‘Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde’

Revision and support booklet

Name: ..............................................

Class: ..............................................

This booklet is a useful source of revision; it provides some information, activities, exam questions, critical essays and further revision sources. It is not exhaustive, but a starting point and indicative of the work that you should be doing independently to support your classwork and revision.
## Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
<th>Topic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3-10</td>
<td>Themes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Context</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12-16</td>
<td>Chapter Summaries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17-21</td>
<td>Critical essays</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Exam question</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Further Sources of Support and Useful Websites:

- [http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/gcsebitesize/english_literature/prosejekyllhyde/](http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/gcsebitesize/english_literature/prosejekyllhyde/)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Duality: What is it?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key Quotes and their importance:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The purpose of this theme in the novel:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Themes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Violence and Brutality: What is it?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Quotes and their importance:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The purpose of this theme in the novel:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Themes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science vs religion: What is it?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key Quotes and their importance:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The purpose of this theme in the novel:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Themes

### Appearance: What is it?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Quotes and their importance:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

### The purpose of this theme in the novel:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Themes</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reputation: What is it?</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Key Quotes and their importance:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The purpose of this theme in the novel:</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Themes

**Good vs Evil: What is it?**

**Key Quotes and their importance:**

**The purpose of this theme in the novel:**
### Themes

**The Supernatural: What is it?**

**Key Quotes and their importance:**

**The purpose of this theme in the novel:**
# Themes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Secrets: What is it?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Quotes and their importance:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The purpose of this theme in the novel:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
# Contextual information about Victorian society and literature

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Context</th>
<th>Links to the novel</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gothic horror</strong> included the following key features: mystery, suspense and unease, horror and violence, the supernatural, isolation, insanity, pathetic fallacy and tense atmospheres</td>
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</tr>
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<td><strong>Crime in the Victorian Era</strong> In the 1850s and early 1860s there were panics about street robbery and most offenders were male and came from the working class. Petty crimes, such as pick-pocketing and food-snatching, were regular, but assault and violent crime (crimes shedding a lot of blood) were unusual.</td>
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<td><strong>There was a clear division between rich and poor during the 19th century:</strong> status and wealth were key parts of Victorian life</td>
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<td><strong>Important scientific discoveries were made. For example, the introduction of antiseptics in 1867. It was also used in different ways: a form of entertainment involved 'spectacles' where paranormal events, such as hypnotism, communication with the dead, ghost conjuring and the like, were carried out to the delight of crowds and participants.</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Progress in the Victorian era:</strong> most of the nineteenth century was a time of unprecedented technological progress and an age in which European nations carved up the world with their empires. Victorian England’s secret attraction to allegedly savage non-Western cultures, even as Europe claimed superiority over them. As the Western world came in contact with other peoples and ways of life, it found aspects of these cultures within itself, and both desired and feared to indulge them.</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
On the next few pages, you will find chapter summaries (as found on BBC Bitesize). Highlight the key points and write which theme is present in each chapter.

Chapter 1 - Story of the Door

Utterson and Enfield are out for a walk when they pass a strange-looking door (the entrance to Dr Jekyll's laboratory). Enfield recalls a story involving the door. In the early hours of one winter morning, he says, he saw a man trampling on a young girl. He pursued the man and brought him back to the scene of the crime. (The reader later learns that the man is Mr Hyde.)

A crowd gathered and, to avoid a scene, the man offered to pay the girl compensation. This was accepted, and he opened the door with a key and re-emerged with some money and a large cheque.

Utterson is very interested in the case and asks whether Enfield is certain Hyde used a key to open the door. Enfield is sure he did.

Themes:

Chapter 2 - Search for Mr Hyde

That evening the lawyer, Utterson, is troubled by what he has heard. He takes the will of his friend Dr Jekyll from his safe. It contains a worrying instruction: in the event of Dr Jekyll's disappearance, all his possessions are to go to Mr Hyde.

Utterson decides to visit Dr Lanyon, an old friend of his and Dr Jekyll's. Lanyon has never heard of Hyde, and not seen Jekyll for ten years. That night Utterson has terrible nightmares.

