

Worksheet 1 – A Short History of Vampires

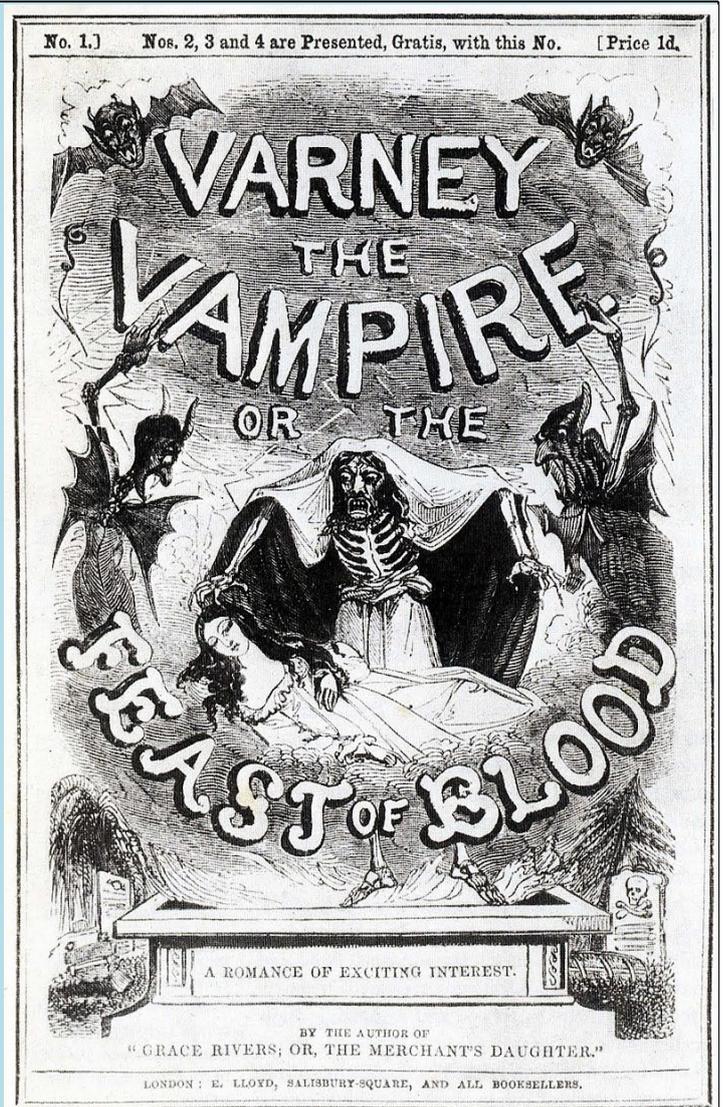
Recall

Answer these questions after watching the video lecture to check how much you remember.

1. Where and when was the modern idea of vampires first discovered?
a) London in the 1810s c) The Austria-Hungarian empire in the 1720s
b) Eastern Europe in the 1690s d) Italy in the 1780s
2. What did the locals do with the bodies of these so-called 'vampires'?
a) Burn them c) Sprinkle holy water on them
b) Stake and decapitate them d) Bury them in a locked tomb
3. What reasons did the authorities give for these beliefs? Highlight or circle three.
a) Mass delusion c) Propaganda
b) Diet d) Ingesting drugs
4. What does 'manducation' mean?
a) Chewing or eating c) Scratching nails
b) Drinking d) Groaning

Analysis

5. In the lecture (6:21), Prof Nick Groom mentions an early vampire story called 'Varney the Vampire.' To the right you will find a cover from one of the original publications of the story. What typical Gothic elements can you see in this image? How does the depiction of this vampire compare to Stoker's depiction of Dracula – what similarities and differences do you note?



Evaluation

6. Now read the extract below from Rymer and Prest's 'Varney the Vampire.'

A tall figure is standing on the ledge immediately outside the long window. It is its finger-nails upon the glass that produces the sound so like the hail, now that the hail has ceased. Intense fear paralysed the limbs of that beautiful girl. That one shriek is all she can utter—with hands clasped, a face of marble, a heart beating so wildly in her bosom, that each moment it seems as if it would break its confines, eyes distended and fixed upon the window, she waits, froze with horror. The pattering and clattering of the nails continue. No word is spoken, and now she fancies she can trace the darker form of that figure against the window, and she can see the long arms moving to and fro, feeling for some mode of entrance. What strange light is that which now gradually creeps up into the air? red and terrible—brighter and brighter it grows. The lightning has set fire to a mill, and the reflection of the rapidly consuming building falls upon that long window. There can be no mistake. The figure is there, still feeling for an entrance, and clattering against the glass with its long nails, that appear as if the growth of many years had been untouched. She tries to scream again but a choking sensation comes over her, and she cannot. It is too dreadful—she tries to move—each limb seems weighed down by tons of lead—she can but in a hoarse faint whisper cry, —

"Help—help—help—help!"

...The figure turns half round, and the light falls upon the face. It is perfectly white—perfectly bloodless. The eyes look like polished tin; the lips are drawn back, and the principal feature next to those dreadful eyes is the teeth—the fearful looking teeth—projecting like those of some wild animal, hideously, glaringly white, and fang-like. It approaches the bed with a strange, gliding movement. It clashes together the long nails that literally appear to hang from the finger ends. No sound comes from its lips. Is she going mad—that young and beautiful girl exposed to so much terror? she has drawn up all her limbs; she cannot even now say help. The power of articulation is gone, but the power of movement has returned to her; she can draw herself slowly along to the other side of the bed from that towards which the hideous appearance is coming.

What influence do you think this story might have had on Stoker's *Dracula*?

Success Criteria:

- Write your answer as two analytical paragraphs.
- Include quotations from both 'Varney the Vampire' and *Dracula* as evidence.
- Analyse key themes in both texts (e.g. terror and horror, sex, violence)

Challenge: Also analyse the use of language in both texts

Use the sentence starters to help you:

In 'Varney the Vampire' the authors present the vampire as...

They do this by... For example...

Similarly, in *Dracula*, Stoker explores... This is seen when...

Glossary

- **Aristocrat** – A person who is associated with the ruling, privileged class.
e.g. The wealthy aristocrat was born into a noble family, so she never worked a day in her life.
- **Predatory** – An adjective used to describe something that kills and eats other animals; it can also be used to describe exploitative behaviour.
e.g. Hawks are predatory and may pose a danger to rabbits and other small pets.
- **Rejuvenate** – Give new energy or vigour to; a synonym for revitalize.
e.g. The exercise and fresh air rejuvenated me.
- **Bewitch** – To be enchanting or delightful; or to use witchcraft or spells
e.g. The wicked fairy bewitched the prince and turned him into a frog.
- **Culmination** –The highest or climactic point of something; similar to climax.
e.g. Achieving the Olympic medal was the culmination of years of hard work.

