

Name: _____

Dr. Jekyll & Mr. Hyde film analysis

1. *Before you view the 1941 Victor Fleming film Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, respond to these two questions:* Do all people have within them the capacity for good and evil? Is an essential aspect of a functioning society the need for individuals to control their evil side in their interactions with others? Explain.

Background: Robert Louis Stevenson published *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll & Mr. Hyde* in 1886, and in the novella he explored the intellectual ideas of his day, specifically those of psychologist Sigmund Freud and biologist Charles Darwin.

- Freud posited that the human psyche is divided into three parts: the id (the unconscious part that is basically animalistic and operates by biological instincts, impulses, and drives), the ego (the conscious part that modifies behavior by controlling socially unacceptable impulses), and the superego (the social part that consists of externally imposed standards and rules, inhibiting the instinctual impulses that produce antisocial behavior).
 - Darwin's work disturbed traditional religious beliefs of the day as it suggested that all organisms evolve in response to their environments and that evolutionary adaptations allowed the fittest to survive. Late Victorians like Stevenson began to consider that if humans evolve, they might also devolve.
1. How does the opening scene of the film show both the superego and the id of Freud's concept of the psyche? How is the setting of this scene significant?
 2. Which character serves as the central symbol of the superego (society's rules and expectations for acceptable behavior) in the film? How? Provide some examples.
 3. Describe the physical differences between Dr. Jekyll and his alter ego, Mr. Hyde. How do these differences reveal the influence of Darwinian ideas?
 4. How do Beatrix Emery and Ivy Peterson serve as parallels to Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde? How do the two women symbolize the ego and id? Consider the differences between the women in terms of social class and physical features.
 5. What socially unaccepted desires and impulses does Dr. Jekyll repress that surface when he becomes Mr. Hyde? How do they relate to the id and superego?