He starts watching the door (which belongs to Dr Jekyll's old laboratory) at all hours, and eventually sees Hyde unlocking it. Utterson is shocked by the sense of evil coming from him.

Utterson goes next door to warn his friend, Jekyll, against Hyde, but is told by the servant, Poole, that Jekyll is out and the servants have all been instructed by Jekyll to obey Hyde.

Utterson is worried that Hyde may kill Jekyll to benefit from the will.

Themes:
Chapter 3 - Dr Jekyll Was Quite at Ease

Two weeks later, following a dinner party with friends at Jekyll's house, Utterson stays behind to talk to him about the will.

Jekyll laughs off Utterson's worries, comparing them to Lanyon's 'hidebound' (conventional and unadventurous) attitude to medical science. The reader now sees why Lanyon and Jekyll have fallen out, and starts to understand that Jekyll's behaviour has become unusual.

Utterson persists with the subject of the will. Jekyll hints at a strange relationship between himself and Hyde. Although he trusts Utterson, Jekyll refuses to reveal the details. He asks him, as his lawyer not his friend, to make sure the will is carried out. He reassures him that 'the moment I choose, I can be rid of Mr Hyde'

Themes:

Chapter 4 - The Carew Murder Case

Nearly a year later, an elderly gentleman is brutally clubbed to death in the street by Hyde. The murder is witnessed by a maid who recognises Hyde. A letter addressed to Utterson is found on the body and the police contact him. He recognises the murder weapon as the broken half of a walking cane he gave to Jekyll years earlier. When he hears that the murderer is Hyde, he offers to lead the police to his house.

They are told that Hyde has not been at home for two months. But when they search the house they find the other half of the murder weapon and signs of a hasty exit.

Themes:

Chapter 5 - Incident of the Letter

Utterson goes to Jekyll's house and finds him 'looking deadly sick'. He asks whether he is hiding Hyde. Jekyll assures him he will never see or hear of Hyde again. He shows Utterson a letter from Hyde that indicates this.

Utterson asks Guest, his head clerk, to compare the handwriting on the letter to that on an invitation from Jekyll. There is a resemblance between the two, though with a different slope. Utterson believes Jekyll has forged the letter in Hyde's handwriting to cover his escape.
Chapter 6 - Remarkable Incident of Dr Lanyon

The police cannot find Hyde. Coincidentally, Jekyll seems happier and, for two months, he socialises again. Suddenly, however, he appears depressed and will not see Utterson. Utterson visits Dr Lanyon to discuss their friend’s health, but finds Lanyon on his death-bed. Lanyon refuses to discuss Jekyll who, he hints, is the cause of his illness. Trying to find out what has happened, Utterson writes to Jekyll. He receives a reply which suggests Jekyll has fallen into a very disturbed state and talks of being 'under a dark influence'.

Lanyon dies and leaves a letter for Utterson in an envelope marked 'not to be opened till the death or disappearance of Dr Henry Jekyll'. Utterson, being a good lawyer, locks it away unopened in his safe.

Utterson tries to revisit Jekyll several times, but his servant, Poole, says he is living in isolation and will not see anyone.

Themes:

Chapter 7 - Incident at the Window

Utterson and Enfield are taking one of their walks, as at the opening of the book. They pass Jekyll’s window and see him looking like a prisoner in solitary confinement. Utterson calls out to him and Jekyll replies, but his face suddenly freezes in an expression of 'abject terror and despair'.

The change in Jekyll's expression is so sudden and horrible it 'froze the very blood of the two gentlemen below', and they depart in silence.

Themes:
Chapter 8 - The Last Night

One evening, Jekyll's servant comes to Utterson and asks him to come to Jekyll's house. They go to the laboratory, but the door is locked. The voice from inside does not sound like Jekyll's and both men believe it is Hyde.

Poole says the voice has for days been crying out for a particular chemical to be brought, but the chemicals given have been rejected as 'not pure'.

Poole says that earlier he caught a glimpse of a person in the lab who looked scarcely human.

