Frankenstein WebQuest

Part 1

Introduction:

Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* is considered the very first science fiction story. What does that mean and why is science fiction such an important part of our literary experience?

Why has the Frankenstein monster become a part of our collective understanding? Why are we so afraid of the monster?

Before we begin reading the novel, we need to develop our prior knowledge about Mary Shelley and the gothic style she uses. We need to understand some of the science behind the Frankenstein story. We need to explore the human fascination with death and our own desires to prolong life.

Mary Shelley is an unusual woman from an unusual family. Research her life and how the story of Frankenstein came about. Start with the following links to find information before you search other sites.
http://www.maryshelley.nl/

http://www.litgothic.com/Authors/mshelley.html

Books and Writers

The Literature Network

1. When and where was Mary Shelley born?

2. Where did she grow up (if different than birth place)?

3. What inspired her to write Frankenstein?

4. What else has she written?

5. What was her personal life like? Husband? Friends? Kids? Etc.

6. What challenges did Shelley face in her life that might have influenced her writing?

7. What was unique about her life that might have influenced her work?

8. Where did she live as an adult?

9. When was Frankenstein Published?

10. What did the critics think about Frankenstein when it was first published?

Part 2

Themes of Frankenstein:
1. **On the internet find the definition of "theme" as it relates to literature. Write the definition below.**

Use the following websites to answer the questions below.
[Major Themes in Frankenstein](#)
[Themes in Frankenstein](#)

2. The novel *Frankenstein* incorporates several themes.
   List at least 3 themes of the story.

3. **What is science fiction?** *Frankenstein* is the first science fiction story. What makes it science fiction? Develop a definition of science fiction and evaluate *Frankenstein* as a science fiction story.

Suggested sources:
[Introduction to Science Fiction](#)
[What is Science Fiction?](#)

4. **Gothic Literature** is a specific form of literature that lends itself to the *Frankenstein* story. Use the websites below to create a definition of Gothic Literature.

Suggested sources:
[The Gothic Experience](#)
[The Gothic Novel](#)
[Frankenstein as Gothic Novel](#)

5. Why is Frankenstein considered a "Gothic" novel?

6. **The Prometheus Myth** is Mary Shelley's alternative title for the novel. Find out what the Prometheus myth is and how it might relate to Frankenstein's monster.

Suggested sources:
[Prometheus](#)
[Frankenstein and the Prometheus Myth](#)