

## Frankenstein: (d) Good or bad science?

☉ refers to links on [www.crossref-it.info](http://www.crossref-it.info)

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- ❖ **Lesson focus:** What role does science play in the novel, and what seems to be Mary Shelley's attitude to it?
- ❖ **Opening Exercise:** Using cuttings from a range of newspapers and magazines, create a picture of a 'perfect' person.
  - Work in small groups and compare the results.
- ❖ **Discussion Ideas:** Prior to the lesson, students should be asked to research a controversial aspect of current scientific concern. Each should be prepared to present their findings to the class.
  - What principles come out of the discussions?
  - How would these apply to the events in *Frankenstein*? Look at ☉ *Frankenstein* > The Context of *Frankenstein* > Religious/philosophical context > Good and bad science.
- ❖ **Textual Examination:** Skim-read the opening chapters and trace how Victor is led to his creation of the Creature.
  - At which stages could any of your principles (discussed above) have warned him or stopped him?
- ❖ **Recreative task:** Bertrand Russell wrote: '...those who do not desire the happiness of mankind will not endeavour to further it, while those who do desire it will do what they can to bring it about.'
  - Write a letter to him in response to this statement, either as Victor Frankenstein or the Creature.
  - The full article can be found at <http://www.solstice.us/russell/science-ethics.html>
- ❖ **Critical task:** In Vol.1 Ch.3, Victor says, 'Remember, I am not recording the vision of a madman.'
  - Do you agree with him, or is madness the only word for his activities?
- ❖ **Extension task:** Why, having gone through so much effort, does Victor reject the Creature as soon as he sees him?
  - Read the first part of Vol.1 Ch.4. Are there any clues in the language or content here?
  - Also, students could look in more detail at the issues surrounding cloning.