AP English Literature

*Frankenstein*

Discussion Questions

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**Reading #1 Letters – Chapter 1**

1. Discuss the epistolary style of presenting the novel.
2. What does Robert Walton hope to discover?
3. Characterize Walton. What are some of his strengths and weaknesses?
4. What does Walton do to prepare for his journey?
5. In the 4th letter, what seems unusual about the dialogue between the stranger and Walton?
6. Notice and begin to formulate an analysis of the ice imagery.
7. How is Walton and the stranger’s relationship developing? What is important to Walton?
8. Of what does the stranger warn Walton ?
9. What history of Dr. Frankenstein does the reader learn in Chapter 1?

**Reading #2 Chapters 2-6**

1. What type of knowledge intrigued VF as a child? His friend Clerval?
2. Why does VF wish to make such a discovery?
3. Read the last line of Chapter 2. Do you agree? Disagree? Why?
4. How does VF adapt to University life?
5. To what central question does VF seek an answer?
6. What is VF’s warning in Chapter 4 (43)?
7. How does VF create the creature?
8. How is the tone in Chapter 4 beginning to shift?
9. Why does VF stay away from Geneva for so long? How does this signal a possible larger problem?
10. Describe VF’s condition as he works on the creature. What might the effect of this be?
11. What is VF’s reaction to the animation of his creature (chapter 5)?
12. Why does the creature come to VF’s bed?
13. Observe the gothic setting – the darkness, late nights, thunderstorms, etc. What is the effect?
14. How does Elizabeth describe Justine?
15. What is the purpose of Justine’s letter?
16. How does Elizabeth describe William in the letter?
17. What is the tone of Chapter 6?

**Reading #3 Chapters 7-10**

1. How does the tone abruptly shift in Chapter 7?
2. What method was used in murdering William?
3. Because VF sees the creature on the way home, of what is he convinced?
4. What evidence points towards Justine’s guilt?
5. Why would Justine confess to a crime which she did not commit?
6. VF falls into a deep depression where he contemplates suicide (86). How is this ironic?
7. Discuss the meaning of Percy Blysshe Shelley’s poem on (87) Chapter 10.
8. What is the tone of VF’s dialogue with the creature in Chapter 10?
9. What is the creature’s reaction when his creator calls him “Devil”? (95)
10. What is the creature’s message about the results of human alienation (96-97)?

**Reading #4 Chapters 11-15**

1. Describe the tone of the creature’s tale.
2. How was the creature similar to a human? How was he dissimilar?
3. How is the creature treated by those who see him? How does this affect him?
4. How does the reader know that the creature is perceptive?
5. How does the creature take advantage of the cottagers as they teach Safie?
6. Discuss some of the conclusions in chapter 13 at which the creature arrives (120).
7. How does the creature read Paradise Lost? What effect does this reading have on him (130-131)?
8. Describe the encounter with the old man. What did Mary Shelley create him as a blind character?

**Reading #5 Chapters 16-19**

1. Why does the creature burn the cottage? What does he then seek in Geneva?
2. What is the result of the creature saving the drowning girl?
3. The creature admits to murdering William. Why did he do it?

4. What request does the creature make of VF at the end of Chapter 16? Is this a reasonable or an unreasonable request? Why?

5. Observe the narration shift in Chapter 17.

6. At one point the monster explains his vices and virtues (131). What conclusion is he making about mankind?

7. What does VF agree to do? Under what conditions?

8. Describe why and how VF procrastinates. Why is he avoiding the fulfillment of his promise?

1. What foreshadowing hints does Shelley drop concerning Clerval?
2. Where does VF travel to fulfill his promise? What is a distinct trait about this setting? What effect does it have?

**Reading #6 Chapters 20-22**

1. List some of the reasons why VF does not want to create the female. How valid are these reasons?
2. What does VF do to the female? Why?
3. How has the creature taken control in Chapter 20?
4. What is the creature’s threat to VF?
5. How do you know the location to which VF flees? What is significant about this location?
6. How was Clerval murdered? Why is the method important?
7. What is the mood of Chapter 21?
8. Describe the diction in Elizabeth’s letter to VF. What is her purpose for writing?
9. Who did VF perceive to be the potential victim of the creature’s threat? What does this say about VF?

**Reading #7 Chapters 23-24**

1. Discuss the chain of tragedies that occur in Chapter 23. What effect do they have on VF?
2. How convincing is VF when he tries to explain the cause of the destruction to the magistrate? To what extent is he to blame for not being understood?
3. How does the creature taunt VF? What effect do these taunts have on VF?
4. Describe the narration shift which occurs in Chapter 24. What effects has the bulls-eye narration had on the readers?
5. How and why does VF try to warn Walton?
6. Discuss the significance of the increasing use of ice.
7. Discuss the lessons which VF has learned.
8. What is the creature’s reaction to VF’s death? What has the creature learned?
9. What is the greatest fear which Shelley tries to instill in her readers?
10. What is the central, universal theme of the novel?
11. How is the novel relevant to modern society?