Imagine being imprisoned for your whole life because you looked like someone else!

This is the sad fate of Philippe, twin brother of the King of France, until a daring plan to rescue him unfolds.

Follow his exciting story, filled with swordplay and intrigue, to its surprising ending!
The Man in the Iron Mask

ALEXANDRE DUMAS
Then the boat drifted onto the sands of St. Marguerite. D'Artagnan took his prisoner to the governor.

He is a prisoner of state. He is to be seen by no one. His face is to be masked forever under penalty of death. That is the order of the king!

I understand!

A few days later, orders from the king called d'Artagnan back to Paris. As he left the island, he glanced back for a last look at the man in the iron mask.

He is truly an unfortunate man!

The END
Welcome to Saddleback’s Illustrated Classics™

We are proud to welcome you to Saddleback’s Illustrated Classics™. Saddleback’s Illustrated Classics™ was designed specifically for the classroom to introduce readers to many of the great classics in literature. Each text, written and adapted by teachers and researchers, has been edited using the Dale-Chall vocabulary system. In addition, much time and effort has been spent to ensure that these high-interest stories retain all of the excitement, intrigue, and adventure of the original books.

With these graphically Illustrated Classics™, you learn what happens in the story in a number of different ways. One way is by reading the words a character says. Another way is by looking at the drawings of the character. The artist can tell you what kind of person a character is and what he or she is thinking or feeling.

This series will help you to develop confidence and a sense of accomplishment as you finish each novel. The stories in Saddleback’s Illustrated Classics™ are fun to read. And remember, fun motivates!
Overview

Everyone deserves to read the best literature our language has to offer. Saddleback’s Illustrated Classics™ was designed to acquaint readers with the most famous stories from the world’s greatest authors, while teaching essential skills. You will learn how to:

• Establish a purpose for reading
• Use prior knowledge
• Evaluate your reading
• Listen to the language as it is written
• Extend literary and language appreciation through discussion and writing activities

Reading is one of the most important skills you will ever learn. It provides the key to all kinds of information. By reading the Illustrated Classics™, you will develop confidence and the self-satisfaction that comes from accomplishment—a solid foundation for any reader.
Step-By-Step

The following is a simple guide to using and enjoying each of your Illustrated Classics™. To maximize your use of the learning activities provided, we suggest that you follow these steps:

1. **Listen!** We suggest that you listen to the read-along. (At this time, please ignore the beeps.) You will enjoy this wonderfully dramatized presentation.

2. **Pre-reading Activities.** After listening to the audio presentation, the pre-reading activities in the Activity Book prepare you for reading the story by setting the scene, introducing more difficult vocabulary words, and providing some short exercises.

3. **Reading Activities.** Now turn to the “While you are reading” portion of the Activity Book, which directs you to make a list of story-related facts. Read-along while listening to the audio presentation. (This time pay attention to the beeps, as they indicate when each page should be turned.)

4. **Post-reading Activities.** You have successfully read the story and listened to the audio presentation. Now answer the multiple-choice questions and other activities in the Activity Book.
Remember,

“Today’s readers are tomorrow’s leaders.”
But when Aramis did not appear, Philippe began to worry.

Suddenly there was a voice outside.

Why, sire. I do not know.

What is all that noise?

The voice of M. Fouquet?

The door opened. But it was not only Fouquet who entered.

Ohhhhhhhh...

Louis and Philippe were dressed exactly alike. To each it seemed that he stared into a mirror. The queen cried out as if she were seeing a ghost.

Alexandre Dumas

Alexandre Dumas, a French novelist and dramatist, was born at Villers-Cotterets in 1802. His father, the illegitimate son of a marquis, was a general in the Revolutionary armies, but died when Dumas was only four years old. He received a basic education from a priest and entered the office of a local lawyer.

After he met General Foy, he became a clerk in the service of the Duke of Orleans. At that time, he began to collaborate with Leuven in the production of vaudevilles and melodramas.

In 1844 he produced, with the help of Auguste Maquet, his new collaborator, a famous cloak-and-dagger romance, The Three Musketeers, which is based almost solely on historical fact, as opposed to his other very successful novel, The Count of Monte Cristo, which was a product of his brilliant imagination.

Much has been written about Dumas' share in the novels which bear his name. The Dumas-Maquet series is undoubtedly the best. But the manuscripts of novels still exist in Dumas' handwriting and attest to his skill as a narrator, and he is considered by most literary critics as "the master of narrative."

Dumas died in 1870.
At Vaux, Philippe still played the part of the king.

His mother entered.

My brother loves her. I will try to love her too.

He took her hand and kissed it.

In this moment I forgive her for my eight years of suffering.

Stay with me, mother. I wish you to make your peace with M. Fouquet.

I have no ill feelings toward M. Fouquet!
And your most loyal countryman. How you must have suffered! Come, you are free!

Quickly Fouquet told the king about the plot. He told him also that the Bishop of Vannes was the leader, and that those taking part were at Vaux.

Let us go there at once! They shall be taken and put to death!

Do you believe he is my brother? This is a trick of the Bishop of Vannes!

But sire, you cannot kill your brother!

But public talk of it could bring down the greatest shame upon the throne.

We shall see. Come, I will stop at the palace and change my clothes.

And so they drove away, leaving the confused Baisemeaux with an order to let the prisoner go. It was signed by the prisoner himself!

Signed, Louis!

D’Artagnan, Aramis, Porthos, and Athos always stood together and fought together. The four musketeers shared many adventures, but none was stranger than the one that involved the man in the iron mask.

Who was this prisoner who ended his days on the lonely island? Why must his face be hidden forever behind a mask?
In their early days together there was no question about the loyalty that the musketeers had for each other.

Then years later, came a secret so dangerous that it threatened the throne of France itself and put the old friends on different sides.

Go now my good friends. Hide fast. Leave the country! In a few hours, the king will order me to follow you and kill you!

Meanwhile, Fouquet rushed into the Bastille. He was almost stopped by the guards.

I am Fouquet! Let me in!

Look out! Stop him!

No! It is Minister Fouquet!

Hearing the noise, Baisemeaux rushed out.

Take me at once to the prisoner brought here by the Bishop of Vannes. If you don’t, I will return with ten thousand men and thirty cannons!

