

NAME: _____



Activity One

Notre Dame Cathedral

Several famous Paris buildings are mentioned in this novel. *The Notre Dame de Paris (Our Lady of Paris)*, mentioned in Chapter One, is widely considered one of the finest examples of French Gothic architecture in France and in Europe.



Construction of the Cathedral began in 1163 A.D. — almost 800 years ago! Because the building was so huge and elaborate — and due to the relatively primitive technology of the time period — the Cathedral was not completed until 1345 — almost two centuries later.

Using resources in your school library or on the Internet, research more information on this beautiful and historic structure. Create an information card for

your choice. The card should resemble a large baseball card complete with a picture of Notre Dame de Paris. This picture can be drawn or downloaded from the Internet and pasted to the card.

Your card should also include at least five interesting facts about the cathedral, like the one found in the text box below:

During the French Revolution (1789-1799), many of the cathedral's treasures were destroyed and plundered. The statues of the biblical kings of Judah (mistakenly thought to be the kings of France) were beheaded by vandals.



Activity Two

Casting Director

- **This activity can be done with students working in small groups.**

Imagine you are the casting director for a movie company planning to do a film version of this novel. You are to cast all of the major roles for the movie and must choose one of the following two scenarios:

- a)** For the list of characters in the box below, choose an appropriate Hollywood actor to fill each role and write a brief explanation as to why you chose this particular actor.

OR

- b)** For the list of characters below, choose an appropriate person from your own classroom or school to fill each role and write a brief explanation as to why you chose this particular person. For this assignment, you might choose fellow students (including yourself), teachers, principal, custodian, etc.

Roles

- **Armand**
- **Madame Calcet**
- **Suzy**
- **Evelyne**
- **Paul**
- **Mireli**
- **Tinka**
- **Nikki**
- **Father Christmas**
- **The Floorwalker**
- **Monsieur Brunot**

NAME: _____



Activity Three

The Louvre

Want to check out the famous painting, *Mona Lisa*, or the statue, *Venus de Milo*? Care to see what an honest-to-goodness Egyptian



sarcophagus looks like — one belonging to an Egyptian woman named *Tanetshedmout*? Or perhaps a film, a concert, or a fascinating lecture is more to your liking. All of this can be yours with a simple visit to the *Louvre*.

Too far, you say. Too expensive?

Then take a virtual tour on the Internet. One site that can be accessed in this regard is <http://www.virtualsweden.se/project/louvre>.

Your task is to investigate the *Louvre* in your school library or on the Internet. From your research, prepare a brochure advertising this amazing museum so that it will attract even more visitors. A starting point might be to examine other brochures to get ideas regarding format, design, etc.

Your brochure should contain a title, at least one picture, and several relevant and interesting facts about the *Louvre*.

NAME: _____



Activity Four

Put it on Film

- **To be done in groups of four or more.**

One of the fascinating things about putting book to film is in the many different interpretations of a scene which are possible. To illustrate this, you may wish to check out a number of student-made clips of scenes from novels which are posted on *YouTube*.

The task of your production team is to recreate a particular scene from this novel. Choose your scene carefully. Factors to consider:

- **length** (2–3 minutes — 2–3 pages is advised)
- **number of characters** (i.e. Armand taking the children through the streets of Paris might be impractical because of the number of people involved)
- **setting** (i.e. visiting the Department Store might be impractical because of the setting)
- **dialogue** (i.e. too much can be difficult to memorize for the actors; too little might make the scene a bit boring)

Your task is to create a short scene from the novel and present it to the class on film or in person. A script must be written, roles assigned, and rehearsals must be scheduled before filming or performing. You may wish to present the film in Readers Theater format.

Be sure that when you are presenting your finished project to the class, it is your best effort.

Have fun!

NAME: _____



Activity Five

An Alternate Ending

- **This activity can be done individually or in small groups.**

The conclusion of ***The Family Under the Bridge*** is quite memorable. Not only does it tie-up most of the loose ends (i.e. the Calcets finding a home; Armand remaining with the family), but it is very moving and dramatic as well. The conclusion also leaves the reader wondering about other issues (i.e. how will Armand adjust to a lifestyle in which he is tied down to one place with so many responsibilities; will the Calcets and Armand ever see the gypsies again?).

What, though, if Natalie Savage Carlson had woken up on the wrong side of the bed on the day she wrote the novel's concluding chapters? What if it didn't end the way it is described in these pages, but had taken another *turn in the road*? What if Armand had not been able to get a job; or if Madame Calcet had refused his generous offer?

Although we will never know the answers to these questions, you will be given the opportunity of putting your imagination to work in coming up with what might have happened if the author's imagination had worked its way in an entirely different direction.

Working alone or in a group, brainstorm possible alternative endings to the novel. Remember to consider all of the principal characters. From your list of ideas, choose one ending to present to the class. Write a detailed synopsis of your alternate ending, presenting as much detail as possible. After presenting it to the class, you may wish to get their input as to additional changes that might be made to further improve your alternative ending.

Have fun!

NAME: _____



Activity Six

Gypsies

Gypsies (Romani people) have made for wonderfully interesting characters in stories, songs and poems for generations. Many times they are portrayed in these stories as villains. To see them portrayed in this novel in a much more positive light is quite refreshing.

**I must down to the seas again, to the vagrant gypsy life,
To the gull's way and the whale's way where the wind's like a whetted knife;
And all I ask is a merry yarn from a laughing fellow-rover,
And quiet sleep and a sweet dream when the long trick's over"**

— John Masefield (British poet, 1878–1967)

Who are these remarkable people? Where do they live? And what do they do? Where did they come from? What makes them so unique and controversial? And why have they attached themselves to such a lifestyle?

Your assignment is to do a brief report on the gypsies. You may wish to consider the following subtopics:

- their origin and history
- where they can be found
- how they make their living
- their beliefs; worldview
- their diet; means of entertainment
- hardships? persecution?

Your report should be at least a half-page in length.