

***Frankenstein* Contextual Documents**

When we return from Fall Break, we will begin reading Mary Shelley's novel *Frankenstein*. The setting and characters of *Frankenstein* are intricately tied to the culture of Shelley's time. Similarly, her use of **allusions** throughout the text is prolific and these allusions contribute to the work's theme. Complete the following assignments to create for yourself a "context" in which you will read *Frankenstein*. Use textual evidence in each part of the assignment to support your claims.

The readings are simply too long for me to print them out (I promise they're not that long!). I have linked each of them to my website. You will need to access them online. You will need to use your phones/tablets in class to access these texts.

This assignment will be due the Tuesday after Fall Break, September 29. You should spend the next three days in class working on it! Work diligently these three days so you do not have to complete anything over Fall Break!

I. "Prometheus": *Frankenstein* is subtitled *The Modern Prometheus*. "Promethean ambition" is the trait said to be exemplified by both literary and real characters who strive beyond their mortal limitations, often to dangerous or tragic ends. Read the Greek myth of Prometheus and answer the following questions:

1. What knowledge was forbidden to man by Zeus? Why?
2. What might have motivated Prometheus to defy Zeus?
3. What was Prometheus' punishment? What does it symbolize?

II. *Paradise Lost*: Read the excerpts from Milton's *Paradise Lost* involving Adam's creation and Lucifer's expulsion. "Paradise Lost is about Adam and Eve--how they came to be created and how they came to lose their place in the Garden of Eden, also called Paradise. It's the same story you find in the first pages of Genesis, expanded by Milton into a very long, detailed narrative poem [divided into twelve books]. It also includes the story of the origin of Satan. Originally, he was called Lucifer, an angel in heaven who led his followers in a war against God, and was ultimately sent with them to hell. Thirst for revenge led him to cause man's downfall by turning into a serpent and tempting Eve to eat the forbidden fruit" (<http://www.paradiselost.org>). Answer the following questions:

1. Summarize Raphael's account of the Creation. Be sure to address the following: i. In what ways did God want to distinguish Man from all other creatures? ii. What privileges and gifts does God bestow on Man? iii. What is the one rule given to Man and the punishment for breaking it?
2. Summarize Satan's speech. Be sure to address the following: i. How does he feel about God? ii. What are his feelings about mankind? iii. What is his opinion of his new status in life? What are his plans relating to mankind?
3. What is the relationship between God and Adam? Between God and Lucifer? How does God treat them differently?
4. What does Milton suggest about the duty of a parent/creator to his creation in these excerpts?

III. "Rime of the Ancient Mariner": Samuel Taylor Coleridge's poem is about the relationship between nature and man. Read the poem and answer the following questions:

1. How are ice and the albatross both symbolic?
2. Why does the mariner slay the albatross and what happens as a result?
3. What is the role of the crew in the story?
4. What "saves" the mariner? How does he react to the natural world?
5. Why must the mariner tell his story?