

Wuthering Heights Study Guide

Wuthering Heights by Emily Brontë

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Introduction

First published in 1847, Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights* ranks high on the list of major works of English literature. A brooding tale of passion and revenge set in the Yorkshire moors, the novel has inspired no fewer than four film versions in modern times. Early critics did not like the work, citing its excess of passion and its coarseness. A second edition was published in 1850, two years after the author's death. Sympathetically prefaced by her sister Charlotte, it met with greater success, and the novel has continued to grow in stature ever since. In the novel a pair of narrators, Mr Lockwood and Nelly Dean, relate the story of the foundling Heathcliff's arrival at Wuthering Heights, and the close-knit bond he forms with his benefactor's daughter, Catherine Earnshaw. One in spirit, they are nonetheless social unequals, and the saga of frustrated yearning and destruction that follows Catherine's refusal to marry Heathcliff is unique in the English canon. The novel is admired not least for the power of its imagery, its complex structure, and its ambiguity, the very elements that confounded its first critics. Emily Brontë spent her short life mostly at home, and apart from her own fertile imagination, she drew her inspiration from the local landscape—the surrounding moorlands and the regional architecture of the Yorkshire area—as well as her personal experience of religion, of folklore, and of illness and death. Dealing with themes of nature, cruelty, social position, and indestructibility of the spirit, *Wuthering Heights* has surpassed the more successful Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre* in academic and popular circles.



Author Biography

Emily Jane Brontë was born on July 30, 1818, to Maria Branwell and the Reverend Patrick Brontë, in Thornton, Yorkshire, England. She was the fifth of six children, and the fourth daughter. The family moved to a parsonage in Haworth in 1820, and following the death of Maria Brontë in 1821, the children's maternal aunt came to care for them. In 1825 Emily was sent to join her sisters Maria, Elizabeth, and Charlotte at school, but after an epidemic at the school claimed the lives of Maria and Elizabeth, Emily and Charlotte returned home. Emily would remain at home for the next ten years. In 1826 Patrick Brontë gave his children a set of toy soldiers, and the children began to make up stories about them. A realm in Africa, called Angria, was largely the inspiration of Charlotte and brother Branwell, but soon Emily and Anne had invented the Pacific Island of Gondal, which would figure in poems and stories they wrote throughout their lives. Emily was uncomfortable with outsiders and made only brief, intermittent attempts to construct a life for herself away from the parsonage. An unsuccessful experiment as Charlotte's pupil in East Yorkshire that began in 1835 ended after a year. She was similarly ill-suited for a position as assistant teacher at Law Hill School near Halifax. In 1842, Charlotte and Emily traveled to Brussels, Belgium, intending to study languages, but returned home later that year because of the death of their aunt, who had left them what money she had.

In 1845 Charlotte discovered a private notebook of Emily's poems and persuaded her to publish a selection of them. Emily reluctantly agreed, and a volume of poetry that included "Remembrance," "The Prisoner," "The Philosopher," and "Stars" appeared in 1846. It sold only two copies, but one critic was flattering. *Wuthering Heights* appeared in 1847 under the pseudonym Ellis Bell and was panned by contemporary critics, who objected to its coarseness and brutality. In contrast, Charlotte's novel *Jane Eyre*, published the same year, was a runaway success. Emily produced one further poem in 1846; *Wuthering Heights* was her only novel. In 1848 Branwell Brontë died, in part owing to his dissolute ways, which were a source of constant concern to his sisters. Emily caught cold at his funeral and developed tuberculosis. Refusing to seek medical treatment, she died on December 19, 1848.

The lack of biographical material about Emily Brontë makes her an enigmatic figure and her work difficult to evaluate. The poems, in particular, suffer from a lack of context, and ambiguous punctuation. Although the poems are often clumsy, they show flashes of the same originality that makes *Wuthering Heights* so compelling. Emily Brontë did not know success during her lifetime, but despite the initial failure of *Wuthering Heights*, she has proved a giant among writers.



Plot Summary

Part I-Childhood

Set on the Yorkshire moors of England, *Wuthering Heights* opens with the comments of Mr. Lockwood, the newly arrived tenant of Thrushcross Grange. He tells of his visit to Wuthering Heights, where he encounters his landlord and neighbor, Mr. Heathcliff; Joseph, Heathcliff's pious and surly old servant; Hareton Earnshaw, an ignorant and impoverished young man; and the beautiful Catherine Heathcliff, widow of Heathcliff's dead son. Rough weather forces Lockwood to spend the night. He finds several old books, the margins of which had been used as a childhood diary by Catherine Earnshaw, mother to the current Catherine. Perusing these pages, Lockwood learns about the childhood adventures of Heathcliff and the first Catherine, and of their oppression by Catherine's brother, Hindley. Lockwood falls into a restless sleep, punctuated by nightmares in which the first Catherine Earnshaw comes to the bedroom window and begs to be let in. He awakes screaming, and in so doing he wakes Heathcliff, who opens the window and begs Catherine to come again. At sunrise Heathcliff escorts Lockwood back to Thrushcross Grange.

