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Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde

AQA GCSE English Literature



York Notes Rapid Revision

The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde

AQA GCSE English Literature

Written by Anne Rooney

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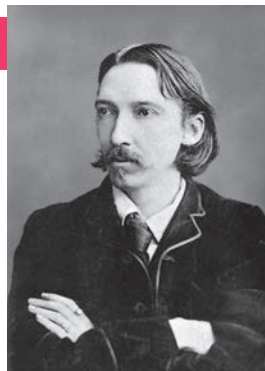
ANSWERS

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INTRODUCTION Who was Robert Louis Stevenson?

Three key things about Robert Louis Stevenson

1. He first studied **engineering**, then trained in the **law**, but became a **writer** instead of a lawyer.
2. He had **fragile health** throughout his life, and travelled in search of a healthy climate.
3. Brought up as a strict Christian, he disappointed his parents by giving up his **religion** as a young man.



What was his early life like?

- He was born in Edinburgh, in Scotland. His father was a Calvinist (a type of Protestant), and his mother was from a family of religious ministers.
- His father was an engineer and owned a company which built lighthouses. He wanted Stevenson to follow him.
- Stevenson hated studying engineering, and wanted to be a writer. His father persuaded him to study law first.

Why did Stevenson write *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*?

- He wrote the novel as a **shilling shocker** – a short book that would be sold cheaply – when he needed money.
- Stevenson was ill and in debt. The idea for the book came to him in a dream, and he wrote the novel in three days.
- He burned the first draft when his wife, Fanny, said he had missed the point of his own **allegory**. He rewrote it in another three days.

What was the response to *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*?

- The book was an instant bestseller, and Stevenson's money problems were over.
- It was so popular that **pirate copies** appeared in America, and it was translated into other languages without Stevenson's permission.
- Some religious figures even preached sermons about the book and its depiction of evil.

INTRODUCTION

Plot summary

Chapters 1–3

- Mr Utterson is walking with his friend Mr Enfield, who tells him a strange tale about a violent character called Mr Hyde.
- Utterson is Dr Jekyll's lawyer, and recognises Hyde as the person Jekyll has left his possessions to.
- Utterson waits by Hyde's door and confronts Hyde, who is rude.
- Jekyll refuses to discuss Hyde with Utterson.

Chapters 4–6

- A year later, Hyde violently murders Sir Danvers Carew in the street. Utterson identifies the victim.
- Utterson leads the police to Hyde's home, but he has disappeared.
- Utterson visits Jekyll, finding him sick and distressed. Jekyll says he will have no more to do with Hyde.
- Utterson visits Dr Lanyon, who has fallen out with Hyde. Lanyon is very ill and dies soon after.

Chapter 9

- Lanyon's letter for Utterson explains how Jekyll had asked Lanyon to fetch chemicals from his laboratory and give them to Hyde.
- Hyde came to Lanyon's home, mixed the chemicals and drank the mixture.
- Hyde turned into Jekyll. The shock led to Lanyon's death.

Chapters 7–8

- Utterson and Enfield see Jekyll at his window, but a terrible look crosses Jekyll's face and he shuts the window.
- Jekyll's butler, Poole, calls on Utterson at night because he believes Hyde has murdered Jekyll.
- Utterson and Poole break down the door to Jekyll's cabinet.
- They find Hyde's body, but no trace of Jekyll. There is a document for Utterson.

Chapter 10

- Jekyll's document explains how he became convinced that human nature is divided and can be separated into two identities.
- He made a potion that turned him into Hyde, who was evil.
- The transformations went out of control. He ran out of chemicals, and could no longer turn back to Jekyll.

PLOT AND STRUCTURE Chapters 1-3

Five key things about Chapters 1-3

The first three chapters introduce the main **characters**, the main **mystery** in the story and some key **themes**:

1. We meet **Mr Utterson**, a lawyer. Stevenson tells the story from his **point of view**.
2. Other important characters are introduced: **Dr Jekyll**, **Mr Lanyon**, **Mr Hyde** and **Mr Enfield**.
3. We learn that **Hyde** is a **mysterious** and **unnatural** character with some link to **Jekyll**. Jekyll is a **scientist**, and a friend and client of **Utterson's**. Utterson aims to uncover the **link**.
4. The dark **setting** in gloomy **Victorian London** is introduced.
5. Important themes are introduced: **science**, **friendship**, **secrecy**, and **good and evil**.



What happens in Chapter 1?

