

FRANKENSTEIN

MARY WOLLSTONECRAFT SHELLEY, 1818

The Work and Author	Theme and Contents	Main Characters	The Story	Qualities and Values
<p>Frankenstein:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Published in 1818. The forerunner of two literary genres—science fiction and horror fiction. A romantic adventure written in the Romantic Period (1798-1825). <p>Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> An essayist and novelist. An early feminist and the daughter of a feminist whose work may have had more profound meaning than was at first thought. The wife of Percy Bysshe Shelley, one of the great poets of the Romantic period. Influenced by her husband and Lord Byron, another of the great poets of the Romantic period 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Set in Austria, Switzerland and the British Isles, the story is told as a flashback by Dr. Victor Frankenstein to adventurer Robert Walton. It focuses on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Horror. • Murder. • Revenge • Innocent victims. • A misunderstood creature • Creativity and insanity. • Guilt 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Dr. Victor Frankenstein, the sometimes mad scientist who created the Frankenstein monster. The monster, a hideous, 8-foot creature whose ugliness causes him to be rejected by mankind. He gets revenge for his rejection by killing. Robert Walton, the adventurer who hears and records Frankenstein's chilling tale. Henry Clerval, Victor's lifelong friend who is eventually killed by the monster. Elizabeth Lavenza, an adopted child of the Frankenstein family who eventually becomes Victor's wife before being killed by the monster. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> After the death of his mother, Victor Frankenstein, a brilliant student, heroically searches for a way to restore life. Victor creates the Frankenstein monster. Once he sees his horrible creation, Victor totally rejects him. Rejected by society, the monster seeks revenge for his rejection. First he kills Victor's youngest brother William Victor goes crazy with grief over the monster's actions and vows to end the monster's existence. The monster demands that Victor create a mate for it. Victor refuses. Outraged at Victor, the monster kills Henry Clerval, Victor's best friend, and Elizabeth, Victor's wife, on their wedding night. Victor finally dies chasing the monster after telling his story to Robert Walton. The monster disappears into the frozen north after viewing Victor's body. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Frankenstein is considered the first true horror novel. The characters, including the monster, all mean well. The theme of the novel is that had Victor not rejected his monster because of its appearance, it would not have been violent. The book serves as a warning to all of us not to judge people solely on their appearance. Some experts think that Mary Shelley may have written <i>Frankenstein</i> as a warning to men not to bypass the female birth function.