Ah, monseigneur! But I...

Outside the cell, a shocked Fouquet heard the voice of the king.

Help! I am the king! It was Fouquet who sent me here!

The door flew open.

Fouquet! Have you come to kill me?

Oh, sire, I am the best of all your friends!

D’Artagnan was captain of the king’s musketeers. He knew the secret, and was ordered by King Louis X to hide the prisoner’s face forever.
You may have acted for my good, but I would rather die than let this happen!

I am going to the king! You must leave Vaux and leave France! I give you four hours to escape the king's reach!

But...

His heart broken, Aramis followed Fouquet down a secret staircase to the courtyard. He watched as Fouquet's carriage left at full gallop.

Should I warn the prince—take him with me? Civil war would follow. No, he was a prisoner, and I'll let him remain so.

Aramis went to find Porthos. After saying good-bye to d'Artagnan, they rode away.

At any other time, I might try to keep Aramis and Porthos from escaping. But now I must attend to other matters.

Our present story begins on a summer night in 1661 when Aramis visited the Bastille, a great prison, to hear the confession of a prisoner. Once a musketeer, Aramis was now Bishop of Vannes.

Alone, Aramis entered and faced the young prisoner.

Are you ill? Is that why you have asked for me?

Yes...

No, you found a note in your bread telling you to ask for someone to hear your confession. I had it put there!

Then it is you who have an important secret to tell me? I will listen.

My secret is so important that if the king knew I was here tonight, I would die tomorrow!

The governor of the prison went with him to the cell.

Leave, Baisemeaux! You cannot hear the prisoner's confession.
I will listen. But who are you?

We are old friends. Don’t you remember seeing me in the village where you spent your childhood? I was the cavalier with a lady in black silk...

I remember! The woman was my nurse.

D’Artagnan left. Fouquet quickly locked the door and turned to Aramis.

What is happening? You must tell me!

First, you must know that the king thinks you are a robber and a traitor. He is your enemy!

Because he and I share a secret so important that I am now his only friend. He will do as I wish!

It goes back to the birth of Louis XIV. Do you remember?

As if it were yesterday!

Then Aramis told Fouquet the whole story of the plot.

You took the king from his throne? Put him in prison? This happened here?

Here at Vaux... last night!

But I did not believe I would stay there forever because I was taught to be a cavalier! There were lessons...

So much for arithmetic! Now your astronomy lesson...

Under my roof! This crime against my guest, my king! I am shamed forever!

Your king was planning to arrest you!
I have seen him more than a dozen times. Now I have kept it very secret.

But we have a question for the Fouquet. Your Majesty has not spoken to him more than twice in your life.

Ah! My thanks!

Ah! I will go with you.

Ah! He is the king's order.

Ah! You have the balcony.

Ah! You have better. You are free, by the king's order.

Here is the king's order.

Ah! Well lead the way.

Ah, my friend, I am Fouquet. Your feast has touched the heart of the king.

And the king has your friend, Fouquet. Your feast has touched the heart of the king.

Perronetta? Perronetta!

One hot summer day, I was called to my study and hard work, I fell asleep. I was justHitmen.

And horse-riding.

Touch.

Good!
Calm yourself! Whatever is the matter?
The last letter from the queen! A puff of wind blew it into the well!

But she will never believe me! She will think I wanted to keep the letter. She is so suspicious in all matters that have to do with Philippe!

The queen burns all her letters each time she comes here anyway. Isn’t this the same thing?

Philippe was my name, and my head was spinning with what I had heard.

My teacher gets letters from the queen?

And the lady who comes to see me every month... she is the queen!

As dawn came, someone slipped into the king’s bedchamber.

Well, sir, how did it go?

Just as we thought. A complete success!

D’Artagnan had spent the night in Fouquet’s room. Now, he knocked at the king’s door.

That will be d’Artagnan coming for his orders. Let us begin the attack!

That would be a terrible mistake!

If he comes into the room this morning, he is sure to see that something has happened! I will take care of him.

Aramis! What are you doing here?

Good morning, my friend! The king does not wish to see anyone just yet.

But he asked me to come this morning.

Later, later!
You are getting that wild
look in your eyes again!
I must take your knife!

The jailer left, and the
king felt more alone than
ever. He threw his dishes
against the wall.

But not a sound
answered him. He
came a madman,
tearing at the floor
boards. He was
no longer a king,
a gentleman,
not even a person.

Perronnette and the teacher
left for the village right away.

Come! We will
find someone with
a long ladder! We
must get the letter
out of the well.

But I had
other ideas.

Meanwhile, Philippe lay in
the king’s bed at Vaux.

I am Philippe, son and
heir of Louis XIII. I am
the king!

I lowered the rope and the
bucket nearly to the water.
Then I slid down.

I see the letter.
It’s a long way
down, floating
on the water!

I saw the sky
disappearing
above me. I
was dizzy and
frightened.
I jumped into the water, holding onto the rope with one hand, and grabbed the letter.

I put it into my shirt and somehow climbed back to the top.

Then I heard someone coming. I had just time to hide in the bushes.

I can see that my teacher is a gentleman. And Perronnette is far better than a servant.

And I...I myself must be highborn. After all, the queen, Anne of Austria, seems to care about what happens to me!

For an hour he shouted, but no one came. He picked up a chair and beat on the door.

Help! Help me!

Then there were cries from outside.

Quiet! Stop it! You're bothering us!

The other prisoners are people I have put here with never a thought for their suffering!

The jailer entered with food.

Should I pray? How can I ask for the liberty I have so often refused my fellow men?

You have always been calm! Now a broken chair and all this noise! Unless you promise to quiet down, I must report it to the governor.

I wish to see him!
Soon after, Porthos and Aramis rode away to Vaux. Baisemeaux went to breakfast. The young king found himself a prisoner in the Bastille.

Am I dead? Is this hell? Am I still in a nightmare?

A sound caught his attention.

A rat! A large rat!

A prisoner! I am a prisoner in the Bastille!

It is a plot! Fouquet plots against me! I must call someone—but there is no bell!

The governor! Get me the governor!

Excited and soaked from being in the well, I came down with a high fever. When I was out of my head, I told of the whole adventure. My teacher found the letter under my pillow.

Here is the letter. I must write to the queen about this. I dare not keep it from her!

