William Blake: Newton, circa 1805

Frankenstein

Mary Shelley

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Introduction – ‘Frankenstein’

Published in 1818, ‘Frankenstein’ has now become a mainstream cultural phenomenon. Although very much a Gothic horror novel, it is the very idea of playing God and creating life that has captured the imagination of many generations. The novel challenges many of our beliefs about appearances and reality, and suggests that science without an ethical framework is inviting trouble. Whilst in the past, the emphasis may have been on the monster- and certainly film versions exploit this – and the fear of the unknown, ‘Frankenstein’ is also asking the reader to consider responsibility. Who is the real monster? Moreover, the novel presents three narrative viewpoints, allowing us to enter the perspective of the monster who is a sensitive soul, unwanted and abandoned. Many consider this novel to be the first science fiction novel ever written, and it is a product of the times, reflecting the fascination with science at the time.

About the Author... Mary Shelley

Mary Shelley was born to famous parents – her mother was pioneer feminist Mary Wollstonecraft and her father was political philosopher William Godwin. Born in 1797, Mary’s education was unique and liberal and she certainly had open minded parents. Mary’s behaviour was not typical of the ‘norm’ at the time as she lived a radically open and free lifestyle. She became a part of the life of the famous Romantic poet, Percy Bysshe Shelley, who was married. A pregnancy followed ending in the death of her premature baby. Later Shelley’s wife committed suicide and Mary and Shelley married. They were connected to other famous people in the Romantic movement, including Lord Byron, another famous poet. Tragically, the next two children Mary had also died, until another child was born. This last child was later drowned in a boating accident.

‘Frankenstein’ was written when she was 18 and published by the time she was 20. Mary died in 1851 at the age of 53 from a brain tumour. Mary’s bohemian and very unique life is just as interesting as her literary achievements, and has also been the subject of much writing.
## Knowledge Questions- ‘Frankenstein’

1. Outline the main characters in *Frankenstein* and the roles they play?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Character</th>
<th>Role</th>
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2. Locate, sketch and label the places where the novel takes place.

3. Outline the plot of the story in a timeline from beginning to end using the above two arrows.
PLOT Outline ... ‘Frankenstein’

a) Volume One. Part One

The origins of Frankenstein and his ambitions. Frankenstein is an intelligent man of the times—everything about him is positive. He is a man full of love, someone to admire and respect.

b) Volume One. Part Two

The Monster is born. A different mood comes over the text with a darker and heavier tone.

- Frankenstein searches cemeteries and morgues.
- His work is lonely and obsessive.
- The monster is born. Frankenstein is shocked by his creation
- Clerval comes to comfort him
- Elizabeth’s letter arrives
- Father’s letter arrives with bad news

c) Volume Two. Part One

- Frankenstein’s despair and the Monster’s despair
- Humanization of the monster
- Life in the forest for the Monster
- The Old man and his loving children.

d) Volume Two. Part Two

- The Cottage/The perfect Society.
- There is poverty but there is love
- The Monster realizes who he is. He learns language, history, religion and politics.

e) Volume Two. Part Three

- What is justice? The monster finds books in the forest and learns of enlightenment.
- The monster dares to take his part in society and approaches De Lacey but is turned away.
- The monster decides to take revenge against the human race especially his creator.
- The monster demands a companion and Victor reluctantly agrees.

f) Volume Three

Everything that Frankenstein had hoped to achieve has failed.

The three stories of the play: 1. Robert Walton’s story

2. Victor Frankenstein’s story

3. The Monster’s story

TASK: The story is "framed" by the letters of Robert Walton. He tells us the story as Frankenstein told it to him. Why did Mary Shelley choose to ‘frame’ the story as she did, as a story within a story?
CHARACTER STUDIES – ‘Frankenstein’

In your book, allow one page per character. Based on the following questions, create an in-depth character study.

