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 **Prestwick House**
Activity Pack
Literature Made Fun!



Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde
BY ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON



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All references come from the Prestwick House Literary Touchstone Press edition of *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, published 2005.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Pre-Reading**Research****Objective:** Researching the author**Activity**

Using the library or the Internet, research the life and times of Robert Louis Stevenson. Record information on the following topics:

- significant dates in Stevenson's life
- facts about Stevenson's personal life
- facts about Stevenson's professional life
- descriptions of Stevenson's environment (his community, society, culture, etc.)
- examples of Stevenson's most significant works
- people who influenced or inspired Stevenson's work
- events in Stevenson's life which may have affected the themes and topics he used in his novels

Use your research to write a five-paragraph mini-biography of Stevenson.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Chapters 1 – 10**Suspense****Objective:** Recording questions and answers**Activity**

One way authors create suspense in a novel is to raise questions that are not answered immediately at all, even by the end of the book.

As you read each chapter, keep a list of questions that arise in your mind and are left unanswered at the end of the chapter. Note the page number on which each question occurred to you. When a question is answered in a later chapter, record the answer and the page number on which it occurs. If a question is not directly answered, but you can infer the answer based on later information, record your inference. If a question is never answered, leave the answer column blank.

Example questions from chapter one have been recorded for you.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Chapters 1 – 10

Allusions

Objective: Recognizing allusions and understanding their power

Activity

An allusion in a literary text is a reference, either obvious or subtle, to a well-known person, place, or event, or to another literary text. The writer does not explain the reference. Rather, the effect of the allusion depends upon the reader's knowledge and his or her recognition of the reference. Authors use allusions to enhance their descriptions through comparisons. They are a kind of literary inside joke because, while you can still comprehend the literal meaning of a passage without understanding an allusion it contains, you don't get the pleasure of the added detail and clarification the allusions provide. Prior to the twentieth century, authors could reasonably presume that educated readers would recognize references to the Bible and the classics. This is not always a safe assumption today.

Stevenson used many allusions to enhance *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*. He was especially fond of biblical allusions. Brought up in a Presbyterian home, Stevenson found that biblical allusions were a useful way of delineating good and evil. In the first chapter, for example, the narrator Utterson remarks that he "incline[s] to Cain's heresy." He "let[s] his brother go to the Devil in his own way." (Pg. 1) This is a reference to the story of Cain and Abel in which Cain, in anger and jealousy, kills his brother Abel. When God asks Cain where his brother is, Cain replies, "I don't know...Am I my brother's keeper?" (Genesis 4:9) In the context of the novel, it seems that Utterson is suggesting that his tendency is to be aloof and uninvolved in the lives of his fellowmen so that he, too, would be tempted to reply as Cain did, "It's not my job to take care of them." He's not saying that he literally murders his fellowmen but that his lack of influence in their lives could allow some to destroy themselves. This is an exaggeration on his part, for the text makes it clear that he often finds himself in the position of willingly helping someone who has nowhere else to turn. His choice of Cain is a potentially disparaging one to himself: it allies him with a murderer; however, his choice of this comparison is also true to the description of his character as a person who is very harsh in his judgment of himself. Fill in the chart that follows. For each of the allusions,

- Explain in detail the historical, mythological, literary, or Biblical event or person to which Stevenson is referring. You may need to consult a library or the Internet for help.
- Explain how the details of the references add to your understanding of or appreciation for the situation in the novel in which the reference occurs.

An example has been done for you.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Chapters 2 – 5**Cliché II****Objective:** Recognizing, understanding, and rewriting clichés**Activity**

Fill in the chart that follows for some common clichés. Explain the meaning of each one, and if it has a specific historical or cultural significance or origin, record that as well. You may need to consult a library or the Internet to help you. Finally, re-write the worn-out metaphors by creating a new image that conveys the same meaning as the cliché. Consider common metaphors that are unique to our time and culture, such as computer or technology related images. Caution: don't just re-word the phrase or record another cliché. Create an entirely new image that means the same thing as the original.

An example has been done for you.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Chapters 9 – 10**Epitaphs**

Objectives: Summarizing a character's personality
Writing an epitaph

Activity

An epitaph is the brief inscription on a tombstone that summarizes life and/or personality of the deceased and may allude to the manner of his or her death and to his or her religious beliefs. Using your knowledge of the lives and personalities of the characters, write an epitaph for Dr. Jekyll's or Dr. Lanyon's tombstone. Write it in several short lines, as a poem, capitalizing the first word in each line. Your epitaphs may be ironic, but they should not be funny. Some examples have been provided.