What will happen to Philippe? And to us?

Shortly after this, you were arrested and brought to the Bastille. That was eight years ago.

They are dead. They were poisoned.

I must have a powerful enemy! Who else would be able to imprison a child such as I was and to kill two good people?

And here I am still. My nurse and teacher disappeared. Do you know what became of them?

It seems that the very fact that I live must be dangerous to someone!

You are right. And I must ask you one more question.
In the house where you lived—were there mirrors there?

I don't know the meaning of that word.

And in your studies, were you taught history?

A little. I learned about the early French kings, but that's all.

You know, the poor fellow looks like the king! His first act was to dress up and pretend that he was the king!

Good heavens!

He is mad, of course. And the king was very angry. So remember, Baisemeaux, there is sentence of death upon you if you allow him to see anyone but me or the king himself!

Then they went to get the prisoner. Aramis put on his mask again.

Fire at once if he speaks!

Yes, sir.

And so, without speaking a word, the king was locked into the cell where Philippe had spent six long years.

A fine boy, your majesty!

He shall rule as Louis XIV!

He does look a little like the king, but not as much as you said!

"Louis XIII ruled in troubled times. For years he had no heir. Then on September 5, 1668, his wife, Anne of Austria, gave birth to a son."
They led the king through an iron door to the outside. A carriage was hidden among the trees.

What do you mean to do with the king of France?

Try to forget that word. You could be tortured for using it!

The carriage took the road to Paris. About 3:00 AM they reached the Bastille.

Soon Baisemeaux appeared.

Go and wake the governor!

What now? Whom have you brought me?

Hush! Let us go to your room!

The order to release Marchiali—it was a mistake. I now bring you another order, to set Seldon free.

But what about Marchiali?

I have brought him back. It is the same as if he had never left!

The court was happy with the news. Then the king showed the baby to the people.

The birth of two sons turned the king’s joy to fear. He knew there would be quarrels about which son was older and so the heir to the throne. There might even be war.

But while the king was outside, the queen, alone except for the midwife, gave birth to a second son.

Dame Perronnette was the midwife. She hurried to the king to tell him the news.

I will come at once!
To keep this from happening, the second son was taken away and raised in secret. No one in France except his mother knows he was ever born!

And if you are the man I think you are, you have a portrait of that first son—the one who now sits on the throne!

Then the dream became a nightmare.
It is only a dream! Come, wake up!

But his eyes were open. He jumped to his feet and felt the damp ground.

Who are you? What is this joke?
It is no joke.

So that is he!

And here is a mirror. Look!

Are you a servant of M. Fouquet?

That doesn't matter. What matters is that we are your masters now. Follow us!

They forced the king to go with them through a long underground passage.

Where are you taking me?

You will know soon enough!
Alone, the king paced the floor in his anger.

Then, almost weeping, the king threw himself on his bed.

I hate him! Tomorrow he will go to prison. Then everyone will say that I am greater than he!

At last, worn out, he fell asleep. In a dream he seemed to see a face looking down from the ceiling above. It was like his own face seen in a mirror.

Then the ceiling seemed to draw away, and the bed he lay on began to sink.

The light of the room faded. The air became cold.

Which is the king? The one in the portrait or the one in the mirror?

The king is he who is on the throne and not in prison—the one who has power!

Have you told me these things only to break my heart? I don't need to be king to be happy! I only need to be free, to enjoy nature...

Whoever sits on the throne has power, and I can put you on the throne.

Your brother will take your place in prison.

Unless you refuse, I shall do so! And it will be for the good of the people of France!

You will see no more of me until I come to take you from this dark place. Until then, your majesty!
Aramis left the cell. Soon he was taking leave of the governor of the Bastille.

Soon afterward, Aramis visited the shop of M. Percerin, who made the king's clothes. Outside he met his friends.

Ah! D'Artagnan and Porthos!

So, my friend. You, too, will have new clothes for the party at the chateau of Vaux.

A poor bishop has no money to buy clothes for every feast. I have another errand here.

Porthos here has thirty-six new suits—but not one fit for the great feast!

Inside, they talked with M. Percerin.

You know, of course, of the feast at Vaux that M. Fouquet is giving for the king.

Know of it! Is not every important man in the country buying new clothes from me? Am I not making five new suits for the king himself?

The next day there was entertainment in honor of the king. Finally, there were fireworks.

But the king was more angry and unhappy than ever. He went to his room and sent for d'Artagnan.

Call your guards. Arrest Fouquet.

Arrest M. Fouquet! In his own house? While you are still under his roof?

But this is a man who has spent much money in order to please you! And you wish him arrested?

I hate him! But do not make his arrest just yet.

Keep him under guard tonight. Return early in the morning for further orders. Now leave me!

As you wish, sire.
I will push aside a part of the floor. From the king's room it looks like one of the false windows painted on the ceiling. Can you see?

Yes, I see the king, and Colbert as well.

Ah, yes, the king's clothes! Fouquet has hired an artist to paint a portrait of the king! A surprise, you see!

And so...?

The portrait should show the king exactly as he is dressed on the day everyone sees it! For this, the artist must copy the king's suit of clothes.

Let someone copy the king's clothes? Impossible!

From above, they could hear the two men talk.

Fouquet has given me too good a meal! Where does he get all the money to do it?

From France's treasury, sire!

So you wish to insult the king?

Well then, we will tell the king that M. Percerin was against the portrait.

Oh, no! Let your artist copy everything!

Leave me. I will go to bed. In the morning I shall decide what to do.

Colbert lies! Now look closely and learn how you will go to bed each night.

Very good, sire.

Fouquet, who was giving the feast, was the minister of finance. While holding this job, he had become the richest man in France. The young king didn't trust him.

He had even talked of it with his mother, Anne of Austria.

Fouquet has spent 18,000 livres to build his new Chateau Vaux. I have asked Colbert to check his accounts!

But his feast to honor you will be wonderful! Wait until after that.
Meanwhile, from the clothing shop Aramis went to see Fouquet.

My friend, everyone talks of the great festival!

Yes, it is coming and my money is leaving!

I need from you now a secret order to free a prisoner from the Bastille.

And who is that?

A poor youth named Seldon. He has been imprisoned for ten years because of two poems he wrote.

