



 Prestwick House

# Activity Pack

## JANE EYRE

BY CHARLOTTE BRONTË



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Written by Eva Richardson

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Pre-Reading****Research****Objective:** Relating *Jane Eyre* to its literary period**Activity**

Charlotte Brontë is one of the most famous and popular novelists of the Victorian Era in British Literature. The Victorian literary period took place during the reign of Queen Victoria between 1837-1901.

Using the library or Internet, research significant aspects of the Victorian Era and add your findings to the following **Victorian Era Chart**. Mention at least four items for each category.

A few answers have been provided for you.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Volume I – Chapter I

## Characterization

Objective: Recognizing character traits

## Activity

In Chapter I, Charlotte Brontë introduces her readers to the world of Jane Eyre. We learn that Jane is an orphan living under the protection of her aunt Mrs. Reed. Mrs. Reed's other children, John, Eliza, and Georgiana, behave toward Jane in an unfriendly and rather hostile manner. The children do not treat Jane like one of them. They do everything possible to make Jane feel worthless, and John in particular seems to enjoy torturing young Jane. Jane narrates:

“Dreadful to me was the coming home in the raw twilight, with nipped fingers and toes, and a heart saddened...by the consciousness of my physical inferiority to Eliza, John, and Georgiana Reed.” (Pg. 11)

Paying attention to the descriptions of a character's physical appearance and behavior is essential for understanding important plot developments in the novel. It also helps to explain other characters' feelings and attitudes. The first chapter reveals valuable information about the character of John Reed. Understanding John's character is crucial for evaluating Jane's present and future emotions and actions.

Study Chapter I carefully and gather information on John's age, physical appearance, family background, and behavior/personality. Add your findings to the following **Introducing Characters Chart**. If appropriate, you should include direct quotations from the text into the second column of the chart. Once you have completed the chart, share your findings with the other students in your class.

A few examples have been completed for you.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Volume I – Chapter V

## Chronology

**Objective:** Noticing and recording chronological order

**Activity**

In Chapter IV, Mr. Brocklehurst explains to Mrs. Reed that consistency is his primary goal in the education of the young women in his care:

“Consistency, madam, is the first of Christian duties; and it has been observed in every arrangement connected with the establishment of Lowood: plain fare, simple attire, unsophisticated accommodations, hardy and active habits; such is the order of the day in the house and its inhabitants.” (Pg. 38)

When Jane arrives at Lowood in Chapter V, she quickly encounters Mr. Brocklehurst's ideal of consistency when she observes that every day goes by according to the same mundane and monotonous routine.

Study Chapter V carefully and then create a **Daily Activity Log** in chronological order for Jane at Lowood.

A few entries have been completed for you. Try to find as many activities as possible and add them to the appropriate time slot.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Volume I – Chapter X****Resume**

**Objective:**    Creating a modern job application  
                     Relating literature to life

**Activity**

After eight years at Lowood, Jane decides to leave the school and seek employment in a private residence.

This is the advertisement Jane writes and publishes in the *Herald*:

“A young lady accustomed to tuition... is desirous of meeting with a situation in a private family where the children are under fourteen.... She is qualified to teach the usual branches of a good English education, together with French, Drawing, and Music.... Address J.E., Post-office, Lowton,—shire.” (Pg. 90)

Consider Jane's background, education, and experiences and create a modern job application tailored to her needs and job objectives. Use this information as well as any additional information you consider appropriate to create a cover letter and a resume for Jane. You may use the blank resume provided here or you can make one yourself.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Volume II – Chapter XVII

Theme  
Letter Writing

**Objective:**    Researching the status of governesses in nineteenth century England  
                  Writing a letter from one character to another

While his guests are visiting at Thornfield, Mr. Rochester requests Jane's presence in the drawing-room at night. Unwillingly, Jane quietly enters the drawing-room and takes a seat in the corner. She hopes to remain unnoticed by Mr. Rochester's guests because she feels out of place among these people of high social status.

Seated in the window seat, Jane is forced to hear a conversation between Miss Ingram and some of the other guests who are discussing the value and character of governesses:

‘You should hear mamma on the chapter of governesses. Mary and I have had, I should think, a dozen at least in our day: half of them detestable and the rest ridiculous, and all incubi – were they not, mamma?’

‘Did you speak, my own?’

The young lady thus claimed as the dowager's special property reiterated her question with a special explanation.

‘My dearest, don't mention governesses; the word makes me nervous. I have suffered a martyrdom from their incompetency and caprice; I thank Heaven I have now done with them!’

Mrs. Dent here bent over to the pious lady, and whispered something in her ear; I suppose, from the answer elicited, it was a reminder that one of the anathematized race was present.

‘Tant pis!’ said her ladyship, ‘I hope it may do her good!’ Then in a lower tone, but still loud enough for me to hear, ‘I noticed her; I am a judge of physiognomy, and in her's I see all the faults of her class.’

‘What are they, madam?’ inquired Mr. Rochester aloud.