1. Pick a key character in the text/film.
2. Write a physical description for this character.
3. Describe the character's personality.
4. What happens to him/her in the text? (Briefly)
5. What motivate/s this character? What is his/her driving force?
6. Describe this character's attitude to life.
7. What major events and turning points are faced by this character? How are they handled?
8. Describe changes and/or transformations experienced.
9. What problems are faced by this character, and how are they handled?
10. Discuss the relationships this character has with others.
11. How does this character use language?
12. Is the character's gender important in his/her life?
13. Why is this character the way he/she is?
14. What important past experiences have shaped this character?

Prometheus

Frankenstein is subtitled “The Modern Prometheus”. Who was Prometheus?

In Greek and Roman mythology, Prometheus was an immortal giant who moulded men from clay and stole fire from the gods on Mount Olympus and gave it to men. This led to independence, and when Zeus, leader of the gods looked down on Earth and saw humanity had fire, he punished Prometheus by chaining him to a rock where his liver would be pecked out by an eagle as torture. The liver regrew every night, hence the torture was never ending, until Hercules rescued him. This myth had great significance to the Romantics as Prometheus had defied the establishment to follow his own dreams and aspirations.

Grigory Karpovich Mikhailov, 1814-1867
Comprehension Questions Worksheet- ‘Frankenstein’

Opening - Letters 1-4
1. Letters 1-4 act as an ‘overture’ for the novel. What does this mean?
2. The writer is 28 year old Arctic explorer, Robert Walton. What are our impressions of him?
3. What is the impact of not having companions?
4. When Victor Frankenstein is taken on board the ship, how does Walton describe him?

Chapter 1
5. Describe Victor Frankenstein’s past history and family life.
6. What is your impression of Victor? Why?

Chapter 2
7. What type of parents were Victor’s parents?

Chapter 3
8. Victor states that he became obsessed with the need to ‘...pioneer a new way, explore unknown powers, and unfold to the world the deepest mysteries of creation.’ What did he have in mind?

Chapter 4
9. What was ‘loathsome’ about his research?

Chapter 5
10. From what has the ‘monster’ or Victor’s creation been created?
11. Describe and explain Victor’s reaction to the monster he has created.

Chapter 6
12. Why are Victor’s family concerned?

Chapter 7
13. What terrible news does Victor receive from home?
14. How does Victor cope with seeing his monster again?

Chapter 8
15. What stops Victor from stepping in and helping Justine?
Comprehension Questions Worksheet- ‘Frankenstein’

Chapter 9
16. Why does Victor roam through the Alps?

Chapter 10
17. What does Victor’s monster want from him?

Chapter 11
18. How are the French family in the cottage unknowingly helping the monster develop?

Chapter 12
19. In what way do you respond to the monster at this point? Why?

Chapter 13
20. To what extent is the monster a victim of appearances?

Chapter 14
21. What do we learn about the monster’s beloved De Lacey ‘family’?

Chapter 15
22. How does the monster’s learning develop? When he discovers how he was created, how does he feel?
23. Although accepted by the blind man, how do the rest of the family respond to the sight of the monster in their cottage?

Chapter 16
24. How does the monster react to this rejection? Why did he kill William?

Chapter 17
25. What compromise does Victor make with his monster?

Chapter 18
26. Describe Victor’s mixed feelings about making the female companion?

Chapter 19
27. Explore the moods and tone of Victor’s work.
Comprehension Questions Worksheet- ‘Frankenstein’

Chapter 20
28. When Victor breaks his promise, the monster rages “Beware, for I am fearless and therefore powerful? What does this mean?

Chapter 21
29. Who has been murdered?

Chapter 22
30. Why does Victor want to wait until after the wedding to inform Elizabeth about his creation?

Chapter 23
31. After the deaths of Elizabeth and his father, Victor spends time in a mental asylum. How is he now in the same situation as his monster?

Chapter 24
32. How does the monster respond to Victor’s death? Why?

Task: The faces of Frankenstein
Research the various films made about Frankenstein and create a collage.
Extension Questions Worksheet- ‘Frankenstein’

1. To what extent is Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein* a product of the author’s own life and the social and scientific movements of her time? Discuss.