For ten years? I will have an order sent to free him.

It was the supper hour when Aramis arrived at the Bastille.

Tonight you look like the musketeer you used to be.

With old friends I like to be myself.

As soon as they were outside, Aramis locked the door and closed the window curtains.

Monseigneur! Monseigneur!

So that is d'Artagnan! He thinks you are up to something.

If he does not see you before the other has disappeared, you can count on d'Artagnan to the end of the world!

What do we do now?

From his hiding place Philippe appeared.

And he is as faithful as a dog.

You will take your place and watch the king go to bed. You must learn the ceremony.

Very good.
You are mad! How could I hurt the king? You have your musketeers and guards here anyway!

Yes. But just tell me, as a friend, that I am wrong.

I could not think of hurting the true king of France. Tomorrow will be the most wonderful day he has ever enjoyed!

This is a party. Baisemeaux! Make me drunk tonight. Drink up!

Bravo!

But it was Baisemeaux who drained his glass in one gulp.

An hour later, a servant brought in a fifth bottle of wine.

What is that noise?

What noise?

A courier has just arrived.

Tell him to go away! I will see to it tomorrow!

An order signed by the king? I think you should take care of it now!

But orders that arrive in the middle of supper... oh, very well! Send it to me!

Good night, my friends. In ten minutes I shall be fast asleep!
The order was brought to Baisemeaux.

An order marked "urgent!" "A man who has been here for ten years must be released this very minute!"

We are at supper! Tomorrow morning will do!

Though I wear boots tonight, I am still a priest. Think of the poor man and let him go now!

Shall I send your servants at once?

No. But please tell Colbert I wish to see him!

Fouquet bowed and left. And in the room above, d'Artagnan, captain of the king's guards, joined his old friends, Aramis and Porthos.

And so we have come to Vaux. How do you like it?

Very much. And I like Fouquet also.

As Baisemeaux turned away to call his men, Aramis changed the paper for one he had brought.

But something tells me you have a secret plan.

But my inner voice, which never fools me, tells me it is the king you are plotting against!

Oh, very well... if you wish it!

You will be rewarded for this!

But if your plan is only to help Fouquet protect himself from Colbert, I will help you!
But soon the king became gloomy.

One of Fouquet's golden goblets costs more than the best wines I can buy!

Fouquet's home is grander, his furniture finer, his servants better than mine, even though I am the king of France!

Go and open the cell of the prisoner Seldon.

You said "Seldon.
Don't you mean to say "Marchiali"?

Later, Fouquet led the king to his bedroom, the largest and finest of all.

LeBrun has painted on the ceiling the things we dream of. There you will see things both happy and sad.

Yes, Marchiali...
no, no, Seldon!

I read "Seldon" in letters as large as that!

And I read "Marchiali" in letters as large as this!

Suddenly, a cold shiver seemed to pass over the king, and he grew pale.

Your majesty?
Are you ill?

I am sleepy. that is all.

Here! Read the paper!

Yes, it plainly says "Marchiali." He is the young man whose confession you came to hear.
Follow your orders! Send your men to bring the prisoner here!

Yes... yes...

Baisemeaux was confused, but he gave the order. The prisoner was brought to the room.

You must swear never to tell anything you have seen or heard in the Bastille.

Then Aramis stepped out of the shadow.

And now that you are free, where will you go at this hour?

I am here to help this man with anything he needs.

Bless you, sir!

A carriage was waiting.

Go on!

The room above the king’s?

You’ll hardly be able to move about for fear of bothering him!

During the night I sleep, or read in my bed.

And your servants?

I have only one with me. Do not worry! Let us go and dress to meet the king!

At seven o’clock in the evening, the king arrived.

Your majesty, I and my house are honored!

A grand banquet was served on plates of gold.

It is impossible, sir, to dine better anywhere!
The king’s procession was now coming closer.

The king has little love for me, nor do I care much for him. But...

Well, what?

Now that he is on his way here as my guest, he seems suddenly very dear to me.

You must not think that way.

But if he would really wish it, I feel that I could love him.

By the way, which room are you staying in?

The blue room, on the second floor.

An officer rode ahead to help them through each barrier.

Open and let them pass!

When the last gate was behind them, the horses picked up speed through the city streets. Soon they were galloping through the countryside. They stopped at last in the middle of a forest.

We must talk. Do you want to stay in the carriage?

Yes, I like it. It has helped set me free!

Aramis made a sign to the driver, who led them off the road.

The driver is deaf and dumb. He will lead us away from the road so no one can hear us.
There, in the darkness, the two men faced each other.

Now tell me plainly, who am I today, and who will I become tomorrow?

You are the son of Louis XIII, brother of Louis XIV, who is the heir to the throne of France.

After tomorrow you will sit upon his throne, and he will take your place in prison.

If you look like the king and act like the king, no one will know! There are no dangers, only obstacles.

But the king will speak out. Someone will see that I am not Louis!

Yes, and one is that I’m not sure I am doing the right thing.

Suddenly a servant rushed in.

The king and his procession are coming. We can see them from the top of the house!

They will be here in an hour. In an hour!

And the people ask themselves why such feasts are held!

Alas! I, too, ask the same thing!

I will answer you in twenty-four hours! It will be a day to celebrate!
Much later that day, at the chateau, everyone was waiting for the king to arrive. Lebrun, the artist, put the last touches on the king’s portrait.

A fine copy of M. Percerin’s suit!

The colors... the face—they are wonderful!

I can think of no other way to show my joy than to hug you!

It was a happy moment for the artist. But it was an unhappy one for M. Percerin, who had made Fouquet’s suit.

But Fouquet, you have ruined the beautiful clothes I made for you. There is paint all over them!

Aramis watched as the young man set foot on the earth once more.

Your highness, truly I wish you to be happy. I know a secret place where you can live safely.

You can hunt, fish, and enjoy the warm sun and soft air. You can live out your life in peace.

Sir, before I decide, let me walk and think. Ten minutes is all I ask.

As you please.

Then he seemed to pray...

To breathe this soft, fragrant air... why ask for more?

Heaven help and guide me!
At last he turned to Aramis.

Let us go where the crown of France can be found!

You will be a great king!

I know them by heart. My mother, the other members of my family, my ministers—what they look like, how they act.