- The story begins as Utterson walks with his friend Enfield through London.
- Enfield tells Utterson about a scene he saw: an unnatural-looking man trampled a small child, then went through a door the pair have just passed.
- The man returned with money to make the witnesses keep quiet. The man is called Mr Hyde.
- Utterson knows Jekyll has left his property to Hyde in his will and is curious. The will is strange, saying Hyde will come into the inheritance if Jekyll dies or disappears.

What happens in Chapters 2 and 3?

- **Chapter 2:** Determined to find out who Hyde is, Utterson visits Dr Lanyon, a friend of both Jekyll and Utterson. He learns that Lanyon and Jekyll have fallen out over Jekyll's strange ideas.
- Utterson sets out to see Hyde, and waits by the door Enfield showed him. He meets Hyde, who is rude and seems '**hardly human**'.
- Utterson imagines that Hyde is blackmailing Jekyll over something in Jekyll's past.
- **Chapter 3:** Utterson visits Jekyll and says he has met Hyde. Jekyll refuses to talk about Hyde or his will.

Five key quotations

1. Utterson's character: **'backward in sentiment; lean, long, dusty, dreary and yet somehow lovable'** (Chapter 1)
2. Enfield's account of Hyde's character: **'the man trampled calmly over the child's body and left her screaming on the ground'** (Chapter 1)
3. Utterson's reaction to Hyde: **'hitherto unknown disgust, loathing and fear'** (Chapter 2)
4. Dr Lanyon on the theme of friendship: **'Henry Jekyll became too fanciful for me. He began to go wrong, wrong in mind.'** (Chapter 2)
5. Jekyll to Utterson on the theme of secrecy: **""this is a private matter, and I beg of you to let it sleep""** (Chapter 3)

Note it!

The novel has a fragmented structure. It is pieced together from what Utterson observes or guesses, and information from other characters. For example, Enfield, a minor character, witnesses Hyde trampling a child, but Utterson does not.

Exam focus

How can I write about character? AO1

You can use the first three chapters to write about how characters are introduced.

The first chapters introduce Utterson and show his relationships with Enfield, Lanyon and Jekyll. We learn Utterson is **'backward in sentiment; lean, long, dusty, dreary and yet somehow lovable'**. The last point is **surprising** – it doesn't seem to fit with the others. We then see him interact with Enfield, Jekyll and Lanyon, who all respect and value him, **bearing out the point made in the quotation**.

Introduces topic with a clear statement

Quotation summarises character

Interrogation of quotation

Evidence of Stevenson's consistency

Now you try!

Finish this paragraph about another character. Use one of the quotations from the list.

Another character introduced in the opening chapters is Hyde. We first see him through Enfield's account of

PLOT AND STRUCTURE Chapters 4–6

Five key things about Chapters 4–6

Chapters 4–6 happen a year later than the opening chapters. The mystery becomes more complex and interesting, and aspects of **language**, **style** and **setting** are developed:

1. The murder of **Sir Danvers Carew** is told as if by the **maid**, in words that could be taken from her statement to the police. This continues the pattern of extra **narratives** that describe events **Utterson** does not see.
2. The **Gothic style** is developed in the journey to **Hyde's** lodgings. The city is half-hidden by the **fog**, and Stevenson uses heightened **language**.
3. The **setting** of **Jekyll's laboratory** is introduced.
4. When **Mr Guest** finds **similarities** between the **handwriting** of **Jekyll** and **Hyde**, the link between the two characters becomes more **mysterious**.
5. The death of **Lanyon** and **Jekyll's reaction** to it increase the **mystery**.

What happens in Chapter 4?

- The maid is the only witness to Carew's murder.
- Carew was carrying a letter for Utterson, so the police contact him. Utterson goes with Inspector Newcomen to Hyde's lodgings and meets Hyde's unpleasant landlady.
- Hyde has left his lodgings hurriedly, leaving behind half of the cane used to murder Carew.



What happens in Chapters 5 and 6?

- **Chapter 5:** Utterson visits Jekyll, who is sick and distressed. Jekyll says he will have no more to do with Hyde and gives him a letter, supposedly from Hyde.
- **Chapter 5:** Utterson shows the letter to Guest, an expert in handwriting. Guest compares it with a note from Jekyll and says the writing is similar. Utterson assumes Jekyll forged the note.
- **Chapter 6:** Utterson visits Lanyon, who is very ill. Lanyon says he never wants to hear about Jekyll again.
- **Chapter 6:** Lanyon dies, leaving a package Utterson must not open yet. Jekyll will not speak to Utterson, deepening the sense of mystery.

