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**IDX G9 ENGLISH H+ STUDY GUIDE**

**ISSUE 4**

**By Maggie and Gavin**

**Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde**

**Basic Plot Outline**

Note: This is a very general plot outline merely for reference. For the test you are expected to have much more specific knowledge.

**Chapter 1**

Mr. Utterson, a lawyer, learns from his friend Mr. Enfield about a horrible incident, in which a man, Mr. Hyde, trampled a young girl, but paid a large check when threatened by the police.

**Chapter 2**

After returning home, Utterson was troubled by that, one of his clients, Dr. Jekyll, had made a will and left everything to Hyde, rather than his own family. Utterson visits Dr. Lanyon, an old friend of Jekyll. Lanyon had never heard of Mr. Hyde, leaving Utterson more concerned. Utterson then spied on the house where Hyde had trampled the girl. Utterson went to Jekyll’s house, found Jekyll absent, and asked a servant, Poole, who treated My. Hyde almost like a master.

**Chapter 3**

Utterson visits Jekyll’s dinner party, asked him about the matter, yet Jekyll would not reveal, only saying that he can choose to be free of Hyde whenever he likes.

**Chapter 4**

After a year, Mr. Hyde murdered a respected old man, Sir Danvers Carew, a client of Utterson’s. Utterson takes the police to Hyde’s address, but they find nothing but the burnt-out end of a checkbook.

**Chapter 5**

Utterson visits Jekyll, who said that he is finished with Mr. Hyde. He even showed Utterson a letter from Hyde. However, with the inspection of Utterson’s clerk, a handwriting expert, it was discovered that the letter was written in Jekyll’s hand.

**Chapter 6**

Jekyll is back to his old self and starts to hang out with his friends. But after two months, Jekyll went through a dramatic change, becoming reclused again. When Utterson asked Dr. Lanyon about it, Lanyon said he has had a shock that will soon kill him. Lanyon gives Utterson a [letter](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/dr-jekyll-and-mr-hyde/symbols/letters-and-documents) to read when Jekyll is dead.

**Chapter 7**

One day Utterson and Enfield decided to pay Jekyll a visit when walking pass his old lab. Jekyll greets them, but suddenly was overtaken by terror, and flees from the window.

**Chapter 8**

Poole visits Utterson in a panic and lets Utterson follow him to the house. Someone has locked himself inside the lab, and the sound that comes out is that of Mr. Hyde. Utterson and Poole, thinking that Jekyll has been murdered, break in, and find Hyde’s dead body on the floor and some documents, including a letter from Jekyll, including his confessions, which Utterson decided to return home and read.

**Chapter 9**

(This chapter is the letter Lanyon asked Utterson not to open until both Lanyon and Jekyll have died).

Lanyon was asked by Jekyll to get ingredients from Jekyll's lab for an experiment and to await a visit from a man. A man, whose appearance is clearly that of Mr. Hyde, arrives, makes a potion and drinks it. His body and appearance gradually warped into that of Dr. Jekyll.

**Chapter 10**

(This chapter is the letter containing Jekyll’s “Confession”.)

Jekyll, proposing a theory of human evil/good duality, succeeded in finding a method to separate the two. Having the ability to transform into Mr. Hyde, Jekyll gains a new life, where all of his beasty instincts can be pursued. After Hyde committed crimes, Jekyll decided to cease transforming into Hyde, yet one time the transformation occurred involuntarily, forcing Jekyll to confess to Lanyon in order to gain the chemicals he needs to transform back.

After returning home, Hyde takes over, and Jekyll is forced to lock himself up, sending Poole out for more chemicals. However, the potion has lost its effectiveness, and Jekyll writes the last of his confession, then turning into Hyde forever.

**Character Analysis**

**Dr. Henry Jekyll**

Dr. Jekyll is presented as a fine Victorian gentleman --- well mannered, respected, and having a wide circle of friends. Central to the plot progression is his belief of human good vs. evil duality, and his intention to separate the two. Jekyll’s ability to transform into Mr. Hyde allowed him to live a double life, where he can engage in malevolent atrocities and unleash his beasty nature with no damage to his reputation. As Jekyll gradually lost control over the transformation process, he became increasing isolated and depressed, illustrating his struggle against the sinister side of his nature.

**Mr. Edward Hyde**

Since his first appearance in the novel, Hyde is constantly dehumanized, being described with terms such as “Savage”, “Snarled”, “Ape-like”, “Hardly human”, illustrating his animosity and separation from civilized society. Central to Hyde’s characterization is descriptions of his “deformed” looks, while never specifying on specifics of the deformation, giving a sense of uncertainty and mystery. Throughout the story, Hyde attacked two innocent victims, the first being an attack while the latter being a murder. Hyde leaves an impression of horror to other characters, perhaps indicating people’s fear of their malicious side.