I know that Colbert is the enemy of M. Fouquet, and that Fouquet is your friend. What do you wish me to do for him?

Good!

I shall give you the throne of France, and you shall give me the throne of St. Peter! When you are king and I am pope, we shall control the world!

By then I shall have become your prime minister.

Prime minister and friend! You are my only friend! What do you wish for yourself?

And my brother will leave the throne forever?

We will take him from his bed while he sleeps. He will go to bed a king and awaken a prisoner! You will rule from that moment on!

Here is my hand on it, sir.

Allow me to kneel before you.

And so they took their seats in the carriage. It rolled quickly toward the chateau of Vaux.

Fouquet is a good man. When you have paid his debts, he will leave the government.
At last he turned to Aramis.

Let us go where the crown of France can be found!

You will be a great king!

When will that be?

Tomorrow night. Have you studied the notes I gave you?

I know them by heart. My mother, the other members of my family, my ministers—what they look like, how they act.

I know that Colbert is the enemy of M. Fouquet, and that Fouquet is your friend. What do you wish me to do for him?

Good!

Fouquet is a good man. When you have paid his debts, he will leave the government.

By then I shall have become your prime minister.

Prime minister and friend! You are my only friend! What do you wish for yourself?

I shall give you the throne of France, and you shall give me the throne of St. Peter! When you are king and I am pope, we shall control the world!

And my brother will leave the throne forever?

We will take him from his bed while he sleeps. He will go to bed a king and awaken a prisoner! You will rule from that moment on!

Here is my hand on it, sir.

Allow me to kneel before you.

And so they took their seats in the carriage. It rolled quickly toward the chateau of Vaux.
Much later that day, at the chateau, everyone was waiting for the king to arrive. Lebrun, the artist, put the last touches on the king’s portrait.

A fine copy of M. Percerin’s suit!

The colors...the face—they are wonderful!

I can think of no other way to show my joy than to hug you!

It was a happy moment for the artist. But it was an unhappy one for M. Percerin, who had made Fouquet’s suit.

But Fouquet, you have ruined the beautiful clothes I made for you. There is paint all over them!

Sir, before I decide, let me walk and think. Ten minutes is all I ask.

Aramis watched as the young man set foot on the earth once more.

Your highness, truly I wish you to be happy. I know a secret place where you can live safely.

You can hunt, fish, and enjoy the warm sun and soft air. You can live out your life in peace.

There is enough money here for all your needs. Take it...if that is what you wish!

As you please.

To breathe this soft, fragrant air...why ask for more?

Heaven help and guide me!
There, in the darkness, the two men faced each other.

Now tell me plainly, who am I today, and who will I become tomorrow?

You look just like your brother. And this, the cause of your troubles, can lead you to success!

You are the son of Louis XIII, brother of Louis XIV, who is the heir to the throne of France.

Suddenly a servant rushed in.

The king and his procession are coming. We can see them from the top of the house!

They will be here in an hour.

In an hour!

After tomorrow you will sit upon his throne, and he will take your place in prison.

If you look like the king and act like the king, no one will know! There are no dangers, only obstacles.

But the king will speak out. Someone will see that I am not Louis!

Yes, and one is that I'm not sure I am doing the right thing.

And the people ask themselves why such feasts are held!

Alas! I, too, ask the same thing!

I will answer you in twenty-four hours! It will be a day to celebrate!
The king's procession was now coming closer.

The king has little love for me, nor do I care much for him. But...

Well, what?

An officer rode ahead to help them through each barrier.

Open and let them pass!

Now that he is on his way here as my guest, he seems suddenly very dear to me.

You must not think that way.

But if he would really wish it, I feel that I could love him.

When the last gate was behind them, the horses picked up speed through the city streets. Soon they were galloping through the countryside. They stopped at last in the middle of a forest.

We must talk. Do you want to stay in the carriage?

Yes, I like it. It has helped set me free!

By the way, which room are you staying in?

The blue room, on the second floor.

Aramis made a sign to the driver, who led them off the road.

The driver is deaf and dumb. He will lead us away from the road so no one can hear us.
Follow your orders! Send your men to bring the prisoner here!

Yes... yes...

Baisemeaux was confused, but he gave the order. The prisoner was brought to the room.

You must swear never to tell anything you have seen or heard in the Bastille.

Then Aramis stepped out of the shadow.

And now that you are free, where will you go at this hour?

I am here to help this man with anything he needs.

Bless you, sir!

The room above the king's? You'll hardly be able to move about for fear of bothering him!

During the night I sleep, or read in my bed.

And your servants?

I have only one with me. Do not worry! Let us go and dress to meet the king!

At seven o'clock in the evening, the king arrived.

Your majesty, I and my house are honored!

A grand banquet was served on plates of gold.

It is impossible, sir, to dine better anywhere!
But soon the king became gloomy.

One of Fouquet's golden goblets costs more than the best wines I can buy!

Fouquet's home is grander, his furniture finer, his servants better than mine, even though I am the king of France!

Later, Fouquet led the king to his bedroom, the largest and finest of all.

LeBrun has painted on the ceiling the things we dream of. There you will see things both happy and sad.

Yes, Marchiali... no, no, Seldon!

Yes, yes, I see.

I am sleepy.

Suddenly, a cold shiver seemed to pass over the king, and he grew pale.

Your majesty? Are you ill?

I am sleepy. That is all.

Go and open the cell of the prisoner Seldon.

You said "Seldon." Don't you mean to say "Marchiali"?

And I read "Marchiali" in letters as large as that!

I read "Seldon" in letters as large as that!

Here! Read the paper!

Yes, it plainly says "Marchiali." He is the young man whose confession you came to hear.
The order was brought to Baisemeaux.

An order marked "urgent!" "A man who has been here for ten years must be released this very minute!"

We are at supper! Tomorrow morning will do!

Though I wear boots tonight, I am still a priest. Think of the poor man and let him go now!

Shall I send your servants at once?

No. But please tell Colbert I wish to see him!

Fouquet bowed and left. And in the room above, d'Artagnan, captain of the king's guards, joined his old friends, Aramis and Porthos.

And so we have come to Vaux. How do you like it?

Very much. And I like Fouquet also.

But something tells me you have a secret plan.