The next day, Lockwood, finding himself sick, persuades the servant, Nelly Dean, to sit and talk with him. She relates how she grew up at Wuthering Heights, and she tells how one night Mr. Earnshaw brought home the mysterious boy, Heathcliff, whom he had found starving in Liverpool. Mr. Earnshaw favors Heathcliff, causing his son Hindley to hate the interloper, but Heathcliff and the first Catherine become fast friends. Hindley is sent off to college, but after Mr. Earnshaw's death he returns with a wife and becomes master of Wuthering Heights. Under Hindley's tyranny, Catherine and Heathcliff grow closer and more mischievous, their favorite pastime being to wander the moors. On one such excursion they are caught looking in the windows of Thrushcross Grange, and Catherine is bitten by a bulldog and has to stay at the Grange for five weeks. Hindley, meanwhile, forbids Heathcliff to have further contact with Catherine.

Catherine returns much changed. She now dresses and acts like a lady, and she has befriended Edgar and Isabella Linton, the siblings who live at the Grange. Heathcliff feels her neglect sharply, and Catherine feels torn between loyalty to her old friend and attraction to her new companions. Hindley's new wife, Frances, gives birth to a son, Hareton, and dies of consumption, and Hindley starts drinking and becomes even more tyrannical. Heathcliff is deprived of all education and is forced to labor as one of the servants of the Heights. When Edgar proposes to Catherine, she accepts, but tells Nelly that she would never have done so if her brother had not turned Heathcliff into someone it would disgrace her to marry. Heathcliff overhears this comment and flees Wuthering Heights before she goes on to explain to Nelly the depth of her feelings for Heathcliff:

"I cannot express it, but surely you and everybody have a notion that there is, or should be an existence of yours beyond you. What were the use of my creation if it were entirely contained here? My great miseries in this world have been Heathcliff's miseries,



and I watched and felt each from the beginning; my great thought in living is himself. If all else perished, and *he* remained, I should still continue to be; and, if all else remained, and he were annihilated, the Universe would turn to a mighty stranger. I should not seem a part of it. My love for Linton is like the foliage in the woods. Time will change it, I am well aware, as winter changes the trees-my love for Heathcliff resembles the eternal rocks beneath-a source of little visible delight, but necessary. Nelly, I *am* Heathcliff-he is always, always in my mind not as a pleasure, any more than I am always a pleasure to myself-but as my own being-so, do not talk of our separation again."

Part II-Marriage and Death

Catherine and Edgar are married and seem happy, until Heathcliff returns, mysteriously wealthy and educated. He takes up residence at Wuthering Heights, where he gambles Hindley out of all his possessions. Heathcliff quickly resumes his acquaintance with Catherine, to her delight and Edgar's annoyance. Isabella, Edgar's sister, begins to love Heathcliff, in spite of repeated warnings about his character. Heathcliff, desiring Isabella's inheritance, begins to encourage the attraction, and when Nelly informs Edgar of this courtship he becomes enraged. A fight ensues between Edgar and Heathcliff, and Heathcliff is banished from the Grange. Catherine, to punish Edgar, refuses to eat for three days and drives herself into a feverish delirium. While Edgar is nursing her back to a fragile state of health, Isabella and Heathcliff elope. Isabella soon regrets her marriage to the cruel Heathcliff. She writes to Nelly, telling her of her miserable life at Wuthering Heights and begging her to visit. Heathcliff takes advantage of Nelly's visit to request a meeting with Catherine, who is pregnant. Nelly reluctantly agrees, and a few days later, while Edgar is at church, Heathcliff enters the Grange and sees Catherine for the last time. Edgar enters and finds Heathcliff embracing Catherine, who has fainted. Catherine dies without ever fully regaining her senses, although two hours before her death, she gives birth to a daughter. Edgar and Heathcliff are both distraught at Catherine's death, and Heathcliff begs her ghost to haunt him.

Days after Catherine's death, Isabella appears at the Grange, having fled the Heights. She swears she will not return, but she refuses to stay at the Grange because she fears Heathcliff will find her there. She moves to the South of England and gives birth to a sickly boy she names Linton.

Part III-The Second Generation

Shortly after Isabella's escape, the doctor, Kenneth, brings news of Hindley's death. Nelly wants Edgar to take in Hindley's son Hareton, but Heathcliff vows that if they take Hareton from him he will take his child from Isabella. He asserts that he wants to see if the same mistreatment will affect Hindley's child as Hindley's abuse affected Heathcliff.

Twelve years later, Isabella, near death, writes to her brother and asks him to care for her son after her death. Edgar brings Linton home, but Heathcliff immediately demands



custody of his son. He reveals to Nelly his plan to see his child ruling over both Thrushcross Grange and Wuthering Heights.