**Mr. Gabriel John Utterson**

Mr. Utterson is the character where most of the third-person narration took place, slowing unveiling the truth behind Mr. Jekyll. His rational, calm, and objective narrative allowed the reader to perceive the story independently. He is a kind polite character, a respectable lawyer, and a trustworthy friend and advisor of Mr. Jekyll. Utterson stimulated most of the plot progression, by investigating the matter, leading the police into the house, and etc. The novel ends with Utterson reading the letters left by Jekyll and Lanyon, yet his reaction was never mentioned, adding a mysterious atmosphere at the end.

**Dr. Hastie Lanyon**

Mr. Lanyon, a close friend of Jekyll, believes Jekyll’s experiments are morally objectionable and unscientific, describing the experiments as “Unscientific Balderdash”. Being traditional and conventional, when he witnessed Hyde’s transformation into Jekyll with his own eyes, his entire scientific world view on which his life had been built upon had been mercilessly shattered. The shock that such as monstrous beast lies within the gentleman had deeply disgusted Lanyon, leading the cease of his friendship with Jekyll.

**Mr. Enfield**

Mr. Enfield is presented in Chapter I, helping to shape the initial impression for Hyde.

**Sir Danvers Carew**

A well-respected, distinguished gentleman and even a member of the Parliament, Sir Danvers is characterized as a model Victorian-era gentleman. This results a stark contrast to his murder by Hyde, helping to characterize Hyde as someone who opposes traditional Victorian values.

**Mr. Poole**

Jekyll’s faithful servant. He alerted Utterson about the sudden transformation of his master.

**Themes**

**Duality**

The duality of human nature is one of the most central themes of the novel. This idea is presented primarily on the character of Jekyll, as on the surface he is presented as a respectable and well-manner Victorian era model gentleman, conflicted by his sinister inner desires. He wishes to be respectable doctor following the highest moral standards, yet yearns to engage in the most terrible atrocities of mankind.

The theme of Duality is also presented in the setting of the story --- London. There are contrasting descriptions of the presence of areas of degradation and poverty next to wealthy ones. The front door of Jekyll’s house was presented as having “a great air of wealthy and comfort”, whereas the back door left an impression of “Sordid negligence”.

**Good vs. Evil**

The theme of good vs. evil is present throughout the story. In Jekyll’s view, “man is not truly one, but truly two”. He acknowledges both his good and evil side, and the atrocities committed by Hyde illustrates the consequences to giving into one’s evil side. Hyde was associated with Christian ideas about Hell and Satan and Jekyll repeatedly refers to him as “my devil”. Through the novel, it is proposed that the inherent evil aspect of man is merely suppressed by society.

**Reputation**

The novel also contains the theme of reputation, as Jekyll separated Hyde from himself, in order to experience of the pleasure of unleashing animosity while maintaining his reputation. During Utterson’s investigations, he never announced his suspicions about Jekyll publicly, partially to maintain his friend’s reputation, despite realizing Hyde’s depravity. At the end of the novel, even after Jekyll’s death, Utterson announced, “I would say nothing of this paper. If your master has fled or is dead, we may at least save his credit”

**Historic Context**

The novella was written in the 19th century, a period of rapid industrialization in Britain. The result was the hasty growth of population, from 1 million in 1800 to 6.7 million in 1900, leading to massive poverty and social gaps. This inequality was demonstrated in the novel by the setting of London and contrasting descriptions of neighborhoods.

The novel demonstrated traditional Victorian values, as many characters, such as Utterson, the initial Jekyll, Lanyon, Enfield … are models of Victorian gentleman, attempting to suppress their internal bestiality.

During this era, the science of physiognomy was popular. It was an idea that the study one’s physical appearance could determine aspects about their internal morality. This idea is clearly demonstrated on Hyde. Stevenson’s portrayal of Hyde heavily focused on his wicked physical appearances, supporting the theory of physiognomy.

**The Picture of Dorian Gray**

1. What is the symbol of Dorian’s picture? What are some things to note?

Dorian’s picture is the \*Faustian Bargain\* in this book. He makes a deal with the devil to preserve his beauty and instead let his picture grow old for him. There is more than just “aging” when it comes to the picture’s transformation. The picture first changes after Dorian leaves Sibyl, where it’s noted that the picture visibly looks crueler. Over time, the picture grows more and more ugly, as a reflection of Dorian’s corrupting soul. It’s also to note that the picture agonizes Dorian because Dorian has to deal with the fact that he is pretty damaged. Dorian’s attitude towards the picture keeps shifting throughout chapters. At some moments he is interested in how the picture functions and in other times he wants to burn the thing. Either way, the picture eventually is too much for him to bear, so that why he attempts to destroy it. But the picture symbolizes Dorian’s soul, which is why when Dorian destroys the picture, he simultaneously kills himself. It’s interesting to note that Dorian never considered suicide, he just was selfish enough to lead himself to it.

