

Crime and Punishment Key Info

Writer: Fyodor Dostoevsky | Generated: Jan 26, 2026

Key Facts

- **Full Title:** Crime and Punishment
- **Original Title:** Преступление и наказание (Prestupleniye i nakazaniye, Russian)
- **Author:** Fyodor Dostoevsky (1821-1881)
- **Title of the Author:** Russian Novelist, Short Story Writer, Essayist, Philosopher, "Psychologist of the Human Soul"
- **Source:** Inspired by Dostoevsky's own poverty, moral struggles, religious faith, and his observations of crime, punishment, and social injustice in St. Petersburg.
- **Written Time:** 1865 (conceived during Dostoevsky's financial crisis and personal hardships)
- **First Published:** 1866 (serially in The Russian Messenger)
- **Publisher:** The Russian Messenger (Mikhail Katkov, editor)
- **Genre:** Psychological Realism / Philosophical Novel / Moral & Social Tragedy
- **Form:** Novel, divided into six parts and an epilogue (structured as crime, mental torment, confession, and redemption).
- **Structure:** Linear narrative with deep psychological monologues; explores conscience, guilt, morality, and redemption through intense inner dialogues.
- **Tone:** Dark, tense, psychological, philosophical, and redemptive; blends realism with moral and religious symbolism.
- **Point of View:** Third-person omniscient, but heavily focused on the inner consciousness of Raskolnikov (stream of consciousness style).
- **Significance:** A cornerstone of Russian and world literature; pioneer of the psychological novel; examines alienation, morality, justice, and the possibility of redemption through suffering.
- **Language:** Russian

- **Famous Line:** "Pain and suffering are always inevitable for a large intelligence and a deep heart."
- **Setting:**
- **Time Setting:** Mid-19th century (contemporary St. Petersburg society before major Russian reforms).
- **Place Setting:** St. Petersburg, Russia, mainly in cramped apartments, streets, taverns, and prisons, symbolizing poverty and moral decay.

Key Notes - Crime and Punishment

- **Original Title - Преступление и наказание:** The original Russian title of the novel is Prestupleniye i nakazaniye, which means "Crime and Punishment." Dostoevsky began writing it in 1865, and it was first published serially in The Russian Messenger magazine in 1866.
- **Crime and Punishment - Significance of the Title:** "Crime" refers to Raskolnikov's murder, and "Punishment" refers to his mental torment, guilt, and ultimately both his legal and spiritual penalty. The title symbolizes not only the external legal punishment but also the psychological, moral, and religious punishment.
- **Raskolnikov's Conflict:** The protagonist Raskolnikov is a poor student who believes that extraordinary people may commit crimes if it benefits society. However, after murdering the old pawnbroker, he suffers from intense guilt. This conflict raises profound questions about human psychology, morality, and faith in God.