Five key quotations

1. Style of narrative from the maid's point of view: **'never had she felt more at peace with all men or thought more kindly of the world'** (Chapter 4)
2. Gothic atmosphere: **'like a district of some city in a nightmare'** (Chapter 4)
3. Heightened language: **'The fog still slept on the wing above the drowned city, where the lamps glimmered like carbuncles'** (Chapter 5)
4. Setting, Jekyll's laboratory: **'the tables laden with chemical apparatus, the floor strewn with crates'** (Chapter 5)
5. Increasing mystery – Jekyll: **“I have brought on myself a punishment and a danger that I cannot name.”** (Chapter 5)

Note it!

The letter Lanyon leaves for Utterson carries the instruction that it should not be read until the **'death or disappearance'** of Jekyll (Chapter 6). The reference to 'disappearance' also occurs in Jekyll's will. It is clear Lanyon knows something about the mystery that Utterson has not yet learned.

Exam focus

How can I write about the Gothic? AO3

You can use Utterson's journey in Chapter 4 to write about Gothic aspects.

The account of Utterson's journey through London **is evidence of the novel's reflection of Gothic literature.** It is characterised by things half-seen, glimpses through the fog, and strange, unworldly scenes. London looks **'like a district of some city in a nightmare'** populated by **poor, ragged children and women drinking gin in the early morning.** The fog, darkness, mystery and otherworldliness of the scene **are typical of Gothic literature.**

Introduces the point

Quotation illustrates a point of style

Further demonstrates the character of the passage

Ties the evidence firmly to the theme

Now you try!

Finish this further paragraph about Gothic aspects of the novel. Use one of the quotations from the list.

Another feature of the Gothic is explored in Jekyll's account of his misery.

He has

PLOT AND STRUCTURE Chapters 7-8

Five key things about Chapters 7-8

The action comes to a **climax**. Poole asks Utterson to go to Jekyll's house; they break down the cabinet door and find Hyde's body.

1. **Utterson** realises that **something terrible** is happening to **Jekyll** when he and **Enfield** speak to Jekyll through his window.
2. It becomes clear that the **unnaturalness** of **Hyde** is so extreme that he is **barely human**. He becomes the focus of **fear** as **Poole** believes he has **murdered Jekyll**.
3. Stevenson uses **Poole** to give information to **Utterson** and to trigger the **final action**.
4. The importance of **science** in the narrative increases as we learn of **Jekyll's desperate search** for a particular **chemical**.
5. The **mystery deepens** with Hyde's **suicide** and the likely death of **Jekyll**.

What happens in Chapter 7?

- Utterson and Enfield again pass the battered door that Hyde used.
- They go into the courtyard and speak to Jekyll at his window, but Jekyll is suddenly overcome by something and his expression shows '**abject terror and despair**'. Utterson and Enfield are horrified.

What happens in Chapter 8?

- Poole visits Utterson at night, to demand that he come to Jekyll's house. Poole is worried about Jekyll, who has not been seen for days.
- Jekyll's staff are afraid that Hyde is in the house and has murdered Jekyll.
- Poole tells Utterson that Jekyll has tried to get a chemical he needs and that a figure like Hyde has been seen scurrying around.
- Poole and Utterson break down the door to Jekyll's cabinet and find the body of Hyde '**sorely contorted and still twitching**'.
- They find a note from Jekyll to Utterson, and a new will that leaves everything to Utterson. Utterson cannot understand why Hyde did not destroy the new will.



Five key quotations

1. A nameless terror strikes Jekyll: **'an expression of such abject terror and despair, as froze the very blood of the two gentlemen below'** (Chapter 7)
2. Utterson indicates Poole's low social status: **"Now my good man," said the lawyer, "be explicit. What are you afraid of?"** (Chapter 8)
3. Narrative structure: **'[Utterson] trudged back to his office to read the two narratives in which this mystery was now to be explained.'** (Chapter 8)
4. Science: **'there were traces of chemical work, various measured heaps of some white salt being laid on glass saucers'** (Chapter 8)
5. Hyde's terrifying unnaturalness: **'A dismal screech, as of mere animal terror, rang from the cabinet.'** (Chapter 8)

Note it!

There is very little direct action related in the novel. Most events are told afterwards in accounts given by one of the characters, either in speech or writing. The dramatic events of the final night have additional impact because this type of action is rare.

Exam focus

How can I write about dramatic tension? AO2

These chapters can be used to explore rising tension in the novel.

Stevenson uses the characters' terror to raise dramatic tension. Poole is afraid when he begs Utterson to come with him. Jekyll's staff are scared of whatever is now living in Jekyll's cabinet and their fear spreads to Utterson. Jekyll has a look of abject terror and despair, as froze the very blood of the two gentlemen. The causes of these fears are often not stated, which creates further tension for us.

