

## “Story of the Door” through “Dr. Jekyll Was Quite at Ease”

### Vocabulary

From the choices given, circle the best definition for each underlined word. Classify each word according to its part of speech. Rely on context clues for help.

1. He was austere with himself; drank gin when he was alone, to mortify a taste for vintages. . . .

**austere:**

part of speech: \_\_\_\_\_

inconsiderate

indulgent

stern

displeased

**mortify:**

part of speech: \_\_\_\_\_

subdue

ignore

harden

cultivate

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11. . . . Utterson himself was wont to speak of it as the pleasantest room in London.  
part of speech: \_\_\_\_\_  
reluctant  
eager  
bored  
accustomed
12. God bless me, the man seems hardly human! Something troglodytic, shall we say?  
part of speech: \_\_\_\_\_  
primitive  
supernatural  
mythical  
exotic

### **Extra Vocabulary Questions**

#### ***Understanding Latin:***

1. Using a Latin dictionary or other resources, give the sense of the underlined phrase in the following sentence. What image might Stevenson be trying to create with this phrase?

“Ay, it must be that; the ghost of some old sin, the cancer of some concealed disgrace: punishment coming, pede claudo, years after memory has forgotten and self-love condoned the fault.”

#### ***Idiom:***

Playwright George Bernard Shaw once quipped, “England and America are two countries separated by the same language.” Some of Stevenson’s British, 19th century *idioms* (uses of words) may strike you as strange, but by paying attention to context

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you should be able to determine their sense. Put the following underlined phrases into your own words.

2. It was a nut to crack for many, what these two could see in each other, or what subject they could find in common.
  
3. “But the doctor’s case was what struck me. . . . I saw that Sawbones turn sick and white with desire to kill him.”
  
4. “Well, we screwed him up to a hundred pounds for the child’s family; he would have clearly liked to stick out. . . .”
  
5. “. . . the person that drew the cheque is the very pink of the proprieties, celebrated too. . . .”

### **Extra Vocabulary Helps**

“I gave a view halloa. . . .”: originally a British fox hunting term; now any cry signalling recognition.

“[T]he more it looks like Queer Street. . . .”: A British figure of speech referring to financial problems or something very puzzling.

### **Allusion**

Another technique on which Stevenson relies is *allusion*—referring to a famous historical or literary figure or event, often to make a comparison or contrast with someone or

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something else. For example, someone might describe a friend's betrayal of a trust as a "Judas kiss," referring to Judas's kissing Jesus to reveal him to the Pharisees' guards. Such an allusion gives an immediate mental picture of false love concealing evil intent and betrayal. Using what you know, explain each allusion below. If the allusion is new to you, look it up in a good dictionary or encyclopedia.

1. "And all the time . . . we were keeping the women off him as best we could, for they were as wild as harpies."
2. "Such unscientific balderdash . . . would have estranged Damon and Pythias."
3. ". . . or can it be the old story of Dr. Fell?"

## Questions

1. What incident first brought Hyde to Enfield's attention?
2. To which clauses in Jekyll's will does Utterson object? Why?
3. What information does Poole give Utterson about Hyde?



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In your own experience, when have you found reputation to be an accurate indicator of character? When have you found it inaccurate? Do you place more value on a person's reputation, direct experience of a person, or some combination of the two? Why?

Ironically, some people consider their reputation so important that they will commit crimes to protect it. How important is your reputation to you? What would you do to defend it?

9. Enfield says that Jekyll is a man “who [does] *what they call good*” (emphasis added). Why do you think Enfield chooses these words? What difference, if any, is there between what is generally accepted as “doing good” and what actually *is* good? Is there a difference between “doing good” and “being good”?

### **Dig Deeper**

10. As the book begins, Utterson remarks that he tends towards “Cain’s heresy.” Read Genesis 4:1–16. What do you think Utterson meant by “Cain’s heresy?”

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What is heresy? Consult a dictionary and your teacher, pastor, priest, or other religious educator for definitions. What are some beliefs that your church or denomination has decided, throughout its history, are heretical?

Do heresies exist in areas of life other than religion? Why or why not?

11. Friendship is an important theme in the book. What references to friendship have you noticed so far? Do you think Utterson and Lanyon are good friends to Jekyll, and vice versa? Why or why not?

12. What do the following biblical passages tell us about friendship?

1 Samuel 20

Job 2:11–13; 42:7–9

Proverbs 17:9, 17; 18:24; 27:6

Luke 15:3–10 (especially vv. 6 and 9)

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John 15:12–15

How do these biblical lessons in friendship apply to the characters in the novel?  
How do your own friendships measure up to these biblical standards?

13. Enfield prefers not to ask too many questions of others because such behavior “partakes too much of the style of the day of judgment.” Read Matthew 12:36, 37; Revelation 20:12–15. What do you think Enfield means by his statement?
14. The two friends, Utterson and Enfield, have expressed similar sentiments about involving themselves in the lives of others. Of Utterson, Stevenson writes:

But he had an approved tolerance for other; . . . and in any extremity inclined to help rather than to reprove. “I incline to Cain’s heresy,” he used to say quaintly: “I let my brother go to the devil in his own way.”

Enfield puts it this way:

“I had a delicacy. . . . I feel very strongly about putting questions; it partakes too much of the style of the day of judgment. You start a question, and it’s like starting a stone. . . . No, sir, I make it a rule of mine: the more it looks like Queer Street, the less I ask.”



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Both men seem to adhere strongly to an adage similar to “Don’t ask, don’t judge.” Read Matthew 7:1, 2; Romans 14:4, 10, 13. How do the attitudes expressed by Utterson and Enfield relate to these verses?

Read Matthew 18:15–18; 1 Corinthians 5:9–13; Galatians 6:1–4; James 5:19, 20. How do you reconcile these verses with the ones above?

15. Enfield remarks that he is “ashamed of [his] long tongue.” What does he mean? Why do you think he feels this way? Read James 3:1–10. What warnings and advice does James give Christians concerning the tongue? Which of his images particularly “hit home” for you?
  
16. Utterson thinks that “in the law of God, there is no statute of limitations.” What might you infer about Utterson’s view of God from this sentiment? Do you agree with his view? Why or why not?

Read the following: Exodus 34:4–7; Psalm 99; Psalm 103:8–18; Isaiah 43:25; Jeremiah 31:27–30, 33, 34; Romans 3:9–26; Colossians 2:13–15. What tensions,

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if any, do you find in these texts between God's justice (or "the law") and God's mercy (or "grace")? In what other scriptural texts do you find this tension?

How do you think about this tension in your own life of faith?

17. Spurred by the thought that Hyde is a punishment sent to Jekyll for "some old sin," Utterson examines his own conscience. What does he conclude about his past? What message might Ephesians 2:1–10 and Philippians 3:12–14 have for someone like Utterson, worried about past sins?

## **Optional Exercises**

### ***Musical Option:***

When composers set the text of the Requiem Mass to music, they often include the Dies Irae (Latin, "day of wrath"), a medieval poem about the day of judgment. Compare and contrast at least two composers' settings of the Dies Irae. How does the music interpret the text?

### ***Monetary Conversions:***

According to critic Leonard Wolf, in 1886 the British pound was worth five American dollars. In 1886 American dollars, Hyde would have paid the family of the girl he trampled \$50 in gold and \$450 by check, for a total of \$500.

In the year 2000, an American dollar was worth 2,000 percent more than it was in 1886. Therefore, in the year 2000 Hyde would have paid \$10,000!

Keep these conversion figures in mind as other monetary amounts come up in the story and use them to adjust the amounts to current figures.