‘I will tell you in your private ear,’ replied she,

‘But my curiosity will be past its appetite;

‘Ask Blanche; she is nearer you than I.’

‘Oh, don't refer him to me, mamma! I have just one word to say of the whole tribe; they are a nuisance.’” (Pg. 173)

## Activity I

Using the Internet and/or library, conduct some research on the history and social standing of governesses in Europe, or in England in particular, in the nineteenth century. Pay special attention to their social status, their reputation, and their responsibilities in the education of children. Maybe you can also find particular examples of select governesses.

Write a short essay detailing your findings.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Volume II – Chapters XIX-XX****Newspaper Writing****Objective:** Writing a newspaper article**Activity**

The mysterious visit of Mr. Mason culminates in a horrible tragedy that takes place in the attic at Thornfield. In the middle of the night, Jane is awakened by a terrible scream. She follows Mr. Rochester to the attic and finds Mr. Mason exhausted and physically injured. Apparently, Grace Poole burst out of her room and attacked Mr. Mason, scratching and biting until Mr. Mason was bloody and screaming for help.

Mr. Rochester immediately calls for the doctor while Jane watches the injured Mr. Mason. The doctor provides some much-needed medical care to Mr. Mason. Afterwards, Mr. Rochester insists that Mr. Mason leaves Thornfield as soon as possible, and he commands Jane never to speak of the incident again.

Imagine a different scenario: Dr. Carter, who attended Mr. Mason and bandaged his wounds, reveals the details of the incident to the local newspaper reporter. Put yourself in the reporter's shoes and write a story and headline for it about the mysterious attack on Mr. Mason that includes the essential facts of the sensational incident. Consult the appendix on newspaper writing. Remember that good articles usually have the most important facts (who, what, when, where, why, and how) in the first paragraph.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Volume II – Chapter XXV

Symbolism  
Inference

**Objective:** Analyzing Jane's two dreams as symbolic images in the text  
Paying attention to the technique of foreshadowing

## Activity

In preparation for his marriage to Jane, Mr. Rochester has gone to London. Jane spends a restless night waiting for Mr. Rochester's return. During the night, she is plagued by two distinct dreams, the **Dream of the Small Child** and the **Dream of Ruins**. Like the descriptions of the chestnut tree, the descriptions of the two dreams Jane shares with Mr. Rochester upon his return to Thornfield will gain significance later in the story. In that sense, the two dreams serve as powerful symbolic images that foreshadow events that will shape the subsequent plot of the story.

In order to understand the symbolic significance of Jane's two dreams and their function as a means of foreshadowing events in the story, it is important to pay close attention to the descriptions of both dreams in Chapter XXV.

Remember that in literature, symbols refer to objects, words, events, or ideas in the text that signify something beyond a narrow, literal meaning.

Study the descriptions of Jane's dreams closely. Then fill in the following **Symbolic Meaning of Dreams Chart** with a) specific descriptions of each dream and b) your interpretation of the dreams' respective meanings.

A few details have been provided for you.

Once you have completed the chart, be sure to hang on to the results because you will be required to come back to this activity later and reevaluate your findings.



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Wrap-Up

### Creating a Dust Jacket

**Objective:**    Reviewing the major themes of the novel  
                     Summarizing the main events and ideas of the novel

#### Activity

In small groups, create a new dust jacket for the novel. For inspiration, you can go to a bookstore and/or library and study different dust jackets of popular novels. Use a large sheet of paper and fold it to create the new dust jacket.

#### The cover:

On the cover, draw or sketch or cut pictures from magazines and newspapers and design a collage for a new cover. The new cover should depict a major idea or incident, characters, or themes from the book. It also must contain the title and an advertising catchphrase that attracts consumers' attention. Keep in mind that the author's name and the title of the text must also appear on the cover of the book.

#### The back:

On the back of your dust jacket, give a few relevant details about the author. Use the library and/or Internet to research important details about the author's life, her accomplishments, and other works she has written.

#### The inside flaps:

On the inside of your new dust jacket, write a brief summary and review of the novel. Keep the following questions in mind when creating your summary and review:

1. What is the main theme of the story?
2. Why did the author write the story?
3. What did I learn from the story?
4. Why would I recommend the book?
5. What are the main incidents in the story?

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Wrap-Up****Characterization  
Inference**

**Objective:** Inferring character traits based on the actions, statements, and events in the story

**Activity I**

Identify the traits that you think the following characters possess by placing the assigned letter(s) for each character in the blanks next to the character traits that apply. You can assign several character traits to each character. Afterwards, pick one or two traits for an individual character of your choosing and write a short paragraph explaining how that trait is portrayed in the story. Be sure to cite specific examples, quotes, and passages from the text that illustrate the character trait(s) you have selected to write about.

Use the following letter abbreviations for the characters:

J – Jane Eyre	SJ – St. John Rivers
R – Mr. Rochester	F – Miss Fairfax
A – Adèle	I – Miss Ingram
B – Bertha Mason	

A few examples have been supplied for you.