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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Emily Brontë was born on July 30th, 1818, the fifth child of six. When she was three years old, her mother died and the children were brought up by an aunt. They lived in the parsonage¹ in Haworth, a village in West Yorkshire, because their father was the parson² there. The village was on the edge³ of a large moor⁴ and this landscape was the inspiration for Emily's writing.

For a short time she attended a school with her older sisters Maria, Elizabeth and Charlotte. When Maria and Elizabeth both died of tuberculosis⁵ in 1825, Charlotte and Emily were taken home. After that they were educated with their brother Branwell by their father at the parsonage.



Emily loved the beautiful, windswept⁶ Yorkshire countryside around Haworth and became sad and ill when she was away from it. She had a job as a private teacher for a short time in 1837, and in 1842 she went to Belgium with Charlotte to study French and German at a girls' academy. Later the two sisters opened a school in their own home but they had to close it because they didn't have enough students. Haworth was too far from big towns and cities for most people.

Emily, Charlotte and their younger sister Anne all enjoyed writing. In 1846 they published a collection of their poetry. The following year Emily's only novel *Wuthering Heights* was published. Emily Brontë died of tuberculosis in December 1848 and is buried in Haworth.

1 **parsonage**: house where a parson (priest) lives

2 **parson**: priest in charge of a church

3 **on the edge**: (here) at the beginning

4 **moor**: large area of wild land

5 **tuberculosis**: a serious infectious disease

6 **windswept**: place with a lot of wind and few trees to protect it

ABOUT THE BOOK

Wuthering Heights is a story about love and revenge¹. It follows the life of Heathcliff, a mysterious gypsy-like person, from his childhood to his death at the age of 38. It is set on the moors in West Yorkshire, an area Emily Brontë knew and loved. It is the only novel Brontë ever published.

The title of the book is the name of one of the two houses that feature in the book, and describes the house's position on a windy (wuthering) hill (height). It tells the story of the unresolved love and passion between childhood friends, Catherine Earnshaw and Heathcliff and how it destroys both them and their families.



The book is told in a series of flashbacks² by two narrators. The first, Mr Lockwood, rents Thrushcross Grange from Heathcliff and the second, Nelly Dean, is a servant³ who tells Lockwood about the events of the past. Both of the narrators take part in the action of the story and allow us to have a first-hand account⁴ of both the present and past.

The main theme in the story is love, and how love can damage people if it is not expressed well. Unresolved love can turn to hate and hate becomes revenge. Nature is another important part of the story and the conflict between nature and civilization is embodied⁵ in the relationship between Heathcliff and his rival⁶, Edgar Linton.

Although *Wuthering Heights* is now considered to be a classic of English literature when it was first published critics found the book to be strange and shocking yet they all agreed that it was compulsive⁷ reading.

¹ **revenge:** something you do to hurt someone because they have hurt you

² **flashbacks:** when you talk about the past as if it were the present

³ **servant:** someone whose job it is to work in another person's home

⁴ **first-hand account:** direct personal experience

⁵ **embodied:** seen

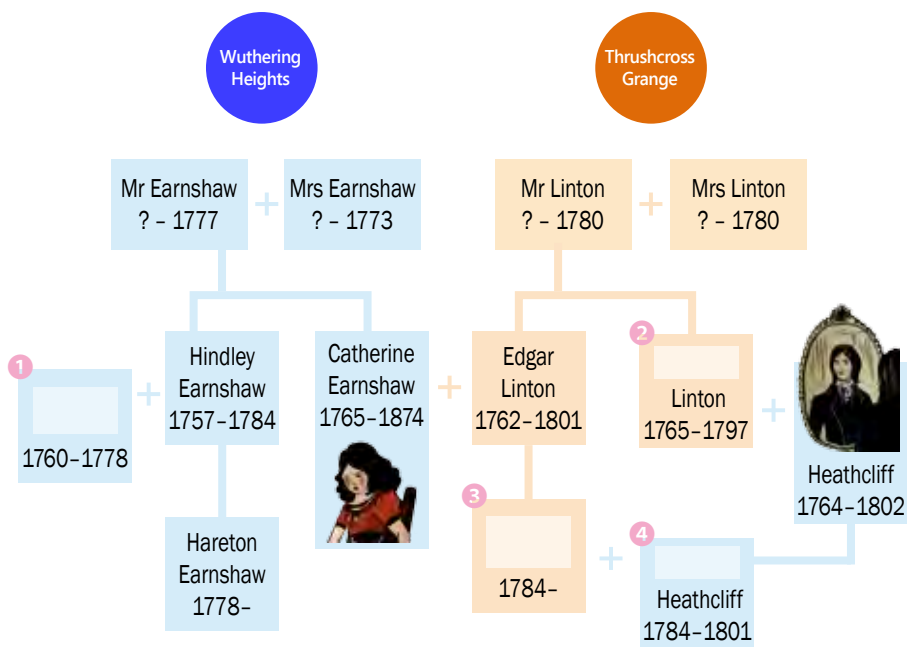
⁶ **rival:** person he must compete against

⁷ **compulsive:** that you cannot stop

BEFORE READING

1 Look at the family tree of the main characters in the story. Read the sentences and fill in the missing names **1**–**4**.

