

Frankenstein

Our thrilling adaptation of Mary Shelley's classic horror story

About the Story

Lexile: 970L (editorial)

For qualitative complexity factors, go to Scope Online.

Learning Objective:

to read a play and an editorial and then consider the implications of creating intelligent life

Key Skills:

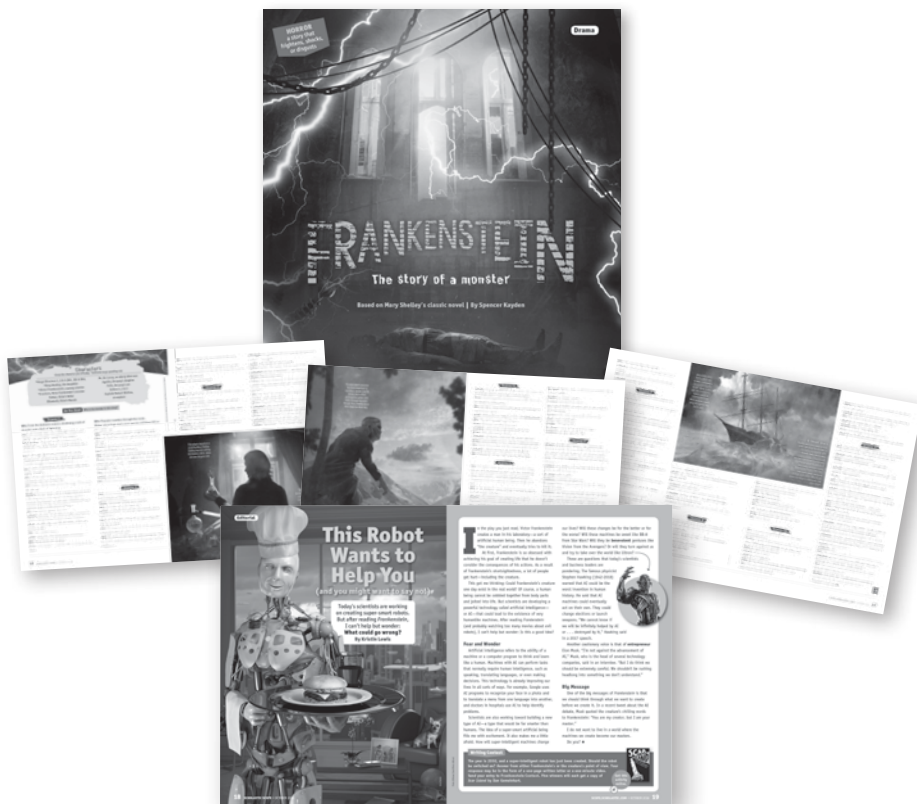
inference, interpreting text, key ideas, synthesis, author's craft

Essential Questions:

- Why is it important to be loved?
- What does it mean to be a responsible scientist?
- What limits, if any, should we put on technological advancement?

Standards:

The texts and lesson support these Common Core anchor standards: **R.1, R.2, R.3, R.4, R.5, W.2, W.3, SL.1, SL.2, L.4, L.5, L.6.** For more standards information—including TEKS—go to Scope Online.



Your Teaching Support Package

Find your full suite of materials at scope.scholastic.com.

Audio:

- Vocabulary
- Editorial

Literature Connections: ideas for connecting to curricular texts

Activities to print or project:

- Vocabulary
- Close Reading and Critical Thinking
- Synthesis: Frankenstein and AI
- Quiz*
- **Core Skills Workout:** Mood*, Inference
- **Literary Elements:** Theme Anticipation Guide, Character Thinking Tool, Genre Exploration
- Contest Entry Form

*Available on two levels

Step-by-Step Lesson Plan

Close Reading, Critical Thinking, Skill Building

1 Preparing to Read

Do-Now: Theme Anticipation Guide

(5 minutes, activity sheet online)

As a class, complete the **Anticipation Guide** to activate prior knowledge and build curiosity.

Preview vocabulary.

(7 minutes, activity sheet online)

Project or distribute the **Vocabulary Words and Definitions**. Review the words as a class: *abomination, benevolent, entrepreneur, ghastly, musters, racks, sallow, shunned*

2 Reading and Discussing the Play

(30 minutes, activity sheet online)

- Read aloud the “As You Read” box on page 12.
- Assign parts and read the play as a class.
- Discuss the following questions in groups.

