

Approved for use in English IV

Summary of the Work:

Written by Mary Shelley in 1818 in response to a challenge for a ghost story, *Frankenstein* haunts our minds with visions of dead body parts brought to life. The conflict between Victor, the creator, and the creature sets the stage for exploration of the themes of revenge, the philosophical limits of science and forbidden knowledge. *Frankenstein* deals with the elements of the Gothic novel and the Romantic movement. The novel raises issues that can be linked to today's society and culture.

Rationale:

Readers in the 1800's were fascinated and a bit horrified by the macabre aspects of the novel. The horror and the suspense of this novel presents a perfect companion to English IV M*A*S*H-Mystery – Adventure - Suspense – Horror. The ethical implications of genetic engineering, the cloning of animals and people, resonate in Shelley's work. The themes of nurture versus nature, playing God, and blind ambition versus social responsibility, provoke consideration of many sensitive contemporary issues. The tie in to a Media Literacy unit provides a look at Hollywood's version of the creature. As a literary classic, *Frankenstein* explores the human condition that is not bound by time or setting.

Professional Reviews and/or Critical Essays:

Griffith, George V., An overview of *Frankenstein*, in *Exploring Novels*, Gale, 1998. Reproduced in Literature Resource Center.

Aldiss, Brian W., "Mary Shelley: Overview" in *St. James Guide to Science Fiction Writers*, 4th ed., edited by Jay P. Pederson, St. James Press, 1996. Reproduced in Literature Resource Center.

* Print resources are available from the library media center and libraries in the district. Contact any library media specialist to view the scholarly sources.

* Scholarly reviews are also available online through Books in Print and Gale. Contact the library media specialist to obtain username and password information to access the subscription database of full-text reviews.

Noted Distinction:

- See Titlewave for Awards.

Readability:

- Lexile Score: 1170
- Readability Level: 6.9

Learning Resources Guidelines:

- The novel meets the Learning Resources Guidelines.

Standard Alignment: ([link](#))

Approval:

Submitted to Committee:

Approved for Adoption:

Notes on the Text:

(The best way to evaluate and understand a novel is to personally read the book in its entirety.)

Frankenstein has been interpreted numerous times since its original publication. Most modern representations of Mary Shelley's classic novel portray the monster as pure evil, a lumbering killing machine. Mary Shelley gave the creature the ability to learn, speak, and know the difference between right and wrong. *Frankenstein* continues to be a popular work that questions science and its ethical relationship to humanity. Does science always act for the good of man, or does it have a dark side? Does man have the right or the power and intellect to act as a creator or God? Mary Shelley's answer seems to be that science and progress are ethically neutral with the capacity to work for either good or evil. Science thus presents humans with the enormous challenge to handle its power responsibly and humanely.

Connection to the Curriculum:

Romanticism
Gothic Novel
Female writer
Timeless themes
Modern day issues (genetic engineering, outcast, euthanasia, etc.)
Media manipulation-Hollywood's version

Additional Connections:

(AP, Honors, Essential/Applied, Dramas, Films, etc.)