2. Who is the hero in *Frankenstein* - Victor or the Monster? Discuss.

3. In what ways is Mary Shelley’s novel *Frankenstein* a social criticism?

4. The characters in *Frankenstein* are not very interesting as we never really get to know them. They are too concerned with ideas and the monster is not very convincing as a character. Discuss.

5. The monster kills, but Victor is also a murderer. To what extent do you agree?

6. *Frankenstein* has little relevance for us in contemporary society. Discuss.

7. *Frankenstein* shows us the consequences of behaving irresponsibly in the use of playing God with science. Discuss.

Wider Issues to Explore...

8. Why do we need friends? What happens to us when we don’t have friends and companions?

9. What is it to be a parent? What happens when people create, but do not take responsibility for their creation?

10. What is progress?

11. Do we always recognize ‘humanness’ when we see it?

12. What makes a monster? What makes us human?

13. Is humanity obsessed with overcoming the power of nature?

14. Should there be limits and controls to the pursuit and development of science?

15. Are humans unable to look past appearances?

16. How is our self image formed? How do others influence our self-image?
Choose TWO of the following

1. Compose a series of poems based on the text.
2. Revise a section of the text and turn it into a short story.
3. Invent a game or create a quiz based on the text.
4. Rewrite the ending of the text so that the outcome is different.
5. Plan and create a picture book of the story.
6. Present a talk on an aspect of the text to the class.
7. Who was the author? Research and report a biography of the author.
8. Write a newspaper article based on aspects of the text.
9. Compose and /or find some music that represents key moments in the text. Play them to the class and explain to the class your reason for choosing these pieces of music.
10. Choreograph a movement inspired by one or more key scenes in the text. Present a live performance to an audience or have someone video tape it.
11. Using any art medium (painting, sculpture, inks, pencil etc.), create one or more visual representations of the text.
12. Choose an aspect of the background of the text that interests you and create a PowerPoint/research report for the class. (I.e. the times; the fashions; key conflicts etc.)

Note: for each of your projects, write 250 + words about the process you undertook.
‘Frankenstein’ and Gothic Literature

In the 1700s, there was a great interest in Gothic novels, peaking from 1765 to 1820. These novels appealed to all classes of people in both England and America - cheap editions as well as luxurious books. ‘Of all the various kinds of superstition which have in any age influenced the human mind, none appear to have operated with so much effect as the Gothic...’ (Dr. Nathan Drake, 1798) Although much of the popular Gothic literature would seem to us dated and not so scary, it was shocking at the time as it was so new. Some features of Gothic literature include:

- Obsession with the dark, the gloom and doom
- Ghosts and haunting
- Death, decay and dying
- Horror and the supernatural elements
- Wild storms, weather and environments
- Mental illness and obsession; melancholy
- Inner turmoil; feelings of isolation and alienation
- Mansions in disrepair, ruins, abandoned castles etc.
- Passionate emotions; obsessive love...
- Torture chambers, dungeons, graveyards/ cemeteries
- Omens, signs, superstitions, forebodings...
- Nightmares and dreams...

Task:

1. Analyse the painting below. What is the nightmare about?

2. Examine your experiences with horror films and stories. In your opinion what makes horror? Why do people love horror movies?

Henri Fuseli- ‘The Nightmare’ painted in 1781
The Romantics and ‘Frankenstein’

In the late eighteenth century and early nineteenth century there was a Romantic movement in the Arts, including writers, artists, politicians, philosophers and musicians. It was essentially a backlash against the Industrial Revolution and the Age of Enlightenment with its emphasis on rationality or thinking. The Romantics pushed for intuition, imagination, nature and the natural, as well as intensity and depth of feeling. The sensitive soul was deep and inspiring. Romantics urged artists to create and be original, rather than copying and lavishly being tied to the past. There was a need to escape from the grim realities of life and yet there was empathy for the voice of the marginalised in society. Mary Shelley was central to this movement, as she was part of the lives of the key romantic poets and writers, Shelley and Lord Byron amongst others. The romantics do not refer to a love story per se, but rather a love or romance with life and art. Hence beauty can be seen in nature, people, life and even death. In ‘Frankenstein’, the way Victor and Walton behave and respond to life and living is typically ‘romantic’, although to modern sensibilities they may seem overly dramatic and intense.

