



ELA Virtual Learning

English IV

April 27, 2020



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Lesson: April 27, 2020

Objectives/Learning Targets:

- Evaluate how an author's choices to structure specific parts of a text contribute to a text's overall meaning and its aesthetic impact
- Analyze a case in which recognizing point of view requires distinguishing what is directly stated in a text from what is implied.

BELL RINGER

The subtitle of the famous book by Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* is *The Modern Prometheus*. Click on this link to read the [correlation between Prometheus and Victor Frankenstein?](#)

On a sheet of paper or a Google Doc that you will use for notes in this lesson, answer the following question.

By likening Frankenstein to a “Modern Prometheus”, is Shelley doing more than just drawing a comparison? Is she commenting on the nature of man’s pursuits of knowledge? Is the “Modern” state of man’s creation beneficial or detrimental to a healthy civilization?



Background

Mary Shelley (1797-1851) was an English novelist, short story writer, and dramatist, best known for her gothic novel, *Frankenstein*. In the novel, Victor Frankenstein, a brilliant scientist, succeeds in creating life in his laboratory, only to be horrified by his own creation. The novel begins with a series of letters written by Walton, an explorer, and his sister, detailing Walton's Arctic expedition and encounter with the mysterious stranger. As you read, take notes on your sheet or Google Doc regarding the speaker's feelings about his journey.

Learn:

Read: EXCERPT FROM FRANKENSTEIN; OR THE MODERN PROMETHEUS

Answer: After reading the letters, answer the following questions on a separate sheet of paper.

Constructed response: Why do you believe Shelley uses these letters to set up the novel?

Question 1 Part A

The full title of Mary Shelley's novel is *Frankenstein; or the Modern Prometheus*. The subtitle refers to Prometheus, a mythological figure who symbolizes both the nobility of the quest for knowledge and the danger of overreaching in that quest. In the passage from *Frankenstein*, how do the two ideas symbolized by Prometheus interact and build on one another?

- A. R.W. possesses advanced geographic knowledge as a result of his explorations, but he has sacrificed personal happiness to gain that knowledge.
- B. R.W. believes firmly in his ability to achieve his goals, but he is challenged by the natural world he seeks to conquer.
- C. R.W. is extremely educated about his surroundings, but he makes a costly mistake about his location within those surroundings.
- D. R.W. is the only member of his crew to care about science for its own sake, but he overestimates what science can accomplish.

Question 1 Part A Answer

B. R.W. believes firmly in his ability to achieve his goals, but he is challenged by the natural world he seeks to conquer.

The passage focuses on the narrator's struggle with nature and his desire to be successful.

Question 2 Part B

Select the TWO quotations that, taken together, best support the answer to Part A?

- A. “I am, however, in good spirits: my men are bold, and apparently firm of purpose” (Paragraph 1)
- B. “I shall be well content if nothing worse happen to us during our voyage.” (Paragraph 2)
- C. “But success shall crown my endeavours.” (Paragraph 4)
- D. “it is very probable that you will see me before these papers can come into your possession.” (Paragraph 6)
- E. “This appearance excited our unqualified wonder.” (Paragraph 9)
- F. “Shut in, however, by ice, it was impossible to follow his track, which we had observed with the greatest attention.” (Paragraph 9)

Question 2 Part B Answer

C. But success shall crown my endeavours.” (Paragraph 4)

This quote addresses his desire to succeed.

F. “Shut in, however, by ice, it was impossible to follow his track, which we had observed with the greatest attention.” (Paragraph 9)

This quote shows his struggle with nature.

Apply what you learned - Constructed

Response

Using your notes, respond to the following prompt on a sheet of paper or Google Doc.

Why do you believe Shelley uses these letters to set up the novel?

Constructed Response Answer Key

(Answers will Vary)

- Check your answer to make sure it meets the following criteria:
 - Did you write in complete sentences?
 - Did you use standard conventions (spelling, punctuation, grammar)?
 - Did you respond to the prompt?
 - Did you support and explain your answer using at least 2 details from the article?
 - Did you support these details with commentary?

Sample Response

In Excerpt from Frankenstein; or the Modern Prometheus, Mary Shelley begins her novel with letters from Walton, an explorer, to his sister. I believe Shelley does this to address the themes of man vs. nature and man's determination to succeed. In the beginning of the excerpt, Walton writes, "But success shall crown my endeavours. Wherefore not? Thus far I have gone, tracing a secure way over the pathless seas, the very stars themselves being witnesses and testimonies of my triumph. Why not still proceed over the untamed yet obedient element? What can stop the determined heart and resolved will of man?"(Paragraph 8). It is evident that Walton has great hopes and is excited to be able to share his experiences and his ability to overcome challenges. However, as the letters progress, the challenges nature poses to Walton become worse than he expected. "Some of my comrades groaned, and my own mind began to grow watchful with anxious thoughts, when a strange sight suddenly attracted our attention and diverted our solicitude from our own situation"(Paragraph 15). The letters seem to be written to show the point of view of a person who is dealing with the challenges of nature and his determination to overcome these challenges.

Reflection

In your notes, answer this question:

Overall, do you believe that Shelley's use of letters to introduce themes to the story is effective? Explain.

Additional Resource

Click on this link, to watch [DON'T REANIMATE CORPSES! FRANKENSTEIN PART 1: CRASH COURSE LITERATURE](#). As you watch, note Shelley's exploration of the natural world in her novel and how the excerpt of the text reflects this theme.