

Crime and Punishment

Fyodor Dostoevsky

Why does Raskolnikov keep revising his explanation of why he killed the pawnbroker?

TOTAL TIME

PASSAGE

30 minutes	Napoleon stops being an excuse
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FIND THE ANCHOR TEXT

Use the Anchor Text Table of Contents in the Enhanced Reader to open the START anchor. Then use the dropdown to select the END anchor.

SECTION / LOCATION	Part V, Chapter IV
START	“Yes, that’s what it was! I wanted to become a Napoleon, that is why I killed her.... Do you understand now?”
END	whether I am a trembling creature or whether I have the right...”,
PASSAGE ID	sec-cp-02

THE MOVE

Track a confession as explanations are proposed and discarded

WHY THIS PASSAGE

Raskolnikov keeps replacing one explanation for the murder—money, Napoleon, testing himself—with another because none fully accounts for what he did. The confession becomes an investigation of motive rather than a stable statement of motive.

MARK

Number each explanation Raskolnikov offers for the murder. Cross out each one when he weakens or replaces it. Star the explanation that comes closest to making the crime a test of himself.

NOTICE

- Why is the Napoleon explanation initially attractive to Raskolnikov?
- What makes him reject or revise it?
- What does the repeated revision reveal about whether he understood his motive before acting?

THINK

Answer provisionally: Why does Raskolnikov keep revising his explanation of why he killed the pawnbroker? Choose the strongest interpretation you can defend from this passage alone.

WRITE

Write a short evidence-based response to: Why does Raskolnikov keep revising his explanation of why he killed the pawnbroker? Use at least two details from the assigned passage and explain how they support your interpretation.

CLOSE

Name the single detail that most changed or sharpened your interpretation, and explain why.

STRONG ANSWER	He keeps revising because each explanation—money, Napoleon, career, daring—fails to account fully for what he did. The confession reveals that motive itself was unstable and partly unknown to him.
EVIDENCE	Track at least three explanations and show where he weakens, replaces, or contradicts each one.
WATCH FOR	Do not select one motive too early and ignore the revisions. The repeated failure of explanations is the evidence.
SOLO	Read the exact passage independently.
SUPPORTED	Use narration and sentence highlighting while reading the same passage.
LISTENING	Listen to the exact passage; visual following is optional. Same question and evidence demand.

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Why does Raskolnikov keep revising his explanation of why he killed the pawnbroker?

START ANCHOR	"Yes, that's what it was! I wanted to become a Napoleon, that is why I killed her.... Do you understand now?"
END ANCHOR	whether I am a trembling creature or whether I have the right..."

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OPEN THE MARKED PASSAGE IN TUMBLELIT

SOLO: read independently. SUPPORTED: use narration + highlighting. LISTENING: listen to the exact passage. The question and evidence task stay the same.

1. MARK - Number each explanation Raskolnikov offers for the murder. Cross out each one when he weakens or replaces it. Star the explanation that comes closest to making the crime a test of himself.
2. NOTICE - Why is the Napoleon explanation initially attractive to Raskolnikov? What makes him reject or revise it? What does the repeated revision reveal about whether he understood his motive before acting?
3. THINK - Answer provisionally: Why does Raskolnikov keep revising his explanation of why he killed the pawnbroker?
4. WRITE - Write a short response using at least two pieces of evidence from this passage.

Use evidence from the assigned passage. Show what you noticed and how the text supports your interpretation.