? How does the trial scene illustrate it? Is Dostoevsky's understanding of the inability of human beings to pass judgment biblical? Why or why not?
33. To what extent does the incident surrounding the corpse of Father Zossima in Fyodor Dostoevsky's *The Brothers Karamazov* serve as a commentary on Hebrews 11:1? Is it true that faith will always have to operate without tangible evidence, while skeptics who seek signs will always find reasons to justify their unbelief? Illustrate your points from the novel and from Scripture.
34. In Fyodor Dostoevsky's *The Brothers Karamazov*, Ivan Karamazov is described as the son most like his father, perhaps because the father lives out the philosophy espoused by the son, yet Ivan both loves and hates the old man. Is it true that Ivan is like old Fyodor? In what ways? What explains the love-hate relationship between them?
35. To what extent is the character of Dmitri in Fyodor Dostoevsky's *The Brothers Karamazov* a combination of his father Fyodor and his brother Alyosha? Why does this combination of traits lead to the self-loathing that finally makes him willing to accept punishment for a crime he did not commit? In the end, which aspect of his character wins out? How do you know?
36. To what extent does Alyosha in Fyodor Dostoevsky's *The Brothers Karamazov* illustrate the maxim that "to understand all is to forgive all"? Discuss the relationship between his insights into the true natures of those around him and his non-judgmental spirit. Is his approach to the sins of others a biblical one? Why or why not?

37. In Fyodor Dostoevsky's *The Brothers Karamazov*, the author, through the mouth of Father Zossima, argues that faith leads to love and doubt leads to destructiveness - that one who is not honest with himself cannot ever reach out and love others, while the one who knows and believes the truth is free to love everyone. Evaluate this philosophy from Scripture, and support your argument with specifics from the novel.
38. Discuss the use of foreshadowing in Fyodor Dostoevsky's *The Brothers Karamazov*. Choose three specific examples of foreshadowing in the novel and explain what the purposes of the author might have been in giving hints about what would happen later in the story.
39. Ivan is the character in Fyodor Dostoevsky's *The Brothers Karamazov* who is most likely to give voice to his ideas, but when he waxes philosophical, one is not always certain of his sincerity. To what extent does Ivan really believe what he says when he speaks of the realms of philosophy and religion? What role does the ambiguity of his personality play in the development of the author's themes in the novel?
40. In Fyodor Dostoevsky's *The Brothers Karamazov*, the author deliberately misleads the reader concerning Dmitri's involvement in his father's death. How does Dostoevsky do this? Why? To what extent does this literary technique play an essential role in the trial scene at the end of the book?
41. Compare and contrast the attitudes of Ivan and Alyosha toward the suffering of children in Fyodor Dostoevsky's *The Brothers Karamazov*. To what extent does skepticism prevent the amelioration of suffering, while faith equips one to deal with the suffering in the world? Is this Dostoevsky's answer to the problem of evil posed by Ivan early in the book? Is his answer a biblical one?
42. In Fyodor Dostoevsky's *The Brothers Karamazov*, in what way is Father Zossima's decision to send Alyosha out of the monastery and into the world intended to be a fulfillment of II Timothy 2:2? Give special attention in your answer to the relationships among Father Zossima, Alyosha, and the young boys in the town.
43. Compare and contrast the major female characters in Fyodor Dostoevsky's *The Brothers Karamazov*, Katerina and Grushenka, both in the nature of their sin and the nature of their redemption. What might Dostoevsky be communicating through the differences between these characters?
44. The Christianity in Fyodor Dostoevsky's *The Brothers Karamazov* is Russian Orthodoxy, and thus may be strange to Western readers. Analyze the Christianity of the novel. Does Dostoevsky present a gospel of faith or a gospel of works? Why do you think so? Support your conclusion with details from the story.