Topic sentence states the main idea

Supporting evidence

Quotation shows unexplained fear

Analysis of technique

Now you try!

Finish this further paragraph about **dramatic tension**. Use one of the quotations from the list.

Stevenson uses uncertainty about who or what is in the cabinet to raise the tension. Poole and Utterson hear a terrifying

PLOT AND STRUCTURE Chapter 9

Five key things about Chapter 9

Chapter 9 is the first of two chapters that **unravel the mystery**. It presents Lanyon's part of the story in the form of a **letter** Lanyon has left for Utterson:

1. **Lanyon** reveals the **terrible events** that have led to his own **death** and explains how **Jekyll** used a **potion to transform** himself into Hyde.
2. **Lanyon's letter** is another in the **series of narratives** told by **different characters** that Stevenson uses to build the novel.
3. We **see more of Hyde**, who is otherwise a shady figure for most the novel.
4. **Lanyon's character** is revealed most fully in this chapter. This is important, as he is the **counterpoint** to **Jekyll** in the novel's treatment of the **theme of science**.
5. The **theme of science** is explored most fully in this chapter.

What happens in this chapter?

- Lanyon's account begins with him receiving a strange letter from Jekyll.
- The letter asks Lanyon to collect a tray of chemicals from Jekyll's laboratory and keep it to give to Hyde, who will visit him at midnight.
- Lanyon believes that Jekyll has gone mad, and so he must carry out Jekyll's wishes as he can't tell what will happen if he refuses. He collects the tray of chemicals.
- Hyde arrives and Lanyon reacts to him with '**disgustful curiosity**'.
- Hyde mixes the chemicals together, and gives Lanyon the choice of watching or not, but doesn't tell him what to expect.



What happens to Lanyon?

- Lanyon, though fearful, watches as Hyde drinks the potion and, his '**mind submerged in terror**', witnesses the transformation.
- The final paragraph sets up further mystery, as Lanyon refuses to write down what Jekyll told him. He says only that he will never recover from the shock.

Five key quotations

1. The use of different narratives – Lanyon: **'The contents increased my wonder, for this is how the letter ran'**
2. Hyde to Lanyon on the theme of good and evil: **"your sight shall be blasted by a prodigy to stagger the unbelief of Satan"**
3. Lanyon on the unnaturalness of Hyde: **'There was something abnormal and misbegotten in the very essence of the creature'**
4. The fascination of science – Lanyon: **'the ebullition ceased and the compound changed to a dark purple'**
5. Hyde on Lanyon's view of science: **"you who have so long been bound to the most narrow and material views"**

Note it!

Lanyon describes the effect Hyde's presence has on him as he might describe a patient's symptoms. Being near Hyde causes **'incipient rigor'** and **'a marked sinking of the pulse'**. His role as a doctor is embedded in his character.

Exam focus

How can I write about science? A01

You can use Chapter 9 to write about the theme of science.

Jekyll's potion is the scientific motif at the heart of the novel. It is explored most thoroughly in this chapter. Despite his horror, Lanyon is fascinated by the chemistry as Hyde mixes the potion, being careful to describe how the reaction proceeded until 'the ebullition ceased and the compound changed to a dark purple, which faded again more slowly to a watery green'. This gives the fantastical events a basis that sounds realistic.

Topic sentence sets out the point

Introduces difficult quotation with an explanation

Quotation demonstrates the point being made

Explanation of the effect of the quotation

Now you try!

Finish this further paragraph about the **theme of science**. Use one of the quotations from the list.

Jekyll and Lanyon have different ideas about science. When Hyde speaks to Lanyon, he

PLOT AND STRUCTURE Chapter 10

Five key things about Chapter 10

The chapter is told in the form of Jekyll's statement, which he left for Utterson. It gives Jekyll's account of what happened:

1. The **mystery** is solved, drawing together all the **threads** of the novel and answering the **questions** it has raised.
2. **Jekyll's statement** of what happened is the last of the **separate narratives**, and Jekyll is the only one who could reveal the **final secrets**.
3. It gives insight into **Jekyll's character**, what drove him to his **experiment** and **how he has been affected** by it.
4. The **themes** of **duality** and **good and evil** are explored through **Jekyll's** use of the **potion**.
5. The **Gothic** elements of the novel reach their **climax**, as the **mystery**, **supernatural** aspects, **exploration of evil**, and **extreme** events are all brought together.

What did Jekyll do?

- Jekyll explains that he wanted to pursue shameful pleasures **without** damaging his reputation, and so he looked for a way to split his personality in two.
- He made a potion that turned him into Hyde, who embodies the '**lower elements**' of his soul. Jekyll used this to enjoy his pleasures secretly.
- After Hyde murdered Carew, Jekyll decided to stop using his potion. He had changed without intending to, though, and had to use more and more of his potion to turn back.



