The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde

By Robert Louis Stevenson

A summary

On their weekly walk, an eminently sensible, trustworthy lawyer named Mr. Utterson listens as his friend Enfield tells a gruesome tale of assault. The tale describes a sinister figure named Mr. Hyde who tramples a young girl, disappears into a door on the street, and reemerges to pay off her relatives with a check signed by a respectable gentleman.

Since both Utterson and Enfield disapprove of gossip, they agree to speak no further of the matter. It happens, however, that one of Utterson’s clients and close friends, Dr. Jekyll, has written a will transferring all of his property to this same Mr. Hyde. Soon, Utterson begins having dreams in which a faceless figure stalks through a nightmarish version of London.

Puzzled, the lawyer visits Jekyll and their mutual friend Dr. Lanyon to try to learn more. Lanyon reports that he no longer sees much of Jekyll, since they had a dispute over the course of Jekyll’s research, which Lanyon calls “unscientific balderdash.” Curious, Utterson stakes out a building that Hyde visits—which, it turns out, is a laboratory attached to the back of Jekyll’s home. Encountering Hyde, Utterson is amazed by how undefinably ugly the man seems, as if deformed, though Utterson cannot say exactly how. Much to Utterson’s surprise, Hyde willingly offers Utterson his address. Jekyll tells Utterson not to concern himself with the matter of Hyde.

A year passes uneventfully. Then, one night, a servant girl witnesses Hyde brutally beat to death an old man named Sir Danvers Carew, a member of Parliament and a client of Utterson. The police contact Utterson, and Utterson suspects Hyde as the murderer. He leads the officers to Hyde’s apartment, feeling a sense of foreboding amid the eerie weather—the morning is dark and wreathed in fog. When they arrive at the apartment, the murderer has vanished, and police searches prove futile. Shortly thereafter, Utterson again visits Jekyll, who now claims to have ended all relations with Hyde; he shows Utterson a note, allegedly written to Jekyll by Hyde, apologizing for the trouble he has caused him and saying goodbye. That night, however, Utterson’s clerk points out that Hyde’s handwriting bears a remarkable similarity to Jekyll’s own.

For a few months, Jekyll acts especially friendly and sociable, as if a weight has been lifted from his shoulders. But then Jekyll suddenly begins to refuse visitors, and Lanyon dies from some kind of shock he received in connection with Jekyll. Before dying, however, Lanyon gives Utterson a letter, with instructions that he not open it until after Jekyll’s death. Meanwhile, Utterson goes out walking with Enfield, and they see Jekyll at a window of his laboratory; the three men begin to converse, but a look of horror comes over Jekyll’s face, and he slams the window and disappears.

Soon afterward, Jekyll’s butler, Mr. Poole, visits Utterson in a state of desperation: Jekyll has secluded himself in his laboratory for several weeks, and now the voice that comes from the room sounds nothing like the doctor’s. Utterson and Poole travel to Jekyll’s house through empty, windswept, sinister streets; once there, they find the servants huddled together in fear. After arguing for a time, the two of them resolve to break into Jekyll’s laboratory. Inside, they find the body of Hyde, wearing Jekyll’s clothes and apparently dead by suicide—and a letter from Jekyll to Utterson promising to explain everything.

Utterson takes the document home, where first he reads Lanyon’s letter; it reveals that Lanyon’s deterioration and eventual death were caused by the shock of seeing Mr. Hyde take a potion and metamorphose into Dr. Jekyll. The second letter constitutes a testament by Jekyll. It explains how Jekyll, seeking to separate his good side from his darker impulses, discovered a way to transform himself periodically into a deformed monster free of conscience—Mr. Hyde. At first, Jekyll reports, he delighted in becoming Hyde and rejoiced in the moral freedom that the creature possessed.

Eventually, however, he found that he was turning into Hyde involuntarily in his sleep, even without taking the potion. At this point, Jekyll resolved to cease becoming Hyde. One night, however, the urge gripped him too strongly, and after the transformation he immediately rushed out and violently killed Sir Danvers Carew. Horrified, Jekyll tried more adamantly to stop the transformations, and for
a time he proved successful; one day, however, while sitting in a park, he suddenly turned into Hyde, the first time that an involuntary metamorphosis had happened while he was awake.

