



By Craig Francis, Rick Miller, Paul Van Dyck
Adapted from the novel by Mary Shelley
Directed by Craig Francis and Rick Miller
Produced by Kidoons and Geordie Theatre
In association with the Segal Centre

Study Guide

INTRODUCTION

Geordie Theatre is a Montreal-based professional theatre company that has presented live English-language productions for young audiences in Quebec and abroad since 1980. Pushing artistic boundaries with provocative and important stories, Geordie delivers more than 200 performances each season and reaches more than 40,000 young people and their communities annually.

Land Acknowledgement: We would like to begin by acknowledging that the territory on which Geordie Theatre operates is the traditional territory of the Kanien'kehà:ka Mohawk nation of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy. Montreal is known in the Mohawk language as Tiotià:ke or Broken in Two because of the way the river breaks around the island. It is considered unceded territory of the Kanien'kehà:ka nation. This land has also existed as a meeting ground of many peoples including the Abenaki, St. Lawrence Iroquians and Huron-Wendat people. We extend our deepest respect to the elders of these communities and to all Indigenous peoples who carry the history of the land-caring for it and calling it home. We are privileged to share a story with you on this land.

A note on acknowledging territory: A crucial part of Geordie Theatre's visit happens at the beginning of the performance- the Land Acknowledgement. The Land Acknowledgement is researched and customized for the territory on which your school is located, and acts as a crucial bridge between Geordie Theatre and Indigenous Peoples.

ABOUT THE STUDY GUIDE

This study guide was created as a tool for teachers to help introduce young students to the world of theatre, as well as engage them more deeply with the themes and concepts developed in *Frankenstein*. The guide contains a synopsis, character and setting information, a summary of the themes and concepts at play, as well as pre- and post-show discussion questions and activity ideas.

The activities include presentations and handouts that are class-ready for easy distribution to students. Additionally, most activities can be adapted to an online-learning platform.

NOTE ON CONTENT & RESOURCES

This production is recommended for viewers aged 7 and up. Geordie Theatre, Kidoons, and WYRD believe that patrons can determine what is distressing, triggering, or offensive for themselves by offering content advisories for each show. Of course, should you be unsure based on the advisories, please contact us and we will be happy to help you with your decision.

Script includes talk of death, mild violence, giving and taking life.
Production includes thunder, flashing lights and fog effects.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley was an author who wrote the novel behind the play you are about to watch, *Frankenstein*, in 1818. The only child of a social philosopher and a feminist, she was born in 1797, married poet Percy Bysshe Shelley in 1814 and would go on to write several novels and a travel book throughout the course of her life. Mary Shelley died in 1851 at age 53. *Adapted from Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley by Kids Britannica.*

SYNOPSIS

In order to better grasp the cultural context, it is important for students to understand that *Frankenstein* was originally written by Mary Shelley in 1818 as a novel, but has been adapted many times for films and plays over the years. The play they are going to see has been co-created by Craig Francis, Rick Miller and Paul Van Dyck. This production of *Frankenstein* uses immersive comic book design and theatrical techniques to reanimate the classic story. To review the plot prior to viewing the show with your students, it is recommended you use the accompanying *Frankenstein - Study Guide Slides*, which includes comic book illustrations by Craig Francis. [For the full graphic novel online, please visit the production's website, under the Comic tab.](#)

MEET THE CHARACTERS :

MARY: A young person in the present day

VICTOR FRANKENSTEIN: A young man in the early 1800s

ALPHONSE FRANKENSTEIN: Victor's father

JUSTINE: The Frankensteins' housekeeper

PROFESSOR KREMPE: Professor of medicine

ELIZABETH LAVENZA: Student of medicine in Krempe's class and Victor's close friend

THE CREATURE: Victor's creation

LINA: Coffee shop owner in Geneva

DELACEY: A blind old man in the Swiss woods

FELIX: Delacey's son, a woodcutter

WILLIAM FRANKENSTEIN: Victor's little brother

GRACE: A lighthouse keeper in Scotland

THE COMPANION: The second Creature

[For pictures and biographies for the full cast and crew, please visit the production's website, under the Cast & Crew tab.](#)

THEATRE ETIQUETTE

A live theater performance is an exciting group activity and reviewing theatre etiquette with students of all ages to highlight expectations can ensure everyone can enjoy the show.