Why did Jekyll die?

- Jekyll ran out of a chemical he needed for the potion and new supplies didn't work. He realised that an impurity in his original supply made the potion work, but new supplies were pure.
- He knew he would one day turn into Hyde and be unable to turn back. This finally happened.
- Jekyll's statement is told with great emphasis on his suffering and despair.

Five key quotations

1. Jekyll on man's duality: **'man is not truly one, but truly two'**
2. Jekyll on good and evil: **'those provinces of good and ill which divide and compound man's dual nature'**
3. Jekyll's character: **'the temptation of a discovery so singular and profound, at last overcame the suggestions of alarm'**
4. Hyde's character: **'his every act and thought centred on self; drinking pleasure with bestial avidity from any degree of torture to another'**
5. Gothic **imagery**: **'that insurgent horror was knit to him closer than a wife, closer than an eye; lay caged in his flesh'**

Note it!

Utterson is not mentioned in this final chapter. His role is completely at an end. Although the statement was left for him to read, we do not see his response to either this statement or the letter that Lanyon left for him and that forms Chapter 9.

Exam focus

How can I write about human duality? AO1

You can use Chapter 10 to write about the theme of duality.

Jekyll wanted to find a way of separating what he saw as two different aspects of his nature. His philosophical and scientific work led him to the conclusion that **'man is not truly one, but truly two'**. His potion bears this out, as it separates good and evil parts. He goes on to think that the human spirit might eventually turn out to have many more than two identities fused together.

Introduces main point

Jekyll's view is grounded in serious thinking

Quotation summarises Jekyll's view of the issue

How Jekyll's view develops over time

Now you try!

Finish this paragraph about the **theme** of good and evil. Use one of the quotations from the list.

The theme of good and evil is further explored in Chapter 10. Through the division of Jekyll

PLOT AND STRUCTURE Form and structure

Three key things about form and structure

1. The novel borrows from several forms: the **Gothic novel**, **crime novel**, **short story** and even the **epistolary** novel.
2. The story is pieced together from **narratives** by different people and from different **points of view**. This is a common feature of **Gothic** novels.
3. The last two chapters **reinterpret** earlier events. They reveal the **mystery** at the novel's heart and we see everything in a new light.



How does Stevenson use different points of view in telling the story?

- He uses a third-person narrator, who tells most of the story from Utterson's viewpoint. This means we can't see what other characters know or think.
- Enfield, Poole, Lanyon and Jekyll narrate parts of the story Utterson does not see.
- The whole story is set up by Enfield, who tells Utterson how Hyde trampled a child.

How does Stevenson develop mystery in the novel?

- Characters refuse to reveal information: Lanyon will not explain his disagreement with Jekyll, and Jekyll will not explain the strange terms of his will.
- Stevenson uses story-telling techniques from the Gothic tradition, such as leaving gaps in the account.
- Characters cannot explain why Hyde seems unnatural; there is something apparently unknowable at the heart of the novel.

How is the novel structured?

- It is a mixture of long and short chapters; Chapters 8–10 are much longer than Chapters 1–7.
- Each chapter relates one or more incidents, except the final one, which revisits the whole story.
- The first three chapters are set a year before the rest. There is another gap between Chapters 5 and 6, but it is dismissed quickly: '**Time ran on**'.

Five key quotations

1. Precise times: **'On the 12th, and again on the 14th, the door was shut against the lawyer.'** (Chapter 6)
2. Controlling events across time – Lanyon's letter: **'for the hands of J.G. Utterson ALONE and in case of his predecease to be destroyed unread'** (Chapter 6)
3. Dramatic moments – Utterson to Poole: **""We have come too late," he said sternly, "whether to save or punish.""** (Chapter 8)
4. Delays and hesitation: **'I hesitated long before I put this theory to the test of practice.'** (Jekyll, Chapter 10)
5. Lost intervals of time: **'the maid fainted. It was two o'clock when she came to herself'** (Chapter 4)

Note it!

As Stevenson uses different narrators in different parts of the novel, he can keep back vital information about the action, and even be misleading. This allows him to manage readers' expectations and build suspense.

Exam focus

How can I write about Stevenson's use of documents in the novel?

AO1

AO2

You can discuss the documents left for Utterson by other characters.

Documents serve several purposes within the novel, one of which is controlling the flow of information.

Stevenson uses this to build mystery and suspense.

Jekyll's will sets out what must happen after his death and Lanyon leaves a document for 'J.G. Utterson ALONE and in case of his predecease to be destroyed unread'. These restrictions mean the mystery can't be solved until the characters are dead – if at all.

