

Honors British Literature

Ms. Culliton

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HW = Homework

CW = Classwork

Month beginning: 2/15/2016



Perpetual Vocabulary Assignment: Every time you see a word whose meaning you do not know, LOOK IT UP. Keep a list of words and their definitions. Yes, you MAY USE this list during tests and quizzes. Be sure that the definition you have taken down for the word suits the CONTEXT in which it was used within the piece of literature you were reading!

Reminder: Absences do not extend due dates, test, dates, quiz dates, etc. All work must be done while absent; tests and quizzes must be made up at the start of class the day you return from an absence. E-mail or call in a timely manner if this presents a problem.

Monday February 15	Tuesday February 16	Wednesday February 17	Thursday February 18	Friday February 19
	Finish <i>Hamlet</i> . HW = Read textbook Introduction to the Romantic Period pp. 620 - 637 and do the Literary Period Introduction Test sheet (it's not a test-- complete it as you read the text); due Thu.	TEST on <i>Hamlet</i> Acts IV-V and whole play. (open-SG; 3X) HW = Read textbook Introduction to the Romantic Period pp. 620 -637 and do the Literary Period Introduction Test sheet (it's not a test-- complete it as you read the text).	Literary Period Introduction Test sheet for Romantic Period DUE (will be collected in class so cannot be turned in for a late grade if you are present). CW = Read pp/ 726-729 on Mary Wollstonecraft and the Shelleys and reprint handout " <i>from A Vindication of the rights of Women</i> "; finish for HW along with the "Respond and Think Critically" questions	"Respond and Think Critically" questions for "Vindication" DUE. Film on Mary Shelley. HW = Read and do SG for <i>Frankenstein</i> Letters 1- 4 and Chs. 1-5

Note: There may be unannounced quizzes (open-SG) as well as the tests listed on this schedule.

Monday February 22	Tuesday February 23	Wednesday February 24	Thursday February 25	Friday February 26
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HW = *Frankenstein* Letters 1- 4 and Chs. 1-2 and SG questions

Continued on Reverse

Perpetual Vocabulary Assignment: Every time you see a word whose meaning you do not know, LOOK IT UP. Keep a list of words and their definitions. Yes, you MAY USE this list during tests and quizzes. Be sure that the definition you have taken down for the word suits the CONTEXT in which it was used within the piece of literature you were reading!

Monday February 29	Tuesday March 01	Wednesday March 02	Thursday March 03	Friday March 04
<i>Frankenstein</i> Letters 1- 4 and Chs. 1-2 and SG questions DUE. CW = Film adaptation of <i>Frankenstein</i> and clips from <i>Gothic</i> . HW = Chs. 3-4 and SG questions	Chs. 3-4 DUE. Film adaptation of <i>Frankenstein</i> and clips from <i>Gothic</i> HW = Chs. 5-8 and SG, due Thu.	Read <i>Frankenstein</i> Chs. 5-8 and do SG questions	<i>Frankenstein</i> Chs. 5-8 and SG questions DUE. TEST (3X) on Letters 1-4 and Chs. 5-8. HW = Ch. 9-12, due Monday	Film adaptation of <i>Frankenstein</i> and clips from <i>Gothic</i> and documentaries
Note: There may be unannounced quizzes (open-SG) as well as the tests listed on this schedule.				

Monday March 07	Tuesday March 08	Wednesday March 09	Thursday March 10	Friday March 11
<i>Frankenstein</i> Chs 9-12 DUE. HW= Chs. 13-15	Chs. 13-15 DUE. HW = CHs. 16-18	Chs. 16-18 DUE. TEST on <i>Frankenstein</i> Chs. 9-17 (3X; open-SG). HW = Ch. 18-20	Ch. 18-20 DUE. HW=Ch. 21-22	<i>Frankenstein</i> Chs 21-22 DUE. HW= FINISH the book and all SG questions.
All reading assignments include Study Guide questions.				

Meet Mary Shelley



[Frankenstein] offers a rare opportunity to investigate the way that an individual work can merge into general consciousness: how a personal act of imagination may become myth.

—Christopher Small in *Mary Shelley's Frankenstein*

Mary Shelley's fame as a writer rests on a single novel, *Frankenstein*. Millions of people who have never heard of Mary Shelley know her story through the films and other media inspired by the novel. The word "Frankenstein" has become a synonym for monster, and Shelley's tragic tale—about a well-intentioned student of science and his human-like creation—has been given myth-like status.