Included in the *Frankenstein - Study Guide Slides*

Theatre etiquette is a set of rules that explain how to behave when watching a play to be respectful to the cast and crew and the other patrons (spectators).

- Arrive on time and use the bathroom before the start of the play to avoid interruptions.
- Stay in your seat and do not chat with your friends during the play.
- Do not use electronic devices (phones, tablets).
- Feel free to clap or laugh when you are impressed or amused; it lets the actors know that you are enjoying yourself!

Pre-Show Discussion Questions

The following discussion questions may be used to initiate conversation and build background information of the main themes in *Frankenstein*. They might also be used as writing/short scene prompts or as an introduction to lesson plans. Please select the questions that are most appropriate to the age group you teach.

- ★ Would you want to live forever? Why or why not?
- ★ Do you ever feel lonely? What do you do when you are lonely?
- ★ What do you know about artificial intelligence (AI)? What are the benefits of AI? What are the potential risks?
- ★ What do you know about climate change? How can scientific discovery help with climate change?
- ★ What would you do if you felt like the project or artwork you were working on was a failure? Why?
- ★ What are possible reactions people might have when they are facing something that scares them? What do you do?

Pre-Show Activity: Climate change and artificial intelligence

Students will benefit from having preliminary background knowledge on the topics of climate change and artificial intelligence. As a class or in groups, students can visit [Nasa's Climate Kids](#) to answer the discussion questions and learn more about climate change.

Included in the *Frankenstein - Study Guide Slides*

In the play, Mary's father is attempting to address climate change with the help of artificial intelligence... Is that actually possible? Let's find out! Climate change often refers to how the surface of the Earth is getting rapidly warmer over time. Visit the NASA's Climate Kids to learn more about climate change and to answer these questions.

- What is climate change?
- Why is it an important issue for humans to address?
- What can humans do to contribute to improve this situation?

Once they have developed a firmer understanding of climate change, they can begin to explore how artificial intelligence can contribute to address climate control. As a class or in groups, students can Watch [Four ways AI can help tackle climate change](#) by *BBC Ideas* to hear Simon Redfern from the University of Cambridge explain how AI can help us understand, adapt to and even reduce climate change.

Included in the *Frankenstein - Study Guide Slides*

Artificial intelligence or "AI" is the ability for a computer to think and learn. With AI, computers can perform tasks that are usually completed by humans, such as learning

and problem-solving.

How does technology affect your life? Our society?

How do you think artificial intelligence can help humans address the issue of climate change?

Post-Show Discussion Questions

The discussion questions may be used to build an understanding of *Frankenstein* and its messages. They can be used as writing prompts or as an introduction to lesson plans. Please select the questions that are most appropriate to the age group you teach.

1. Why did Mary drop out of art school? Would you have done the same? Why or why not?
2. Why did Mary's father abandon his robot?
3. Why did Victor abandon his creature?
4. How did the Creature learn to talk? Read? What else did he learn from Delacey?
5. After he found him, what did the Creature want Victor to make for him? Why?
6. This play is a multimedia experience, which means the artists used many theatrical techniques (sound, visuals, special effects, costumes, props, video productions, etc.) to bring the story to life. Discuss these techniques and which you enjoyed the most.
7. Discuss the different fathers in *Frankenstein*. Describe their characteristics as fathers and their relationships with their child (or creature).
 - o Victor's dad, Alphonse
 - o Mary's father
 - o Victor ("father" of the Creature)
8. Which character do you relate to the most? Why?
9. At the end of the play, the Creature writes "I forgive you" as the last entry in Victor's journal? What was he forgiving him for?
10. According to you, what lessons can we learn from this story?

Post-Show Activity: Journal writing

The story centers around Mary finding and reading Victor Frankenstein's journal. Journaling can help children and adolescents process their feelings and build an understanding of their world. Once you have reviewed the structure and tone of a journal entry, students can select one of the following two journal writing ideas.

Included in the *Frankenstein - Study Guide Slides*

Choose one of the following journal activities. Remember to date your entry, use "Dear diary," as an opener, and feel free to use a personal, informal tone when writing, as if you were writing for yourself only.

