

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Robert Louis Stevenson was born in Scotland in 1850. His father was a well-known engineer¹. Robert studied engineering then law². He became a full-time writer and author in 1876, and married Fanny Osbourne in 1880.

Stevenson became known for his travel writing, such as *Travels with a Donkey in the Cevennes* (1879), and adventure stories, such as *Treasure Island* (1883). He disliked the hypocrisy³ he saw in 19th century British society and his attitudes and outlook⁴ are, to a 21st century reader, quite modern.

Stevenson suffered from ill health⁵ and he and Fanny traveled widely looking for a climate that would be good for him. His travels often gave him material for his writing.



He wrote *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* and *Kidnapped*⁶ while he and Fanny were living in Bournemouth from 1886 to 1887. This town on the south coast of England had been recommended to him for its good climate. And his father bought them a house here as a wedding present.

After 1887, his search for a more adventurous life and healthier climate led Robert and Fanny to travel around Europe, then the Pacific Ocean. In 1889 they set up house⁷ on the Pacific island of Samoa, where Stevenson died in 1894.

Stevenson remains a popular author wherever English is spoken, and he is also remembered in France, where his *Travels with a Donkey in the Cevennes* has helped the revival⁸ of the tourist industry in that area.

1 **engineer:** person who designs and makes machines

2 **law:** rules of a country

3 **hypocrisy:** pretending to be better than you are

4 **outlook:** views on life

5 **ill health:** when you are sick

6 **kidnapped:** when someone is taken by force

7 **set up house:** decided to live

8 **revival:** making popular again

ABOUT THE BOOK

The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde is possibly Stevenson's most famous book. And the phrase "Jekyll and Hyde" (as in the expression "he is a Jekyll and Hyde character") has become a very common saying in English, and is well-known even by people who have not read the book.

The main theme of the book is the "divided self"¹ or the 'dual'² nature of man. It is centered around the belief that good and evil are present in all of us and explores what could happen if these parts were chemically divided into two separate personalities. It is a theme that was particularly dear³ to Stevenson who had already developed a play and a short story on it.




The story also looks at the importance of reputation⁴. The respectable⁵ Dr Jekyll starts his transformation into the evil Mr Hyde because he is afraid his behavior is inappropriate and he wants to save his reputation. His friends Utterson, Lanyon and Enfield avoid gossip⁶ at all costs. The importance of reputation also reflects the importance of appearances and facades⁷ in Victorian society and how, very often, the surface hides a sordid⁸ and violent reality.

The story's structure is also interesting. In addition to the narrative told by the writer, we have two descriptions of the same events written by characters in the story. We read the same part of the story three times, but from three different points of view.

The story has been translated into many languages and been the inspiration for a number of films, musicals, plays, stories, cartoons and videogames.


- 1 **divided self:** two parts of one person
- 2 **dual:** double
- 3 **dear:** important
- 4 **reputation:** what people say and think of you
- 5 **respectable:** who people respect
- 6 **gossip:** unkind talk about other people
- 7 **facades:** appearances that hide the truth
- 8 **sordid:** dirty and unpleasant

BEFORE READING


 **1** Look at these scenes from the book. Discuss with a partner.




- a What is happening in each scene?
- b What happens next in each scene?
- c Think of a title for each picture.

 **2** Look at the pictures again. Write five questions about each one. Ask and answer the questions with a partner then compare your answers with the rest of the class.

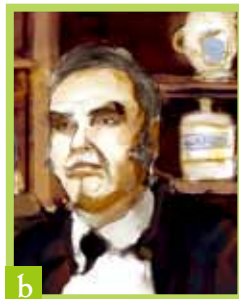
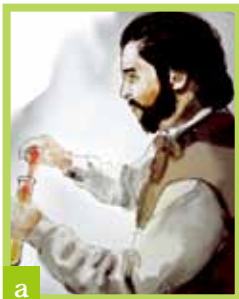
- 3** Look through the illustrations in the story. Do you recognize any of the characters from the scenes above? How are the illustrations similar to the two scenes above? What atmosphere do the illustrations suggest? What elements of the illustrations add to the atmosphere (colors, light, style, and subject)?