Born in 1797, Shelley was the daughter of two of England's leading intellectual radicals. Her father, William Godwin, was an influential political philosopher and novelist. Her mother, Mary Wollstonecraft, the author of *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*, was a pioneer in promoting women's rights and education. Shelley never knew her mother, who died ten days after giving birth, but she was influenced throughout her life by her mother's writings and reputation.

When Mary was four, her father remarried. Mary received no formal education, but Mr. Godwin encouraged his daughter to read from his well-stocked library. The Godwin household

was also a place of lively intellectual conversation. Many writers visited Godwin to talk about philosophy, politics, science, and literature. When Mary was nine, she and her stepsister hid under a sofa to hear Samuel Taylor Coleridge recite his poem "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner." This popular poem later influenced Shelley as she developed her ideas for *Frankenstein*.

Mary's future husband, the widely admired poet Percy Shelley, was one of her father's frequent visitors. When Mary was sixteen, she and Percy eloped to France. They married in 1816 and lived together for eight years, until Percy's early death. They spent their time traveling in Switzerland, Germany, and Italy, visiting with friends; studying literature, languages, music and art; and writing. In her journal, Shelley described her years with Percy as "romantic beyond romance." Her life during this period was also filled with personal tragedy. She gave birth to four children in five years, three of whom died as infants. Many critics have pointed out that thoughts of birth and death were much on Shelley's mind at the time she wrote *Frankenstein*.

Mary Shelley did not put her name on the novel when it was published in 1818. Many reviewers and readers assumed it was written by Percy Shelley because he had written the preface. Mary Shelley's name was first attached to the novel in the 1831 edition for which she wrote the introduction. Remembering back fifteen years, she explained in the introduction how an eighteen-year-old came to write the unusual novel.

After Percy's death in 1822 in a boating accident, Mary Shelley returned to England and supported herself, her son, and her father with her writings. She wrote four novels, including *The Last Man* (1826), a futuristic story about the destruction of the human race. She also wrote short stories, essays, and travelogues. To preserve her husband's literary legacy, she collected and annotated Percy Shelley's poems for publication. She died in 1851.

Introducing the Novel

I busied myself to think of a story, . . . One which would speak to the mysterious fears of our nature and awaken thrilling horror.

—Mary Shelley

In the introduction to the 1831 edition of *Frankenstein*, Mary Shelley explains how she came to write her famous novel. In the summer of 1816, she and Percy Shelley were living near the poet Lord Byron and his doctor-friend John Polidori on Lake Geneva in the Swiss Alps. During a period of incessant rain, the four of them were reading ghost stories to each other when Byron proposed that they each try to write one. For days Shelley could not think of an idea. Then, while she was listening to Lord Byron and Percy discussing the probability of using electricity to create life artificially, according to a theory called galvanism, an idea began to grow in her mind:

*Perhaps a corpse would be re-animated;
galvanism had given token of such things:
perhaps the component parts of a creature might
be manufactured, brought together, and
[endued] with vital warmth.*

The next day she started work on *Frankenstein*. A year later, she had completed her novel. It was published in 1818, when Shelley was nineteen years old.

Frankenstein is an example of a **gothic** novel. This type of novel was popular between 1760 and 1820. The main ingredients of the gothic novel are mystery, horror, and the supernatural. The word *gothic* itself has several meanings. It can mean harsh or cruel, referring to the barbaric Gothic tribes of the Middle Ages. It can also mean “medieval,” referring to the historical period associated with castles and knights in armor. In literature the term applies to works with a brooding atmosphere that emphasize the unknown and inspire fear. Gothic novels typically feature wild and remote settings, such as haunted castles or wind-blasted moors, and their plots involve violent or mysterious events.

While the atmosphere of Shelley’s *Frankenstein* is nightmarish, the novel is much more than a

horror story. Shelley’s central characters—a young student of science and the man-like being he creates—are both morally complex. Through their conflict, Shelley poses profound questions about science and society and about the positive and destructive sides of human nature. These questions struck a chord with Shelley’s readers in the early 1800s—a time of startling breakthroughs in science and technology and a growing faith in the power of science to improve human life. Today, in a world where scientific advances such as cloning and genetic engineering seem to be redefining life itself, her questions are no less relevant.

THE TIME AND PLACE

The novel takes place in the late 1700s in various parts of Europe, especially Switzerland and Germany, and in the Arctic. *Frankenstein* was published in 1818 in England at the height of the Romantic movement. This movement in art and literature was based in part on the feeling of optimism about human possibilities that pervaded Western culture after the American and French revolutions.

In England the post-revolutionary period was also a time of economic suffering and social disorder as the new industrialism transformed English society. Shelley’s readers lived in hopeful, but also disturbingly turbulent, times.