They break down the door and inside find a body, twitching. In its hand are the remains of a test tube (or vial). The body is smaller than Jekyll's but wearing clothes that would fit him.

On the table is a will dated that day which leaves everything to Utterson, with Hyde's name crossed out. There is also a package containing Jekyll's 'confession' and a letter asking Utterson to read Dr Lanyon's letter which he left after his death (see Chapter 6) and is now in Utterson's safe.

Utterson tells Poole he will return before midnight, when he has read all the documents.

Themes:

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Chapter 9 - Dr Lanyon's Narrative

Chapter 9 lists the contents of Dr Lanyon's letter. It tells of how Lanyon received a letter from Jekyll asking him to collect a drawer containing chemicals, a vial and a notebook from Jekyll's laboratory and to give it to a man who would call at midnight.

Lanyon says he was curious, especially as the book contained some strange entries.

At midnight a man appears. He is small and grotesque, wearing clothes that are too large for him.

The man offers to take the chemicals away, or to drink the potion.

Lanyon accepts and, before his very eyes, Hyde transforms into none other than Dr Jekyll.

In horror at what he has witnessed, Lanyon becomes seriously ill.

Themes:
Chapter 10 - Henry Jekyll's Full Statement of the Case

Jekyll tells the story of how he turned into Hyde.

It began as scientific curiosity in the duality of human nature (or the good and evil), and his attempt to destroy the 'darker self'. Eventually, however, he became addicted to the character of Hyde, who increasingly took over and destroyed him.

The novel does not return to Utterson who, at the end of Chapter 8, was going to return to Jekyll's house.

Themes:
Man is not truly one, but truly two': duality in Robert Louis Stevenson’s Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde

- Article by: Greg Buzwell

Curator Greg Buzwell considers duality in Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde, exploring how the novel engages with contemporary debates about evolution, degeneration, consciousness, homosexuality and criminal psychology.

Robert Louis Stevenson’s Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde (1886) is a late-Victorian variation on ideas first raised in Mary Shelley’s Frankenstein (1818). Stevenson’s monster, however, is not artificially created from stitched-together body parts, but rather emerges fully formed from the dark side of the human personality. In the story Dr Jekyll, an admired member of the professional Victorian middle-classes, conducts a series of scientific experiments which unleash from his own psyche the ‘bestial’ and ‘ape-like’ Mr Hyde (ch. 10). Gothic fiction had examined the idea of the sinister alter ego or double before on many occasions but Stevenson’s genius with Jekyll and Hyde was to show the dual nature not only of one man but also of society in general. Throughout the story, respectability is doubled with degradation; abandon with restraint; honesty with duplicity. Even London itself has a dual nature, with its respectable streets existing side-by-side with areas notorious for their squalor and violence.

Evolution and degeneration

Viewed on a simple level, Dr Jekyll is a good man, much admired in his profession. Mr Hyde, meanwhile, is evil. He is a murderer; a monster who tramples upon a small girl simply because she happens to be in his way. On a deeper level, however, the comparison is not merely between good and evil but between evolution and degeneration. Throughout the narrative Mr Hyde’s physical appearance provokes disgust. He is described as ‘ape-like’, ‘troglodytic’ and ‘hardly human’ (ch. 2). As Mr Enfield, a well-known man about town and distant relative of Jekyll’s friend Mr Utterson, observes ‘There is something wrong with his appearance; something displeasing, something downright detestable’ (ch. 1). Some 15 years before Jekyll and Hyde, Charles Darwin had published The Descent of Man (1871), a book in which he concluded that humankind had ‘descended from a hairy, tailed quadruped’ which was itself ‘probably derived from an ancient marsupial animal’. [3] Going back even further, Darwin hypothesised that these stages of evolution had been preceded, in a direct line, by ‘some amphibian-like creature, and this again from some fish-like animal’. Such a nightmarish biological lineage that denied the specialness of humans, feeds into many late-Victorian Gothic novels. Dracula’s ability to transform into the shape of a wolf or a bat is one example, while Dr Moreau’s experiments upon the hapless animals on his island as he attempts a barbaric form of accelerated evolution is another. Stevenson’s portrayal of Hyde works in a similar fashion. Mr Hyde is regarded as physically detestable but perhaps only because he subconsciously reminds those he encounters of their own distant evolutionary inheritance. When Dr Jekyll’s medical colleague, Dr Lanyon, witnesses Hyde transform back into Jekyll, the knowledge that the ugly, murderous beast exists within the respectable Victorian scientist sends him first to his sick-bed, and then to an early grave.
**Double lives and misleading appearances**

