

## Discussion questions for reading 1

1. What type of person is Captain Walton? What motivates him in his dangerous endeavor?
2. What is Walton's impression of his new friend, Victor Frankenstein?
3. What is Victor like as a child? How is he different from the other children? What clues are there about his future?
4. Why do you think young Victor is so interested in unlocking the secrets of nature?
5. Why does Dr. Frankenstein's view on his creation change so suddenly and severely?
6. How might Dr. Frankenstein handle the situation differently?
7. Why doesn't the doctor explain the secrets of his discoveries?
8. Is Frankenstein's mistake due to fate or his own choices? How culpable (guilty) is he?
9. Why do you think Shelley chose to frame the story of Dr. Frankenstein within the story of Captain Walton?
10. How would you describe Shelley's writing style? Use examples in your answer.
11. How does Shelley create anticipation and tension for the story?
12. Why do you think Shelley includes a poem in Chapter 5?
13. Why does Shelley include multiple references to "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner"?

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## Discussion questions for reading 2

1. Why do you think Victor feels so “tormented” by discussions of science and his accomplishments? What is the root of this anguish?
2. What is Victor’s relationship to the natural world?
3. What are some instances where Dr. Frankenstein is irresponsible?
4. Why does Victor hesitate to return to his hometown when his journey is nearing its end? (See Chapter 7.)
5. How does Shelley describe the appearance of the monster? Why does she give us such a vague picture?
6. What reasons does Dr. Frankenstein offer for keeping the truth of William’s murder to himself? Do you believe his reasons?
7. In what ways does Victor accept responsibility? In what ways does he deny responsibility.
8. Can we believe everything the doctor says? What should we question?
9. Based on the novel so far, what does Shelley think of the justice system?
10. Choose an excerpt that demonstrates Shelly’s word choice (figurative language, imagery, mood, etc.) and analyze it.
11. How does Shelley use descriptions of natural scenes in the novel?
12. Describe the personality of the creature. Is he what you expected? Use examples from the novel in your response.
13. Based on *Frankenstein* alone, what does Mary Shelley think of humanity? Use examples from the text in your answer.
14. What are Dr. Frankenstein’s key personality traits?

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### Discussion questions for reading 3

1. How would you describe the personality of the creature?
2. What experiences mold the monster's personality?
3. How might the creature have turned out differently under different circumstances?
4. Which excerpt gives the best example of Shelley's use of imagery?
5. In what ways does the story of the De Lacey family fit with the clichés of Romantic literature?
6. Why does Shelley explore the books found by the creature? Are they important?
7. What insight does the creature gain from Plutarch's *Lives*?
8. What insight does the creature gain from *The Sorrows of Werter*?
9. What insight does the creature gain from Milton's *Paradise Lost*?
10. Which of the three books makes the greatest impression on the creature? Explain.
11. In your opinion, how does the creature perform in his attempt to introduce himself?
12. Why does Shelley include the incident with the drowning girl?
13. Why do you think the murdering of William (Chapter 16) thrills the creature so?
14. What reason does the monster give for "punishing" Justine? What is his logic?
15. How does the creature persuade the doctor to create a companion?
16. How does Clerval compare to Dr. Frankenstein?
17. How is Shelley using allusions to *Paradise Lost* to impact the reader?

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## Discussion questions for reading 4

1. Do you find the doctor's thoughts and actions frustrating? Explain.
2. Why does the doctor decide to destroy his second creature?
3. Do you believe that the doctor really fell asleep in the sailboat? Explain.
4. Is there anything incredible (hard to believe) about where the monster leaves Clerval's body?
5. Romantic authors often include extreme cases of coincidence. Choose one from the novel to examine.
6. In what ways is the doctor courageous? In what ways is he cowardly?
7. How does Shelley build suspense leading up to Elizabeth's murder?
8. Why doesn't the doctor protect Elizabeth on their wedding night?
9. Analyze one reference to *The Bible* used in *Frankenstein*.
10. How does the magistrate respond to the doctor's request for help?
11. In what ways do the doctor and the creature mirror one another?
12. What evidence is there that the doctor is insane? Could it all be his fantasy?
13. How does the creature aid the doctor in his pursuit? Why does he do this?
14. Who suffers more, the doctor or the creature? Explain.
15. Did you find the resolution of *Frankenstein* satisfactory? Why or why not?
16. Does the doctor truly take responsibility for his actions? Explain.
17. Does the captain make the right choice in cancelling the voyage? Explain.
18. What is the relevance of Shelley's full title, *Frankenstein; Or, The Modern Prometheus*?
19. What is the most important theme (message about life) of *Frankenstein*?

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