Introduces point about form

Further explanation

Quotation gives relevant example

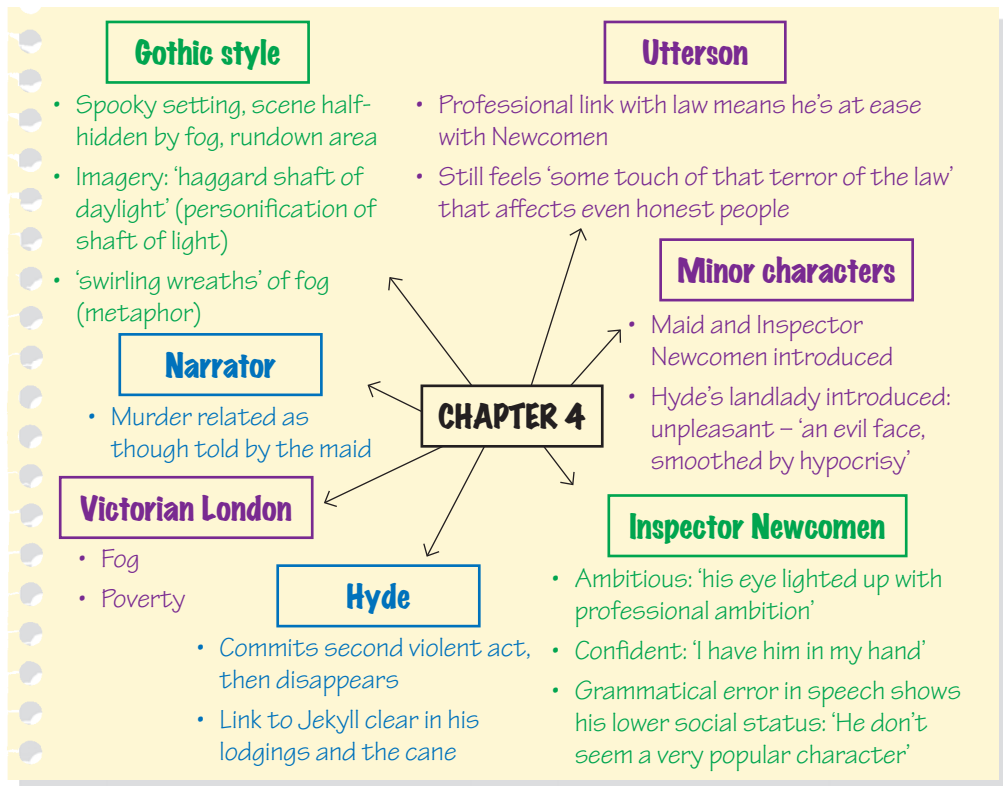
Explains consequences

Now you try!

Finish this paragraph about **structure**. Use one of the quotations from the list. Stevenson borrows elements from the Gothic novel. Events are often half-seen, and there are gaps

PLOT AND STRUCTURE Quick revision

1. Look at this ideas map for Chapter 4. Is there anything else you could add?



2. Create your own ideas map for one of the other chapters.

Quick quiz

Answer these quick questions about plot and structure.

1. What triggers Enfield's story about Hyde as he walks with Utterson?
2. How much did Hyde have to pay in compensation for trampling the girl?
3. Why is Utterson so curious about Hyde?
4. How does Utterson suspect Jekyll and Hyde are linked (Chapter 2)?
5. Who does Hyde murder?
6. How does Utterson know where Hyde lives?
7. What was the weapon Hyde used in the murder?

8. Why does Utterson show the note from Hyde to Guest?
9. Why, as we learn later, does Jekyll shrink from the window when talking to Utterson and Enfield?
10. What do Poole and Utterson use to break down the door to Jekyll's cabinet?
11. What noises has Poole heard coming from Jekyll's rooms?
12. How has Hyde killed himself?
13. In his letter to Lanyon, what does Jekyll ask him to collect from the laboratory?
14. What did Lanyon assume on the basis of Jekyll's letter?
15. What choice does Hyde give Lanyon before he takes the potion?
16. What was the first warning sign for Jekyll that his experiment was getting out of hand?
17. When did Jekyll decide to stop taking his potion?
18. Why did the potion stop working?
19. What did Jekyll decide about why his potion had worked originally?
20. How many female characters feature in the novel?

Power paragraphs

Write a **paragraph** in response to **each of these questions**. For each, try to **use one quotation** you have learned from this section.

1. How does Stevenson make use of different narrators?
2. How much of the story is explained by Dr Lanyon's letter in Chapter 9?

