*Wuthering Heights* : (d) Character doubling

✆ *refers to links on www.crossref-it.info*

- ❖ **Lesson focus:** To explore the way that Brontë links characters into pairs of similarities or opposites. This scheme assumes that students have read at least as far as Ch. 16, but may be best used after having read the whole novel.

- ❖ **Opening exercise:** In pairs students think of novels or films that they know where there are obvious pairings of characters, either as opposites or similarities.
  - ➢ Discuss how this division / linking of character helps tell the story.
  - ➢ Talk about how and why this is a feature typical of Gothic literature.
  - ✆ (Aspects of literature > Aspects of the Gothic > Gothic and sensation fiction)

- ❖ **Textual examination:** Make copies of the extracts in **Worksheet d)i Doubling characters exercise**.
  - ➢ Students (perhaps in pairs) should annotate these extracts, which show turning points in the lives of Catherine and Heathcliff, noting:
    - • The immediate context of the passage
    - • Any notable language
    - • Significant imagery
    - • (Most importantly) Ideas about Catherine and/or Heathcliff.
    - ✆ (*Wuthering Heights* synopses and commentary > Chapter 4; Chapter 10; Chapter 16)
    - ✆ (*Wuthering Heights*: Characterisation > Heathcliff; Catherine)

- ❖ **Discussion ideas:** Students report back on what they have found in their extracts.
  - ➢ Bring out links between the two characters in discussion.
  - ➢ Ask students for other possible pairings (which they must justify).
    - • They should come up with a surprisingly large number of pairings.
  - ➢ Allocate some of these pairings around the class, asking students to find two passages which involve the two characters

- • Make notes, as they did for the passage on Catherine and Heathcliff earlier.
- • Students report back on their findings.
- ✆ (*Wuthering Heights*: Characterisation > Doubling characters)
- ✆ (*Wuthering Heights*: Characterisation > The power of character)

- ❖ **Recreative task:** Play a version of the TV programme *Mr and Mrs*.
  - ➢ In suitable pairs students take on characters in role and try to answer questions as their character might, whilst their partner tries to predict their responses.
    - • Sample questions can be found on the internet, though they will need careful selecting, and, if possible, making relevant to the world of the novel.

- ❖ **Critical task:** 'She was much too fond of Heathcliff. The greatest punishment we could invent for her was to keep her separate from him.' How far is Nelly's comment a fair summary of the relationship between Catherine and Heathcliff, and the problems it contains?

- ❖ **Extension task:** The relationships between Catherine/Heathcliff and Cathy/Hareton change as the novel progresses.
  - ➢ Draw up two columns (one for each relationship) and trace how these pairings develop through the novel.
  - ➢ How far can you justify parallels between the two relationships as well as within the two pairings?