45. Sigmund Freud, in his analysis of Fyodor Dostoevsky's *The Brothers Karamazov*, argued that the relationship that existed among Fyodor Karamazov, Dmitri, and Grushenka was an example of what he called the Oedipus Complex - that men secretly desire to kill their fathers and sleep with their mothers. To what extent is Freud's interpretation plausible? Use details from the story to support or refute his contention.
46. In the year that Fyodor Dostoevsky's *The Brothers Karamazov* was published, the author gave a speech in which he said, "To be a real Russian, to be wholly Russian, means only this: to be a brother to all men, and to be universally human." To what extent does this statement express the central theme of Dostoevsky's last and greatest novel? Illustrate your answer with specifics from the story.
47. Dostoevsky, in response to the critics of *The Brothers Karamazov*, argued, "It is not like a child that I believe in Christ and confess Him. My hosanna has come forth from the crucible of doubt." Alyosha seems barely touched by the agonies of doubt, but, like the author, both Dmitri and especially Ivan suffer horribly from it. To what extent does Dostoevsky believe that doubt is an essential prelude to faith, and indeed strengthens faith when it is overcome, and to what extent does he see doubt as wholly destructive?
48. Contrast the characters of Fyodor Karamazov and Father Zossima in Fyodor Dostoevsky's *The Brothers Karamazov* in the light of the author's views on the nature of fatherhood. What makes a good father? What makes a bad one? Go beyond the obvious extremes represented by the two men and dig into the nature of their fatherly relations with Alyosha, the "son" they had in common.
49. The phrase, "the essence of the Karamazovs," occurs repeatedly in Fyodor Dostoevsky's *The Brothers Karamazov*. What exactly is this essence? Choose three leading qualities that are central to the essence of the pivotal family and show how they relate to the various members of the family. Does this essence change by the end of the novel?
50. All three Karamazov brothers in Fyodor Dostoevsky's *The Brothers Karamazov* have pivotal dreams that serve as turning points for their characters. Discuss the roles played by these dreams, how they change the respective characters, and how they help to communicate the main themes of the novel.
51. To what extent is the Karamazov family in Fyodor Dostoevsky's *The Brothers Karamazov* a microcosm of Russia itself? Use your knowledge of Russia in the late nineteenth century to discuss the broader message concerning the culture in which he lived that Dostoevsky may have been trying to communicate.
52. Both Fyodor Dostoevsky's *The Brothers Karamazov* and William Shakespeare's *Hamlet* speak in detail about the crime of parricide and its consequences for the sons of the murdered father. To which of the Karamazov brothers would you most closely compare Hamlet? Why? Support your arguments with evidence from both works of literature.

53. Some critics have argued that Dmitri, Ivan, and Alyosha in Fyodor Dostoevsky's *The Brothers Karamazov* represent the body, mind, and spirit, respectively. To what extent is this assessment accurate? Do you consider it simplistic, or does it get to the essence of the characters as they are presented by Dostoevsky? Be sure to support your conclusions with details from the novel.
54. Discuss the portrayal of women in Fyodor Dostoevsky's *The Brothers Karamazov*. Does the fact that all the women in the story are weak, petty, and vacillating show that the author believes women inferior to men? What other interpretation may be possible? Defend your thesis with specifics from the story.
55. The main ideas in Fyodor Dostoevsky's *The Brothers Karamazov* are presented in such a way that both sides of each dispute are allowed to speak through the voice of an advocate. Both sides are presented powerfully and fairly, with neither argument seeming to be openly triumphant. How then can one tell the position of the author on these issues? In the end, who wins the debate? Choose one important controversy of ideas presented in the book, show how Dostoevsky presents both sides through the mouths of powerful advocates, and how he answers the question.
56. The main ideas in Fyodor Dostoevsky's *The Brothers Karamazov* are presented in such a way so that both sides of each dispute are allowed to speak through the voice of an advocate. Both sides are presented powerfully and fairly, with neither argument seeming to be openly triumphant. Some critics have argued, however, that Dostoevsky settles his arguments, not through abstract debate, but instead through the fates of his characters. Choose an important controversy in the book, show how both sides are presented through the mouths of powerful advocates, and discuss how the author gives his answer through the development of the plot rather than through abstract philosophizing.
57. Evaluate the ending of Fyodor Dostoevsky's *The Brothers Karamazov*. To what extent is Alyosha's speech at the grave of Ilusha satisfying? Does he leave too many questions, both about the characters and about the main ideas of the book, unanswered, or does the ending point to the answers to those questions? Defend your answer with specifics from the book.
58. Though Fyodor Dostoevsky's *The Brothers Karamazov* and Voltaire's *Candide* are very different in style and content, both challenge as part of their philosophy Leibniz' idea that "this is the best of all possible worlds." Discuss the role played by the problem of evil in both stories, and contrast the authors' resolutions of that problem.
59. In the Eastern Orthodox Church, icons are pictures that are believed to provide windows into the spiritual world. Fyodor Dostoevsky, the author of *The Brothers Karamazov*, was a Russian Orthodox Christian, and his religious beliefs appear clearly in his last and greatest novel. Discuss the extent to which the character of Alyosha, who is described by the author as the hero of the story, serves in the role of an icon - a picture providing a window into the spiritual world - rather than one whose Christianity is most clearly spelled out in his speech or even in his actions. Be sure to support your arguments with details from the novel.