The letter continues describing Jekyll’s cry for help. Far from his laboratory and hunted by the police as a murderer, Hyde needed Lanyon’s help to get his potions and become Jekyll again—but when he undertook the transformation in Lanyon’s presence, the shock of the sight instigated Lanyon’s deterioration and death. Meanwhile, Jekyll returned to his home, only to find himself ever more helpless and trapped as the transformations increased in frequency and necessitated even larger doses of potion in order to reverse themselves.

It was the onset of one of these spontaneous metamorphoses that caused Jekyll to slam his laboratory window shut in the middle of his conversation with Enfield and Utterson. Eventually, the potion began to run out, and Jekyll was unable to find a key ingredient to make more. His ability to change back from Hyde into Jekyll slowly vanished. Jekyll writes that even as he composes his letter he knows that he will soon become Hyde permanently, and he wonders if Hyde will face execution for his crimes or choose to kill himself. Jekyll notes that, in any case, the end of his letter marks the end of the life of Dr. Jekyll. With these words, both the document and the novel come to a close.

From: Spark Notes

READ the summary carefully.
1- FOCUS on language!
a)from line 1 to line 24: MATCH each word or expression from the text to its equivalent in French!

| 1-Gruesome           | 1 and…               | a-un testament       |
| 2-Trample            | 2 and…               | b-de bonne grâce    |
| 3-Gossip             | 3 and…               | c-parmi             |
| 4-A will             | 4 and…               | d-une prémonition   |
| 5-Stalks             | 5 and…               | e-horrible          |
| 6-Balderdash         | 6 and…               | f-prétendument      |
| 7-Stake out          | 7 and…               | g-piétiner          |
| 8-Willingly          | 8 and…               | h-traquer           |
| 9-A foreboding       | 9 and…               | i-étrange           |
| 10-Amid              | 10 and…              | j-des balivernes, des bêtises |
| 11-Eerie             | 11 and…              | k-envelopper dans, enrouler dans |
| 12-Wreathed in       | 12 and…              | l-des ragots, des cancans |
| 13-Allegedly         | 13 and…              | m-surveiller        |

b)from line 25 to line 49: FIND the English words or expressions for the French below! The words are in chronological order in the text.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1-claquer (une porte, une fenêtre) :</th>
<th>2-un majordome :</th>
<th>3-isoler, couper du monde :</th>
<th>4-battu par le vent :</th>
<th>5-recroquevillé :</th>
<th>6-se résoudre à faire qqch :</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7-final :</td>
<td>8-chercher à faire qqch :</td>
<td>9-apprécier :</td>
<td>10-pousser qqn à faire qqch :</td>
<td>11-serrer, enserrer :</td>
<td>12-catégoriquement :</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

c-from line 50 to th eend : MATCH each word with the correct definition!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1-undertake</th>
<th>1 and …</th>
<th>a-the moment at which something unpleasant begins:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2-instigate</td>
<td>2 and…</td>
<td>b-close with a loud noise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-trapped</td>
<td>3 and…</td>
<td>c-to do or begin to do something, especially something that will take a long time or be difficult</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-an onset</td>
<td>4 and …</td>
<td>d-unable to move or escape from a place or situation:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-slam shut</td>
<td>5 and …</td>
<td>e-to cause an event or situation to happen by your actions:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-run out</td>
<td>6 and …</td>
<td>f-to finish</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Your task: READ the document below, OBSERVE the timeline and ANSWER the questions.
BE READY to REPORT in class!

**Nineteenth-century Britain**

Victoria came to the throne during the early, frenetic phase of the world’s first industrial revolution. Industrialisation brought with it new markets, a consumer boom and greater prosperity for most of the propertied classes.

It also brought rapid, and sometimes chaotic change as towns and cities expanded at a pace which precluded orderly growth.

Desperately poor housing conditions, long working hours, the ravages of infectious disease and premature death were the inevitable consequences.

The Victorians wrestled with this schizoid legacy of industrialism. The Victorian town symbolised Britain’s progress and world pre-eminence, but it also witnessed some of the most deprived people, and depraved habits, in the civilised world.