- ☐ a Catherine and Edgar's daughter is called Cathy Linton.
- ☐ b Hindley married a woman called Frances.
- ☐ c Linton is Heathcliff's son's first name.
- ☐ d Edgar's sister's name is Isabella.



2 Create your own family tree. Ask your family for the information. Compare family trees with a partner.

3 Look again at the information in the family tree in Exercise **1**. Answer the questions.

- ☐ a How many cousins did Cathy Linton have?
- ☐ b How old was Hindley Earnshaw when he died?
- ☐ c Which two characters died in 1780? And which two in 1801?
- ☐ d Who was younger – Heathcliff or Edgar Linton?
- ☐ e What was the relationship between Hareton Earnshaw and Edgar Linton?

4 The following sentences describe 5 of the characters. Match a beginning (a-e) with a suitable ending (1-5).

- | | |
|---------|--|
| _____ a | Heathcliff had dark hair and eyes and dressed |
| _____ b | Cathy Linton had golden curls that fell |
| _____ c | Hareton's hair was uncombed and his hands were brown |
| _____ d | Catherine Earnshaw had thick dark curls, dark eyes |
| _____ e | Linton Heathcliff was a delicate boy |
-
- ☐ 1 over her shoulders.
 - ☐ 2 with a pale, sad face.
 - ☐ 3 and a passionate nature.
 - ☐ 4 like a gentleman.
 - ☐ 5 from working outside.

5 Look at the pictures in the book. Which of the characters in Exercise **3** can you see on these pages?



A



B

6 Read about the two houses where most of the events in the story take place. Look at the pictures below. Which of the photos are most like the description?

- _____ (a) Wuthering Heights: a sixteenth century farmhouse situated on the top of a hill. “Wuthering” means “stormy” or “windy” in the local language. After Thrushcross Grange it is the best building in the neighborhood.
- _____ (b) Thrushcross Grange: the most important building in the neighborhood. It is an elegant house situated in a large park and is about six and a half kilometers from Wuthering Heights.



7 Write descriptions of the other two houses.


8 Number the events in the story in the order you think they happen.

- _____ (a) Heathcliff runs away from Wuthering Heights and makes a lot of money.
- _____ (b) Heathcliff and Catherine become close friends.
- _____ (c) Heathcliff becomes the owner of Thrushcross Grange.
- _____ (d) Heathcliff goes to visit Catherine for the last time before she dies.
- _____ (e) Heathcliff arranges the marriage of his son to Catherine's daughter.

9 Choose suitable words from the box that describe the feelings shown in the events below.

1. hate 2. love 3. sadness 4. sympathy 5. violence

- _____ (a) Nelly felt sorry for Heathcliff because Hindley was cruel to him.
- _____ (b) Heathcliff was determined to take his revenge on Hindley.
- _____ (c) Heathcliff and Catherine cried when old Mr Earnshaw died.
- _____ (d) Hindley and Heathcliff had a fight when Hindley tried to stab Heathcliff with a knife.
- _____ (e) Cathy went back to Wuthering Heights because of her feelings for Linton.

 **10** Discuss the following questions about friendship and love with a partner.

- (a) How does friendship between people grow and become stronger?
- (b) What are the similarities and differences between friendship and love?



1. A Visitor at Wuthering Heights



I have been to see my landlord¹ Mr Heathcliff today. He's my only neighbor here in this beautiful but wild part of England.

He was standing at the gate to his farm when I arrived. His black eyes looked at me suspiciously².

"Mr Heathcliff?" I said.

He nodded³.

"I am Mr Lockwood, your new tenant⁴ at Thrushcross Grange, sir."

"Come in!" he said coldly, opening the gate.

I'm not a sociable man but I had the impression that Mr Heathcliff was even less sociable than me.

I rode through the gate and he followed me up the small road to the house. As we entered the courtyard⁵ he shouted to an old man, "Joseph! Take Mr Lockwood's horse and bring us some wine."

The name of Mr Heathcliff's house is Wuthering Heights. "Wuthering" means "stormy" or "windy" in the local language and it describes the place well. The house stands on the top of a hill. On one side of it there are a few trees. They all lean in the same direction, blown by the strong north winds.

¹ **landlord:** man who rents a house

² **suspiciously:** in a distrusting way

³ **nodded:** moved his head up and down to say "yes"

⁴ **tenant:** person who rents a house

⁵ **courtyard:** open area surrounded by buildings