 **4** What do you know about the story of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde? Brainstorm in class.

 **5** Listen to Dr Jekyll speaking. Then tick (✓) T (true) or F (false) below.

- | | | | |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> T | <input type="checkbox"/> F | <input type="checkbox"/> a | Mr Hyde is more evil than Dr Jekyll. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> T | <input type="checkbox"/> F | <input type="checkbox"/> b | Dr Jekyll is taller than Mr Hyde. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> T | <input type="checkbox"/> F | <input type="checkbox"/> c | Mr Hyde is younger than Dr Jekyll. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> T | <input type="checkbox"/> F | <input type="checkbox"/> d | Dr Jekyll is uglier than Mr Hyde. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> T | <input type="checkbox"/> F | <input type="checkbox"/> e | Mr Hyde is mixture of good and evil. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> T | <input type="checkbox"/> F | <input type="checkbox"/> f | Mr Hyde has got a kindly face. |

6 Look at three pictures below. Which one is Mr Hyde? Give reasons for your choice.



7 The story is set in Victorian London. In groups find out as much as you can about life at that time. Write a description of your daily life in Victorian London.



The Story of the Door



Mr Utterson was a lawyer¹, and a man of some contradictions². He hardly ever smiled, so he looked rather unfriendly and unwelcoming. But, in company with friends, and at parties, he was quite social and companionable³. He did not allow himself many luxuries, and did not spend much money on himself at all. Although he enjoyed fine⁴ wines, he did not drink them when alone. He enjoyed the theater, but had not gone to see a play for twenty years. However, he was happy to see others enjoy themselves, and did not complain or criticize⁵ them for allowing an excess of pleasure in their lives. Because of this he was often one of the last respectable friends of men who were losing their good reputation⁶ and going downwards in society.

He could be called modest, for he was good-natured to his friends and did not expect them to follow his example. He accepted them as they were, faults⁷ and all. His companions were usually distant relations from his own family, or friends that he had known for a long time. You could say that he did not choose his friends, but they gradually collected around him in time, like ivy⁸ grows on a tree.

1 **lawyer:** person who looks after other people's legal problems

2 **contradictions:** opposite ideas or tendencies

3 **companionable:** happy to be with people

4 **fine:** good quality

5 **criticize:** tell someone they have done wrong

6 **reputation:** what people say and think of you

7 **faults:** weaknesses; bad points

8 **ivy:** a climbing plant



One friend in particular was Mr Richard Enfield, a distant relative, and a well-known man in the city of London. The two men were very different, but they always went for a long Sunday walk together.

People who saw them out on their walk reported that they rarely spoke, often looked unhappy, and always seemed to welcome the sight of other friends. However, it is a fact that the two men looked forward to¹ these weekly walks. They would even cancel other appointments in order to go and enjoy their walks without interruption.

Friends

- Who are your closest friends? What do you like to do with them?
- Do you enjoy doing different things with different friends?

One day, while they were out on their walk together, they were strolling² along a small quiet street in an otherwise busy³ area of London. It was now quiet because it was Sunday and most of the shops were closed. But during the week the shops and businesses in that street were busy, and most were successful. It was a pleasant, colorful street, which was kept clean and attractive by the people who lived and worked there. Or rather it was all clean and attractive except for one building, two storeys⁴ high, next to an open passage that led away from the street.

1 **looked forward to:** waited with pleasure for

2 **strolling:** walking slowly, in a relaxed way

3 **otherwise busy:** that was usually busy

4 **storeys:** floors or levels of a building



This building had no windows facing the street, and its bare, unfriendly wall was broken only by a door at ground level. The wall was discolored and crumbling⁵ and the door was scratched⁶ and dirty, with peeling⁷ paint. It had no bell or doorknocker. It looked uncared for, and the scratches and writing that had been left by children had not been cleaned or repaired.

As they passed, Mr Enfield asked Mr Utterson if he had ever noticed the door, because it reminded him of a very strange story.

"No," said Mr Utterson. "What story was that?"

"Well," replied Mr Enfield. "Once, I was coming home this way at about 3 a.m. on a dark winter's night, and the whole area was very quiet and deserted. It was so quiet that I thought to myself, 'If I see a policeman I will feel safer.' But then suddenly I saw two people. One was a small unpleasant-looking man walking along this street at a good speed. The second was a small girl, about eight or nine years old, running as fast as she could along another street which led into this one. Well, the two met at the corner and ran into each other. The unusual thing was that instead of stopping and apologizing⁸, the little man, quite⁹ on purpose¹⁰, stamped¹¹ hard on the girl as she lay on the ground, screaming with pain. Then he walked on, leaving her there.



5 **crumbling:** with small pieces breaking off

6 **scratched:** with long narrow marks

7 **peeling:** separating from the wood

8 **apologizing:** saying sorry

9 **quite:** (here) completely

10 **on purpose:** deliberately; when you mean to do something

11 **stamped:** brought his foot down