2. How is the theme of secrecy presented in the novel?

There are two important details to remember for secrecy:  
 First, consider light and dark imagery in the novel. In the later chapters, whenever Dorian confronts his picture, it is during the night. It’s also during nighttime that Dorian is usually mentally unstable. So, we see him keep up this mask in the daytime in front of Lord Henry and Gladys, but then goes pretty insane at night.

Second, consider Dorian’s growing paranoia. Dorian is so focused on his image in the latter half of the book, he starts suspecting everybody of trying to expose him. This can be seen in the page where he thinks about his valet Victor backstabbing him. This is also quite literally expressed when Dorian kills Basil because Basil uncovered his secret. In certain chapters such as chapter 11, you can see how important his appearance has become for him, as he becomes a \*trend\* to dress according to.

3. How is the corruption of Dorian’s soul expressed throughout the novel?

There are a LOT of symbols and things that show Dorian being influenced by Henry and Dorian’s corruption.

Painting. Need I say? It’s Dorian corrupting soul on a frame.

Dialogue. This is especially important. Lord Henry is known for speaking in paradoxes and uses the worlds “crude” and “vulgar” very often. Of course, Dorian also adopts these traits later on. Here’s one paradox I found that should be from Dorian (the dialogue on the pdf is messed up, but I’m 85% sure this is him) *“Nowadays all the married men live like bachelors, and all the bachelors like married men.”*

Garden. Now I really didn’t find a lot of quotes on this, but there are a couple. There are a few mentions of colors fading out of things. That shows Dorian’s loss of morality. The fading-color thing begins to occur after Dorian left Sibyl, so it’s safe to assume that this is a comment on his mental state.

Substance Abuse. Don’t do drugs. In this case, Dorian is doing opium which also shows that he’s no longer the innocent boy that he was before and is getting some bad habits.

CIGARETTES. (And other motifs) This is my favorite motif! I really like the motif of cigarettes in the novel, because they appear so much in the latter chapters. At first it’s just Lord Henry recommending Basil to smoke a cigarette, which he calls a good source to get some quick pleasure from. Dorian smokes a lot in his late thirties, so you can look into those chapters. It’s a sign that Dorian is committing to that hedonistic lifestyle and similar to drugs, it’s just not a good habit that he adopted from Henry.

Allusions (direct and indirect). There are a lot of allusions in this book that tell a bad ending. I think the most interesting one is the allusion to Narcissus. Here’s a really obvious quote: *“Once, in boyish mockery of Narcissus, he had kissed, or feigned to kiss, those painted lips that now smiled so cruelly at him.”* Dorian is compared to Narcissus, and like the self-obsession that killed Narcissus, Dorian’s obsession with his appearance kills his soul. There are more allusions, like Romeo and Juliet (Dorian and Sibyl).

Rhetorical questions? Thoughts? (I’m not sure what to call his one) This one is pretty obvious. Dorian’s thoughts are morally unacceptable at the end of the book. He starts victim blaming a lot, especially towards Basil, and often frames himself as the victim. There’s also the time where he called Sibyl a martyr, which just shows how selfish he is.

Actions. Dorian blackmails Alan Campbell and sends a bunch of young men committing suicide. Yeah, I’d say that’s pretty concerning.

4. ESCAPISM

A lot of symbols!

Chapter 11 was dryyyyy. The whole deal of that chapter was that Dorian was trying to escape the truth that he sucks by reading a book. So that entire chapter plus the symbolism of the book from Lord Henry is about escapism.

Secondly, Dorian tries to redeem himself a lot in the last two chapters. Frankly, it’s useless. But it’s very interesting to see him bring up people like Hetty Merton who he essentially sees as a replacement for Sibyl Vane. It’s important to note that he’s using these characters and these actions to gaslight himself to think that he is redeemable. But even so, it’s obvious that he is never actually improving. For example, he starts \*redeem\* himself as early as the night he left Sibyl Vane. But that for one, was because he couldn’t stand his ugly portrait, and also the next day he woke up really relaxed and lazy, which showed that he never even cared in the first place. Later on, he tries to say that he’s getting better through his attitude towards Hetty, but his so-called improvement is just himself ghosting Hetty, which shows nothing in reality.

Substance abuse! Dorian does drugs and smokes cigs to distract himself from his agony. There’s a very specific description in the chapter before he visits the opium den where he stares at a box a lot and it’s hinted that he’s going through substance abuse. I personally think that this is a sign that Dorian exceeded Lord Henry and became his own bad person. An even worse person than Henry because he’s got all the bad stuff from Henry and he has MORE.