

May 2023

Incoming English 3-4 Honors Student:

Your road to English 3-4 Honors has been an arduous one. Throughout your school career, you have worked steadfastly to reach this echelon of academic work and to become a master of reading and writing. Through continued perseverance and dedication, you will overcome difficult academic hurdles and become even stronger and better equipped for the work ahead.

The objective of the independent reading assignment is to further prepare you for the upcoming year. We would like you to engage in a careful reading and critical analysis of the novel [\*Frankenstein\* by Mary Shelley](#).

The purpose of your independent reading is to prepare you for the work we will be doing in class in August and September. Reading is the first step. While we don't want to ruin a well-deserved summer of rest and relaxation, this course is designed to help you gain success in future IB exams, eventually translating into college credit. It is necessary for you to complete summer work to display your commitment to learning and honing your skills for your future academic pursuits.

This year you will sharpen your critical thinking and linguistic skills. **Make sure that you do your own work. DO NOT cheat by using materials such as Sparknotes, Cliffs Notes, and any other summary sources.** For some reason, students are tempted to rely on those literary commentaries rather than their own reflections. In the process, they cheat themselves out of thinking through their own thoughts, feelings, and experiences. The quick-fix interferes with true, life-long learning. Please understand that as teachers, we're interested in what *you* have to say about a work of literature.

Please feel free to contact either one of us throughout the summer if you have questions.

Sincerely,

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**The novel *Frankenstein* is not available in the NCHS bookstore, so you will need to [read it online](#) or purchase it. You are looking for the 1831 edition of the novel.**

**Independent Summer Reading ~ 10<sup>th</sup> Grade Honors**  
***Frankenstein* by Mary Shelley**

We have many ethical questions that intersect with Mary Shelley's classic novel. At what point does human life begin? Do human beings have the right to pursue science over ideology, no matter the gains or sacrifices? Mary Shelley's beautifully written Gothic novel *Frankenstein* raises the same questions about a scientist's quest to produce a living creature from human parts. The journeys of both Victor Frankenstein and his creature lead them and readers to question the nature of humanity, the rights of the living, and the responsibility of science. Students who remember Frankenstein as a Halloween monster will be surprised to find themselves re-evaluating their view of Victor Frankenstein's creature, and will form contemporary connections as they explore Mary Shelley's Gothic tale, *Frankenstein*.

Mary Shelley began writing *Frankenstein* before her nineteenth birthday and published it two years later. It was while on a holiday in Switzerland during the summer of 1816, that Shelley conceived the idea for *Frankenstein*. Since the summer proved rainy, Mary, her husband Percy, and their friend Lord

Byron were confined to the house for days on end, during which they read German ghost stories. Each challenged the other to write a ghost story. Shelley was the only one who actually followed through with the challenge. You can read more about this in [Mary Shelley's introduction](#) to the novel.

**This assignment is due Friday, August 25, 2023**

Follow these directions to complete your summer reading assignment.

Materials needed: [Frankenstein](#) by Mary Shelley, a Google doc or a notebook, sticky notes and highlighters if you have your own copy of the novel.

### Step #1 Pre-reading and Marking the Text

- Read the myth of [Prometheus](#). Knowing this information will aid your understanding of the novel, since Mary Shelley subtitled this novel “The Modern Prometheus.”
- Mark the text circling key words and underlining key ideas that connect the myth and the novel such as the following: rebelling against a father figure, creating a new race of beings, absence of forethought, falling from grace, curiosity, intense suffering, forbidden knowledge, gifting knowledge, cursed gifts, and fire.
- This can serve as a background to your reading, but revisit this myth during and after your reading to complete the marking of the text.
- View this brief [video](#) on YouTube, “Everything you need to know to read ‘Frankenstein’ - Iseult Gillespie” by TED-Ed.