If your plan is only to help Fouquet protect himself from Colbert, I will help you!

But my inner voice, which never fools me, tells me it is the king you are plotting against!
You are mad! How could I hurt the king? You have your muskeeters and guards here anyway!

Yes. But just tell me, as a friend, that I am wrong.

I could not think of hurting the true king of France. Tomorrow will be the most wonderful day he has ever enjoyed!

This is a party. Baisemeaux! Make me drunk tonight. Drink up!

Bravo!

But it was Baisemeaux who drained his glass in one gulp.

An hour later, a servant brought in a fifth bottle of wine.

What is that noise?

What noise?

A courier has just arrived.

Tell him to go away! I will see to it tomorrow!

An order signed by the king? I think you should take care of it now!

But orders that arrive in the middle of supper...oh, very well! Send it to me!

Good night, my friends. In ten minutes I shall be fast asleep!
Meanwhile, from the clothing shop Aramis went to see Fouquet.

My friend, everyone talks of the great festival!

Yes, it is coming and my money is leaving!

I need from you now a secret order to free a prisoner from the Bastille.

And who is that?

A poor youth named Seldon.

He has been imprisoned for ten years because of two poems he wrote.

For ten years? I will have an order sent to free him.

It was the supper hour when Aramis arrived at the Bastille.

Tonight you look like the musketeer you used to be.

With old friends I like to be myself.

As soon as they were outside, Aramis locked the door and closed the window curtains.

So that is d'Artagnan! He thinks you are up to something.

Monseigneur! Monseigneur!

From his hiding place Philippe appeared.

And he is as faithful as a dog.

If he does not see you before the other has disappeared, you can count on d'Artagnan to the end of the world!

What do we do now?

You will take your place and watch the king go to bed. You must learn the ceremony.

Very good.
I will push aside a part of the floor. From the king's room it looks like one of the false windows painted on the ceiling. Can you see?

Yes. I see the king, and Colbert as well.

Ah, yes, the king's clothes! Fouquet has hired an artist to paint a portrait of the king! A surprise, you see!

And so...?

The portrait should show the king exactly as he is dressed on the day everyone sees it! For this, the artist must copy the king's suit of clothes.

Let someone copy the king's clothes? Impossible!

From above, they could hear the two men talk.

Fouquet has given me too good a meal! Where does he get all the money to do it?

Can you prove it?

Easily, to the very cent!

So you wish to insult the king?

Well then, we will tell the king that M. Percerin was against the portrait.

Oh, no! Let your artist copy everything!

Leave me. I will go to bed. In the morning I shall decide what to do.

Colbert lies! Now look closely and learn how you will go to bed each night.

Very good, sire.

Fouquet, who was giving the feast, was the minister of finance. While holding this job, he had become the richest man in France. The young king didn't trust him.

He had even talked of it with his mother, Anne of Austria.

Fouquet has spent 18,000 livres to build his new Chateau Vaux. I have asked Colbert to check his accounts!

But his feast to honor you will be wonderful! Wait until after that.
Aramis left the cell. Soon he was taking leave of the governor of the Bastille.

Good-bye, old friend! We shall soon meet again!

Inside, they talked with M. Percerin.

You know, of course, of the feast at Vaux that M. Fouquet is giving for the king.

A poor bishop has no money to buy clothes for every feast. I have another errand here.

Porthos here has thirty-six new suits—but not one fit for the great feast!

Know of it! Is not every important man in the country buying new clothes from me? Am I not making five new suits for the king himself?

Soon afterward, Aramis visited the shop of M. Percerin, who made the king's clothes. Outside he met his friends.

Ah! D'Artagnan and Porthos!

So, my friend. You, too, will have new clothes for the party at the chateau of Vaux.

The next day there was entertainment in honor of the king. Finally, there were fireworks.

But the king was more angry and unhappy than ever. He went to his room and sent for d'Artagnan.

Call your guards. Arrest Fouquet.

Arrest M. Fouquet! In his own house? While you are still under his roof?

But this is a man who has spent much money in order to please you! And you wish him arrested?

Keep him under guard tonight. Return early in the morning for further orders. Now leave me!

I hate him! But do not make his arrest just yet.

As you wish, sire.
Alone, the king paced the floor in his anger.

Then, almost weeping, the king threw himself on his bed.

I hate him! Tomorrow he will go to prison. Then everyone will say that I am greater than he!

At last, worn out, he fell asleep. In a dream he seemed to see a face looking down from the ceiling above. It was like his own face seen in a mirror.

Then the ceiling seemed to draw away, and the bed he lay on began to sink.

The light of the room faded. The air became cold.

Which is the king? The one in the portrait or the one in the mirror?

The king is he who is on the throne and not in prison—the one who has power!

Have you told me these things only to break my heart? I don’t need to be king to be happy! I only need to be free, to enjoy nature...

Whoever sits on the throne has power, and I can put you on the throne.

Your brother will take your place in prison.

Unless you refuse, I shall do so! And it will be for the good of the people of France!

You will see no more of me until I come to take you from this dark place. Until then, your majesty!
To keep this from happening, the second son was taken away and raised in secret. No one in France except his mother knows he was ever born!

And if you are the man I think you are, you have a portrait of that first son—the one who now sits on the throne!

Then the dream became a nightmare. It is only a dream! Come, wake up!

But his eyes were open. He jumped to his feet and felt the damp ground.

Who are you? What is this joke?

It is no joke.

So that is he!

And here is a mirror. Look!

Are you a servant of M. Fouquet?

That doesn’t matter. What matters is that we are your masters now. Follow us!

They forced the king to go with them through a long underground passage.

Where are you taking me?

You will know soon enough!
They led the king through an iron door to the outside. A carriage was hidden among the trees.

What do you mean to do with the king of France?

Try to forget that word. You could be tortured for using it!

The court was happy with the news. Then the king showed the baby to the people.

Long live the king! Long live the new prince!

The carriage took the road to Paris. About 3:00 AM they reached the Bastille.

Soon Baisemeaux appeared.

What now? Whom have you brought me?

But while the king was outside, the queen, alone except for the midwife, gave birth to a second son.

Dame Perronnette was the midwife. She hurried to the king to tell him the news.

I will come at once!

The order to release Marchialli—it was a mistake. I now bring you another order, to set Seldon free.

