



Le Monde School  
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Subject: English  
Class: IV° Senior A-B "Elective"  
Practice Guide

### "Practice Guide"

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

CLASS: \_\_\_\_\_

# FRANKENSTEIN; OR, THE MODERN PROMETHEUS

The summer of 1816 was cold and wet. Three young friends were stuck inside their holiday villa near Lake Geneva. They spent their days telling each other ghost stories and discussing one of the hot topics of the time: galvanism. Was it possible to bring a dead person back to life using electricity? The friends were the poets Lord Byron, Percy Bysshe Shelley and his 18-year-old wife Mary, the daughter of the radical philosopher William Godwin and Mary Wollstonecraft, one of the first feminist writers. Within a year Mary had turned her story into a novel, and Frankenstein's monster was born!

**I**t was on a dreary night of November that I beheld the accomplishment of my toils. With an anxiety that almost amounted to agony, I collected the instruments of life around me, that I might infuse a spark of being into the lifeless thing that lay at my feet. It was already one in the morning; the rain pattered dismally against the panes, and my candle was nearly burnt out, when, by the glimmer of the half-extinguished light, I saw the dull yellow eye of the creature open; it breathed hard, and a convulsive motion agitated its limbs.

How can I describe my emotions at this catastrophe, or how delineate the wretch whom with such infinite pains and care I had endeavoured to form? His limbs were in proportion, and I had selected his features as beautiful. Beautiful! Great God! His yellow skin scarcely covered the work of muscles and arteries beneath; his hair was of a lustrous black, and flowing; his teeth of a pearly whiteness; but these



luxuriances only formed a more horrid contrast with his watery eyes, that seemed almost of the same colour as the dun-white sockets in which they were set, his shrivelled complexion and straight black lips.

The different accidents of life are not so changeable as the feelings of human nature. I had worked hard for nearly two years, for the sole purpose of infusing life into an inanimate body. For this I had deprived myself of rest and health. I had desired it with an ardour that far exceeded moderation; but now that I had finished, the beauty of the dream vanished, and breathless horror and disgust filled my heart.



**1 Work in pairs. Read the introduction and discuss these questions.**

Have you ever seen a film or read a book about Frankenstein? Who were the main characters? What can you remember about the story?

**2a CD3.26 Read and listen to the extract from *Frankenstein* and complete the summary using the words below.**



black wrinkled ambition beautiful muscles work arms change  
 body lifeless worked candle wet one o'clock legs

During a <sup>1</sup>\_\_\_\_ November night Frankenstein finally saw the result of all his <sup>2</sup>\_\_\_\_. First, he anxiously prepared to animate the <sup>3</sup>\_\_\_\_ creature lying on the ground. Then at <sup>4</sup>\_\_\_\_ in the morning, by the light of a <sup>5</sup>\_\_\_\_, the creature's eye opened, it breathed and moved its <sup>6</sup>\_\_\_\_ and <sup>7</sup>\_\_\_\_.

It was difficult for him to describe his emotions. He had worked so hard to create a <sup>8</sup>\_\_\_\_ being. However, instead you could see the <sup>9</sup>\_\_\_\_ and arteries under the yellow skin, and although the creature had lovely <sup>10</sup>\_\_\_\_ hair and white teeth, these contrasted with its watery eyes, <sup>11</sup>\_\_\_\_ skin and straight lips.

Unexpected events may transform our lives but human feelings can <sup>12</sup>\_\_\_\_ even more dramatically. For two years Frankenstein had <sup>13</sup>\_\_\_\_ at bringing life to a dead <sup>14</sup>\_\_\_\_, making himself sick and tired. It was something he had wanted passionately, but now he had achieved the <sup>15</sup>\_\_\_\_, it filled him with disgust.

**GLOSSARY** behold (literary) see | extinguish put out (a light or flame) | convulsive sudden, violent (movement) | delineate describe | wretch miserable person | luxuriance (literary) abundance | dun sandy brown | infuse fill | ardour (literary) passion

**2b Work in pairs. Compare your answers. Show your partner the parts of the extract that helped you make your choices.**

**3 Work in groups. Discuss the questions.**

- 1 Why do you think the novel has the subtitle 'the Modern Prometheus'?
- 2 Why do you think Frankenstein wasn't satisfied with the results of his experiment?
- 3 If the creature is made of human parts, does that make it human? Do you think it will think and feel in the same way as a human being?
- 4 What kind of future would a similar sort of creature have in today's society?



Emma Jane Austen in the Cloud Book