### Step #2 Marking the Text and Taking Notes

1. As you are reading *Frankenstein* ([audiobook](#)), you will need to either keep a Google doc or notebook and record page numbers, write in the margins of your book, **or** use sticky notes to write about the following:
  - **Allusions or references.** Of the many allusions in *Frankenstein*, the big three source materials are the myth of Prometheus, The Bible/ *Paradise Lost*, and “The Rime of the Ancient Mariner.”
  - **Diction or word choice.** Mary Shelley uses a rich vocabulary. Create a vocabulary list of at least 20 words. You may highlight the words in pink if you’re marking your personal copy of the novel or create a list in your notebook.
  - **Plot and character development.** How did Frankenstein’s creature become a monster? This is a broad question with many possible answers throughout the text.
2. Identify and note the elements for the structure of the novel.
  - **Foreshadowing.** Foreshadowing is when the author hints at what might happen in the story (or simply tells you directly). You are getting a “shadow” of the events before they happen. The author includes foreshadowing to add interest, focus attention, or create feelings like suspense, tension, and mystery.
  - **Narrative structure.** This novel has three narrators, Robert Walton, Victor Frankenstein, and the creature.
    - Walton’s letters frame the novel. How is Walton like Victor? What is Walton’s purpose in this story?
    - The primary narrator is Victor Frankenstein. How reliable is he as a narrator? Is he believable? Is he biased?
    - When the creature takes over and tells his story, how do you feel about him? Why?
  - Mary Shelley uses symbols and motifs to develop her themes. Note when you see these symbols and motifs in the novel. What could they mean? How could Shelley be using

them to say something about life, nature, or human nature?

- **Symbols:** fire, storms, lighting, Walton’s journey, the rocky island, mountains, hands/strangulation, cold/ice, the albatross, ruined castles, nature retreats.
- **Motifs:** desolate places, beautiful places in nature, chaotic nature, journeys.
- **Theme** topics include but are not limited to the following: playing God, hubris (excessive pride), ambition, science, knowledge, justice, evil, revenge, fate, guilt, and parenthood.

### Step #3 Analysis

Write down ten or more favorite **quotes**. As you read, you will come across passages that you feel are important to the story; perhaps the quote is beautifully written or reveals something important about the plot, a character, or a theme. Record the quote and the page number. Then consider why the quote is important to the story. For each quote, analyze, interpret, and evaluate.

<b>Analyze</b>	What literary devices does the author use, if any?
<b>Interpret</b>	What does this quote mean? How does it fit into the larger story? How does it explore the character?
<b>Evaluate or Connect</b>	Can you relate to this passage? Do you agree or disagree with this character or decision? Do you believe the author? Have you had any similar experiences?

[Frankenstein](#) Table of Contents and Reading Schedule. Four weeks is a suggestion. You may read faster. Here is the [audiobook](#).

Week 1, page 5-72	Week 2, pages 73-129	Week 3, pages 130-197	Week 4, pages 198-265
Author’s intro p 5 (6)	Vol 1, Ch 7 p. 73 (10)	Vol 2, Ch 7 p. 130 (8)	Vol 3, Ch 6 p. 198 (7)
<a href="#">Letters</a> p. 15 (17)	Vol 1, Ch 8 p. 83 (8)	Vol 2, Ch 8 p. 138 (9)	Vol 3, Ch 7 p. 205 (8)
Vol 1, Ch 1 p. 32 (5)	Vol 2, Ch 1 p. 93 (6)	Vol 2, Ch 9 p. 147 (5)	Walton in continuation
Vol 1, Ch 2 p. 38 (6)	Vol 2, Ch 2 p. 99 (6)	Vol 3, Ch 1 p. 155 (8)	212 to end (14)
Vol 1, Ch 3 p. 44 (7)	Vol 2, Ch 3 p. 105 (8)	Vol 3, Ch 2 p. 163 (7)	
Vol 1, Ch 4 p. 51 (7)	Vol 2, Ch 4 p. 113 (6)	Vol 3, Ch 3 p. 170 (9)	
Vol 1, Ch 5 p. 58 (7)	Vol 2, Ch 5 p. 119 (6)	Vol 3, Ch 4 p. 179 (10)	
Vol 1, Ch 6 p. 65 (8)	Vol 2, Ch 6 p. 125 (5)	Vol 3, Ch 5 p. 189 (9)	

67 pages

56 pages

67 pages

67 pages

**Complete the reading and the assignment by Friday, August 25, 2023**