Exam practice

Reread the section in Chapter 2, after Utterson has spoken to Poole and wonders how Jekyll might be linked to Hyde: 'And the lawyer set out homeward ... strange clauses of the will.'

Why is this moment significant in the text as a whole? Write **two paragraphs** explaining your ideas. You could comment on:

- how it relates to Utterson's character
- how Stevenson uses it to manage the mystery of the story.

SETTING AND CONTEXT Victorian London and the Gothic

Five key things about Victorian London and the Gothic

1. Victorian London was often affected by **thick fog**, called smog – a mix of fog and smoke from fires and factories.
2. **Social inequality** was severe, with some people being very **rich** and others extremely **poor**.
3. The dark, narrow streets were often the **scene of crimes**.
4. **Gothic literature** often features dark, **mysterious** and **spooky settings**.
5. Gothic literature deals with **strange happenings** and **extreme experiences**.

What was Victorian London like?

- Smog made the air difficult to breathe and often made it gloomy or dark in the daytime. It could even affect the insides of houses.
- Many buildings were in a poor state and the streets were often crowded and dirty. Coupled with the smog, this made the city dark and unhealthy.
- Some areas of the city were occupied by the very poor, and these were generally slums – with very crowded houses in a bad condition, like those which Mr Utterson passes when going to Mr Hyde's lodgings.
- The dark streets made it easy for criminals to attack people and escape, which made people afraid to go out at night.



What was London society like?

- It was important for the rich to act respectably in public, but some behaved badly in private. Dr Jekyll wants to hide behaviour he is ashamed of.
- The social classes were sharply divided. Middle-class and upper-class people had servants to look after their houses; they treated the servants as their inferiors.
- Professionals such as doctors and lawyers were well regarded and respected in society and rarely suspected of doing anything wrong.

What characterises the Gothic?

- Gothic literature often deals with topics such as the supernatural, madness, extreme passion and violence. Edgar Allan Poe's stories are an example.
- It is characterised by mystery and suspense and complex **plot twists**.
- Exotic settings are common, such as castles or dungeons. A scientific laboratory that had once been used for human dissection is suitably Gothic, echoing Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*.

Three key quotations

1. The theme of reputation: **'fond of the respect of the wise and the good among my fellow-men'** (Chapter 4)
2. Lanyon describing Hyde's Gothic unnaturalness: **'there was something abnormal and misbegotten in the very essence of the creature'** (Chapter 9)
3. Grotesque events: **'the body of a man lay sorely contorted and still twitching'** (Chapter 8)

Note it!

Inspector Newcomen is part of the London police force that was established in 1829. It struggled to combat the level of street crime. The poor were so desperate that they often had no choice but to rob people to avoid starvation.

Exam focus

How do I link context to the novel? AO1 AO3

You can write about Stevenson's use of the Gothic.

Stevenson uses the traditions of the Gothic novel in portraying Jekyll and Hyde. Jekyll is shown experiencing extremes of terror and despair. Hyde is **subhuman, with 'something abnormal and misbegotten' about him**. They combine the extremes of experience and a terrifying prospect of what lies within human nature.

Clear topic statement

Successfully embedded quotation

Explanation of point

Now you try!

Finish this paragraph about the novel's **context**. Use one of the quotations from the list.

Stevenson uses the importance of reputation to explain Jekyll's motives and the

SETTING AND CONTEXT Science

Five key things about nineteenth-century science

1. Many people **distrusted** developments in **science** and saw them as a **threat** to their idea of what it meant to be **human**.
2. **Doctors** saw people in their **own homes** rather than in clean surgeries – **Dr Lanyon's patients** come to his **house**.
3. **Amateur science** including chemistry was a popular pastime among people (generally men) who could afford it.
4. Some **pseudo-sciences** were treated as equal to real sciences, including working out personality from handwriting (**graphology**) and how someone looks (**physiognomy**).
5. Some people saw a **conflict** between **religion** and science, a tension Stevenson explores in the novel.

What were the important developments in nineteenth-century science?

- Charles Darwin's book *On the Origin of Species*, published in 1859, argued that humans evolved from other animals. This contradicted the religious belief that God created humans.
- Advances in pharmacology (the study of drugs) showed that chemicals affect the mind and body.
- Scientists recorded their observations and experiments more systematically than in earlier times.
- Scientists began to study the workings of the mind; the first laboratory for experimental psychology opened in Germany in 1879.



What did people think about science?

- There was a strong feeling that science should avoid certain questions which threatened mainstream beliefs.
- There was little regulation of science or its products and so it was sometimes seen as dangerous.
- Some people thought science promised great things for the future, with the possibility of new discoveries improving their lives.

