

English Literature: *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*



WordIT

Duality

Meaning: (*n.*) Having two parts, often with opposite meanings, such as the duality of good and evil.

Origins of the word: Late 14th century, from the Old French *dualité*, from the Latin *dualis* meaning 'dual' (two parts).

In context: Stevenson explored the duality of human nature through his characters.

Challenge: Draw two stick people. Surround one with quotations that show Jekyll's character and the other with quotations showing Hyde's character. What do you notice?

Now try doing this using descriptions of London.

Reputation

Meaning: (*n.*) The beliefs or opinions that are generally held about someone or something.

Origins of the word: From the Latin *reputatio*, meaning 'consideration' or 'a reviewing'. The prefix 're-' = to do something repeatedly.

In context: Utterson is more concerned about protecting Jekyll's reputation than bringing Hyde to trial.

Challenge: Why do you think Victorian gentlemen were so concerned with reputation?

How relevant is reputation in today's society? Argue for and against.

Deference

Meaning: (*n.*) Polite submission and respect shown to another person, particularly because of their experience or status.

Origins of the word: From the French *déferer*, meaning 'to give way to arguments' or 'comply'.

In context: Poole and the servants show deference towards Utterson because of his higher social status. (They defer.)

Challenge: List examples of deference that can be identified in the novella.

What are the positives and negatives about the deference shown in the text? To what extent do you agree that it is the showing of deference that leads to Jekyll's tragic demise?

Deceit

Meaning: (*n.*) The action of deceiving someone by concealing or misrepresenting the truth.

Origins of the word: Old French *deceveir*, meaning 'to deceive' or 'cheat'. The prefix 'de-' = to take from.

In context: After creating his alter ego, Mr Hyde, Jekyll is plagued by lies and deceit.

Challenge: In what ways does Dr Jekyll deceive the following characters:

- Mr Utterson?
- Dr Lanyon?
- Poole?

Locate quotations for each.

Morality

Meaning: (*n.*) Beliefs about what is 'right' behaviour and what is 'wrong' behaviour.

Origins of the word: From the Latin *moralis*, meaning 'moral', 'ethical'.

In context: The novella explores morality and the value in controlling one's inherently wicked tendencies.

Challenge: Choose three characters and list descriptions from the text that demonstrate their moral and immoral traits.

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