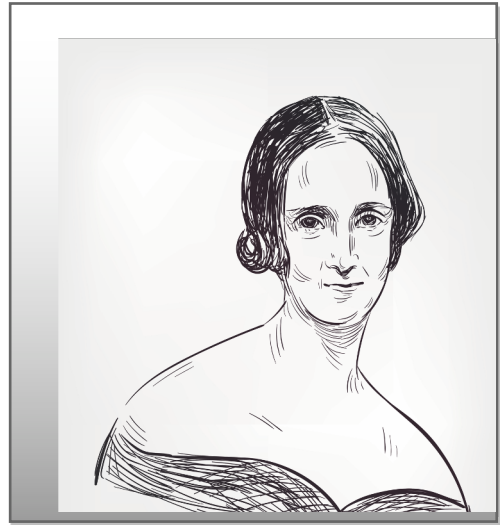


Mary Shelley: a profile



Mary Shelley was born in 1797, the daughter of the philosopher William Godwin and of the writer and feminist Mary Wollstonecraft.

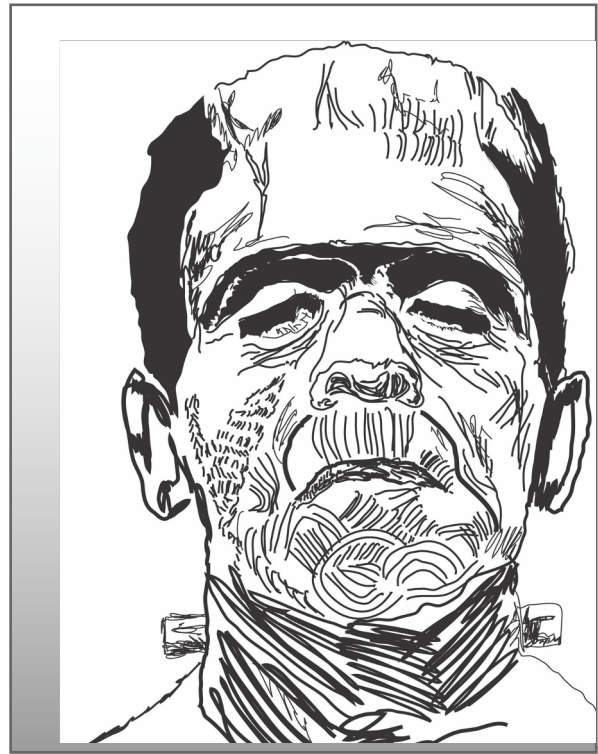
Mary Shelley received an excellent education and was often present at the conversations her father had with many interesting people, including poets and writers, who often visited her father.

At 17, Mary met her future husband, the Romantic poet Percy Bysshe Shelley. In 1815 they had a baby girl who died prematurely. In 1816 the couple married and Mary started writing “Frankenstein: or, the Modern Prometheus” which was published in 1818. She uses the epistolary technique to communicate her message to the reader. Unfortunately, in 1822 Percy drowned in a sailing boat accident in Italy. Mary returned to England with her only son Percy Florence and devoted herself to his education. She also edited her husband’s works and continued writing novels, including “Valperga” and “The Last Man” – which were not as successful as “Frankenstein” – articles, biographies, and short stories. She died of a brain tumour in 1851.

1) Answer the following questions.

1. Who were Mary Shelley’s parents?
2. Did she receive an excellent education?
3. Who did Mary meet when she was 17?
4. When was “Frankenstein: or, the Modern Prometheus” published?
5. What happened in 1822?
6. Who edited Percy Bysshe Shelley’s works?
7. Were Mary Shelley’s other novels as successful as “Frankenstein”?

Read the text "*Gothic and science fiction*".



Frankenstein has elements from two different genres – **gothic** and **science fiction**.

Gothic elements include mystery, horror and terror, wild landscapes, the supernatural and castles with secret passages.

A science fiction story is about science and the future. The content is imaginative but based on scientific facts, theories, and principles. It demonstrates what could happen because of advanced technology and science.

Frankenstein is considered an early example of science fiction. It is not about the supernatural but a scientific experiment and the horror of its unexpected result. Blood transfusions and the latest discoveries and scientific theories, physics and biochemistry experiments – including Volta's experiments with electricity and Galvani, Aldini and other scientists' investigations into electricity in animals and human beings – strongly influenced the author, Mary Shelley.

2) Match.

- | | |
|----------------------------|--|
| 1. Gothic stories | a. was strongly influenced by the latest discoveries and scientific theories of chemistry and electricity, physics and biochemistry experiments. |
| 2. Science fiction stories | b. include mystery, horror and terror, wild landscapes, the supernatural and castles with secret passages. |
| 3. Frankenstein | c. demonstrate what could happen because of advanced technology and science. The content is imaginative but based on scientific facts, theories, and principles. |
| 4. Mary Shelley | d. is considered an early example of science fiction. It is about a scientific experiment and the horror of its outcome. |

1.....

2.....

3.....

4.....