

Frankenstein Reading Questions

Name: _____

Letters

Note: The letters help form the frame tale. The explorer Robert Walton is narrating as he writes letters to his sister who lives in England.

1. List some examples of light/dark imagery that appear throughout all of the letters.

Letter 1

2. Where is this letter written?
3. What attitudes and beliefs does the letter writer (Robert Walton) have about the arctic?
4. What does Walton want to discover in the arctic?
5. In what career did Walton fail?
6. What has Walton been doing to prepare himself for his arctic exploration?
7. Look on page 3. What does Walton believe he deserves?
8. What does Walton plan to do in Archangel (another city in Russia) and thereafter?

Letter 2

9. What does Walton lack? What does he say this thing would do for him?
10. What does Walton say about his education? What problems does he see with it?
11. To what literary work does Walton attribute his attachment to and passionate enthusiasm for the dangerous mysteries of the ocean? How will he be different from its main character?

Letter 3

12. How does Walton say he will be when he encounters danger?

Letter 4

13. What strange sight did Walton and his crew see?
14. Walton describes how his crew helped an emaciated, exhausted man. What did the man say he had been doing in the arctic?
15. How does Walton feel about the man they rescued? What reasons does he give?
16. What warning does the rescued man give to Walton?

Chapter 1

Note: Here we get into the main story. Victor Frankenstein takes over the narration.

17. What modern day country would Victor be from if he says he is "by birth a Genevese"?
18. Describe the history of the relationship of Victor's parents and his family history.
19. Fill in the blanks of the description uses for his parents' treatment of him:
"I was their plaything and their _____, and something better – their child, the _____ and _____ creature bestowed on them by heaven, whom to _____, and whose future lot it was in their hands to _____, according as they fulfilled their duties towards me."
20. What's the story of how Elizabeth joined the Frankenstein family?
21. How did Victor's parents present Elizabeth to him?

Chapter 2

22. How did Elizabeth and Victor's individual personalities complement one another?
23. How else did the Frankenstein family expand?

24. Who is Henry Clerval? Describe his personality.

25. How did Victor feel about his parents and childhood?

26. What does Victor say was the reason why he could have a violent temper and vehement passions when he was young?

27. What even led Victor to pursue knowledge in the natural sciences?

28. Victor's father says the works of Cornelius Agrippa, which interested Victor, are "sad trash." Why didn't this stop Victor from reading it? What *didn't* his father say?

29. Victor remarks that he was "left to struggle with a child's blindness, added to a student's thirst for knowledge." With those qualities, Victor began his search for the philosopher's stone and "the elixir of life," but soon focused on the latter. Why?

30. What else did Victor want to accomplish?

31. What event changed the focus of Victor's studies? What did he decide to study instead of the natural sciences?

32. Who does Victor credit for the change in his studies? (And then how does he create some suspense at the end of the chapter?)

Chapter 3

33. In keeping with the characteristics of gothic literature, Victor describes how there was an "omen...of my future misery" the day before he left for college at the University of Igolstadt (in Germany). What was it?

34. What is denied to Henry?

35. What does Victor say led him to M. Krempe, the professor of natural philosophy? What does this suggest about Victor?

36. What does M. Krempe think of Victor's previous studies?

37. What did Victor believe he would be able to do at college, after hearing the inspiring lecture from M. Waldman, the chemistry professor?

38. How does M. Waldman's attitude towards Victor differ from that of M. Krempe's?

Chapter 4

39. Why doesn't Victor go home (to Geneva) from college for two years?

40. How does Victor say scientific studies are different from other studies?

41. What "bold question" began to fascinate Victor as he progressed in his studies?

42. What else did Victor begin to study?

43. What did Victor discover and be able to do?

44. Why won't Victor tell us readers/listeners about the secret he knows?

45. Relating to the previous answer, how is Victor similar to the Ancient Mariner?

46. What did Victor plan to create?

47. What result did Victor (arrogantly) imagine from his experiment?

48. Where was Victor locating the materials for his experiments?

49. How did Victor's experiments change him physically and mentally?

50. What does Victor say a “human being in perfection” ought to do?

51. What does Victor say about studies that have a “tendency to weaken your affections and to destroy your taste for those simple pleasures in which no alloy can possibly mix”?

52. What does Victor say was the cause of Greece being enslaved, Caesar harming his country, America being discovered rapidly and the empires of Mexico and Peru being destroyed?

Chapter 5

53. List the physical details of the creature that Victor brought to life.

54. How did Victor respond to the creature?

55. Why does it matter that *Ancient Mariner* is referenced?

56. What suddenly distracts Victor for the better? What does Victor also suddenly worry about?

57. What then affected Victor for several months?

Chapter 6

Elizabeth writes to Victor to catch him up on family news, but this letter mostly functions to give the reader background on the Frankenstein family. We learn:

- Victor has a brother named Ernest who is 16.
- A woman named Justine Moritz is part of the Frankenstein family. She did not get along with her mother and Victor’s mother adopted Justine. Justine is a servant, but in Switzerland, there isn’t much distinction amongst the social classes, so she is really like family. She received an education and was treated well.
- Justine’s mother apologized and called her home, but they still had problems. The mother died and Justine came back to live with the Frankensteins.
- Victor has another much younger brother named William.
- Note that Elizabeth refers to Victor as her cousin and Victor’s father as her uncle.