Close-Reading Questions

▶ **In Scene 2, why does Victor hesitate before he opens the door of his building?** (inference)

Victor dreads seeing the monster and doesn't know what to expect when he returns to his lab. He is gathering his courage.

▶ **In Scene 4, Victor says, “I am the author of a terrible evil.” What does he mean?**

(interpreting text) *Victor means that as an author creates a book, he has created evil: the creature and the murder the creature has carried out.*

▶ **In Scene 6, Mr. De Lacey says, “Most people are friendly—unless they are blinded by prejudice.” What kind of prejudice do people have against the creature?** (key ideas)

Many people are unable to see past the creature's appearance. They assume he is a monster because he is so large and strange looking.

Critical-Thinking Questions

▶ **Is Victor right to refuse to make a**

companion for the creature? *Answers will vary. Some students might say no; Victor owed it to the creature to try to make life more bearable. Others might say yes; Victor is considering the potential harm his actions could cause and rightfully concludes that the risk is too great.*

▶ **The creature says that he's evil because he's unloved. In your opinion, is being treated poorly a valid excuse for the creature's**

crimes? *Answers will vary. Students may say that while there is no excuse for murder, and that we are ultimately responsible for our own actions, the way the creature is treated does make him sympathetic. Students may say that some, most, or all of the responsibility for the creature's crimes lies with Victor, who failed to love, teach, and protect the being he created, and with society, which bullied and rejected the creature.*

- As a class, discuss the questions from the captions:

▶ **How might advances in science and technology have inspired Mary Shelley?**

It seems likely that Shelley was inspired by the fascination and fear surrounding science and technology in her day to write a story about a scientist who pushes science to the limit. She seems to have taken the idea of restoring life to the dead in a creative direction.

▶ **Should scientists conduct research that could lead to harm as well as to good?**

Some students may say that the development of something that could be of great benefit to humankind is worth the risk of that thing doing harm; others may disagree. Students might also point out that some technologies or discoveries

do both harm and good—and students may have differing opinions on whether it's worth tolerating the harm for the sake of the good.

► **What do Frankenstein's creature and the Hulk have in common?** *Both are rejected by society and wonder at times why they were created only to lead such a miserable life.*

► **Why do you think this story is still popular 200 years later?** *Students might say that the frontiers of science fascinate and frighten us as much now as they did in the 1800s. Plus, it is a ripping yarn, full of suspense and drama.*

3 Reading and Discussing the Editorial

(10 minutes, activity sheet online)

As a class, read the editorial and discuss the questions below.

Close-Reading Questions

► **Think about the statement “You are my creator, but I am your master.” In the editorial, Kristin Lewis calls these words “chilling.” What does she mean?** (interpreting text, synthesis) *Answers will vary but should include the idea that it's scary to imagine losing control of something you created.*

► **What concerns does Lewis express about artificial intelligence?** (key ideas) *Lewis expresses the concern that machines with artificial intelligence might become more powerful than the humans who built them. She worries that these machines could eventually take actions that humans do not support—or that they could even turn against us.*

► **The fifth paragraph contains several questions. Why might Lewis have included these questions?** (author's craft) *Lewis likely wanted to raise them in the reader's mind.*

Critical-Thinking Question

► **Do you think humanity should continue to develop super-smart artificial intelligence? Why or why not?** *Answers will vary. To support their answers, students may draw on the play and the editorial as well as their own ideas.*

4 Skill Building: Synthesis

(15 minutes, activity sheet online)

Break students into small groups to complete the activity sheet **Frankenstein and AI**. This activity will prepare students to respond to the narrative writing prompt on page 19. For alternate culminating tasks, see the box below.

Differentiate and Customize

For Struggling Readers

At the end of the play, the creature says, “The world fed me hate.” Find three examples in the play that support this statement.

For Advanced Readers

The full title of Mary Shelley's novel is *Frankenstein; or, the Modern Prometheus*. Read the Greek myth of Prometheus. In an essay, explain why Shelley may have chosen this title.

For Future Lawyers

Put the creature on trial for the murders he committed. Make sure that the lawyers on both sides, the witnesses, and the creature take time to prepare what they will say in advance.

For Newscasters

Imagine that the events of *Frankenstein* occur today. Make a short news program about what has happened. Be sure to include interviews!