

## Frankenstein Critical Analysis Evaluation Essay

**Note:** Please review the source guidelines below very carefully. If you do not choose from the provided sources below, this will cause a grading delay and you will need to resubmit the assignment.

For this assignment you will write your evaluation essay. You are required to submit only your final draft for this assignment (though we encourage all students to take advantage of the additional feedback a draft can provide). Use the grader's feedback and the rubric to make revisions to your draft before submitting the final. Your second draft will be graded.

Now that you have completed Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*, you are in a good position to consider what critics have written about the novel. You will need a total of **two critiques** (also known as critical analysis essays) for this assignment.

First, **use the selection of links below** to locate a **critical analysis essay written about the 1818 version of Mary Shelley's novel**. You may focus most of your attention on this first critique.

**Choose from among these sources:**

- ✓ ipl2 Literary Criticism collection: **If you use this site, you must choose from the first seven critiques listed as the final two are not scholarly:**  
( <http://www.ipl.org/div/litcrit/bin/litcrit.out.pl?ti=fra-63> )
- ✓ Professor Sherry Ginn's critique:<sup>1</sup> <http://www.clas.ufl.edu/ipsa/2003/ginn.html>
- ✓ Professor Naomi Hetherington's critique: <http://knarf.english.upenn.edu/Articles/hether.html>

The questions in the study guides should have helped you evaluate this criticism in your head. Now it's time to write it down!

Your evaluation may go more smoothly if you approach the guiding questions in this order:

### 1. Evaluate the critic/author:

Who wrote the criticism you read? What credentials does the author have (education, professional career, other publications, etc.)? (If you are using a credible author, you should be able to find her/his credentials fairly easily)

### 2. Find the thesis of the article:

What is the thesis of the critical article you've chosen? What point does the author want to make about *Frankenstein*?

### 3. Evaluate the thesis:

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<sup>1</sup> Note: You should avoid reading Ginn's article too simplistically. A common misperception is that Ginn is arguing in favor of this novel being an autobiography, but if you read her article in full, you will find that this isn't really the case. If you misinterpret your chosen source, it will affect your own arguments, so please read carefully.

Do you agree with this thesis? Why or why not? We've covered many ideas in the study guides. Can you find points within the guides that support your agreement or disagreement with the critical writer(s)? Look for new supporting information rather than revisiting the same ones the critics have chosen.

#### 4. **Evaluate the support:**

Whether you agree or disagree with the thesis, does the critic provide sufficient research from the text and outside references to make a strong case? What does the article have for support from the text or outside sources? In your opinion, what makes these references valid? Do you feel the author uses this support properly?

Next, locate a second critique about the novel that includes ideas somewhat similar (genre classification, for instance) to any of the discussions you have in your essay. The second critique can either support or refute any of the claims in your paper. The objective of this portion of the essay is to further support your opinion of the primary critic's thesis or support. Therefore, for example, if you choose a secondary article that refutes any of your claims, you will need to counteract those ideas to bring the focus of your essay back in alignment with your essay's thesis (your personal opinion of how the primary critic is either correct or incorrect in his or her thesis claim and/or how the first critic is either effective or ineffective in his or her support). Every discussion in this essay should ultimately support the claim you make in your thesis.

For instance, if the first critic argues that Shelley's writing is juvenile, and if you agree, does the second critic also support this thesis? How so? If the second critic does not support your assessment of the first critic's thesis, what evidence can you use from the text to argue that the second critic is incorrect? Consider another example: if the first critic believes the novel is autobiographical, and if you disagree, does the second critic help you argue your own view of the first critic's thesis? If so, how? Perhaps the second critic disagrees with your view and feels the novel is autobiographical--if that's the case, be prepared to use evidence from the text to refute the second critic's thesis and support your own argument. Using two critiques in this way will allow you to create a polished, comprehensive Evaluation Essay that allows you to connect your own ideas to those of seasoned critics.

In addition to addressing each of the evaluative components above, develop your essay so it has a clear introduction, body, and conclusion. You must include an evaluative thesis statement both the introduction and the conclusion. Ensure that each of your claims are supported with valid evidence from the literary criticism you have chosen, the novel, *Frankenstein*, and/or the study guides.

Using proper MLA<sup>2</sup> style, insert parenthetical citations for all borrowed information in addition to a Works Cited page for *Frankenstein* and your chosen literary critiques; you are not required to cite the study guides if you use them.

**Helpful Hints:** For a thesis statement, try answering a question like: How and how well does this piece of criticism state and support its argument regarding *Frankenstein*?

You might use these as possible guidelines in crafting your thesis statement:

(Critic, aka author of the critique) uses (add critic title) to (add an adjective to describe the effectiveness of the argument such as “adequately” or “inadequately”) argue that (add critic’s thesis) by (explain why and/or include your support).

OR

(Critic)’s (add critique title) (add an adjective to describe the effectiveness of the argument such as “adequately” or “inadequately”) argue that (add critic’s thesis) because (explain why and/or include your support).

More specific thesis examples:

John Smith uses "*Frankenstein* Critique Essay" to adequately argue that Victor's mother created the first monster by coddling Victor as a boy.

OR

John Smith's "*Frankenstein* Critique Essay" does not effectively argue that Victor's mother created the first monster because the novel *Frankenstein* too strongly supports inherent good or bad, which means nurturing roles cannot be held responsible.

The guidelines for this assignment are as follows:

**Length:** This assignment should be at least 750 words.

**Header:** Include a header in the upper left-hand corner of your writing assignment with the following information:

Your first and last name

Course Title (Composition II)

Assignment name (Evaluation Essay)

Current Date

**Format:**

MLA-style source documentation and Works Cited<sup>3</sup>

Your last name and page number in the upper-right corner of each page

Double-spacing throughout

Standard font (TimesNewRoman, Calibri)

Title, centered after heading

1" margins on all sides

Save the file using one of the following extensions: .docx, .doc, .rtf, or .txt

**Underline your thesis statement in the introductory paragraph.**

Reminder: You need *at least two critiques in addition to the novel in Works Cited* in order to receive the highest score. In other words, you need **three sources total in cited in the essay and on the Works Cited page** in order to earn the maximum points in the corresponding column on the grading rubric. **Failure to meet the source minimum will result in a severe decrease in your grade.**

<sup>3</sup> This resource may be helpful as you are making MLA formatting decisions:

<https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/>

<sup>2</sup> Tip: Review the course topics for MLA resources. Failure to use MLA style will result in a reduced grade.