Artificial life and playing God – A comparison with the film ‘Blade Runner’

Since the 1960s, there has been much public awareness of the negative impacts of the technological developments on society, combined with fears about the future. By the start of the 1980s, the world was becoming more and more influenced by technology and its possible interference with our lives. Multinational companies dominated the world, the media was owned by a few people and science appeared to be breaking new ground. Where would it all end? Research on discovering the human genome /unlocking human DNA inevitably lead to predictions of being able to create or clone people. World overpopulation, diminishing resources such as water, extinct species, global warming, weapons of mass destruction and war have consistently dominated the news. Films such as ‘Blade Runner’ can be seen as a dystopian future, where the Earth has been virtually abandoned, a corporation creates humans and the future is very bleak indeed.

Behind the Story...Frankenstein

After the death of her baby daughter, it is known that Mary Shelley once had a dream where her baby was brought back to life by being rubbed. This may be simply a wish fulfillment dream after such a tragic loss, but it probably lay some seeds for the idea of Frankenstein.

Reviving the Dead...Dr. Luigi Galvani, an Italian scientist from the eighteenth century experimented with electricity to revive dead animals. At this time, scientists were obsessed with the idea of reviving the dead. Science was highly unregulated and some macabre experiments were believed to be carried out. Mary Shelley toyed with this idea, but her scientist, Victor Frankenstein created a man from various dead body parts found in cemeteries and so on.

Playing with Life... ‘Blade Runner’

By 1978, the first human being that was fertilized outside its mother’s baby was born- then referred to as ‘test tube babies’. This development was controversial and ethical arguments were common. Was this playing God? Furthermore, where would it all end? By 1996, Dolly the sheep was the first cloned animal to be born and technology now has the ability to create cells and other ‘spare parts’ to be used for those suffering from diseases.

TASK: Where should it all end? Should science be given a free run without limitations? Discuss in a 250 word essay.
## Context and Background- ‘Frankenstein’

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<tr>
<th>‘Frankenstein’</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Historical Times</strong></td>
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| Published in 1818, at a time when many scientists were obsessed with experiments on the human body (for medicine) and used cadavers, often obtained illegally.  

**Gothic literature** was still very popular, and the idea for the book was formed in Mary’s mind when the famous Lord Byron set the task to a group of friends to each write a ghost story. |

| **Social** |
| This was a time when the **Romantic** movement and philosophy was popular. The emphasis was on individual creation and following the original inspiration. Victor Frankenstein was such an individual, as was Walton.  

It was also a time of responding to life with heart and soul, a task that Victor fails as he flees from his creation as soon as he sees its deformities. We begin to ask ‘Who is the real monster?’ The fact that the monster turns out to be a sensitive soul driven to despair because of his abandonment and loneliness, reinforces the moral dilemma. |

| **Personal** |
| Mary Shelley had lost three babies in childbirth and once had a dream that she had been able to bring her dead baby daughter back to life by rubbing her vigorously. Perhaps her profound sense of loss, which seemed to mar her life, influenced her ideas?  

Mary also had a very unorthodox upbringing – her parents were highly intelligent and controversial figures in their own rights. Given that her mother was Mary Wollstonecraft, a pioneering feminist, Mary was exposed to a more open and liberated life than most other women would have been. She travelled and lived a very radical, bohemian lifestyle with close ties to key people in the Romantic literature movement such as Byron and Shelley. |

- **Task:** Write or design a page about the making of Frankenstein’s monster. Refer to the text for ideas.
### Significant Quotes Worksheet – ‘Frankenstein’

