

1

Introducing a mystery

How does Stevenson set up the story?

Your progress in this unit:

- understand the characters and events introduced at the start of the novel
- explore how Stevenson presents them
- identify links between this story and other detective and mystery fiction
- explore attitudes towards respectability.

GETTING STARTED - THE STORY AND YOU

What's it all about?

Since it was first published in 1886, *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* has become a popular and influential story.


- 1 Use the internet to find some pictures of the **characters** of Jekyll and Hyde. What do these pictures tell you about the original book and the ideas in it?
- 2 What sort of **genre** is suggested by the images you have found?

What does being 'respectable' mean?

The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde is set in the 19th century. The characters in it are members of the middle class, which was becoming increasingly influential at the time. Most people of this class had strong Christian values and wanted to be seen as models of good behaviour. Ideas about respectability are an important **theme** in the novel.

- 1 Work in pairs. Each of you should think of a living person you consider to be 'respectable'. Describe this person to your partner, but do not give their name. Your partner should try to identify the person from your description. Afterwards, swap over and guess your partner's 'respectable' person.
- 2 What do you think makes a person respectable in the 21st century? In your pairs, agree on a description of 'respectability' and write it down. You could use some of these words in your description:


role model	reputation	status
example	social norms	decency
morality	values	

Key terms

characters: the people in a story; even when based on real people, characters in a novel are invented or fictionalised.

genre: the kind or type of literature to which a text belongs; stories within a particular genre will have similar characteristics.

theme: an idea that a writer keeps returning to, exploring it from different perspectives.

Watch a performance of 'Story of the door' on Cambridge Elevate.

CHAPTER 1: STORY OF THE DOOR

Mr Utterson, a respectable lawyer, is taking a Sunday walk with his friend, Mr Enfield. As they stroll along a quiet street, the sight of a neglected building with no windows and a single door prompts Mr Enfield to tell his friend about an unusual event that he witnessed there.

He describes seeing a strange-looking man knock down a young girl and trample over her. Mr Enfield caught the man and demanded some compensation for the girl. The man's name was Hyde.

Mr Enfield was surprised and puzzled when Hyde entered the neglected building and came out with a cheque signed by a well-known, respected person. Hyde used his own key to enter the building, but Enfield knew that he did not live there.

Although Enfield does not tell Utterson who signed the cheque, Utterson says he already knows. Both men suspect that Hyde had blackmailed this person to sign the cheque. They agree never to talk about the matter again.

GCSE English Literature for AQA: The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde

GETTING CLOSER - FOCUS ON DETAILS

Mr Enfield’s testimony

Mr Enfield is a lawyer. He is Utterson’s friend and ‘distant kinsman, the well-known man about town’. Enfield gives the first account of Mr Hyde when he tells Utterson about the disturbing event he witnessed. The term **testimony** is used to describe this kind of account given by a witness in a story.

1 Read Mr Enfield’s account of what happened when he first saw Mr Hyde. Note down any key phrases that relate to:

- a where the event takes place
- b Mr Enfield’s thoughts and feelings
- c Mr Hyde’s actions
- d paying compensation.

2 Work in pairs. One of you takes on the role of Mr Enfield and gives a spoken account of what happened, using as many key phrases as possible. The other person listens, then gives feedback on the accuracy of the account. Try to identify any key points or phrases that have been missed out.

3 In your pairs, come up with two questions that need answering about each of the following parts of Enfield’s story:

- a the neglected building
- b the door
- c Mr Hyde
- d the cheque.

PUTTING DETAILS TO USE

Understanding Mr Utterson

Stevenson introduces the character of Mr Utterson in the opening lines of the novel. He describes him as ‘the last reputable acquaintance and the last good influence in the lives of down-going men’. What do you think the words ‘reputable’ and ‘good’ and the phrase ‘the lives of down-going men’ suggest about Utterson’s qualities?

1 Look at the following descriptions of Utterson’s character. For each one, decide whether the language reflects Utterson’s profession as a lawyer or whether it suggests something about his personality.

- a cold
- b dreary
- c austere
- d lovable
- e eminently human
- f tolerance for others
- g dusty
- h inclined to help rather than to reprove.

Enfield’s and Utterson’s attitudes

Enfield and Utterson believe that Hyde is blackmailing someone. Knowing how easy it is to destroy someone’s good reputation and respectability, Enfield does not name the person who signed the cheque. Stevenson may be suggesting that even this ‘respectable’ person could have something to hide – and that these two lawyers are turning a blind eye to it:

I incline to Cain’s heresy [...] I let my brother go to the devil in his own way.

Utterson: Chapter 1

In the Bible, Cain killed his brother Abel. When God asked Cain where Abel was, he replied, ‘Am I my brother’s keeper?’ Utterson calls this ‘heresy’ because it goes against the Christian teaching of love for others.

i Contexts

In the late 19th century, the law was a wealthy profession and lawyers enjoyed high status in society. They were valued for their role in the important business of property ownership, inheritance and legal disputes. They had to be trustworthy and discreet in the way they dealt with people who might be on the right or the wrong side of the law.

