# Student Worksheets: 19th Century Texts

# Scientific Advance

### Activity 1

**a)** Read the extract from *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*. Can you spot the metaphors and similes in the text?

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Where in the text** | **Example** |
| First four lines | 1) |
| Rest of paragraph one  CLUE: one of these is also an example of personification | 1)  2)  3)  4) |
| Paragraph two | 1) |
| Paragraph three  CLUE: it’s an extension of the metaphor in paragraph 2 | 1) |

**b)** Why is Jekyll’s disposition like a “prisonhouse”? Use the quotations to help you.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Reason** | **Evidence** |
|  | “That which stood within ran free” |
|  | “as my pleasures were (to say the least) undignified, and I was not only well known and highly considered, but growing towards the elderly man, this incoherency of my life was daily growing more unwelcome” |

### Activity 2

**a)** Read the entries from the *Diary of a Resurrectionist 1811-1812* and answer the following questions.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **?** | **Reason** | **Evidence** |
| Why has the Resurrection-man not used any of the devices that Stevenson used to convince us that this actually happened? |  |  |
| What do you think motivates the resurrectionists to do their work? |  | . |
| Do you think the gang of resurrection-men care about the advancement of scientific knowledge? |  |  |
| Is Jekyll interested in the advancement of scientific knowledge? |  |  |
| Does scientific knowledge progress thanks to the work of the resurrectionists? |  |  |
| Do you have any sympathy for Henry Jekyll and the resurrectionists?  There is no right answer here, but you should back your opinion up with any evidence that is either stated or implied in the text. |  |  |

### Activity 3

**a)** Read the *Miraculous Circumstance* broadside report. How are language, form and structure used to convince us that this story is true?

The first example has been completed:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **How** | **Evidence** |
| The mode | It’s a piece of news published in a broadside i.e. it’s supposedly fact. |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |

**b)** Underline the words in the following lines which reveal how John Macintire feels about the resurrectionists.

*They dragged me out of the coffin by the head, and carried me swiftly away. When borne to some distance, I was thrown down like a clod, and by the interchange of one or two brief sentences, I discovered that I was in the hands of two of those robbers, who live by plundering the grave, and selling the bodies of parents, and children, and friends.*

### Writing Activity

After John Macintire was rescued, his opinion of the resurrectionists changed and he joined the gang who rescued him.

Write a diary entry by John Macintire on the day that he too, finds something unexpected and incredible in a grave he robs.

### Extension Activity

**Semantic change**

The meaning of words changes over time. This is called semantic change. Semantic change is something you will encounter as you study 19th century texts.

One type of semantic change is generalisation. Generalisation is when the meaning of a word becomes broader over time.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Type of semantic change** | **Definition** | **Example** |
| Generalisation | When a word takes on additional meanings | Mantle used to mean cloak. Now it means anything that completely covers something, e.g. a mantle of snow. |

Fill in the words missing from the ‘Example’ and ‘Current Meaning’ columns below.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Types of semantic change** | **Example** | **Former meaning** | **Current meaning** |
| Generalisation |  | Biscuit |  |
|  | An infection that replicates inside other living organisms |  |
|  | Small rodent |  |
|  | Foam caused by the breaking of waves  A sport takes its name from this |  |

Find another word from the *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* extract that has generalised and fill in the table below.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Example** | **Former meaning** | **Current meaning** |
|  | A demon or the devil |  |

The opposite of generalisation is **specialisation**.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Type of semantic change** | **Definition** | **Example** |
| Specialisation | When the meaning of a word narrows | An undertaker was someone who carried out any task. Funeral undertaker eventually just became undertaker. |

Can you find the former and current meanings of the following words?

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Type of semantic change** | **Example** | **Former meaning** | **Current meaning** |
| Specialisation | Doctor |  | Medical doctor became just doctor |
| deer | Any animal |  |

The meaning of a word can worsen over time too. This is called **pejoration**.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Type of semantic change** | **Definition** | **Example** |
| Pejoration | When the meaning of a word worsens over time | Crafty used to mean skilful or ingenious – it came from the Old English cræftig |

Can you find the original, less negative meanings of the words below? Write the current meaning in the final column.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Type of semantic change** | **Example** | **Former meaning** | **Current meaning** |
| Pejoration | Cunning |  |  |
| Notorious |  |  |
| Awful |  |  |
| Villain |  |  |

On the other hand the meaning of words can improve over time too. This is called **amelioration**. Find the former meanings of the words below and write their current meanings too.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Type of semantic change** | **Example** | **Former meaning** | **Current meaning** |
| Amelioration | Pretty |  |  |
| Nice |  |  |

Use the current meanings of the words that have undergone amelioration and pejoration in the tables above to write a sentence describing Mr Hyde.

If you had written the sentence in Old or Middle English how would the meaning change?

### WRITING ACTIVITY

Write a short story that is set in the past. Use words that have undergone semantic change or have gone out of use. You could use archaic sentence structure too.

Follow this link to find words that have gone out of use. Try to include some of them in your writing:

<http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/words/archaic-words>

Here are two examples of how others did it:

1. 19th century author, philosopher and furniture maker William Morris wrote fantastical novels in archaic English. Here is how the character Hallblithe picks a fight in Morris’s fantasy novel *The Story of the Glittering Plain* (1891):

*Thou seemest a big man, and belike shall be good of thine hands. Come and fight with me; and then he of us who is vanquished, if he be unslain, shall serve the other for a year, and then shalt thou do my business in the ransoming.*

*2. The Two Towers* by JRR Tolkien was published in 1954. There are archaic words on every page. Tolkien uses the word ‘reek’, for instance, to mean smoke rather than unpleasant smell. It comes from the Old English rēocan:

*Mists curled and smoked from dark and noisome pools. The reek of them hung stifling in the still air.*

Instead of using the passive voice and saying “Supper is being prepared”, an elf uses the old-fashioned “Supper is preparing.” People hadn’t spoken like that since before the 18th century.

### Activity 4

Read the extract from one of the 19th century letters written by Bahá’u’lláh and answer the following questions.

1. Look at the first three lines of the letter. What should the world leaders’ only concern be? **(2 marks)**

2. What is the world compared to? And how is this metaphor extended? **(3 marks)**

3. Can you find **five** other words in the text that relate to this metaphor? **(5 marks)**

4. How is this metaphor extended to include the rulers of the world? **(1 mark)**

5. Look again at the extract from *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*. In what ways is Dr Jekyll like the rulers of the world as Bahá’u’lláh describes them? **(4 marks)**

6. Read the final paragraph of the letter. What is the answer to the world’s problems? **(2 marks)**