The depiction of Dr Jekyll’s house was possibly based on the residence of famous surgeon John Hunter (1728-1793), whose respectable and renowned house in Leicester Square in the late 18th century also had a secret. In order to teach and to gain knowledge about human anatomy, Hunter required human cadavers, many of them supplied by ‘resurrection men’ who robbed fresh graves. These were brought, usually at night, to the back entrance of the house, which had a drawbridge leading to the preparation rooms and lecture-theatre.

The front aspect of Dr Jekyll’s house presents a ‘great air of wealth and comfort’ (ch. 2). Meanwhile Mr Hyde, soon after we first encounter him, is seen entering a building which displays an air of ‘prolonged and sordid negligence’ (ch. 1). The twist is that the reputable front and the rundown rear form two sides of the same property. Stevenson is not only making the point that the respectable and the disreputable frequently exist in close proximity, but also that a respectable façade is no guarantee against dark secrets lurking within. In a similar fashion, the seemingly decent Mr Enfield, a friend of the lawyer Mr Utterson, first encounters Hyde while ‘coming home from some place at the end of the world, about three o’clock of a black winter morning’ (ch. 1). Exactly where Mr Enfield has been, and what he has been up to, are never made clear but it sounds far from innocent. Throughout the book the people and events that initially seem innocent and straightforward become dark and sinister when viewed more closely.

**Double-consciousness**

Just as the differing appearances of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde play upon the theories emerging from Charles Darwin’s work, so their differing personalities explore contemporary debates about moral behaviour and the possible plurality of human consciousness. By literally splitting the consciousness of Dr Jekyll into two – the decent side that attempts, and largely succeeds, in suppressing desires that run contrary to the dictates of society; and the amoral side that runs riot in an attempt to gratify animal desire – Stevenson explores in a heightened fashion the battles played out in every one of us. As Dr Jekyll observes ‘I saw that, of the two natures that contended in the field of my consciousness, even if I could rightly be said to be either, it was only because I was radically both’ (ch. 10). Through Hyde, the respectable Dr Jekyll is freed from the restraints imposed by society – ‘my devil had been long caged, he came out roaring’ (ch. 10). In his confession at the end of the book, Jekyll observes that, ultimately, he will have to choose between being Dr Jekyll or Mr Hyde. To become the latter would mean giving up on noble aspirations and being ‘forever despised and friendless’. (ch. 10) To become Jekyll, however, means giving up the sensual and disreputable appetites he can indulge as Hyde. In spite of the curious circumstances of his own case it is, as the melancholy Jekyll observes, a struggle and debate ‘as old and commonplace as man’ (ch. 10).

Robert Louis Stevenson's *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*

*Barbara T. Gates, Alumni Distinguished Professor of English, University of Delaware*

Such surrogation can be distinguished from dissociation, a more dramatic type of doubling represented in Robert Louis Stevenson's *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* (1886). Jekyll and Hyde are like a dual personality, a single entity dissociated into two. They have become what Otto Rank calls opposing selves, According to Rank, the double in primitive societies is conceived of as a shadow, representing both the living person and the dead. This shadow survives the self, insuring immortality and thus functioning as a kind of guardian angel. In modern civilizations, however, the shadow becomes an omen of death to the self-conscious person. Doubles become opposites and demons rather than guardian angels (Rank, 71-76). This is particularly true in inhibited or self-restrained modern societies like that of Victorian Britain.

In Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, Hyde thus becomes Jekyll's demonic, monstrous self. Certainly Stevenson presents him as such from the outset. Hissing as he speaks, Hyde has "a kind of black sneering coolness . . . like Satan" (32). He also strikes those who witness him as being deformed — "pale and dwarfish" (*SC*, 40) and simian like. He is both monster and shadow *par excellence* — another self not only for Jekyll but for all the presumably upright Victorian bachelors of the story who perceive his deformities and for whom he becomes both devil and death knell. The Strange Case unfolds with the search by these men to uncover the secret of Hyde. As the narrator/lawyer, Utterson, says, "If he be Mr. Hyde . . . I shall be Mr. Seek" (*SC*, 38), and so will they all. Utterson begins his quest with a cursory search for his own demons. Fearing for Jekyll because the good doctor has so strangely altered his will in favor of Hyde, Utterson examines his own conscience, "and the lawyer, scared by the thought, brooded a while in his own past, groping in all the corners of memory, lest by chance some Jack-in-the-Box of an old iniquity should leap to light there" (*SC*, 42). Like so many eminent Victorians, Utterson lives a mildly double life and feels mildly apprehensive about it. An ugly dwarf like Hyde may jump out from his own boxed self, but for him such an unlikely creature is still envisioned as a toy. Although, from the beginning Hyde fills him with a distaste for life (*SC*, 40, not until the final, fatal night, after he storms the cabinet, can Utterson conceive of the enormity of Jekyll's second self. Only then does he realize that "he was looking on the body of a self-destroyer" (*SC*, 70); Jekyll and Hyde are one in death as they must have been in life.

Poole, Jekyll's servant, and Lanyan, his medical colleague, are even more incredulous. When Poole sees Jekyll/Hyde in his final form, he thinks he sees his master with a "mask" on his face: "that thing was not [118/119] my master and there's the truth" (*SC*, 66). Again, Poole's "thing" is monkey-like and dwarfish, and it weeps "like a woman or a lost soul" (*SC*, 69). When Poole and Utterson hear Jekyll on the opposite side of the door that last night, they react like Ralph Nickleby's would-be rescuers. The voice they hear sounds like something "other," not like the person they know. Lanyan, alas, never survives to that final night. An earlier party to the knowledge that Jekyll and Hyde are one, he has already lost his life to that secret. A man
who believes in rationalism and moral rectitude, Lanyan simply cannot adapt to the truths uncovered in the revelation of Hyde: improbability and "utter moral turpitude" (SC, 80). He sinks slowly into death, his body following the lead of his "sickened" soul. His too is a kind of suicide, a death permitted, if not willed. Lanyan simply cannot accommodate himself to the horror of Jekyll unveiled.

And neither can Jekyll himself, who is a suicide, as his name indicates ("Je" for the French "I", "kyll" for "kill"). His double is killing him even in the early stages of their association, when he believes that he can with impunity rid himself of Hyde at any time. Initially, Jekyll does not care whether or not Hyde survives: "I cannot say that I care what becomes of Hyde; I am quite done with him" (SC, 52). But as his opposing selves prove inextricably bound, Jekyll becomes "careless" of life itself (SC, 97). He knows he risks death in taking his drug, but he does so quite deliberately. If not uppermost in his mind, suicide lurks there all the same. Jekyll often uses telling language, words like "I had come to a fatal cross roads" (SC, 85). Yet his Hyde-self totally fears death. As Jekyll becomes "occupied by one thought: the horror of my other self" (SC, 95), lie simultaneously delights in realizing he has the power of death over Hyde. On the other hand, Jekyll is fascinated by Hyde's "wonderful" love of life and remarks, "when I know how he fears my power to cut him off by suicide, I find it in my heart to pity him" (SC, 96). These vacillations continue until the cabinet door is forced — and with it Jekyll/Hyde's nearly involuntary suicide.