**Write notes about the following quotes in each box**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>‘Frankenstein’</th>
<th>Comments</th>
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<tr>
<td>‘I will pioneer a new way, explore unknown powers, and unfold to the world the deepest mysteries of creation.’ (Victor)</td>
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<td>‘Was I then a monster, a blot upon the earth, from which all men fled, and whom all men disowned?’ (Monster)</td>
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<td>‘A new species would bless me as its creator and source; many happy and excellent natures would owe their being to me. No father could claim the gratitude of his child so completely as I should deserve theirs.’(Victor)</td>
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<td>‘I was the slave of my creature.’(Victor)</td>
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<td>‘Now that I had finished, the beauty of the dream vanished, and breathless horror and disgust filled my heart.’(Victor)</td>
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<td>‘Destiny was too potent, and her immutable laws had decreed my utter and terrible destruction.’(Victor)</td>
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<td>‘Hateful day when I received life!...Accursed creator! Why did you form a monster so hideous that even you turned from me in disgust? I am solitary and abhorred...’(Monster)</td>
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# Characters- ‘Frankenstein’

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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Notes</th>
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| Robert Walton      | *Narrator at the start of the novel  
*Following his lifelong dream to sail and explore the Arctic region; he is clearly a Romantic following his life’s dreams and inner voice  
*Similar to Victor in many ways  
*Passionate and filled with life; at times selfish  
  • Question: In what ways are Walton and Victor similar?                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| Victor Frankenstein | *Central character of the novel; one of the narrators; well loved by those around him; *Passionate and driven student tending towards obsessiveness- which causes him to forget about family and friends, and the impact of what he does on other people.  
*Wants to be remembered as a great scientist who created a new species of man, but does not see the big picture-His focus is so intense he is blinded to reality and does not think about his obligations  
*Vacillates between feelings of guilt and anger at himself as well as anger at the monster – which leads him to seek revenge. He does not really consider other viewpoints.  
  • Question: Does Victor show any mercy towards the monster? Discuss                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| Alphonse Frankenstein | Victor’s father seems to a kind old man of wealth who opens his heart to others; however it is clear that he is also demanding, cold and difficult to talk to. He pushes his desire to see Elizabeth and Victor married.  
  • Question: What do we learn about Alphonse through his letters?                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Elizabeth          | Elizabeth is beautiful and loving, providing a nurturing role for Victor’s younger brothers. She is gentle yet courageous and proud of her heritage, and stands up for Justine in court. The world proves her to be naive and innocent, perhaps too trusting.                                                                                                                   |
| The Monster        | Standing at 2.4metres tall (8 feet) and created from dead body parts by Victor Frankenstein – the monster is described as a ‘daemon’. He possesses superhuman speed and strength, and is filled by a child like wondering and the desire to be loved. However his ugliness frightens all, including his master. The monster yearns for companionship and knowledge; to be a normal member of society but when he realizes that will not be possible he seeks revenge on Victor. |
| William            | *Innocent child who also rejects the monster through fear, resulting in his murder                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| Justine            | *Justine becomes a victim of the monster and injustice                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| De Lacey           | *Kind hearted, blind old man who forgives his son. The monster learns a great deal about life by watching De Lacey’s cottage and family. He accepts the monster as he cannot see him, but the rest of the family drive him away. De Lacey was the monster’s last hope.                                                                                     |
**Characters** - In pairs, create an ‘attributes mind map’ or use the one below - for the main characters in the text.
Structure and Style – ‘Frankenstein’