Taming*, and then improving, Britain’s teeming cities presented a huge challenge. Mortality data revealed that, in the poorer quarters of Britain’s larger cities, almost one child in five born alive in the 1830s and 1840s had died by the age of five. Polluted water and damp* housing were the main causes.

Death rates in Britain as a whole remained obstinately above 20 per thousand until the 1880s and only dropped to 17 by the end of Victoria’s reign.

Life expectancy at birth, in the high 30s in 1837, had crept up to 48 by 1901. One of the great scourges of the age—tuberculosis—remained unconquered, claiming between 60,000 and 70,000 lives in each decade of Victoria’s reign.

*stop, prevent \*organised expansion \*controlling \*heavily populated \*humid

1-a) EXPLAIN what period is known as the Victorian Era.

b) FIND OUT what process the text focuses on. (process=ici, transformation)

2-EXPLAIN what this process involved.

3-PICK OUT the three adjectives that are used to describe this process. EXPLAIN what they mean with your own words. EXPLAIN what they emphasize.

4-EXPLAIN why Victorian towns and cities had become sources of concern and fear.

MORE: READ the text about the Victorian Era in your book, page 166 to complete your answer 1a)
BE READY to present Stevenson: book page 167
In this letter, the respectable Dr Jekyll explains how, seeking to separate his good side from his darker impulses, he discovered a way to transform himself periodically into a murderous monster free of conscience, Mr Hyde.

I must here speak by theory alone, saying not that which I know, but that which I suppose to be most probable. The evil side of my nature, to which I had now transferred the stamping efficacy, was less robust and less developed than the good which I had just deposed. Again, in the course of my life, which had been, after all, nine-tenths a life of effort, virtue, and control, it had been much less exercised and much less exhausted. And hence, as I think, it came about that Edward Hyde was so much smaller, slighter, and younger than Henry Jekyll. Even as good shone upon the countenance of the one, evil was written broadly and plainly on the face of the other. Evil besides (which I must still believe to be the lethal side of man) had left on that body an imprint of deformity and decay. And yet when I looked upon that ugly idol in the glass, I was conscious of no repugnance, rather of a leap of welcome. This, too, was myself.

R.L. STEVENSON, The Strange Case of Doctor Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, 1886

1-READ the text and SAY who the narrator is and why he wrote this letter.

2-CONCENTRATE on Hyde’s duality. What devices are used to underline it? (devices=techniques)

3-“This, too, was, myself” (line 18). DISCUSS what this statement shows about human nature.
GROUP WORK

DOCUMENT 3

TEAM MEMBERS
Chloé – Tom – Mila – Louis – Maya

YOUR TASK:

READ carefully how to present a document in the methodology grid below.
FOLLOW the method:

1-identify
2-describe
3-interpret

And PRESENT the document to the class.
KEEP in mind questions 1 to 4 asked in the book: they will help you interpret the document!

METHODOLOGY

Pour décrire et commenter un document iconographique, tu peux suivre trois étapes:
- **identifier** la nature du document, son origine, son auteur et sa date de création,
- **décrire** le document en situant les différents éléments de l'image et comment ils s'organisent,
- **interpréter** personnellement le sens de l'image et l'intention de l'auteur.

**Identifying**

**Type**
- **E** The document is a/an...
- **N** a photo – a drawing – a painting –

**Author**
- **V** it was painted by... – drawn by... – taken by... – made by...
- **N** a painter – a cartoonist – a photographer – an advertiser

**Date**
- **E** It dates from... – It was published in (+ name of a newspaper) on (+ day) / in (+ year)

**Describing**

- **at the top**
  - in the top left-hand corner

- **in the middle**
  - in the background

- **at the bottom**
  - in the foreground

**E** The document is composed of... – It is made up of... – There is / There are...

**Interpreting**

**E** I suppose / I think that... – In my opinion – What the cartoonist means / suggests is that... – The photographer is highlighting / showing / illustrating... –

**Adj** funny – strange – convincing – interesting – disturbing

**V** look like – illustrate – criticise – denounce

Entraine-toi:
Complète la carte mentale à l’aide des mots ci-dessous.