But what about Marchialli?

I have brought him back. It is the same as if he had never left!

The birth of two sons turned the king’s joy to fear. He knew there would be quarrels about which son was older and so the heir to the throne. There might even be war.

Oh, I see!
In the house where you lived—were there mirrors there?

I don't know the meaning of that word.

And in your studies, were you taught history?

A little. I learned about the early French kings, but that's all.

You know, the poor fellow looks like the king! His first act was to dress up and pretend that he was the king!

Good heavens!

He is mad, of course. And the king was very angry. So remember, Raimeseaux, there is sentence of death upon you if you allow him to see anyone but me or the king himself!

Then they went to get the prisoner. Aramis put on his mask again.

Fire at once if he speaks!

Yes, sir.

And so, without speaking a word, the king was locked into the cell where Philippe had spent six long years.

A fine boy, your majesty!

He shall rule as Louis XIV!

He does look a little like the king, but not as much as you said!

"Louis XIII ruled in troubled times. For years he had no heir. Then on September 5, 1668, his wife, Anne of Austria, gave birth to a son."
Soon after, Porthos and Aramis rode away to Vaux. Baisemeaux went to breakfast. The young king found himself a prisoner in the Bastille.

A sound caught his attention.

Am I dead? Is this hell? Am I still in a nightmare?

A rat! A large rat!

A prisoner! I am a prisoner in the Bastille!

Excited and soaked from being in the well, I came down with a high fever. When I was out of my head, I told of the whole adventure. My teacher found the letter under my pillow.

Here is the letter. I must write to the queen about this. I dare not keep it from her!

What will happen to Philippe? And to us?

Shortly after this, you were arrested and brought to the Bastille. That was eight years ago.

They are dead. They were poisoned.

I must have a powerful enemy! Who else would be able to imprison a child such as I was and to kill two good people?

And here I am still. My nurse and teacher disappeared. Do you know what became of them?

It seems that the very fact that I live must be dangerous to someone!

You are right. And I must ask you one more question.

It is a plot! Fouquet plots against me! I must call someone—but there is no bell!

The governor! Get me the governor!
I jumped into the water, holding onto the rope with one hand, and grabbed the letter.

I put it into my shirt and somehow climbed back to the top.

Then I heard someone coming. I had just time to hide in the bushes.

I can see that my teacher is a gentleman. And Perronnette is far better than a servant.

And I...I myself must be highborn. After all, the queen, Anne of Austria, seems to care about what happens to me!

For an hour he shouted, but no one came. He picked up a chair and beat on the door.

Help! Help me!

Then there were cries from outside.

Quiet! Stop it! You're bothering us!

The other prisoners are people I have put here with never a thought for their suffering!

Should I pray? How can I ask for the liberty I have so often refused my fellow men?

The jailer entered with food.

You have always been calm! Now a broken chair and all this noise! Unless you promise to quiet down, I must report it to the governor.

I wish to see him!
You are getting that wild look in your eyes again! I must take your knife!

The jailer left, and the king felt more alone than ever. He threw his dishes against the wall.

I have to see the governor!

Perronnette and the teacher left for the village right away.

Come! We will find someone with a long ladder! We must get the letter out of the well.

But I had other ideas.

The king—I am the king! I must see the governor!

Meanwhile, Philippe lay in the king's bed at Vaux.

I am Philippe, son and heir of Louis XIII. I am the king!

I lowered the rope and the bucket nearly to the water. Then I slid down.

I saw the sky disappearing above me. I was dizzy and frightened.

But not a sound answered him. He became a madman, tearing at the floor boards. He was no longer a king, a gentleman, not even a person.
Calm yourself! Whatever is the matter?

The last letter from the queen! A puff of wind blew it into the well!

As dawn came, someone slipped into the king's bedchamber.

Well, sir, how did it go?

Just as we thought. A complete success!

The queen burns all her letters each time she comes here anyway. Isn't this the same thing?

But she will never believe me! She will think I wanted to keep the letter. She is so suspicious in all matters that have to do with Philippe!

D'Artagnan had spent the night in Fouquet's room. Now, he knocked at the king's door.

That will be d'Artagnan coming for his orders. Let us begin the attack!

That would be a terrible mistake!

If he comes into the room this morning, he is sure to see that something has happened! I will take care of him.

Philippe was my name, and my head was spinning with what I had heard.

My teacher gets letters from the queen?

And the lady who comes to see me every month...she is the queen!

Aramis! What are you doing here?

Good morning, my friend! The king does not wish to see anyone just yet.

But he asked me to come this morning.

Later, later!
Here is the king’s order to set Fouquet free. I will go with you.

Ah! I will lead the way.

The worried Fouquet waited in his room.

Ah, you have brought me the bishop!

And something better. You are free, by the king’s order!

Ah! My thanks!

But I have a question for the bishop. How have you become so friendly with the king? You have not spoken to him more than twice in your life.

I have seen him more than a hundred times. But we have kept it very secret!

And the king is more than ever your friend, Fouquet. Your feast has touched him to the heart!

Every day I was taught fencing...

Touché!

Good!

...and horseback riding.

One hot summer day, tired from my study and hard work, I fell asleep. I was just fifteen.

Perronnette! Perronnette!

My teacher was calling my nurse. He sounded very worried.
I will listen. But who are you?

We are old friends. Don't you remember seeing me in the village where you spent your childhood? I was the cavalier with a lady in black silk...

I remember! The woman was my nurse.

D'Artagnan left. Fouquet quickly locked the door and turned to Aramis.

What is happening? You must tell me!

First, you must know that the king thinks you are a robber and a traitor. He is your enemy!

Because he and I share a secret so important that I am now his only friend. He will do as I wish!

It goes back to the birth of Louis XIV. Do you remember?

As if it were yesterday!

Then Aramis told Fouquet the whole story of the plot.

You took the king from his throne? Put him in prison? This happened here?

Here at Vaux... last night!

But I did not believe I would stay there forever because I was taught to be a cavalier! There were lessons...

So much for arithmetic! Now your astronomy lesson...

Under my roof! This crime against my guest, my king! I am shamed forever!

Your king was planning to arrest you!
You may have acted for my good, but I would rather die than let this happen!