How does medical science relate to Stevenson's life?

- Stevenson was often unwell, and so was exposed to medical science.
- Stevenson went to university in Edinburgh, which had a famous medical school. The doctor in Chapter 1 has an Edinburgh accent.
- Stevenson was addicted to cocaine, which he took as a painkiller. Jekyll's use of the potion is presented like an addiction.

Three key quotations

1. Jekyll's scientific discovery: '**Certain agents I found to have the power to shake and to pluck back that fleshly vestment**' (Chapter 10)
2. The lure of science for Jekyll: '**the temptation of a discovery so singular and profound, at last overcame the suggestions of alarm.**' (Chapter 10)
3. Science as morally neutral – Jekyll: '**The drug had no discriminating action; it was neither diabolical nor divine**' (Chapter 10)

Note it!

There were few effective treatments for serious illnesses, and operations were very risky. Utterson's assumption that Lanyon is ill and knows he will die is reasonable; it would be common for someone with a serious illness to know this.

Exam focus

How do I relate science to the novel? AO3

You can write about how Stevenson explores the idea of science.

Stevenson uses science to explore the human condition. Science is supposed to be based in what can be observed and reproduced. Lanyon's description of the potion reflects this. Stevenson presents Jekyll's discovery as solid, impartial evidence: the potion itself was neither diabolical nor divine. Stevenson uses the impartiality of science to suggest that Jekyll's discovery is definitely correct – science doesn't lie.

Topic statement

Supporting evidence

Supporting quotation successfully embedded

Explains point

Now you try!

Finish this paragraph about the novel's **context**. Use one of the quotations from the list.

Stevenson shows the dangerous appeal of knowledge in Jekyll's experiment

SETTING AND CONTEXT Settings

Five key things about settings in the novel

1. All the **settings** are in London, sometimes **outdoors**, e.g. the brief trip to **Hyde's lodgings**, and at other times **within the houses** of **Jekyll**, **Lanyon** and **Uttersson**.
2. The **settings** are **superficially domestic** and entirely normal, but **hide** strange, **dark deeds**.
3. Setting is linked to the **themes** of **reputation and secrecy** and to the internal state of the **characters**.
4. **Jekyll's house** is divided into **two distinct parts**, reflecting the **division** of his **personality**.
5. The **weather** frequently reflects events or characters' **state of mind**, with **bad weather** accompanying **misfortune and danger**.

How does Stevenson use setting to tell us about Hyde?

- Hyde is seen in the dark streets of London at night, a setting where danger and crime are common, which suits his evil, criminal behaviour.
- Hyde's lodgings are in a disreputable part of London. Utterson and Newcomen travel through grim, poverty-stricken scenes like '**some city in a nightmare**'.

What does setting reveal about the theme of reputation and secrecy?

- The outside door to Jekyll's laboratory is in a featureless, '**sinister**' and neglected building. This hides its connection with Dr Jekyll, reflecting the tension between Jekyll's respectability and his secret behaviour.
- Hyde overturns his respectably furnished lodgings, leaving the apartment Jekyll had prepared in chaos. This reflects Hyde's destructiveness and Jekyll's ordered, respectable life.



How does Stevenson use inside and outside settings?

- Outdoors is associated with danger and disorder. Hyde commits his crimes outdoors, and Jekyll first changes without the potion when he is in a park.
- Indoor settings are mostly ordered, but can become disordered under Hyde's influence. He overturns his lodgings, and Utterson and Poole break down Jekyll's door to reach him on the last night.

How does Stevenson portray Jekyll's house?

- Jekyll's house is the regular, comfortable house of a respectable citizen, with the usual domestic staff to run it.
- His laboratory is in a gloomy building hidden round the back. It was once used for dissection demonstrations, giving it grim associations.
- Above the laboratory is Jekyll's comfortable cabinet – so the building has two aspects.

Quick quiz

1. What was smog?
2. Which social problems plagued Victorian London?
3. What type of setting characterises Gothic literature?
4. Which two pseudo-sciences popular in Victorian times feature in the novel?
5. Where did doctors treat their patients in Victorian London?
6. Who did the cleaning and cooking for professional men like Lanyon and Jekyll?
7. Who proposed the theory of evolution?
8. What in Stevenson's life is reflected in Jekyll's use of his potion?
9. Give an example of another Gothic writer.
10. How did the rich behave differently in public and in private?

Power paragraphs

Choose one key **setting** or **context** related to the novel. Write **two paragraphs** explaining how Stevenson makes use of this setting or context in relation to either a) theme or b) character.