1 Introducing a mystery

- 1 Enfield explains himself in more detail later on in the chapter. See if you can find the passage. Here are some words and phrases to help you:
- a

The ‘**day of judgement**’ is a reference to passages in the Bible that describe how God will judge the dead according to what they have done in their lives.
- b

To be in ‘**Queer Street**’ means to be in financial or other difficulties.
- 2 Both Utterson and Enfield seem reluctant to go into detail about Mr Hyde. Read the text again and identify which of the two characters says each of the following quotations.
- a

‘signed with a name I can’t mention’
- b

‘that’s a good rule of yours’
- c

‘Here is another lesson to say nothing.’
- d

‘Let us make a bargain never to refer to this again.’



Watch actors and the director discuss the characters of Utterson and Enfield on Cambridge Elevate.



Learning checkpoint

Use the activity in the section ‘Understanding Mr Utterson’ to help you write a short paragraph summarising your impressions of Mr Utterson’s character in Chapter 1.

How will I know I’ve done this well?

- ✓

The best answers will explore why Stevenson wanted to show different sides to a character, and analyse the way he uses language to make his reader understand Utterson. They will offer a personal response and include supportive details from the text.
- ✓

Good answers will explain how Stevenson has made Utterson’s character interesting and believable in the story. They will include references to some well-chosen details.
- ✓

Weaker answers will describe Utterson as a real person and what he does in the story as if it were true. It will not include many examples or mention what Stevenson does as a writer.



Key terms

testimony: an account given by a witness to an event.

... the last reputable acquaintance and the last good influence in the lives of down-going men.

Chapter 1



GCSE English Literature for AQA: The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde

- 3
- Look at the following statements about the attitudes of Enfield and Utterson. Decide whether you agree or disagree with each one, or whether you can't yet say. Find quotations from the text to support your answers.
- a
- The two men show the discretion expected of lawyers and avoid gossip.
- b
- They do not ask questions because they do not care about anybody else.
- c
- They do not criticise others because they have secrets of their own to hide.
- d
- They do not want to admit their suspicions about someone they know and respect.
- e
- They avoid looking below the surface because they are afraid of what they might find.
- f
- They want to protect the respectable reputation of someone they know.
- 4
- Work in pairs. Write one paragraph each about Utterson. One of you should give a positive view of this character, the other a less flattering opinion. Afterwards, discuss how successfully you think you have expressed your ideas.

Choosing names

Writers carefully construct their characters to fit the stories they write. Sometimes the names a writer chooses give clues about the characters.

- 1
- Mr Hyde's name is a **homophone**. Do you think his name is a good choice for a character in a mystery novel? Why, or why not? Consider the following:
- a
- What associations does the word have?
- b
- Does it suggest a good or bad character?

Find out more about character and characterisation in the novel in Unit 13.

The setting of Chapter 1

The **setting** can influence a reader's understanding and responses to a story. Read the description of the street and building that prompt Mr Enfield to tell his tale (beginning '**It chanced on one of these rambles**'). Now look at this example of a student's analysis of Stevenson's language:

Stevenson describes a busy street in London. During the week it is a shopping street. Stevenson describes the shop fronts as being inviting, 'like rows of smiling saleswomen'. This **simile** brings the shops alive, making them seem welcoming to customers. He creates a contrast between this street and the 'dingy neighbourhood' around it.

Opening sentences give an interpretation of the scene. Focus on a short quotation embedded in a sentence ready for analysis. Uses literary term to describe the language and comment on its effect.

Do you agree with the student's interpretation? Before you do Activity 1, think about whether there are any points that you would add or change to improve the analysis.

- 1
- Read the next paragraph, which focuses on '**a certain sinister block of building**'. Using the example as a model, write an analysis of this paragraph. Think about how the **adjectives** ('**sinister**', '**blind**', '**discoloured**', '**sordid**', '**blistered**', '**distained**') might create an impression of the building or **contrast** it with the street on which it stands.

Find out more about context and setting in the novel in Unit 12.

GETTING IT INTO WRITING

How does Stevenson engage the reader?

- 1 Write a paragraph explaining how Stevenson engages the reader’s interest in some mysterious events in Chapter 1.
- 2 Write a paragraph explaining how Stevenson presents Mr Utterson. Do you think he comes across as an important character? Why, or why not? What evidence can you find to suggest that he might be capable of investigating the mysteries?
- 3 Swap your paragraphs with a partner. Talk about how well you have understood details from the text and explained Stevenson’s presentation.

Complete this assignment on Cambridge Elevate.

GETTING FURTHER

Ideas about duality

Chapter 1 introduces the theme of duality – the idea that there are two aspects or ways of seeing things.

- 1 Copy and complete the following table to identify how Stevenson presents the theme of duality through the characters and settings in Chapter 1. Include your own comments and short quotations from the text. Some examples have been given to start you off.

	On one hand ...	On the other hand ...
Mr Utterson	Unfriendly and cold? 'never lighted by a smile' 'backward in sentiment'	Tolerant and helps others? 'eminently human' 'somehow lovable'
the street		It shines out in contrast to its neighbours.
the man who signed the cheque for Mr Hyde	He was woken up to give money willingly to the unpleasant and 'detestable' Mr Hyde.	
the building with the door		Somebody must live there because Enfield says there is ...

Key terms

homophone: a word that sounds the same as another word, but which has a different spelling and meaning, e.g. Hyde/hide.

setting: the description of the place in which a story is set.

simile: a comparison between two things that uses the words 'as' or 'like'.

adjective: a word that describes a person, place or thing.

contrast: to point out the ways in which two or more things are different from one another.