Through Jekyll/Hyde's equivocal attitudes toward self-murder, Stevenson leaves the mystery of his tale in place, much as Le Fanu did. Because all of Stevenson's characters are wanting in self-knowledge, they ultimately fail to understand the links between duality, demons, and death. Stevenson's readers are therefore forced to try to solve the mystery of the strange case. More than Le Fanu, however, Stevenson leads us in this attempt. For even in extremis, his Jekyll fears exposure more than death. This is why lie finally kills himself when the door is forced. Hyde must be hidden if it takes death to hide him, and Jekyll must ultimately be his own murderer to avoid full disclosure of the [119/120] duality. Here Stevenson is not only revealing human nature's deeply intertwined double nature; he is also castigating Victorian hypocrisy. The kind of double life that characters in this book lead is not only false but suicidal. As Stevenson says in his essay "Lay Morals": "We should not live alternately with our opposing tendencies in continual see-saw of passion and disgust, but seek some path on which the tendencics shall no longer oppose, but serve each other to common end." (Osbourne, vol. 24, 208) To behave otherwise, his tale implies, is to court the death of authenticity, the loss of one's self. If altruism and bestiality are both embedded in human nature, one must not only know this rationally as did Jekyll, but must live comfortably with this knowledge.

Many of Stevenson's contemporaries did not live so, nor did they like the link with suicide that Stevenson's story forged. John Addington Symonds wrote Stevenson that one "ought to bring more of distinct belief in the resources of human nature, more faith, more sympathy with our frailty than you have done.... The scientific cast of the allegory will act as an incentive to moral self-murder with those who perceive the allegory's profundity." (qtd. in Steuart, II, 83) But Stevenson was nonetheless acting as a moralist. His "shilling shocker," conceived in a
dream and written in a white heat, captured both his own deepest divisions and insights into the callous folly of late-Victorian hypocrisy. Stevenson had himself considered suicide at least three times and yet persisted through ill health to natural death.\(^{(34)}\) Far from counselling "moral self-murder," his dark story of monstrous alter egos was counselling integration. Far from starting another Werther-craze, *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* pioneered as a modern admonition of blind, self-destructive behavior. Stevenson's fictional lawyers and scientists show dangerous second sides because they have not persisted in self-knowledge. His fictional workers, like the butler, Poole, see masks in place of the "horrors" that their presumed betters have become because they have opted for distorted vision over clear-sightedness.

http://www.victorianweb.org/books/suicide/06e.html
Example Exam Question

Section B: The 19th-century novel

Read the following extract from chapter 2 and answer the question that follows.

Mr Utterson has been looking for Mr Hyde and meets him for the first time.

"If he be Mr. Hyde," he had thought, "I shall be Mr. Seek."

And at last his patience was rewarded. It was a fine dry night; frost in the air; the streets as clean as a ballroom floor; the lamps, unshaken, by any wind, drawing a regular pattern of light and shadow. By ten o'clock, when the shops were closed, the by-street was very solitary and, in spite of the low growl of London from all round, very silent. Small sounds carried far; domestic sounds out of the houses were clearly audible on either side of the roadway; and the rumour of the approach of any passenger preceded him by a long time. Mr. Utterson had been some minutes at his post, when he was aware of an odd, light footstep drawing near. In the course of his nightly patrols, he had long grown accustomed to the quaint effect with which the footfalls of a single person, while he is still a great way off, suddenly spring out distinct from the vast hum and clatter of the city. Yet his attention had never before been so sharply and decisively arrested; and it was with a strong, superstitious prevision of success that he withdrew into the entry of the court.

The steps drew swiftly nearer, and swelled out suddenly louder as they turned the end of the street. The lawyer, looking forth from the entry, could soon see what manner of man he had to deal with. He was small and very plainly dressed, and the look of him, even at that distance, went somehow strongly against the watcher's inclination. But he made straight for the door, crossing the roadway to save time; and as he came, he drew a key from his pocket like one approaching home.

Mr. Utterson stepped out and touched him on the shoulder as he passed. "Mr. Hyde, I think?"

Starting with this extract, how does Stevenson present Mr Utterson as rational and reserved?

Write about:

• how Stevenson presents Mr Utterson in this extract

• how Stevenson presents Mr Utterson as a in the novel as a whole.  

[30 marks]