

**Teacher Guide**

**Grades 9–12**

# **Frankenstein**

**Mary Shelley**



**NEW WAYS TO TEACH READING,  
WRITING, & CRITICAL THINKING**



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# FRANKENSTEIN

by  
Mary Shelley

## Teacher Guide

Written by  
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### Note

The text used to prepare this guide was the Bantam Classic softcover. It was first published in 1818. If other editions are used, page references may vary slightly.

**Please note:** Please assess the appropriateness of this book for the age level and maturity of your students prior to reading and discussing it with your class.

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ISBN 978-1-60878-439-4

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### Publisher Information

For a complete catalog, contact—

Novel Units, Inc.  
P.O. Box 97  
Bulverde, TX 78163-0097

Web site: [novelunits.com](http://novelunits.com)

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## Chapters 8–11

### Vocabulary

infamy	obliterated	ignominious	exculpated
execrated	constrained	adduced	advocate
wantonly	timorous	bauble	ingratitude
guile	manacled	absurd	obdurate
perdition	scaffold	incorruptible	hapless
unhallowed	complacency	polio	augmenting
base	remorse	face	abhorrence
pilgrimage	precipitated	sacrilege	tribute
depraved	perfection	abyss	brake
access	epidemic	guise	angular
avalanche	obscure	balcony	imperial
pinnacle	stupendous	transverse	concussion
dissipated	malignity	aerial	recesses
gale	satiated	diabolically	dissoluble
maelstrom	communion	eluded	decile
clemency	opaque	implores	commiserate
scourge	disfigure	impervious	dormant
slaked	usage	foliage	canopied
offals	measured	emigration	debilitated
Pandemonium	meanly	laboratory	purloined
dank	pensive	accommodated	reverence
amiable		towns	monotonous

### Discussion Questions

1. What is the "incriminating" evidence against Justine? (*She was found with the locket, far from the body.*) Do you think such circumstantial evidence would be enough to convict her in a court today?
2. Why were many who knew Justine hesitant to come forward on her behalf? (*They assumed she was guilty, for fear and hatred of the horrible crime.*) Do you think this ever happens today? Why did Elizabeth's appeal sway the crowd? (*The crowd grew even angrier that Justine could be so ungrateful as to harm good Elizabeth's brother.*) Would you say they were a bloodthirsty group?
3. Why did Justine confess her guilt? (*to obtain a solution*)
4. Victor refers to himself as the "true murderer". Why did he feel that his hands were "thrice accursed"? (*If he hadn't created the monster, William and Justine would still be alive.*) Do you agree?
5. How did Victor's father try to cheer him up after Justine's death? (*told Victor he owed it to himself and others not to grieve so much or he wouldn't be any good to anyone*) Do you agree that a mourner should try to hide his or her grief and console the living?



6. Victor says that he was tempted to kill himself after Justine's death. Why didn't he? *(This would leave Elizabeth, his father, and his other brother unprotected.)*
7. Why did Victor go to Chamounix? *(Overwhelmed by guilt and anger, he sought a place to forget his sorrows—a place he had known since boyhood.)* Do you have a place you go to when you're upset?
8. How did Victor and his creature meet up with each other? *(The creature followed Victor up a glacier.)* Why didn't Victor kill the creature as he had imagined he would? *(The creature moved out of striking range, the pointed out that Victor had neglected him, created the creature's misery.)* Should Victor have gone ahead with his original plan, do you think?
9. How did the creature reproach his creator? *(pointed out that he is spurned by everyone; It's Victor's fault he is miserable.)* Do you sympathize with the monster? Did Victor? *(somewhat; For the first time he felt that he had duties toward the creature as his creator.)*
10. What does the creature remember about his first few weeks of life? *(He remembers darkness, fear, cold, pleasant sounds of birds, holding his hands in a fire, being attacked, and a shelter in a hovel near a cottage.)* Were these happy times for him? *(no)* Why do you think he wanted to tell his creator this tale? *(so that Victor can decide whether he owes it to the creature to help him find happiness)* Is that anything like the reason Victor has for telling Walton his story?

### Prediction

How will the cottage dwellers meet the creature? What will their reaction be?

### Writing Activity

You are Frankenstein's creature. Describe the dream you have one night after watching the family in the cottage.

### The Author's Craft: Suspense

Explain that suspense is a story quality that produces tension in the reader. The reader grows curious about what will happen next. Suspense usually raises one of two types of questions in a reader's mind: What will the outcome be? When will the inevitable outcome happen?

Explain that suspense created by a plot depends on (1) uncertainty about which of two opposing forces will win—or how—and (2) desire to see one force defeat the other.

Have students discuss how suspense develops in this section. (Readers wonder what the monster wants—whether he will be convinced to leave humans alone or will continue to wreak havoc; whether Victor will destroy his creation—or vice versa.)