

By the end of studying **Chapter 4** I need to know:

Plot: Victor attacks his studies and ignores everything else, including his family.

Ideas:

Vocabulary	<p>charnel-house - a building or place where corpses or bones are deposited.</p> <p>Arduous - difficult to do; laborious; onerous; using much energy; strenuous.</p>
Context (To inform interpretation)	<p>Victor isolates himself from his family to focus on his studies which is symbolic of the Enlighten isolating itself/cutting itself off from the Romantic</p>
Themes	<p>Ambition - He fails several times before he is successful at bringing his creation to life</p> <p>Obsession - His work takes its toll on him, affecting both his health and powers of judgement</p> <p>Education - Victor throws himself into his schoolwork, reading all he can about the sciences, particularly chemistry. Gaining a reputation as a scientist and innovator among the professors and fellow students alike.</p>
Deeper understanding	<p>Psychoanalytical interpretation: by isolating himself from his home he is also isolating himself from Superego in order to access the deep and dark desires of the Id.</p> <p>Victor's ambition- Victor's depiction of his overwhelming ambition is evident throughout the chapter- he describes how he was borne on 'like a hurricane' something powerful and unstoppable, yet ultimately destructive. His desire for omnipotence stems from the idea that he sees himself as God. He describes the pains it took to 'animate ht elifeless clay'- alluding to the fact that Man was borne out of clay according to the Bible. This could, also, reinforce the secondary title of the novel: <i>The Modern Prometheus</i>. According to Greek mythology, Prometheus stole fire from the Gods and used it to create man, shaping and moulding them out of clay. In both senses, Victor desires the power of creation- something that he should not have. He also reflects upon how 'a new species would bless me as its creator a source', again using imagery associated with that of a God. The proleptic nature of his statements here also reinforce the extent of Victor's arrogance, he sees himself as being entirely successful- creating not just a singular organism, but an entire species. The fact that his initial thought was to create a complex being such as man, as opposed to a simpler organism, also reinforces this heightened arrogance that he has.</p> <p>Isolation- Victor reflects upon im being at university for two years and 'p[paying] not visit to [his] native Geneva'. He self-imposes exile upon himself from his family. Interestingly, despite ignoring his family, Alphonse does not seek to admonish him (as revealed in Chapter 6); this reminds us somewhat of Walton, who was able to ignore his dying father's requests not to venture on expeditions. It appears that male upper class characters can easily ignore the request of their family without any consequence. The impact of this isolation drives Victor almost to the point of insanity. He describes spending night after night in charnel houses, watching the decaying and decomposition of the human form- speaking in scientific language which suggests a detachment from the reality of what he is seeing. He describes how his 'cheek grew pale with study'- reflecting both the physical and mental deterioration of him as a result of his ambition. This could, equally, be a metaphor for knowledge- as Victor has previously warned- too much knowledge is destructive, here manifesting itself in the physical deterioration of Vicotr's appearance.</p> <p>Enlightenment vs Romantic-</p>

Reading:

Read to the punctuation.

Links across the text:

Chapter 6- Compare Victor's rejection of nature (a Romantic ideal) with the Sublimity of nature in healing Victor following his nervous breakdown.

Letter 1- Robert Walton's ability, like Victor, to ignore his family's requests and also self-impose isolation.

Letter 4- Victor's warnings about the destructive nature of knowledge/ having too much knowledge.

Chapter 10- Victor's believe in his omnipotence is evident when he threatens to **'trample [the creature] to dust'** again alluding to the biblical idea of Man becoming dust upon death.

<p>Quotes and references</p>	<p>My cheek had grown pale with study, and my person had become emaciated with confinement -</p> <p>Who shall conceive the horrors of my secret toil as I dabbled among the unhallowed damps of the grave or tortured the living animal to animate the lifeless clay? - Victor's obsessive drive to create life forces him into secret "horrors."</p> <p>My ardour was indeed the astonishment of the students, and my proficiency that of the masters - Victor perceives himself surpassing all others at the University.</p> <p>No father could claim the gratitude of his child so completely as I should deserve theirs - His expectations of parenthood, mirroring his own experience but contradicting what is to come.</p>
<p>Terminology</p>	<p>Juxtaposition - The beauty of the church is juxtaposed with the ugliness and decay of death</p> <p>Foreshadowing - Victor's obsession with reviving the dead in order to become a 'creator'</p> <p>Simile - describes his life amongst 'normal' people who don't understand the importance of his work or care enough to do anything about it.</p>