



English II Pre AP - Summer Reading Assignment 2010-2011

Read **FRANKENSTEIN** By Mary Shelley

Requirements:

◆ A Student Response Journal

- Respond to each of the following prompts or sections.
- Use a pocket folder with brads or a spiral notebook (NO 3-ring binders please).
- Neatness is key!
- This should be turned in the first day of school next year, 2010-2011 (Aug. 23, 2010)
- Additionally, there will be a multiple choice test with vocabulary and an essay over the book sometime during the first week of school.
- Read, and enjoy the summer!



Caution:

- ◆ You are entering the AP zone. The use of Cliff or Spark Notes is considered plagiarism.
- ◆ Movies are usually vastly different from the novel or play.
- ◆ Read the book first...then watch the movie. You decide!

AUTHOR'S INTRODUCTION

How Frankenstein came to be written by Mary Shelley in 1816-1817 is interesting. She had run away to Switzerland with the married man who would later become her husband, Percy Bysshe Shelley. Because they and some friends were housebound because of incessant rain, they decided to have a competition to see who could write the best ghost story. Frankenstein won. It is written in a style called "Gothic Horror" or "Gothic Science Fiction." Works referred to as "Gothic" have a style, which has elements of gloom, the grotesque, or the supernatural, and often take place in centuries past. Usually, castles and large country homes are involved. Write a plot for a story in the Gothic style. Be sure to include when and where the story is set, details about the main character and at least three other characters, what the most exciting part of the would be, and how it ends.

LETTER 1

The novel opens with a letter from Captain Robert Walton to his sister, Mrs. Saville, in England. Captain Walton is one of many characters who will narrate parts of the novel. We meet him in a frozen North. He is the owner and captain of a ship in Russia, and he is preparing to set out on a sea journey north with the desire to add to the betterment of mankind by the "enterprise" he has embarked on. In this letter, he writes "...do I not deserve to accomplish some great purpose?" Dreams of great accomplishments are not only for characters in fiction. Using Captain Walton's letter to his sister as a model, write a letter to someone close to you telling of a secret dream you have for a worthwhile accomplishment in your own life.



LETTER II

Captain Walton tells his sister about hiring his crew to begin his “enterprise.” He shares his loneliness and his deep need for a friend with his sister. The need for good friends is a universal one. Write a letter to Captain Walton in which you explain your understanding of his need for a friend. Include an example from your own experience or that of someone close to you when you felt the lack of friendship.

LETTER III

This brief letter from Captain Walton to his sister in England tells us that he is well on his way to the North Pole. He is assuring his sister that he is feeling secure over “the pathless sea” and, though it is untamed, the sea is “yet obedient.” Many television programs and films have been made about action on the high seas. “Titanic” “Moby Dick” “Mutiny on the Bounty,” and even “Love Boat” come to mind. Write a review of one of the above or any other film about the sea which you have seen. Be sure to state how you feel about its portrayal of what life aboard a ship is like.

CHAPTER V

Even though the story of Victor Frankenstein’s creation of a monster is fiction, we know that all scientific discoveries can have hidden dangers. For example: atomic power, gasoline engines, steroids, genetically altering food, cloning, research on animal, and the internet, etc. Scientific dangers are also the subject of many films and television programs. Write a Letter to the Editor of a local newspaper about the dangers of present day scientific advances. Your letter might begin:

To the Editor:

People should begin to look more closely at all the ways in which new scientific discoveries are affecting us. For instance.....

CHAPTER VI

In this chapter, we find that the shock of having created a monster seems not to bother Victor any more. He gets on with his life and friendship with Clerval as if nothing had happened. Nothing is mentioned in this chapter of what has happened to the monster. Complete the dialogue below that you might have with a friend about what could possibly have happened to the monster.

Friend: Don’t you think it’s strange that there’s been no newspaper story or gossip about a monster seen somewhere?

You: That doesn’t sound very reasonable to me either. What I really think happened.....

CHAPTER VII

Victor’s journey to Geneva upon learning of the murder of his brother, William, is a dark one, indeed. The description of Victor’s sighting of the monster on the hills amongst the thunder, lightning, and rain is chilling. The thought that the monster is still alive and could possibly have murdered William horrifies Victor as he travels on. Everyone, at one time or another, has had an experience of being very frightened. Write about a time when you had a frightening experience, even though it most likely was not as terrifying as that of Victor, of course. Be sure to write about your experience in complete sentences and tell how the experience finally worked out.