| Narration | There are 3 narrators in the novel: Frankenstein, the monster and Captain Robert Walton. The story shows us the different perspectives and may affect the readers’ sympathies. |
| Structure | The novel uses a story in a story format, also referred to as ‘Chinese-box narration’, allowing the reader to feel they are building up gradual layers to all sides of the story. **Time**: the novel is not in chronological order; it begins after the events and uses *flashbacks*. This emphasizes how the past has influenced the present time. We see how Victor and the monster’s fate are interconnected. The **genre** is a combination of Gothic horror and science fiction. |
| Parallels | **Structures and parallels** are used to develop ideas more fully and to allow the reader to see links between characters and events. Many **chapters mirror** other chapters. Settings are often **contrasted** to great effect. |
| Language | In keeping with the many **Gothic and Romantic elements**, the writing style is intense and emotional. The language is **descriptive, emotional, verbose** (wordy, loads of adjectives etc.) and uses **metaphors and similes**. For Victor, science was a ‘mountain river’…which in its course has swept away all my hopes and joys.’ **Contrast** is used showing us the volatility of the characters’ emotions from dark to light. **Repetition** is used and this builds tension in the novel. **Sentences are varied** and interesting to represent different moods. |
| Imagery Motifs Symbols | **Hands** covering faces when characters see the monster; (representing Victor’s denial of responsibility) **Oustretched hands** and arms longing for love **Hands and evil** - working with the dead bodies to create the monster, and hands killing and strangling victims. **Nature** – the **moon** appears when the monster is created and at later times **Storms** representing chaos and a sense of foreboding, which add to the tension. **Books**: bringing life and learning, ideas **Windows** – frames that are looked into or out of suggesting barriers and viewpoints. **Heaven and Hell** – the polarities of good and evil at work in light and dark; fire and ice; joy and despair etc. |
## Settings and Places – ‘Frankenstein’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>‘Frankenstein’</th>
<th>Imagery / photos</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Gothic elements</strong> *(see <em>Gothic</em>) *</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>The natural world</strong> as a representation of the inner emotional state and /or a desolate place of isolation and despair.</td>
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<td><strong>Bleak landscapes</strong>, cold and uninhabitable- harsh weather to contend with, adding to the nightmarish world. In keeping with the Gothic genre, there are many ‘windswept and bitterly cold’ moments. Self imposed isolation in barren places ‘enveloped in an impenetrable darkness’. The settings add to the hardships to be endured.</td>
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<td>• Quote</td>
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Other:

Other:

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**Themes – ‘Frankenstein’ and ‘Blade Runner’ film**

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<tr>
<th>‘Frankenstein’</th>
<th>‘Blade Runner’</th>
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<td><strong>Science and the need to play God</strong></td>
<td><strong>Science and the need to play God</strong></td>
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<td>Victor’s obsession is the creation of a being, and no scientific restrictions are in place. There is no question of morality or ethics in his mind, all he can see is a great outcome and the accolades that will follow his discovery. The subtitle of the novel is “The Modern Prometheus” and herein is suggested the key problem – that Victor is attempting to do the work of God – creation. The results are disastrous and ruin many lives. The work of creating the monster is arduous and grotesque– hundreds of hours digging up body parts in graveyards. It is unnatural and unhealthy, and goes against the natural world and the order of things. Clearly science outside of a moral framework is very dangerous.</td>
<td>In this world, science has become the tool of profits and greed. All the natural resources have been wasted and the only things that seem to matter involve profit. The Tyrell Corporation has become a substitute religion, and Tyrell certainly sees himself as a god like figurehead. Once again we see science/ technology allowed to progress uninhibited by a moral/ethical framework, resulting in the creation of android humans ‘more human than humans’, or the Replicants. Here we see manipulation and abuse of power with little respect for the consequences.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Responsibility for our Actions</strong></td>
<td><strong>Responsibility for our Actions– The Natural World</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>We see how inept Victor is at taking any responsibility for his actions. Considering he has made his creation from dead body parts one wonders what he expected to achieve? His instant rejection and abandonment of the creature presents him as a type of monster himself. Victor’s behavior is irresponsible.</td>
<td>‘Blade Runner’ shows us the consequences of humanity simply taking from the Earth but never worrying about the effects on the natural world. It is a ‘me/now’ approach to life and living that has many people worried about the limited resources left, the extinction of species and the reluctance of Governments around the world to take effective action to make a difference for the future. In the film, virtually all life is artificial and the only things that matter to the Tyrell Corporation are those that bring in profits. Furthermore, we must ask ourselves about the ethical implications of the creation and then ‘retiring’ of the Replicants and whether or not it is all about the power kick in creating them. Now that the replicants are starting to behave erratically, they are merely being annihilated.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Prejudice</strong></td>
<td><strong>Other themes?</strong></td>
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<td>Through the novel we see how destructive it is to judge others harshly because of their differences to ourselves, and especially outer appearances. The primary victim is of course the monster, who is a deeply sensitive soul with a noble heart that is rejected and loathed wherever he goes, and especially by his own creator. There is no attempt to try and understand the monster, just hostility.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Reality vs. Artifice</strong></td>
<td><strong>Reality vs. Artifice</strong></td>
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<td>The inability to see reality beneath the surface is prevalent in the novel. People’s views are often narrow and negative due to their inner framework of beliefs and ideas. Hence the symbolism of viewing through a window, emphasizing that our beliefs create what we see, or our viewpoints. Furthermore, how we see others influences their own self perception.</td>
<td>There is an incredible amount of artifice in this world, including people and pets. The lines of living are very blurry as we see with the replicants. Despite the incredible scientific and technological prowess, the Corporation does not bother with fixing problems that will not lead to profit. People are not what they seem, leading to an all pervading feeling of unease and potential threat.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Love and Companionship</strong></td>
<td><strong>Love and Companionship</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>We all need love to thrive and exist. It is a basic human requirement and especially expected of parents. Victor is in no way a father or nurturing being towards his creation. This is disappointing because Victor has had plenty of experience of the support and love of others throughout his life. The monster demands a companion and is devastated by seeing this partially completed creature destroyed at the hands of Victor. It sends him into a pain filled rage against the world, with dire consequences.</td>
<td>The world of ‘Blade Runner’ is overpopulated yet people seem to be lonely and alienated. We see the joy that love and genuine connection brings between some of the characters. In terms of the emotional life of the replicants, there is an uneasiness with some of the changes, not to mention the implanting of fake histories and memories. How ethical is this?</td>
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Task: Find quotes and key actions for this theme
Thinking about ‘Frankenstein’ Questions

