

What we learn about dr frankenstein in act 1

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



What we learn about Dr Frankenstein in Act 1 This literature essay is about the role of Dr Frankenstein in the play adaptation of Mary Shelley's 19th Century gothic novel known as " Frankenstein". It is the story of Victor Frankenstein, a scientist obsessed with his desire to unearth the secret of life and create a " perfect" being. He brings to life a monster so grotesque and repulsive that the scientist abandons it in disgust. In Act 1, we learn a great deal about what sort of person he is and his personality. Before anything important happens at the beginning of the play, we learn that he is a very secretive man. The evidence of this is, " Frankenstein- is seen to climb athletically down the outside and in through the window" Then, " There is a scrambling sound from outside, as if the other person is not sure of footing. A leg can be seen waving uncertainly about, feeling for a foothold.

Frankenstein takes it and guides it to safety. A moment later, Clerval appears in the window and jumps down to join Frankenstein". This shows that the scientist is quite strange for the normal and natural way to go into a room is to enter through the door, why would he do this? Maybe he has something to hide. The contrast between the way Frankenstein and Clerval climb through the window suggests that Frankenstein has had practise sneaking into his room because he seems to do this movement with ease, whereas Clerval is much clumsier in comparison. As the play proceeds, we can find out that Dr Frankenstein is a rather messy and unhygienic person. In the stage directions: " The room is an odd mixture of shabby sitting room and cluttered laboratory. " This shows that Frankenstein has difficulties caring for himself because of the fact that he is so engrossed with his work and discoveries. There are some more evidence, He (Clerval) sits in an

armchair, then sits upright quickly and feels behind him. He brings out a human thigh- bone from behind the cushion and stares at it with distaste. " You get the impression that Frankenstein picks up the equipment and places it anywhere he wants. Once the scientist realises where his missing thighbone was, he says " So that's where it got to..." He doesn't look disgusted or finds it unpleasant; he just simply takes it and puts it aside, contrary to his friend's reaction which was of revolt. Then later on, Frankenstein says " There's a glass on the floor beside the chair, Clerval. I've only got the one. We'll share it. " " Clerval finds it. It's dirty and covered in dust. Frankenstein rubs it on his sleeve before pouring the wine in" This again, shows how Frankenstein is messy to an extent that even his best friend would be afraid of him. Offering a glass cup that was lying on the floor to you not is what you would expect from your host. As the play continues, we find out that he is determined: " He will go without meals to get the chemicals he needs" and " I hope you won't mention it to anyone. I...well dug it up last night. " " You What! " " I've begged the university for specimens. They say I've had all their best material for years and produced nothing to show for it. How could I show that then? Can you imagine the reaction? They won't give me anything now. I have to..." The evidence to show he's determined is when Frankenstein tells Clerval that he has been working on his experiments for six years and had to go without meals to save money to buy the right chemicals to do the experiments. Those quotations show just how determined Frankenstein is about his research and experiments, attempting to create life. Even when the university stopped providing him with the best body parts and materials for research. He didn't

simply give up his dreams, but instead, he just went to the graveyard and dug up some body parts to continue on his experiments. This shows that no matter how gruesome it is, he will stop at nothing to pursue his dreams. He knows that Clerval will be shocked and repulsed because of the ellipsis (...) used, showing he hesitates telling Clerval what he has done. During the beginning we also find out that he is obsessed with science — electrical biology to be more exact. The quote and stage directions, which support this, is on page 12, “ More or less. But there's no such thing as animal electricity- it's all one. The same force flows in your nerves as in the frog's, and the very same force flows through the lightning... did I ever tell you how I first realised what my life's work was to be? I was fourteen years old, at home at Geneva, on a night like this-a storm was threatening. They rise very quickly in the mountains there. Outside our front door, about twenty yards away, stood a great old oak tree. It had been there for three hundred years at least, and it was still green and strong. I'd climbed it, I'd sheltered under it, I'd carved my initials on the trunk... and just as the storm was at its height, I opened the door to look at the lightning. You've never seen such a storm! The tree was lit up bright, bright green by flash after flash, and the thunder was exploding around the house like artillery fire. Then without any warning the tree was engulfed in flame. A colossal blaze shot right out of it, all in a moment, and dazzled me so I could hardly see... When I opened my eyes again, only a moment later, the tree was gone. There was nothing there at all but a charred, smoking stump. That great living thing smashed to atoms in an instant! And I thought: the power that can do that is the power of life and death. I'll harness it. I'll study it and master it and make it work for

mankind. " This lengthy quotation shows just how obsessed with electrical biology he is, as he understands the subject to such an extent that he is able to use the scientific words such as atoms or physiology. Frankenstein also says how he will " harness", " study", and " master" electricity and make it work for humanity; having to do all the work for such an advanced topic most definitely shows that he is very ambitious and maybe even slightly crazed. As well as learning that he is obsessed with only one aspect of science, we also find out that he is a genius as shown in the stage directions " Frankenstein begins to turn the handle. The glass discs start rotating slowly in opposite directions; an electric hum fills the air; sparks are seen to jump from one brass terminal to another- all contributing to the impression of high powered electrical activity. " (Stage directions) " There- can you see it? Can you see the finger twitching? " (Frankenstein) " (Leaning over, but not as to obscure the audience's view) The index finger- yes! It's definitely moving- and now the thumb — good God, Frankenstein, it's horrible! " (Clerval) In this short conversation and movement, we can obviously find out that he is a genius as he has made a human hand move through the simple crank of a crane. But what is more is that he can control which finger moves through the various speeds of turning the lever. Obviously someone who is able to make such a marvellous achievement of making a hand move through the cranking of a crane can be considered as intellectually brilliant. The use of exclamations and dashes in Clerval's speech also highlights his amazement at Frankenstein's achievement. To conclude, Dr Frankenstein is indeed a very complicated man, with various different character traits ranging from

being secretive to being a genius. I think that there are more different sides to his character in which may be hidden.