The Romantic movement, which lasted from about 1798 to 1832, pulled away from the period known as the Enlightenment, which emphasized reason and logic. English writers of the Romantic period believed in the importance of the individual. They valued subjectivity, imagination, and the expression of emotions over rational thought. The typical Romantic hero, found especially in the poetry of Lord Byron and Percy Shelley, is passionate, uninhibited, and unconventional. Often the hero is an artist who is a social rebel or a melancholy outcast from society.

The Romantic poets, including William Wordsworth, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, John

Keats, and Percy Shelley, transport their readers to the private worlds of the poets' imaginations. Often, they isolate themselves in nature and celebrate its beauty or its elemental rawness.

They were also attracted to stories and settings from the past. Percy Shelley, for example, made Prometheus, the symbol of creative striving in Greek mythology, the hero of his poetic drama *Prometheus Unbound*.

Mary Shelley's gothic novel *Frankenstein* was labeled "romantic fiction" by an early reviewer. It is a powerful work of imagination that uses exotic natural settings and emphasizes the emotions of fear and awe. Many scholars also see her novel as a critique of Romantic ideals. The "modern Prometheus" she holds up for readers' evaluation, Dr. Frankenstein, is an ambiguous character who may or may not be worthy of our admiration.

Did You Know?

In the early 1800s, scientists were on the verge of discovering the potential of electricity. At this time, scientists knew about the existence of static electricity as well as electricity produced by lightning. But they were just beginning to discover that electricity could be produced by a chemical reaction.

In the 1780s, Luigi Galvani, a professor of anatomy in Bologna, Italy, conducted experiments on animal tissue using a machine that could produce electrical sparks. He concluded that animal tissue contained electricity in the

form of a fluid. Galvani's theory of "animal electricity" was shown to be incorrect, but he had proven that muscles contracted in response to an electrical stimulus. His research opened the way to new discoveries about the operation of nerves and muscles and showed that electrical forces exist in living tissue. In the novel, Frankenstein learns about the controversial theory of "galvanism" as part of his scientific training at a university in Germany. Today, galvanism refers to a direct current of electricity produced by a chemical reaction.

Frankenstein by Mary Shelley

Study Guide Questions

Letters 1-4

1. Who is writing **Letter 1** (and all the letters)?
2. To whom is he writing? What is their relationship?
3. Where is **Robert Walton** when he writes Letter 1? Why is he there? What are his plans?
4. What does Robert Walton tell us about himself?
5. Where is Walton now? What do you think of Walton's question "What can stop the determined heart and resolved will of man"?
6. How much time has elapsed between Letter 3 and **Letter 4**? What "strange accident" has happened to the sailors?
7. Why does the **man** picked up by the ship say he is there? What shape is he in?

8. What sort of person does he seem to be? How does Walton respond to this man?
9. How much time has elapsed when Walton begins writing again? What has happened in the meantime? How does the man respond to Walton's project? How is Walton responding to the man?

Ch 1- 5

11. What is the man's background? (Do we know his name yet?) Where is he from?
12. What is the story of the man's mother, **Caroline Beaufort**? How does the man feel toward his parents, and what responsibilities does he feel they had toward him?
13. Who is **Elizabeth Lavenza** and what is her story? What gift does the man's mother give him? Do we know the man's name yet? Do we know his family name?
14. Who is **Henry Clerval** and what is his relation to **Victor**?
15. How does Victor characterize the interests and characters of Clerval, Elizabeth, and himself?

16. Who is Cornelius Agrippa and how does Victor find out about him? How does Victor's father respond, and how does Victor comment on that response?
17. What sort of science ("Natural Philosophy") is Victor learning from Agrippa, Paracelsus, and Albertus Magnus? How would a modern scientist respond to this sort of thinking?
18. What happens when Victor sees an oak tree destroyed by lightning and hears an explanation? What does Victor then begin to study?
19. Who or what does he credit for this change in direction? Who or what does he blame for his "utter and terrible destruction"?
20. What happens to Elizabeth and to Victor's mother as a result of Elizabeth's scarlet fever? How does this compare with the mother's early history?
21. Why does Victor's father send him to the University of Ingolstadt? How old is Victor then? (Ingolstadt is in southern Germany, in Bavaria, on the Danube, 43 miles north of Munich. The university founded there in 1472 moved to Landshut in 1802 and to Munich in 1826.)

