

Worksheet 5 – Victor Frankenstein

Review: Lecture 4

In the previous lecture, Prof. Groom argued that we should refer to Dr Frankenstein's creation as a Being.

Consider the connotations of this word and add them to the mind map below. Add at least 2 more.

Explain the effect of each connotation. The first one has been done for you.

*Suggests it is something supernatural.
It is beyond the human realm so its
behaviour may be unpredictable.*

The Being

Recall: Lecture 5

Answer these questions after watching the video lecture to check how much you remember.

1. According to Prof. Groom, what is Victor's only actual crime?
 - a) Disposing of the half finished she-being
 - b) Fleeing once he has animated the being
 - c) Putting Elizabeth in harm's way
 - d) Animating the being
2. Where does the being's desire for revenge come from?
 - a) He is born with it
 - b) Being abandoned
 - c) Reading Paradise Lost
 - d) The rejections he experiences from both Victor and the De Lacey's
3. Who is framed for William's murder?
 - a) Janine
 - b) Elizabeth
 - c) Justine
 - d) Henry
4. Where does the being promise to go and live if Victor creates him a mate?
 - a) The Amazonian Jungle
 - b) The Swiss Alps
 - c) With the De Lacey's
 - d) The Arctic Circle
5. Prof. Groom believes that the novel still has such resonance in the 21st Century because it gives us the opportunity to think about important topics. Which one of these topics were mentioned? (Circle all that apply)

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|----------------------------|---|
| a) Human Rights | c) Animal Rights |
| b) Artificial Intelligence | d) Responsibility in Science and Technology |

Analysis

6. Throughout the lecture, Prof. Groom discusses our perception of Victor Frankenstein and the sympathy we may or may not feel towards him. At [6:46-6:55], Prof. Groom notes that ‘It is interesting that in recent years, sympathy has shifted away from Victor and towards the being.’
- a) Why do you think a modern audience might feel more sympathy with the being than with Victor Frankenstein?

Read the passage below and answer the questions which follow.

‘When younger,’ said he, ‘I believed myself destined for some great enterprise... I deemed it criminal to throw away in useless grief those talents that might be useful to my fellow-creatures....All my speculations and hopes are as nothing; and, like the archangel who aspired to omnipotence, I am chained in an eternal hell...From my infancy I was imbued with high hopes and a lofty ambition; but how am I sunk! Oh! my friend, if you had known me as I once was, you would not recognise me in this state of degradation. Despondency rarely visited my heart; a high destiny seemed to bear me on, until I fell, never, never again to rise...’

‘Can any man be to me as Clerval was; or any woman another Elizabeth? Even where the affections are not strongly moved by any superior excellence, the companions of our childhood always possess a certain power over our minds, which hardly any later friend can obtain. They know our infantine dispositions, which, however they may be afterwards modified, are never eradicated; and they can judge of our actions with more certain conclusions as to the integrity of our motives. A sister or a brother can never, unless indeed such symptoms have been shown early, suspect the other of fraud or false dealing, when another friend, however strongly he may be attached, may, in spite of himself, be contemplated with suspicion. But I enjoyed friends, dear not only through habit and association, but from their own merits; and, wherever I am, the soothing voice of my Elizabeth, and the conversation of Clerval, will be ever whispered in my ear.’

Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein*, Chapter 24, Letter dated August 26th, 17-

- b) Define the term ‘*pathos*.’
- c) Select at least 3 short quotations that you feel evoke pathos for Victor Frankenstein. Explain how they make us feel pity for him.

Challenge: Analyse the specific language used in your chosen quotations and explain how this intensifies the pity we feel for Frankenstein.

Evaluation

You are going to write an essay that will bring together your learning from the whole lecture series. Your essay question is:

Should we feel more sympathy for Victor Frankenstein or his creation?

Follow these steps to write the essay:

- a) Mind map your initial ideas, checking back through your work from previous worksheets to help you.
- b) Create an essay plan, deciding on the order of your points and your overarching argument. It might be helpful to organise your points into a clear table, like you did for the Evaluation task for Lecture 2.
- c) Write your essay out in full, remembering to use formal language.

Challenge: incorporate some of the vocabulary from the Glossary section of each worksheet into your essay.

Glossary

- **Omnipotent** (noun) - Having unlimited power.
e.g. How can an omnipotent God allow suffering?
- **Infancy** (noun) – Early childhood.
e.g. I have known my best friend since infancy.
- **Despondency** (noun) – Being extremely low in spirits; no hope or enthusiasm.
e.g. After multiple job rejections, she began to feel a great despondency.