58. What does Henry study at the university (which Victor also begins to study)?

59. What do Victor and Henry do for a fortnight (two weeks) in spring?

60. How does Victor feel at this point?

Chapter 7

61. What are the circumstances of William's death?

62. Why did Elizabeth blame herself for William's death?

63. As Victor returns to his hometown in Switzerland, what is illuminated in a flash of lightning? What does Victor realize?

64. Why does Justine get blamed for William's murder?

65. Why doesn't Victor explain who the real murderer is?

Chapter 8

66. Why does Justine confess to committing William's murder?

67. How does Justine describe the world?

68. What is Justine's final advice for Elizabeth?

69. How does Victor describe William and Justine, collectively?

Chapter 9

70. How does Victor, at the beginning of the chapter, begin to portray himself as a tragic figure?

71. What was Victor "seized by"?

72. How does Victor often deal with his grief?

73. How has the death of William affected Victor's father?

74. How has the death of William affected Elizabeth?

75. What sudden decision does Victor make to try to restore his spirit?

Chapter 10

76. What does Victor credit for giving him "the greatest consolation that I was capable of receiving"?

Note: the poem excerpt in this chapter is from "Mutability," a poem by Mary Shelley's husband, Percy Shelley. The word "mutability" means "constantly changing" or "fickle."

77. Victor suddenly encounters the creature he made. What does the creature accuse Victor of treating like "sport"?

78. Why is it so difficult for Victor to attack the creature?

79. According to the creature, what made him a "fiend"?

80. What seems to make the creature so sad?

81. How does the creature point out Victor's hypocrisy?

Chapter 11

Note: The creature begins narrating in this chapter.

82. How did the creature satisfy his basic needs in his earliest days? How did he develop?

83. How do the people in the first village that the creature visits react to him?

84. Where does the creature take up residence?

85. How does the creature really seem to learn about human nature? What kinds of things does he observe?

Chapter 12

86. What does the creature learn about the people who live in the cottage?

87. How does the creature show a sense of morality? Where does he seem to have gotten the idea for this action?

88. Identify the people who lived in the cottage.

89. What things does the creature do in hopes of winning over the family?

90. What terrified the creature and filled him with "the bitterest sensations of despondence and mortification"?

91. What lifts the creature's spirits?

Chapter 13

92. What makes Felix happy in a way that the creature had not yet witnessed?

93. What barrier is between Safie and the cottagers?

94. What does the creature learn from hearing the cottagers read *Ruins of Empires*?

95. What thoughts about "man" did *Ruins of Empires* provoke in the creature?

96. The creature recognized that he was powerless in society. What qualities made him thus?

97. What does the creature recognize as missing from his infant days?

Chapter 14

98. What is the cottagers' background and reason for their current living situation?

99. Besides wanting to be with Felix, why did Safie not want to live with her father in Turkey?

Chapter 15

100. How did *Sorrows of Werter* make an impact on the creature?
101. What questions puzzle the creature?
102. What did the creature learn from *Lives*?
103. How does the monster compare and contrast himself with Adam, as portrayed in *Paradise Lost*?
104. What does the creature hope will happen when he talks to De Lacey and why? What actually happens?

Chapter 16

105. What does the creature do after the De Lacey family flees the cottage?
106. What events during the creature's travels to find Victor confirm his hatred of humans?
107. What does the creature demand from Victor?

Chapter 17

Note: Victor resumes the narration in this chapter.

108. What will the creature do if Victor fulfills this wish?
109. What does the creature say would be the only reasons that Victor would have for denying him his wish?
110. How does Victor feel about the creature while hearing him express his wishes?
111. What does the creature say is the cause of his vices?

Chapter 18

112. What does Victor's father encourage him to do? How does Victor feel?

113. What allusion is made to *Ancient Mariner* on page 141?

114. How does Victor delay fulfilling his father's wish?

Chapter 19

You will not be quizzed on this chapter. It mainly details all the places in England that Henry and Victor visit. It ends with Victor going to a remote part of Scotland on his own to work on the project that the creature had requested.

Chapter 20

115. How much time passed since Victor made the creature to the time described in this chapter?

116. What concerns does Victor have about his project?

117. What does the creature threaten?

Chapter 21

118. What has happened to cause Victor's arrest? What happens to Victor after his arrest?

119. What is Victor doing to fall asleep?

Chapter 22

120. What worry does Elizabeth express in her letter to Victor?

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

Chapter 23

122. Of course, what's the major event in this chapter?

123. What happens to Victor's father?

124. How does Victor attempt to correct the situation?

Chapter 24

125. What has Victor been doing for months?

126. Why is Walton returning to England?

127. Victor warns Walton to seek happiness in _____ and avoid _____.

128. When Walton sees the creature in the cabin with Victor's body, what is familiar about the scene?

129. What had changed in the creature's personality by the time of his last murder?

130. The creature reminds Walton that, above all, he wanted what?

131. What does the creature say he will ultimately do and why does he choose this method?