CHAPTER VIII

In this chapter, Shelley presents the unjust trial and execution of the innocent Justine Moritz for the murder of William Frankenstein. In the present day, there is a strong argument for eliminating the death penalty, not only in this country, but throughout the world. Suppose you are a person who feels very strongly about the death penalty issue. Write a speech that you would give to an assembly at your school in which you argue against the death penalty, if you feel that way. If, however, you feel that there are times when the death penalty should be imposed, write your speech to reflect that point of view. Be sure to backup your opinion with facts.

CHAPTER XI

Victor has thoughts of murder, hatred, and revenge. He is also guilt-ridden for having created the monster and feels he is truly the real murderer. Imagine that you are Victor's closest friend, Henry Clerval, and you have learned that Victor created the monster that is still at large. What advice would you give to Victor? What will you do if he does not take your advice?

CHAPTER XV

The scene at the end of this chapter when the family sees the monster is very sad. The monster is being judged solely on his appearance. This is particularly important, because we know from all that we have read about him that that he is sensitive, intelligent, and only trying to relieve the pain of his loneliness. Suppose you were Felix. Write a dialogue you would have with your blind father telling him why you attacked the monster.

You: father, Father! You cannot believe the horrible appearance of the man!
There is no telling what he might have done to you.

Father: But, Felix, what makes you think he would have harmed me in any way?

You: Well, first.....

CHAPTER XVI

The monster creeps back to his hovel adjoining the cottage the following day. He overhears Feliz telling his landlord that he is taking away his family because of their fears. He knows that he, too, must leave and plans to go to Geneva to find Victor Frankenstein to take revenge. In his travels, he is shot after saving a child from drowning. Suppose you were the man who shot the monster you found near your daughter. Write out the report the police have asked you to complete when you went to tell them what happened. Begin your report:

“I had taken my daughter with me to the woods where I was hoping to find a pheasant to shoot for our dinner. She wanted to go down to the river to paddle her feet, and ...

CHAPTER XVII

Victor Frankenstein is the narrator of this chapter. He now must deal with the pitiful demand of the monster that he, Victor, “create a female for me.” The monster promises that he will cease looking for revenge on Victor and his family and will go away with his new female never to be seen again. Unbelievable, Victor consents to create another monster, this time a female for the monster he has already created. What options, if any, do you think Victor could have pursued other than promising to make another monster? Rewrite Victor's decision which begins with the words, “I consent to your demand...” Offer the monster an alternative to creating a woman for him. Your rewrite could begin:

“Turning to him, therefore, I said....”



CHAPTER XVIII

Henry Cleval has agreed to accompany Victor to England. Henry has a very different personality than Victor. Write a character sketch of Henry, which describes the qualities and quirks he has. Include how his friendship with Victor demonstrates what kind of person he is. Be sure to compare the ways in which he and Victor are different.

CHAPTER XIX

Victor leaves Henry to go alone to an island in the Scottish Orkneys to begin his task of creating a female companion for the monster. He works alone and in secret in a squalid hut he has rented. As he works, he is fearful that the monster might find him there and want to claim the newly created companion. Make up a scene in which the monster is able to spy on Victor in secret and what he is doing in his hut. In your scene, be sure to write the monster's thoughts as he watches Victor.

WALTON IN CONTINUATION

In the letter to his sister on September 12th, Captain Walton describes the death of Victor. Were you surprised that Shelley chose to have Victor die rather than succeed in killing the monster? Write a short paragraph that explains your reaction to the death of Victor.

WRAP UP

Suppose you were asked to star in a remake of a film of this book. Without worrying about the gender element, which character in Frankenstein would you like most to be? Give your reasons for your choice.

In modern times, the name "Frankenstein" has come to refer to the monster, not the creator. In fact, the monster is never given a name. Why do you suppose we have adopted the name of the doctor for the name of the creature? Make up a name for the monster and explain why you chose it.

Please encourage your child to complete this reading assignment and the journal packet which is on file in the counselor's office and given to each pre-AP student in ninth grade English in order to be prepared for an assessment at the beginning of the 2010-2011 school year.

Sommer Wilson
Pre-AP English II Instructor

If you have questions, please e-mail Sommer Wilson, at sommer_wilson@lagovista.txed.net.