

Reflections:

*A Student Response Journal for...*

*The Strange Case of  
Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*

*by Robert Louis Stevenson*

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Item No. 201072

## Story of the Door

1. Though the author of this novel, Robert Louis Stevenson, was born and grew up in Scotland, *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* is set in England. Draw a small map of the island on which Scotland, Wales, and England are located. Also label the map with the names of the following bodies of water which surround the island:
  - A. The Atlantic Ocean
  - B. The Irish Sea
  - C. The English Channel
  - D. The North Sea
2. Fiction is the designation given to writing that is not fact based, but is a work of the author's imagination. Fiction books are categorized according to the general subject matter of the fiction, and sometimes also according to the period of time when they were written. These categories are called "genres." *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* would fall under the genre category of Gothic mystery. Write down the titles of six novels that you have either studied or know about. Beside each, write the name of the author and the year it was published. Then list the type of "genre" you think that novel would fall under. (Some of the genres are: Horror, Science Fiction, Historical, Coming-of-Age, Action/Adventure, Spy, and Sea novels.)
3. When Mr. Utterson and his cousin, Mr. Enfield, go for a walk in the city of London one day, Mr. Enfield tells him of an event which happened to him on this street one dark night. Write a summary of what happened that night in eight sentences or fewer. You could begin your summary with the words, "It was three o'clock in the morning as Mr. Enfield walked down the empty..."

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*Response Journal*

4. Because this novel was published in 1886, you may find some of the words in it a little old-fashioned. Find and record the meanings of the words below. Then write a new sentence using the word from the novel that refers to something in modern times.
1. emulously
  2. coquetry
  3. gable
  4. harpies
  5. bland
  6. detestable
  7. pedantically
  8. resumed
5. When asked by Mr. Utterson why he did not ask any questions about “the place with the door,” Mr. Enfield says, “You start a question, and it’s like a starting a stone.” Write a short paragraph that would tell what you think Mr. Enfield meant by that sentence to a classmate who doesn’t follow the comment.
6. The title of this chapter is “**Story of the Door.**” A detailed description of the door the attacker of the young girl entered is given. Re-read that paragraph. Then, using that paragraph as a model, write a very detailed description of the front door of your own home or apartment.

## **Search for Mr. Hyde**

7. Mr. Utterson, as we know, is a lawyer. Years ago, he drew up a strange will for Dr. Jekyll, but its terms continue to bother him. Mr. Hyde, whom Mr. Utterson does not know, is to be the recipient of Dr. Jekyll's estate. Mr. Utterson decides to stake out Dr. Jekyll's house and finally meets Mr. Hyde. Write a thumbnail sketch about each of the four Englishmen in the story by referring to what has been written about them. In your sketch, write about: their ages, physical appearances, professions, and personalities.
  
8. This novel is written in the third person, which means a "narrator" tells the story. If a novel were written in the first person, the narrator would be the person relating the story. Look back through the first two chapters and record a paragraph that is written in the third person. Find another that is written in the first person. Copy down each sentence that makes you certain of which person (first or third) the section is.
  
9. We finally meet Mr. Hyde. After he and Mr. Utterson talk for a bit, Mr. Hyde allows the lawyer to see his full face. Mr. Utterson says, "Oh my poor old Henry Jekyll, if ever I read Satan's signature upon a face, it is on that of your new friend." Suppose a friend of yours had never heard of "Satan." Write the conversation you would have which would explain Satan to that friend. Also explain why you think Mr. Utterson says that "Satan's signature" is on Mr. Hyde's face. It might begin like this:

**Your Friend:** What is this *Satan* thing?

**You:** Ever hear of The Devil? Well, ...

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## Response Journal

10. The author, Robert Louis Stevenson, is generous in his use of adjectives in this novel. Below is a list of adjectives and the words they describe taken from this chapter. If you do not know the meaning of the underlined adjective, look it up in the dictionary. Make a new list, substituting another adjective which would describe the word as well as the one in the underlined list.

- |                          |                                 |                             |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. <u>sombre</u> spirits | 2. <u>detestable</u> attributes | 3. <u>rambling</u> talk     |
| 4. <u>dark</u> bed       | 5. <u>nocturnal</u> city        | 6. <u>enduring</u> hatred   |
| 7. <u>quaint</u> effect  | 8. <u>fitting</u> language      | 9. <u>Satan's</u> signature |

11. Suppose you were Mr. Utterson, whom we know has been a friend of Dr. Jekyll for many years and has now just seen Hyde. Complete the dialogue below which you might have with a friend concerning why you think Mr. Utterson is not able to tell that Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde are one and the same person.

**Friend:** It makes no sense. The lawyer *knew* Dr. Jekyll! How could he *not* know that Jekyll and Hyde were one and the same.

**You:** Well, it was dark...

## Dr. Jekyll Was Quite at Ease

12. Dr. Jekyll's will, which leaves his estate to Mr. Hyde, comes up again in this chapter. Most young people are unfamiliar with what a will actually is. Most wills are drawn up by lawyers, but a will can also be handwritten by the person alone and becomes valid when it is dated and witnessed. Research the form of wording that most wills take. Imagine that you are a famous person, either real or not, and write a will explaining who or what would inherit all of your money and property and why.

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13. Before the dinner party is over, Dr. Jekyll has extracted a promise from Mr. Utterson. The terms of his will will be carried out concerning Mr. Hyde. Mr. Utterson still has worries about this, but with “an irrepressible sigh,” he promises. Imagine that Mr. Utterson has a journal in which he writes his thoughts at the end of every day. Write the entry that he would have written describing his feelings after coming home from the dinner party at Dr. Jekyll’s home.
  
14. The tone of a novel is important in that it provides a useful and consistent backdrop for the action of the story. The mysterious, dark tone of this novel is emphasized by many of the phrases and words used to underline this tone. Examples from the first chapter would be: “black winter,” “empty as a church,” and “the screaming child.” Skim over the first three chapters that you have read and write down ten words or phrases that conjure up the dark, mysterious tone of this novel.
  
15. Dr. Layton’s disapproval of Dr. Jekyll’s “unscientific balderdash” is mentioned in this chapter. It seems that Dr. Jekyll has been carrying out what he refers to as “his scientific heresies” for ten years or so. So far, these scientific experiments are not described. Suppose you were a reporter for a London newspaper and had been assigned to write a story of these hearsay experiments. Write down a list of eight questions (in complete sentences) which you would take with you to an interview with Dr. Jekyll.