22. What does Victor learn from **M. Krempe**? How does Victor respond to him, and on what grounds? Is this a good basis for making such a decision?
23. What does Victor learn from **M. Waldman**? How does Victor respond to him? How does Victor think of his older science as opposed to modern science? What does M. Waldman say in describing modern chemistry that changes Victor's mind? What does Victor say he will now do?
24. How well does Victor progress during the next two years? What does he then become interested in, and what ultimately does he discover?
25. Will he share the knowledge of creating life with Walton? Why? (Note the "present" of the telling breaking through the narration here.)
26. How does he go about creating a human being, and what does he expect as a result of this creation? How long does the task take? What happens to Victor in the process?
27. Given all the mad doctor and monster movies we've seen, including perhaps versions of Frankenstein, what is unexpected about the description of the actual creation of life here? How much do we learn of the actual procedure?

28. How does Victor respond to the actual creation of life? What surprises him about the way the creature he has brought to life looks? What does that do to Victor's response?

29. What does Victor dream? How does the dream grow out of, comment on, even explain what Victor has done and been through?

30. What does the creature do? How does Victor respond?

31. Explain the significance of the lines quoted from "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner":

Like one who, on a lonely road,
Doth walk in fear and dread,
And, having once turned round, walks on,
And turns no more his head;
Because he knows a frightful fiend
Doth close behind him tread.

32. Whom does Victor meet arriving in a coach the next morning? How does Victor respond?

33. What does Victor discover when they go to Victor's apartment? How does Victor respond? What happens to him and for how long?

Ch 6-8

33. What is waiting for Victor when he finally recovers? Who has nursed him during his illness?
34. Who is **Justine Moritz** and what is her story? What comments does Elizabeth make about her position in Swiss society? What religion is Justine?
35. Who is **William** and how old is he? Have we heard of him before?
36. What does Victor do after his recovery? What is Clerval's "plan of life"?
37. When does Victor finally plan to return home? What do he and Clerval do while waiting for his father's directions?
38. What is waiting for Victor when he returns to his apartment? What news does his father have for him? And what is his father's name? How does Victor respond?
39. How long has Victor been away from home? What happens the night he returns to Geneva? How does he respond?
40. Whom does Victor see that night? When was the last time they saw each other? How long ago was that?

41. What does Victor now believe happened to William? What does Victor assume about the nature of the creature?

42. Who has been identified as the murderer, and on what evidence? How does Victor respond to this news? Why doesn't he say anything about the real murderer?

43. What happens at Justine's trial? How does Victor respond?

44. The next day, why does Justine say she has confessed to the murder of William? How does Victor respond to Justine's situation and to Elizabeth's anguish?

Ch 9-10

45. How does Victor respond in the days after Justine's death? How have Elizabeth's views changed?

46. What journey does Victor undertake, and when? What places does he travel through? Where does he stay?

47. Where does Victor go the next day? Where does he go the following day? P. B. Shelley mentions the glacier in a letter written at Chamouni (his spelling) on July 25, 1817:

48. How does he feel during this part of his journey? (Notice in this chapter that Frankenstein, in the late 1700s, is able to quote a poem written by P.B. Shelley in 1816.
49. Whom does Victor see? How does he respond?
50. In this chapter, we finally hear the creature speak for the first time. What does he say? Is this what we expect from the creature?
51. What does the creature ask of Victor? What does the creature say to Victor? Does his language remind you of another literary work? How good is Victor at performing the role of creator for his creature?
52. Why has the creature caused the deaths of William and Justine? Is he as inherently evil and bloodthirsty as Victor has assumed?
53. What will cause the creature to change? Keep in mind his statement "I was benevolent and good; misery made me a fiend. Make me happy, and I shall again be virtuous". What sort of psychological understanding is Shelley showing here?

54. The Creature mentions “hand” several times in Ch. 10. What earlier moment does this recall, and how does it build sympathy for the Creature in the reader?

55. Does Victor agree to listen to the creature's tale? What does Victor begin to feel? Where do they go?

Ch. 11-12

56. What does the creature remember of his earliest days? How does he seem to be learning things? How well can the creature speak at this point of his existence?

57. How does the creature respond to his discovery of the fire? Why does he move?

58. What happens during his first encounters with people? Is this more like what you expect from a horror story? But from whose point of view do we see these encounters?

59. Where does he finally find a place to stay? What does he learn about the people who live in the cottage? How does he feel toward them?

60. How does the creature continue to learn about the family he is watching? How might a modern anthropologist or sociologist respond to the creature's methods? What is the condition of the family? How does the creature manage to help them?
61. How does the creature learn language? Why might he have trouble learning words such as "*good, dearest, unhappy*"?
62. What are the names of the family members? Who are **Agatha** and **Felix**?
63. What things bother the creature when he thinks of discovering himself to the family? How does he respond to his own appearance when he sees it?
64. The creature is still there when spring comes. What has been happening to Victor in the meantime? (See Chapter 5.)
65. How does the creature hope to win over the family? How does he respond to the coming of spring?

