

Study questions for Stevenson's "Jekyll and Hyde" for the Great Books Reading Group to meet on [October 26, 2019](#), at the Fremont Library, at [9:15am](#).

1. **1**  
Discuss Jekyll's progression throughout the novel and his fall from grace. What key moments and decisions determine Jekyll's fate? Identify these specific moments and analyze the aspects of Jekyll's character that force him to continue with his experiments.
2. **2**  
Discuss the physical descriptions of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde and their respective homes (Jekyll's main house vs. Hyde's neglected laboratory cabinet) as they relate to major themes of the novel.
3. **3**  
Stevenson creates a balance of realism (a mystery novella like Sherlock Holmes) and the supernatural (a Gothic novel like Frankenstein, Dracula, or Dorian Gray). How does he integrate these concepts, that range from the rational to the nightmare like?
4. **4**  
Discuss the concept of control in regard to Jekyll's relationship with Hyde. Is absolute control possible? Why does Jekyll continue to take the potion? Can one choose when to be completely good or evil? What does Stevenson's conclusion appear to be?
5. **5**  
Discuss the novel's most violent events, including the trampled girl, Carew's murder, and Jekyll/Hyde's ultimate demise. What if any progression arises here and how does it parallel the progression of the novel? We could only imagine what other immoral things Hyde does in the London night. What do you suppose he does?
6. **6**  
Discuss the role of the city throughout the novel, both during the day (rational, moral) and at night (supernatural, immoral). How does the city contribute to the novel's progression? What role does it play? How many of these contradictions can you find in the story?
7. **7**  
Clearly, *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* is an examination of the duality of human nature. Discuss the duality expressed in not only Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, but also Utterson, Poole, and the city of London. What kinds of analogies ( including

violent madness, split personality, addiction, alcoholism, obsession) can you find from the opposing characteristics of Jekyll and Hyde?

8. **8**

How does the notion of loyalty contribute to the novel? Discuss this in reference to Utterson, Lanyon, and Dr. Jekyll. Upon close examination, does loyalty help prevent or expedite violence and tragedy? What do you think happened to Lanyon that led to his death?

9. **9**

Discuss the possible meanings and relevance on the names Utterson, Jekyll, and Hyde in the context of the novel. Compare the respectability of Utterson, Poole, and Jekyll with the diabolical immorality of Hyde. What is Stevenson saying about rational, morally restrained Victorian society. What is this society hiding?

10. **10**

Compare and contrast Dr. Lanyon and Dr. Jekyll's approaches to scientific pursuits and manipulation of natural (moral, rational) laws. What evidence of the supernatural or the science of phenomenon can you find in the story. What kind of ways can science be used for good and evil?

(Thanks to the Gradesaver website for help with these questions.)