

<i>Frankenstein</i> Mary Shelley Norton Critical Edition
<i>Grendel</i> John Gardner
<i>Sparknotes/ Cliff Notes on Beowulf</i> in order to provide context for <i>Grendel</i> . We will read a shortened version of <i>Beowulf</i> in class as well.
<i>Catcher in the Rye</i> J.D. Salinger

**Additional reading assignments that will aid your understanding of the above novels:**

Read the tale/myth of Prometheus.

Read some biographical material on Shelley and Salinger

Read some background/critical information on John Gardner.

Some knowledge of modern philosophy will help you understand some of *Grendel*.

We will begin the year with a test over *Frankenstein*, *Grendel*, and *Catcher in the Rye* on the second day of school. This test will focus mainly on the plot, characters, symbols, and themes found in each work.

Harkness discussions (explained below) over selected summer readings will begin on the third day. I will collect your general notes from all three novels for one grade (10 formative points), and the Harkness Discussion questions will be a separate grade (10 summative points). We will use and discuss all of the summer books during the course. It is imperative that you carefully read each book and take detailed notes. It will also help tremendously to annotate your book and/ or create a detailed log of your reading/interaction with each one.

**Harkness Discussion Guidelines**

1. Prepare for these discussions by close reading the works and doing additional outside exploration if you have questions
2. Listen carefully in discussions
3. Stay close to the text in discussion; keep it open on your desk and be prepared to cite specific passages to support your thoughts or to bring up an idea for discussion
4. Collaborate-don't compete! It is NOT A DEBATE ~ IT IS A DISCUSSION!
5. Take turns speaking; be sure to share time fairly-one or two people should not dominate any discussion- all opinions are valuable
6. Challenge politely if you disagree; suggest another point of view; encourage people to clarify what they mean to be sure you understood them before you disagree with them
7. Be sure you fully finish an idea before moving on to another ~ask if people are ready to move on and summarize what was concluded in the discussion
8. All aspects of the work are open for discussion
9. You are responsible for the success of the discussion; at this point you are capable of digging into the work; you are graded on your participation in the discussions, both verbal and non-verbal

**Using *Frankenstein*, answer the questions below and prepare notes to discuss in your Harkness table.**

1. Look for a symbol or pattern in *Frankenstein* and explain how it impacts your appreciation of the themes of the book.
2. Research what a quest is in the literary sense. Then, list the three aspects of the QUEST and then apply them to *Frankenstein*.
3. Present examples of the two kinds of violence found in the novel. Show how the effects are different.
4. Choose a scene or episode from the novel. Contrast how it could be viewed by a reader from its own time with how it might be viewed by a contemporary reader.

**Using *Catcher in the Rye*, answer the questions below and prepare notes to discuss in your Harkness table.**

1. In the novel, what is the quest? Choose a character and explain how he/she gains self-knowledge.
2. Choose a scene where weather or the environment is more than what it seems and explain the significance.
3. Investigate any symbol in the book. Identify the symbol, list at least three times that it is referenced in the novel (include the page number), explain its meaning and how it is used by the author.

**Using *Grendel*, answer the questions below and prepare notes to discuss in your Harkness table.**

1. Choose 4 significant quotes that reflect the overall meaning of the work. Write out the quote, who says it, and explain the context surrounding it.
2. Do you find Grendel to be a sympathetic character or a monstrous one? Explain your opinion using textual evidence/references from the novel.
3. What did you learn from reading this novel? What do you think the author wanted you to learn?

*Adapted from Assignments originally developed by Donna Anglin. Notes by Marti Nelson.*