I am going to the king! You must leave Vaux and leave France! I give you four hours to escape the king’s reach!

But...

His heart broken, Aramis followed Fouquet down a secret staircase to the courtyard. He watched as Fouquet’s carriage left at full gallop.

Should I warn the prince—take him with me? Civil war would follow. No, he was a prisoner, and I’ll let him remain so.

Aramis went to find Porthos. After saying good-bye to d’Artagnan, they rode away.

At any other time, I might try to keep Aramis and Porthos from escaping. But now I must attend to other matters.

Our present story begins on a summer night in 1661, when Aramis visited the Bastille, a great prison, to hear the confession of a prisoner. Once a musketeer, Aramis was now Bishop of Vannes.

The governor of the prison went with him to the cell.

Leave, Baisemeaux! You cannot hear the prisoner’s confession.

Alone, Aramis entered and faced the young prisoner.

Are you ill? Is that why you have asked for me?

Yes...

No, you found a note in your bread telling you to ask for someone to hear your confession. I had it put there!

Then it is you who have an important secret to tell me? I will listen.

My secret is so important that if the king knew I was here tonight, I would die tomorrow!
In their early days together there was no question about the loyalty that the musketeers had for each other.

Then years later, came a secret so dangerous that it threatened the throne of France itself and put the old friends on different sides.

Go now my good friends. Hide fast, leave the country! In a few hours, the king will order me to follow you and kill you!

Meanwhile, Fouquet rushed into the Bastille. He was almost stopped by the guards.

I am Fouquet! Let me in!

Look out! Stop him!

No! It is Minister Fouquet!

Hearing the noise, Baisemeaux rushed out.

Take me at once to the prisoner brought here by the Bishop of Vannes. If you don't, I will return with ten thousand men and thirty cannons!

Ah, monseigneur! But I...

Outside the cell, a shocked Fouquet heard the voice of the king.

Help! I am the king! It was Fouquet who sent me here!

The door flew open.

Fouquet! Have you come to kill me?

Oh, sire, I am the best of all your friends!

D'Artagnan was captain of the king's musketeers.

He knew the secret, and was ordered by King Louis XIII to hide the prisoner's face forever.
And your most loyal countryman. How you must have suffered! Come, you are free!

Quickly Fouquet told the king about the plot. He told him also that the Bishop of Vannes was the leader, and that those taking part were at Vaux.

Let us go there at once! They shall be taken and put to death!

Do you believe he is my brother? This is a trick of the Bishop of Vannes!

But, sire, you cannot kill your brother!

But public talk of it could bring down the greatest shame upon the throne.

Who was this prisoner who ended his days on the lonely island? Why must his face be hidden forever behind a mask?

And so they drove away, leaving the confused Bassemeaux with an order to let the prisoner go. It was signed by the prisoner himself!

Signed, Louis!
At Vaux, Philippe still played the part of the king.

His mother entered.

My brother loves her. I will try to love her too.

He took her hand and kissed it.

In this moment I forgive her for my eight years of suffering.

Stay with me, mother. I wish you to make your peace with M. Fouquet.

I have no ill feelings toward M. Fouquet!
But when Aramis did not appear, Philippe began to worry.

Where is the Bishop of Vannes, your friend?

Why, sire, I do not know.

Suddenly there was a voice outside.

What is all that noise?

The voice of M. Fouquet!

The door opened. But it was not only Fouquet who entered.

Ohhhhhhhhh...

Louis and Philippe were dressed exactly alike. To each it seemed that he stared into a mirror. The queen cried out as if she were seeing a ghost.

Alexandre Dumas

Alexandre Dumas, a French novelist and dramatist, was born at Viller-Cotterets in 1802. His father, the illegitimate son of a marquis, was a general in the Revolutionary armies, but died when Dumas was only four years old. He received a basic education from a priest and entered the office of a local lawyer.

After he met General Foix, he became a clerk in the service of the Duke of Orleans. At that time, he began to collaborate with Leuven in the production of vaudevilles and melodramas.

In 1844 he produced, with the help of Auguste Maquet, his new collaborator, a famous cloak-and-dagger romance, The Three Musketeers, which is based almost solely on historical fact, as opposed to his other very successful novel, The Count of Monte Cristo, which was a product of his brilliant imagination.

Much has been written about Dumas’ share in the novels which bear his name. The Dumas-Maquet series is undoubtedly the best. But the manuscripts of novels still exist in Dumas’ handwriting and attest to his skill as a narrator, and he is considered by most literary critics as “the master of narrative.”

Dumas died in 1870.
Remember,

"Today's readers are tomorrow's leaders."
Step-By-Step

The following is a simple guide to using and enjoying each of your Illustrated Classics™. To maximize your use of the learning activities provided, we suggest that you follow these steps:

1. **Listen!** We suggest that you listen to the read-along. (At this time, please ignore the beeps.) You will enjoy this wonderfully dramatized presentation.

2. **Pre-reading Activities.** After listening to the audio presentation, the pre-reading activities in the Activity Book prepare you for reading the story by setting the scene, introducing more difficult vocabulary words, and providing some short exercises.

3. **Reading Activities.** Now turn to the “While you are reading” portion of the Activity Book, which directs you to make a list of story-related facts. Read-along while listening to the audio presentation. (This time pay attention to the beeps, as they indicate when each page should be turned.)

4. **Post-reading Activities.** You have successfully read the story and listened to the audio presentation. Now answer the multiple-choice questions and other activities in the Activity Book.
Overview

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This series will help you to develop confidence and a sense of accomplishment as you finish each novel. The stories in Saddleback’s Illustrated Classics™ are fun to read. And remember, fun motivates!
Then the boat drifted onto the sands of St. Marguerite. D’Artagnan took his prisoner to the governor.

He is a prisoner of state. He is to be seen by no one. His face is to be masked forever under penalty of death. That is the order of the king!

I understand!

A few days later, orders from the king called d’Artagnan back to Paris. As he left the island, he glanced back for a last look at the man in the iron mask.

He is truly an unfortunate man!

The End
Imagine being imprisoned for your whole life because you looked like someone else!

This is the sad fate of Philippe, twin brother of the King of France, until a daring plan to rescue him unfolds.

Follow his exciting story, filled with swordplay and intrigue, to its surprising ending!