

## ENGLISH 12

**IT'S ALIVE! QUOTATION RESPONSES***Frankenstein: Chapter 5*

**DIRECTIONS:** Respond to each of the following quotations from Chapter 5 by explaining the significance of what is said or done by the characters involved. Why are these moments, thoughts, or speeches important to the story? How might each fit into the style of work (Gothic, Romantic)? What are your opinions about these important quotations? A topic for discussion has been suggested for each quotation. Use these to guide your responses. A sample response can be found below; notice the completeness and specificity of the response and mirror this in your own discussions. Compose responses on your own lined paper and attach to this worksheet. Choose FOUR of the five quotations and respond.

**EXAMPLE: (FROM CHAPTER 4)**

**Victor's Byronic qualities:** "...I appeared rather like one doomed by slavery to toil in the mines, or any other unwholesome trade, than an artist occupied by his favourite employment. Every night I was oppressed by a slow fever, and I became nervous to a most painful degree...I shunned my fellow creatures as if I had been guilty of a crime. Sometimes I grew alarmed at the wreck I perceived that I had become" (Shelley 45).

Victor, quite Byronically, over-dramatizes nearly every aspect of his life, and in this instance, compares himself to a slave who is being forced to work on reanimating the creature. His arrogance, another Byronic quality, leads him to make a further comparison of himself to an artist creating something beautiful. Viewing himself as both the ultimate creator and one who is being doomed by fate, Victor continues obsessively working on bringing the dead to life. Victor does indeed become wholly engrossed in his "art," as he exhibits the Byronic quality of a becoming so passionately wrapped up in his pursuit of reanimation that he claims he become "oppressed by a slow fever." Additionally, Victor's self-isolation as he works continues the development of his Byronic character qualities, since Victor—partially from crazily working away in his isolated attic laboratory and most likely also due to his shame for desecrating the dead—avoids interactions with any humans who are alive. By the end of this excerpt, Victor shows awareness of his own dark qualities and the results of crossing moral boundaries when he calls himself a "wreck."

**1. Victor's reaction to the "birth" of his creation:**

"For this I had deprived myself of rest and health. I had desired it with an ardour that far exceeded moderation; but now that I had finished, the beauty of the dream vanished, and breathless horror and disgust filled my heart. Unable to endure the aspect of the being I had created, I rushed out of the room, and continued a long time traversing my bedchamber, unable to compose my mind to sleep" (Shelley 47).

**2. Foreshadowing? Victor's ominous dream:**

"I thought I saw Elizabeth, in the bloom of health, walking in the streets of Ingolstadt. Delighted and surprised, I embraced her; but as I imprinted the first kiss on her lips, they became livid with the hue of death; her features appeared to change, and I thought that I held the corpse of my dead mother in my arms; a shroud enveloped her form, and I saw the grave-worms crawling in the folds of the flannel" (Shelley 48).

**3. Is Victor the victim here? He is sure acting like one. But maybe the better question is, where is the eight-foot tall creature Victor ran away from?**

"He might have spoken, but I did not hear; one hand was stretched out, seemingly to detain me, but I escaped and rushed downstairs. I took refuge in the courtyard...listening attentively, catching and fearing each sound as if it were to announce the approach of the demoniacal corpse to which I had so miserable given life. [...] I passed the night wretchedly...I felt the bitterness of disappointment; dreams that had been my food and pleasant rest for so long a space were now become a hell to me; and the change was so rapid, the overthrow so complete!" (Shelley 48).

**4. Romanticism: Weather and nature reflect the moods of man:**

"...I issued into the streets, pacing them with quick steps, as if I sought to avoid the wretch...I...felt impelled to hurry on, although drenched by the rain which poured from a black and comfortless sky" (Shelley 48).

**5. What does Victor mean when he suggests that he is now "free"? Is he correct in so saying?**

"You have guessed right; I have lately been so deeply engaged in one occupation that I have not allowed myself sufficient rest, as you can see: but I hope, I sincerely hope, that all these employments are now at an end, and that I am at length free" (Shelley 49).