- a cartoon – We can guess that... – an advertisement – It shows... – It represents... – It reminds me of... – We can infer / conclude that... – a poster – on the left – in the top right-hand corner

N=noun  Adj=adjectif  V=verbe  E=expression
Dr Jekyll

It’s important to note that Jekyll is a kind man who does “good works”; he helps out the poor, various charities and religious causes. He is the embodiment of Victorian respectability and seems to take pleasure in helping people and being a good friend. Except, of course, this is, to a degree, a “sham”, a “façade”: he appears this way, but in reality he is not. Stevenson uses him as a way of exploring the hypocrisy of Victorian England: this is a world where appearances mean everything and, as a result, many rich people are being blackmailed because they are not as “squeaky clean” as they pretend to be. Jekyll believes that becoming Hyde is wonderful because it allows him to be the person he could never be if he was Jekyll: he can be violent, anti-social, and can go to places of “sin” and “vice” that might mean Jekyll’s disgrace if he were seen in them. In his confession, this passage is perhaps the most revealing of Jekyll:

Not that I dreamed of resuscitating Hyde; the bare idea of that would startle me to frenzy: no, it was in my own person that I was once more tempted to trifle with my conscience; and it was as an ordinary secret sinner that I last fell before the assaults of temptation.

After deciding to stop being Hyde, Jekyll finds he can’t stop himself in indulging in Hyde’s pleasures as himself and, as a consequence, becomes an “ordinary secret sinner” who “fell before the assaults of temptation”. The language here is important: Jekyll sees “temptation” or desire as an “assault”; it is like being attacked. This shows how terrified Jekyll is of his secret desires. What are they though? We never really learn in the novel, but in various filmed versions of the book we see him acting like a paedophile, a sex maniac and a psycho-path. Part of the book’s power may be that we never learn what he has been doing, thus leaving us to imagine his depravity.

Mr Hyde

Hyde is, in many ways, the opposite of Jekyll. Where Jekyll is tall and kind-looking, Hyde is “dwarfish” and has a “displeasing smile” that has a “murderous mixture of timidity and boldness”. He clearly smiles in a perverted or unpleasant fashion, and is both cowardly and bold. Many film versions of the book do not capture this aspect of Hyde, making him appear quite a brave but psychopathic character: he isn’t brave at all. When he is confronted with what he has done to the little girl, he backs down and pays the family compensation because he is frightened of what they might do to him. When he suddenly appears in Regent’s Park at the end of the novel, he is terrified of being caught and hung.

On the other hand, he is not afraid of getting away with what he can; he is not worried about what people think of him. He does not observe the normal rules of politeness: he hits people he doesn’t like, and appears to dislike people for irrational reasons – we see this particularly with Sir Danvers Carew. He is probably highly sexual. We are told that he is “troglodytic”; this means that he is like a cave man. In Stevenson’s time, this was probably code for being highly sexual (Mighall, 2003 & Luckhurst, 2006): it was thought by the Victorians that our ancestors behaved like apes and had no sexual inhibitions.
“Hm,” said Mr. Utterson. “what sort of a man is he to see?”
“He is not easy to describe. There is something wrong with his appearance; something displeasing, something down-right detestable. I never saw a man I so disliked, and yet I scarce know why. He must be deformed somewhere; he gives a strong feeling of deformity, although I couldn’t specify the point. He’s an extraordinary looking man, and I really can name nothing out of the way. No, Sir; I can make no hand of it; I can’t describe him. And it’s not want of memory; for I declare I can see him this moment.”

YOUR TASK

READ the two texts written by Francis Gilbert carefully and :

1-EXPLAIN why and how Dr Jekyll is a complex character.

2-WHAT does Hyde look like? HOW does he act?

3-FOCUS on the extract. WHY doesn’t Stevenson describe Hyde in detail?
1-**LISTEN** to the document on your site: [http://mrspcorner.weebly.com](http://mrspcorner.weebly.com), page LLCE, “The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde

**HOW** does the image below illustrate the main subject? (you can see the image on the same page, in colour!)

2-**EXPLAIN** what impact the outcome of the book had on the readers and why.

3-**DEFINE** the nature of Jekyll’s fight against HYDE.

4-**EXPLAIN** the aim of psychoanalysis and how it can be linked to Stevenson’s story.