



Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley
Pages 742-747

About the Author

1. Who were her famous parents?
2. What happened to her mother?
3. Describe her childhood.
4. Whom did she marry and under what conditions?
5. With which famous writers did she converse?
6. What novel did she write and when?
7. Who did Mary preserve her husband's work?
8. What else did she write?

About the Selection

1. Describe the time in which *Frankenstein* was written.
2. What is the work considered?
3. What themes are explored in the novel?

From the Introduction to *Frankenstein*

1. Define autobiography.
2. Define catharsis.
3. How did the group of friends entertain themselves that rainy summer?
4. What proposition did Lord Byron make to the group?
5. What must exist as a prerequisite to invention?
6. Why might Mary Shelley have felt fearful about presenting her writing to this gathering?
7. What idea did Mary get from the conversation between Percy and Lord Byron?
8. Why was Mary's dream so frightful?
9. Why does Mary have special affection for her creation? How is she feeling as she writes this?
10. What does Shelley mean by "I bid my hideous progeny go forth and prosper" in the last paragraph of the selection?
11. Reread Mary Shelley's biography on page 652. What special significance might the idea of creating life have for her, in terms of motherhood and personal grief?
12. Although this introduction tells only part of Mary Shelley's life, it is very revealing. What do you learn about Shelley's life from this selection? Why do you think she felt compelled to include this autobiographical information in the introduction to her book?
13. Discuss the role of catharsis in the telling of ghost stories and its role in Mary Shelley's idea for the novel *Frankenstein*.