

## Frankenstein • Final Essay • Definitional Argument

Format: typed, double-spaced, standard margins

Length: 1700-2000 words

Due Date:

### ASSIGNMENT:

Write a literary analysis for Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* that argues for two things:

#### 1) What is a monster?

This is your definition—make it specific, and make sure that it contains a theme. You can go as far as having two themes in your definition, but don't make it too elaborate. Remember: the more simple and specific your definition is, the stronger your argument will be.

#### 2) Who is the monster in *Frankenstein*?

This is the core of your argument, and you will devote most of your supporting paragraphs to providing textual analysis that proves X is the monster.

### FORMAT

#### Introduction

Introduce the novel, author, and your argument (your definition of a "monster" and who, therefore, is the monster in *Frankenstein*). Conclude this first paragraph with a sentence that hints at the larger significance of your argument.

#### 1st Supporting Paragraph:

Use this paragraph to explain your definition in global terms and argue for why it is the best definition of a monster. One way to "defend" your definition is to explain why its theme is important. For example, if you think that a true monster lacks respect for nature, you can discuss why it's so important to respect nature in this first paragraph. Keep your discussion in global terms (do not offer evidence yet, and feel free to give some global examples of monsters that fit your definition).

In the final sentence of this paragraph, however, you should shift back into local terms: conclude your paragraph by stating who, therefore, is the monster in Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*.

#### 2nd, 3rd, 4th, and possibly 5th Supporting Paragraphs:

Use the rest of your supporting paragraphs to prove that your character fits your definition of monster and that your definition of monster is important to the novel. Your goal is to use as much of the book as you can to prove your argument, so try to create 3-4 different ways to show how the characters and events in *Frankenstein* prove your argument. For example, if you are arguing that a monster lacks respect for nature, you can use one supporting paragraph to show

that the “anti-monster” does respect nature. Or you can use a paragraph to argue that nature should be respected and show how the characters that do respect nature are all positive. It’s up to you how you choose to organize the evidence in the body of your essay, but remember that you should consider saving your final supporting paragraph for your strongest pieces of evidence that prove your monster meets your definition.

### Conclusion

Finally, tie up your argument by offering something new and interesting. If you haven’t already addressed the larger significance of your argument, you can explain it in some detail in your conclusion. You can also offer another small piece of evidence that connects to a larger significance.

To determine the larger significance of your argument, consider the following questions: How does understanding that X is the monster change how we read the book? What larger issues are raised by your argument? Finally, your conclusion can address both local and global larger significance (i.e. how is your argument significant to the book as a whole? How is your argument significant to all people?).

Do not forget the power of a good conclusion! A hasty or uninteresting conclusion is just like having no conclusion at all.