1. Compare the behaviour of Victor Frankenstein and modern scientists.

2. To what extent is today’s society similar to the society in ‘Frankenstein’?

3. What does the novel have to say about the role of science and technology?

4. Compare and contrast the historical times of ‘Frankenstein’ with today.

5. Analyse the different values in place in ‘Frankenstein’.


7. Create a mind map exploring ‘Frankenstein’ OR create a collage.

After reviewing media, what types of concerns regarding the ethics of science exist today?

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What they said about ‘Frankenstein’ when it was first released in 1818...

<table>
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<th>Reviews</th>
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<td><strong>Walter Scott’s review of Frankenstein</strong></td>
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<td>A more philosophical and refined use of the supernatural in works of fiction, is proper to that class in which the laws of nature are represented as altered, not for the purpose of pampering the imagination with wonders, but in order to shew the probable effect which the supposed miracles would produce on those who witnessed them. In this case, the pleasure ordinarily derived from the marvellous incidents is secondary to that which we extract from observing how mortals like ourselves would be affected ...</td>
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<td>It is no slight merit in our eyes, that the tale, though wild in incident, is written in plain and forcible English, without exhibiting that mixture of hyperbolical Germanisms with which tales of wonder are usually told, as if it were necessary that the language should be as extravagant as the fiction. The ideas of the author are always clearly as well as forcibly expressed; and his descriptions of landscape have in them the choice requisites of truth, freshness, precision, and beauty. The self-education of the monster, considering the slender opportunities of acquiring knowledge that he possessed, we have already noticed as improbable and overstrained. That he should have not only learned to speak, but to read, and, for aught we know, to write -- that he should have become acquainted with Werther, with Plutarch's Lives, and with Paradise Lost, by listening through a hole in a wall, seems as unlikely as that he should have acquired, in the same way, the problems of Euclid, or the art of book-keeping by single and double entry.</td>
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**From John Wilson Croker’s review of Frankenstein**

