**Frankenstein Reading Guide Questions**

**Letters**

***Literary Terms:* Frame Tale and Epistolary Novel.** A frame tale is a story that itself provides a vehicle for the telling of other stories. An epistolary novel is a work of imaginative prose that tells a story through letters. The letters at the beginning of *Frankenstein* act as a frame to the story told by the stranger Walton’s crew rescues.

1. To whom does the narrator (Walton) write? From where does he write? What is the purpose of his voyage and his intended destination?
2. What strange sight does the crew see one day? What question does the stranger they pick up the following day ask? What is the stranger’s goal?

***Literary Terms:* Setting**. The setting of a literary work is the time and place in which it occurs, together with all the details used to create a sense of a particular time and place.

1. Describe the set­ting of the story thus far. What effect does this setting have on Walton? on the stranger?
2. What does the stranger demand to know before he will board the ship?
3. Why was the stranger out on the ice? (What was his purpose for being out there?)

**Volume I, Ch. 1-3**

1. Describe the circumstances under which Elizabeth came to be part of the Frankenstein family. As what does Victor view her?
2. What sorts of books/studies interest Henry Clerval?
3. What interesting event did the young people witness when Victor was fifteen that would have a significant impact on his later studies?
4. Describe the circumstances surrounding the death of Caroline Frankenstein (Victor’s mother). What caused her death and what were her final wishes?
5. Why does Victor travel to Ingolstadt when he was 17?

**Frankenstein Reading Guide Questions**

**Volume I, Ch. 4-8**

1. After two years of study and becoming respected for his achievements, Victor became increasingly interested in finding out what information?
2. Because of the small nature of the parts slowing him down, Victor decided to do what as he created his creature?
3. Describe the crea­ture that Victor creates.
4. What reaction toward his creation does Victor initially have? How do his feelings change?
5. What physical and emotional effects does Frankenstein’s work have on him? (Consider the night immediately after the creature is brought to life, the following day, and after Henry Clerval’s arrival.)
6. Who is Justine Moritz? How did she come to be a part of the Frankenstein extended family?
7. Approximately how much time passes from the bringing to life of the creature and the time Frankenstein heads for Geneva with Clerval?
8. Summarize the contents of the letter Victor receives from his father as he journeys homeward.
9. Why does Elizabeth blame herself?
10. Who does Victor see in the midst of the storm, and of what does he suddenly become convinced upon this sight?
11. Who has been accused of murder? What is the evidence against this person?
12. Why did this person end up confessing?
13. What is the sentence for the crime of murder?

**Volume II, Ch. 1-2**

1. Frankenstein travels to the town of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, where he climbs a glacier.
2. At the top of the glacier, Victor interacts with his creation. Paraphrase (reword) the following passage:

*“ Do your duty towards me, and I will do mine towards you and the rest of mankind. I will leave them and you at peace; but if you refuse, I will glut the maw of death, until it be satiated with the blood of your remaining friends.”*

1. Explain the significance of the creature’s words in the quote below to Frankenstein. To what is he referring (what analogy is he making), and to whom does he compare himself and Victor?

*“ I am they creature; I ought to be thy Adam, but I am rather the fallen angel, whom thou drivest from joy for no misdeed.”*

1. What excuses does the creature give for his “evil” behaviors?

**Volume II, Ch. 3-7**

1. What are the creature’s first two encounters with humans like? What are his intentions and how is he treated?
2. As he observed the difficulties of the cottagers that he observed, what did the creature do to try and help them?
3. Describe the creature’s reaction when he saw his own reflection in a pool of water.
4. How did the creature benefit from the arrival of Safie?
5. Explain the history of the DeLacey family. How did Felix help the Turk? What did he want in return for his help? What happened to Felix and his family as a result of his actions?
6. What did the creature find in the pockets of the clothes he had worn the night he left Ingolstadt?
7. What was Mr. DeLacey’s reaction upon meeting the creature? What is the reaction of Agatha, Safie, & Felix?

**Volume II, Ch. 8-9**

1. What did the creature do to the cottage in his rage and despair?
2. Explain what happened with the girl and the boy in the forest. How does this encounter change the creature’s attitude towards humanity?
3. Why did the creature initially grab William? What caused him to kill the boy?
4. Why did he decide to plant the locket on Justine?
5. What request does the creature make of Victor?
6. The creature again explains his evil behaviors. What are his reasons for the way he has acted?
7. What promises does the creature make if Victor agrees with his request?

**Extended Response: Select *two* of the three questions below and respond in journal format (approximately a page in length for each chosen question.) Write your responses on a separate sheet of paper and staple it to this sheet.**

1. Based on Frankenstein’s account of his creation and on the beginning of the creature’s own story, are you sympathetic toward Frankenstein? toward the creature? Do you think Frankenstein’s treatment of the creature is justified? Explain your responses.
2. Frankenstein blames himself for two deaths because he created the creature who committed the murder. Explain whether you think Frankenstein is responsible for either death. Do you think his creation should be held accountable for the deaths of these two people? Why, or why not?
3. The concept of the noble savage—the idea that primitive human beings are naturally good and that any evil they devel­op is a result of the corrupting force of civilization—was extremely popular in Europe from the sixteenth century to the nineteenth century. Explain whether the monster embodies this concept.

**Volume III, Ch. 1-**