



AP Literature Summer Reading Assignment 2020-2021:
"Creation as Nightmare: Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*"

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Frankenstein
AP Literature

Welcome to Advanced Placement English Literature and Composition! I am super excited to work with you next school year as we read, analyze, and discuss great works of world literature.

For your first assignment, please read Mary Shelley's most famous novel *Frankenstein* in its entirety before September. Few novels have had an enduring and ongoing impact on popular culture, literature, cinema, and media as Mary Shelley's 1818 gothic novel. The classic story of a man and his monster has much to tell us about victor/victim, God/Man, natural/unnatural, creator/creation, birth/death, togetherness/isolation, male/female, and humanized/dehumanized as it does about modern-day dilemmas faced locally, nationally, and globally.

WHAT TO DO?:

1. **Read** *Frankenstein* (not a graphic novel or a picture book; the actual book published in 1818; the actual book will begin with a series of letters from a character named Robert Walton to his sister)
2. Choose **TWO** of the four topics below and research it. Look for the topics' importance to *Frankenstein*. Research with the sole purpose of connecting the two topics back to the story. You don't need to write a paper. What I will be looking for is a sophisticated gathering and organizing of information that you will, in turn, use to lead an in-class discussion. This assignment is due the second day of class.

Topics	Considerations
John Milton's <i>Paradise Lost</i>	A major inspiration to Mary Shelley, John Milton's epic poem, <i>Paradise Lost</i> , revisits the biblical story of Adam and Eve, this time telling the story from the point of view of Satan after his fall from Heaven. Research the poem itself. What connections do you see between the events of the poem to the events/characters/themes/circumstances of <i>Frankenstein</i> ? What else do you observe, notice, question, wonder? Be prepared to discuss this topic in class.
The Life of Mary Shelley	Mary Shelley was eighteen years old when she published <i>Frankenstein</i> . Research the life of Mary Shelley. Who was she? Look for certain events in her life that may have inspired her to write <i>Frankenstein</i> . What else do you observe, notice, wonder, question? Be prepared to discuss this topic in class.
Romanticism	Shelley's <i>Frankenstein</i> is considered to be a novel from the Romantic literary movement. Research this literary movement. Why would <i>Frankenstein</i> fit into Romanticism?. What aspects of the movement does the novel address? What else do you observe, notice, wonder, question? Be prepared to discuss this topic in class.
Prometheus	Initially, Mary Shelley wanted to title her book <i>Frankenstein; or, The Modern Prometheus</i> . In the end, the title was truncated to <i>Frankenstein</i> . Given this, who is Prometheus? Why is he important to this story? What were the consequences of his actions? What else do you observe, notice, wonder, question? Be prepared to discuss this topic in class.