

Borrowed, Then Changed

Trace how a novel reshapes an earlier text.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.9-10.9 “Analyze how an author draws on and transforms source material in a specific work (e.g., how Shakespeare treats a theme or topic from Ovid or the Bible or how a later author draws on a play by Shakespeare).”

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline details that show what Shelley borrows from *Paradise Lost*, circle details that show what she changes, and draw an arrow to words that show the effect of each change.

Milton Inside Frankenstein

- ① Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* draws on John Milton's *Paradise Lost*, an epic poem about the biblical story of creation and humanity's fall. Shelley lets her Creature read Milton's poem after he has secretly learned language and reading. The Creature compares himself to Adam, who is created and cared for, but he also feels like Satan, isolated and cast out. This comparison gives the Creature a literary way to name his pain. Instead of simply presenting a frightening monster, Shelley shows a being who judges his own life against a powerful older story.
- ② Milton's Adam enters a world already prepared for him and speaks with God, his maker. Shelley's Creature wakes alone after Victor Frankenstein abandons him. By replacing a divine creator with a frightened human scientist, Shelley changes the source's question. *Paradise Lost* considers obedience, temptation, and separation from God. *Frankenstein* asks what a creator owes a living creation. Victor's refusal to guide or comfort the Creature helps turn loneliness into anger. The novel therefore borrows Milton's creator-and-created relationship but uses it to criticize irresponsible ambition and neglected responsibility.
- ③ The transformation also changes the reader's sympathy. In *Paradise Lost*, Satan's speeches can sound persuasive, yet the poem ultimately presents his rebellion as destructive. Shelley gives the Creature eloquent speeches about being rejected because of his appearance and denied companionship. Readers may condemn his murders while still understanding the injuries that shape his choices. This mixed response is different from simply choosing between obedient Adam and rebellious Satan. Shelley uses figures from Milton to make readers examine prejudice, isolation, and the moral consequences of creating life without accepting responsibility for it.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

- 1** Compare Adam's relationship with God to the Creature's relationship with Victor. How does Shelley change the meaning of the creator-and-created relationship?

- 2** What question does Paradise Lost consider, and what new question does Frankenstein ask after Shelley transforms the source material?

- 3** How does Shelley's use of Satan affect the reader's response to the Creature? Use one detail from the passage.

- 4** How do Adam and Satan together make the Creature more complex than a traditional monster?

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Choose a source text you know, such as a myth, play, religious text, or historical account. Write a 100-130-word concept for a new work that identifies what you borrow, explains what you change, and shows how the change creates a new theme or question.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline details that show what Shelley borrows from *Paradise Lost*, circle details that show what she changes, and draw an arrow to words that show the effect of each change. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Compare Adam's relationship with God to the Creature's relationship with Victor. How does Shelley change the meaning of the creator-and-created relationship?	Adam is cared for by God in a prepared world, while Victor abandons the Creature. Shelley changes the relationship into a critique of a creator's responsibility to a living creation.
2	What question does <i>Paradise Lost</i> consider, and what new question does Frankenstein ask after Shelley transforms the source material?	Paradise Lost considers obedience, temptation, and separation from God. Frankenstein asks what a creator owes a living creation.
3	How does Shelley's use of Satan affect the reader's response to the Creature? Use one detail from the passage.	It creates mixed sympathy. Readers can condemn the Creature's murders but understand how rejection, isolation, and denied companionship shape his choices.
4	How do Adam and Satan together make the Creature more complex than a traditional monster?	The Creature sees himself as both a created being who should be cared for like Adam and an isolated outcast like Satan. This gives him conflicting feelings and motives rather than making him only frightening.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

My short story, "The Last Signal," transforms the Cyclops episode from Homer's *Odyssey*. In the source, Odysseus escapes Polyphemus's cave by blinding him and hiding beneath sheep. In my version, a teenage engineer is trapped in a private company's data center after exposing its harmful surveillance program. She disables the system's facial-recognition cameras, then leaves through a delivery route while hidden among automated supply carts. The company leader, like Polyphemus, cannot identify the person who challenged him. Changing a physical monster into a powerful institution shifts the theme from clever survival during a journey to the risks of resisting technology that watches and controls people.

Accept accurate paraphrases that distinguish Milton's source material from Shelley's transformations and explain an effect on theme, character, or reader response. For Part 3, accept varied source texts if the response is 100-130 words and clearly identifies borrowing, change, and a resulting thematic effect.