Our readers will guess from this summary, what a tissue of horrible and disgusting absurdity this work presents. – It is piously dedicated to Mr. Godwin, and is written in the spirit of his school. The dreams of insanity are embodied in the strong and striking language of the insane, and the author, notwithstanding the rationality of his preface, often leaves us in doubt whether he is not as mad as his hero. Mr. Godwin is the patriarch of a literary family, whose chief skill is in delineating the wanderings of the intellect, and which strangely delights in the most affecting and humiliating of human miseries. His disciples are a kind of out pensioners of Bedlam, and like 'Mad Bess' or 'Mad Tom,' are occasionally visited with paroxysms of genius and fits of expression, which makes sober-minded people wonder and shudder ... **"The writer of it is, we understand, a female; this is an aggravation of that which is the prevailing fault of the novel; but if our authoress can forget the gentleness of her sex, it is no reason why we should; and we shall therefore dismiss the novel without further comment"** (438). The Literary Panorama and National Register attacks the novel as a "feeble imitation of Mr. Godwin's novels" produced by the "daughter of a celebrated living novelist" (414). (Wikipedia)

- In pairs, find out what the underlined words/ phrases mean or refer to.
- In the second column, paraphrase what is being said.
- What values do the reviewers have?
Essay Topics – ‘Frankenstein’

- Brainstorm the following essay topics in the lines provided below.

1. Frankenstein is not the only monster in Mary Shelley’s ‘Frankenstein’. Discuss.

2. Science without ethics and restraints has disastrous consequences for society. Discuss.

3. In the end the noble hero chasing pure science and invention is exposed as a fraud. Discuss.

4. Society is exposed as superficial and prejudiced when confronted by someone who is different. Discuss.

5. A modern reader of ‘Frankenstein’ is most likely to cast the monster into the hero’s role. Discuss.

6. Mary Shelley’s ‘Frankenstein’ is riddled with fear – fear of science, fear of the supernatural and fear of the different. Discuss.
## Themes – ‘Frankenstein’

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<td><strong>Science and the need to play God</strong></td>
<td>Victor’s obsession is the creation of a being, and no scientific restrictions are in place. There is no question of morality or ethics in his mind, all he can see is a great outcome and the accolades that will follow his discovery. The subtitle of the novel is “The Modern Prometheus” and herein is suggested the key problem – that Victor is attempting to do the work of God – creation. The results are disastrous and ruin many lives. The work of creating the monster is arduous and grotesque - hundreds of hours digging up body parts in graveyards. It is unnatural and unhealthy, and goes against the natural world and the order of things. Clearly science outside of a moral framework is very dangerous.</td>
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<td><strong>Responsibility for our Actions</strong></td>
<td>We see how inept Victor is at taking any responsibility for his actions. Considering he has made his creation from dead body parts one wonders what he expected to achieve. His instant rejection and abandonment of the creature presents him as a type of monster himself. Victor’s behavior is irresponsible.</td>
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<td><strong>Prejudice</strong></td>
<td>Through the novel we see how destructive it is to judge others harshly because of their differences to ourselves, and especially outer appearances. The primary victim is of course the monster, who is a deeply sensitive soul with a noble heart that is rejected and loathed wherever he goes, and especially by his own creator. There is no attempt to try and understand the monster, just hostility.</td>
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<td><strong>Reality vs. Artifice</strong></td>
<td>The inability to see reality beneath the surface is prevalent in the novel. People’s views are often narrow and negative due to their inner framework of beliefs and ideas. Hence the symbolism of viewing through a window, emphasizing that our beliefs create what we see, or our viewpoints. Furthermore, how we see others influences their own self perception.</td>
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<td><strong>Love and Companionship</strong></td>
<td>We all need love to thrive and exist. It is a basic human requirement and especially expected of parents. Victor is in no way a father or nurturing being towards his creation. This is disappointing because Victor has had plenty of experience of the support and love of others throughout his life. The monster demands a companion and is devastated by seeing this partially completed creature destroyed at the hands of Victor. It sends him into a pain filled rage against the world, with dire consequences.</td>
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