

The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde
Discussion Questions

1. What effect does the sight of Mr. Hyde have upon Enfield and Utterson?

2. Describe the Carew murder. In what circumstances does it occur? How does Hyde behave? What is the victim's class or status?

3. Describe two places in the story where the issue of class or social status either openly or subtly influences the characters' actions and/ or treatment of one another.

4. Compare Dr. Jekyll with Mr. Hyde. What are the physical and mental differences between them? Are they in some way allied or even ultimately one being? If so, how?

5. In what sense might the Victorian period's rigid moral standards be responsible for Dr. Jekyll's tragic transformation into the evil Hyde? In other words, according to Stevenson's story, what makes a man like Jekyll--a good Victorian, really--become the criminal Hyde?

6. By what specific mechanism does Dr. Jekyll transform himself into Mr. Hyde?

7. What happens to Dr. Lanyon as a result of his contact with Jekyll and Hyde, and what story does he write down before his death?

8. What effect on you as a reader does the book's partly epistolary structure have? (The term "epistolary" refers to the writing of letters.)

9. Analyze the different stages of Jekyll's experimentation with the Hyde persona. How do his feelings regarding the transformations change?

10. How does Jekyll interpret his relationship to Hyde? Do you agree with his understanding? Why or why not?

11. At one point in the novel, Hyde is described as a "troglodyte." To what does this term refer? What was its significance in Victorian England? How does it relate to the themes of the novel?

12. Why do you think Stevenson chose to tell the story from Utterson's point of view rather than use Jekyll's from the beginning? How does this choice increase the suspense of the novel?

13. Are some people just naturally good and others evil, or are good and bad equally balanced from birth and affected by events in life?

Text Rendering

Find a passage in the book that seemed particularly important to understanding a major issue and/or one of the significant themes in the book. Discuss the significance of the passage to the text and describe why you felt the passage was integral to understanding the book on a deeper level. The passage should be in proper format (whole passage indented 10 spaces, no quotation marks and put the page numbers in parentheses at the end).