1. Mary learns about Victor's life and the time period in which he lived by reading his journal. Write a journal entry about your daily life that includes information that would help someone living in a different time period or a different part of the world understand you and your society.
2. Write a review of the play as a journal entry. Make sure to include information about the plot, the actors, the special effects, how you felt while watching it and whether you would recommend the play to your friends.

Post-Show Activity: Scientific discovery

Several of the characters in *Frankenstein* attempt to address issues by pushing the boundaries of technology and science. Let your students engage their imagination to fix one of their own problems. Review the style of science-fiction and have them brainstorm solutions to their problems, using scientific discovery and inventions. Students may either produce a text or scene.

Included in the *Frankenstein - Study Guide Slides*

When Victor's mother dies, he becomes obsessed with achieving immortality using his scientific knowledge. Similarly, Mary's dad wants to fix climate change by using advanced technology. Both attempted to fix a problem with scientific discovery and innovation.

Select and describe a personal or world problem that you would like to fix and explain how you would address it using scientific or technological innovation. Just like science-fiction writers, feel free to stretch or even make up the science behind your invention.

Post-Show Activity: Scenario: Facing Our Own Monsters

The importance of facing and addressing our difficulties (before they face us!) is a recurring theme throughout the play. Have students create and perform a scene in which the characters face a personal fear or a problem of their own making instead of resorting to denial.

Included in the *Frankenstein - Study Guide Slides*

One of the themes of the play Frankenstein is the importance of facing our monsters before they face us. While Victor's monster was an actual creature, monsters can also be our fears or mistakes. In groups of 2-4 students, create and write or perform a scene in which a character either faces a long-time fear or creates an unideal situation they must face and fix.

Post-Show Activity: Design your own comic book

Graphic novels are becoming an increasingly popular medium for students, helping them engage in literature and explore heavy themes. Pairing this medium with theater, the writers and producers of Frankenstein used comic book and graphic novel techniques to bring the classic story to life. Have students explore creating this medium to express themselves, with the direction of your choice. Use [Canva](#), a free website on which students can design their own comic strip design, or [blank comic strip templates](#), to help students structure their work.

Included in the *Frankenstein - Study Guide Slides*

The writers and producers of Frankenstein used interesting comic book and graphic novel techniques to bring the story to life. Using some of the techniques you have learned, design your own comic strip. First you will brainstorm and select the scenes, including actions and dialogue, and develop a storyboard, before completing the final comic strip product.

Here are some comic strip techniques to explore:

- Speech bubbles or thought bubbles
- Onomatopoeia (a word that imitates the sound it is describing)
- Captions in the top left corner to indicate time or location, or any other narrative information

Quotation Station: Women in Medicine

VICTOR What's wrong?

ELIZABETH It's the university, they're refusing to give me a degree. They said I could study medicine all I want, but I'll never be a doctor.

VICTOR Why would they do this?

ELIZABETH Because I'm a girl.

VICTOR But you're the best student I know.

ELIZABETH Better than you?

VICTOR Absolutely.

Back in the 1800's in Europe, women were not allowed to become doctors.

1. Why might that be? What did people think?
2. Is it fair? Do women make lesser doctors?
3. This is an example of sexism, which is when people treat someone unfairly based on their gender. Can you think of other examples of sexism?
4. What can you say if you witness someone acting sexist or saying something sexist?

Quotation Station: Friendship

CREATURE	I am alone and miserable; humans are repulsed by me. But...someone as deformed and horrible as myself would not run away from me.
VICTOR	You want me to disfigure someone so they look like... you?!
CREATURE	No, ding dong! I want you to make me a companion--

1. Why does Creature want a companion? What could a companion provide him with?
2. Humans are social creatures that crave human interaction. Share a time when you felt lonely. Why did you feel this way? What did you do?
3. When and how did Creature learn about the value of friendship?

Quotation Station: Facing Our Monsters

MARY	We create, and we can learn from our creations.
VICTOR	The world is full of monsters... monsters of our own making. And running away from them is no longer an option.
CREATURE	We all have the choice to face our fears. Before they face us!

1. What did Victor learn from the Creature? Is that a lesson he can apply to other situations in his life?
2. What does Victor mean when he says the world is full of monsters of our own making? How does this apply to humans and climate change?
3. Why can't humans run away from climate change? What can we do to face it?