

Frankenstein: how to read literature like professor

[Literature](#), [Russian Literature](#)



In *Frankenstein*, Mary Shelley uses symbolism and allegory to depict the actions of the main characters and what their actions truly mean. In *How to Read Literature Like a Professor*, Thomas C. Foster asks his readers what you think a symbol stands for, Foster also writes “[whatever] you think it stands for, it probably does.” (ninety-seven) *Frankenstein* contains many symbols, however there is only a few symbols that truly support our findings the whole nine yards.

There are six specific symbols and allegories that were purposefully chosen to support our findings: Light, The Bible, Alps, Water, White, and Lightning. Light, Shelley establishes light as a symbol on the very first page, when Walton tells his sister that he’s heading off to a “country of eternal light” where the “sun is forever visible” (letter one. two), our first indication that light isn’t all good when the monster’s first sensation is of “light pressed upon [his] nerves” (eleven. one).

The light does not benefit to the daemon, it only allows people know how hideous he truly is. The Bible in *Frankenstein* is not a symbol but in fact it is an allegory, the monster is compared to Adam the first man in the Judeo-Christian Tradition, “like Adam I was apparently united by no link to any other being in existence....” later on the monster is also compared to Satan “Many times I considered Satan as the fitter emblem of my condition.” (15. 7)

The Alps is another important symbol that helps bring the true meaning to the characters’ actions, *Frankenstein* goes to The Alps, The Alps combined with its beauty took his mind away from his horrible time with the results of

his creation. In Frankenstein, water figuratively brings life to Frankenstein whether he is traveling on it or drinking it. It brings him life and inspires him to be close to nature. Walton believes the light of the far North as eternal and full of hope “ What could not be expected in the country of eternal light?”

Light is important to all the characters in Frankenstein, Light guides the Character through Important decisions. However many of the decisions that the characters have made could have gone a different way, when Frankenstein decides the truth of how his younger brother died from his family already clearly told the readers what the result might be. Lightning is also a symbol in Frankenstein the tree being burnt by lightning. Here lightning represents the destruction/creation dichotomy. Just as the tree once grew the lightning destroys it.