Ch 13-15

66. Who arrives at the cottage in the spring? What is **Safie**'s background? How does her language problem help the creature? Which of them learns faster?
67. How does the creature learn about reading? What book does Felix use to teach Safie?
68. What does the creature learn from this book? How much of a monster can someone be who can say "but when I heard details of vice and bloodshed, my wonder ceased, and I turned away with disgust and loathing"?
69. What happens when the creature begins to think about himself? How does he compare with the humans described in the book? What questions does he ask himself? How does his knowledge make him feel?
70. What does he learn about human relationships, and how does this make him feel?
71. How did the De Lacey family come to be living in the cottage?
72. How did Safie come to find and join them?

73. What does the creature find in the woods?

74. What are the three books that the creature reads, and what does he learn from each?

75. What else does the creature read and what does he learn from it?

76. How long has it been since the creature came to life? What is Victor doing at this point? (See chapter 6.)

77. What does the creature hope will happen when he talks to De Lacey? What actually happens?

Ch 16-18

78. What happens to the De Lacey family after the events of chapter 15? How does the creature respond, and what does he do to the cottage?

79. How does the creature travel? Does this remind you of any other people's travels?

80. What event during the creature's travels confirms his hatred of humans?

81. What event happens when the creature is near Geneva? Who is the boy? Who is the woman?

82. When Victor visits the site of William's death in chapter 7, he says "I had turned loose into the world a depraved wretch, whose delight was in carnage and misery." After reading the creature's version of events, do you agree?

83. What does the creature demand from Victor?

84. How does Victor at first respond to the creature's demand? What response does he expect from the creature? What approach does the creature say he will take?

85. How effective is the creature in convincing Victor?

86. What does the creature say will happen if Victor creates a female for him?

87. What does Victor decide? What does the creature say he will do while Victor is at work?

88. How does Victor appear and respond to his family when he returns home?

89. Why does Victor's father think Victor might not want to marry Elizabeth?

90. Why does Victor want to visit England? What does he say about slavery?

91. What is the effect of Victor's return to the present?

Ch 19-21

92. What are Clerval's plans for his career?

93. Where does Victor's journey end, and what does he plan to do there? Why is he afraid?

94. Why does Victor change his mind about creating the female? Who watches him as he destroys the female?

95. What happens shortly after Victor destroys the female? How is this similar to what happened after Victor created the Creature?

96. What happens when the Creature visits Victor? What does the Creature promise to do? What does Victor understand that promise to mean?

97. What happens when Victor goes out in a boat to dispose of the female creature's remains? Where does he end up? What happens when he lands?

98. Who is Mr. Kirwin and how does he treat Victor? What has happened to cause Victor's arrest? What happens to Victor after his arrest?

99. What happens when Victor wakes up? Who is there?

100. What happens at Victor's trial?

101. How does Victor feel as they leave Ireland and go to France?

Ch 22-24

102. Why doesn't Victor get home quickly?

103. What does Elizabeth say in her letter? How does Victor respond to her?

104. What are the marriage plans? How does Victor prepare for what he fears will happen?

105. How do Victor and Elizabeth get to Evian and why do they stop there?

106. Has Victor understood the Creature's promise correctly? What happens on Victor's wedding night?

107. How does the Creature respond?

108. What happens when Victor returns to Geneva? What happens to Victor's father? What happens to Victor?

109. What happens when Victor tries to get the authorities to help him hunt for the Creature?

110. What happens during Victor's pursuit of the Creature? Where do they go? What does the Creature do?

111. What sustains Victor during his pursuit?

112. What does Victor ask Walton to do? What does he warn Walton about the Creature?

Walton's letter continues

113. Why wouldn't Victor tell Walton the details about the creation?

114. How has Victor come to understand himself? How does Walton respond to Victor's impending death?

115. How does Walton avoid the threat of a mutiny?

116. Why is Walton returning to England? What will Victor do?

117. Does Victor blame himself? What is Walton's response to Victor's death?

118. What happens as Walton is writing? What is the effect of shifting to the present tense here?

119. When Walton sees the Creature in the cabin with Victor's body, what is familiar about the scene?
Why has the Creature come to see Victor?

120. How does the Creature explain what he has done? How does Walton respond to the Creature?

121. What will the Creature do next? How does he feel about it?

122. Do we see the Creature die?