“[H]ow dangerous is the acquisition of knowledge and how much happier that man is who believes his native town to be the world, than he who aspires to become greater than his nature will allow.” To what extent does Shelley’s Frankenstein support Viktor Frankenstein’s view?

Remember that the focus of your essay should be on Shelley’s attitude to the social concerns of 1816 Europe, and how we locate this in her novel through her characters. You should consider at least some of the following aspects:

- How Shelley presents her world.
- The images and descriptions she uses.
- How does Shelley identify the value systems of the times?
- How do the characters reflect prevailing views and values?
- Do conflicts arise because of different views and values held by characters?
- Where the reader’s sympathies lie.
- How the characters’ actions are shaped by the social views and values.
- The position of the narrative voice used to comment on the characters’ actions and events.
- The presentation of characters as good/bad/both/neither.
- The use of dialogue, description, language, mood, setting etc to underline the message.
- How Shelley might challenge stereotypical thinking.
- Who has power/who is powerless?
- Are there some things which Shelley doesn’t explore; does this reveal where her views and values lie?

The SAC requires 800-1000 words, so keep this in mind and aim for this word limit.

The purpose of this task is to try to get you to grapple with lots of the ideas which we have raised in class and to organize your thoughts into a carefully constructed, well-argued essay. Experiment, challenge, explore ……… Have fun!