Young Catherine, daughter of Catherine and Edgar, is not told that her cousin is so close by, but one day on a walk on the moor, she meets Heathcliff and Hareton and is reacquainted with Linton. Heathcliff tells Nelly that he hopes Linton and young Catherine will fall in love and marry. He boasts about how he has turned Hareton, a naturally intelligent boy, into an ignorant brute, while raising his own weak and selfish son up as Hareton's master. When Edgar hears of his daughter's visit, he does his best to impress on her the evil nature of Heathcliff and the importance of avoiding the Heights. Catherine nevertheless commences a secret correspondence with Linton, which only ends when Nelly discovers the love letters and threatens to tell Catherine's father. Heathcliff, however, convinces Catherine that Linton is dying of grief because of their broken correspondence, and Nelly reluctantly agrees to accompany Catherine on a visit to the Heights. That visit leads to a series of clandestine visits by young Catherine to the Heights. Edgar puts a stop to the visits, but finally agrees to let Catherine and Linton meet for weekly strolls on the moor. During the second of these excursions, Heathcliff, knowing that Edgar is near death, tricks Catherine and Nelly into entering Wuthering Heights, where he imprisons them and forces Catherine to marry Linton. Catherine convinces Linton to help her escape, and she arrives at the Grange just in time to see her dying father. During her absence from the Heights, Heathcliff forces Linton to make Heathcliff the inheritor of all of his and Catherine's property. After her father's death, young Catherine is forced to return to the Heights and tend to her dying husband. He dies shortly after her arrival, and Catherine, impoverished and alone, is forced to stay on at the Heights.

The day after hearing this story, Lockwood visits the Heights and gives notice that he will be leaving for London. Returning months later to settle some business, he finds Thrushcross Grange deserted and matters much changed at the Heights. Hareton and Catherine, previously sworn enemies, have fallen in love, and Catherine is aiding Hareton in his attempts to educate himself. Nelly is now employed at the Heights, and while the lovers enjoy a walk on the moor, Nelly informs Lockwood of Heathcliff's death, which followed four days of starvation during which he was haunted by the vision of his beloved Catherine. He was buried, as requested, next to Catherine, with the adjoining sides of the two coffins removed so that their ashes could mingle, and the country folks claim that a person walking on the moors will sometimes see the ghosts of Heathcliff and Catherine wandering their old playground.



Chapter 1

Chapter 1 Summary

A Mr. Lockwood, Mr. Heathcliff's new tenant, narrates the beginning of *Wuthering Heights*. The year is 1801. *Wuthering Heights* is the name of Mr. Heathcliff's home. The term *Wuthering* is used to describe the amount of wind the property is subjected to during big storms. Mr. Heathcliff, rather reluctantly, has invited Mr. Lockwood into his home to show him around and talk about their arrangement.

Upon entering Mr. Heathcliff's home Mr. Lockwood notices the name *Hareton Earnshaw* and the date 1500 etched into the stone surrounding the front door. Mr. Heathcliff's unfriendly and hurried manner causes Mr. Lockwood not to ask about the relevance of the name or date. Mr. Lockwood is left alone with several of Mr. Heathcliff's dogs as he goes to fetch his butler and a bottle of wine. Mr. Lockwood makes faces at the dogs and they attack him. Mr. Heathcliff and his butler return and the dogs leave Mr. Lockwood alone; he has not been bitten or otherwise injured. Mr. Heathcliff is amused by the event and his mood thus improves. The pair shares some wine and conversation.

Chapter 1 Analysis

The introduction of *Wuthering Heights* serves to introduce the reader to Mr. Lockwood, one of the narrators, and Heathcliff, the main character. Heathcliff's menacing character defines himself as the story's antagonist.



Chapter 2

Chapter 2 Summary

Mr. Lockwood arrives at Wuthering Heights the next day to call on Mr. Heathcliff. Just as he is knocking on the door it starts to snow quite heavily. He begins to pound loudly but no one opens the door. Finally a young man without even a coat on appears and leads him into the house. There, Mrs. Heathcliff is sitting before the fire. She is not very friendly to Mr. Lockwood and refuses to serve him tea, as Mr. Heathcliff had not invited him for tea. The mood is awkward as Mr. Lockwood unsuccessfully tries to engage her in conversation.

Mr. Heathcliff finally arrives. He is angry with Mr. Lockwood for visiting in the middle of such a storm. Mr. Lockwood suggests that Mr. Heathcliff either lend him one of his servants to guide him back home or otherwise let him stay the night. Mr. Heathcliff is not agreeable to either suggestion.

The young man, Mrs. Heathcliff, Mr. Heathcliff, and Mr. Lockwood sit down for tea. The three inhabitants of Wuthering Heights are angry and quite curt with each other and their guest. Mr. Lockwood makes the mistake of identifying Mrs. Heathcliff as Mr. Heathcliff's wife. Mr. Heathcliff tells him that she is his daughter-in-law. Mr. Lockwood then misidentifies the young man as Mr. Heathcliff's son. He is quickly corrected by both Mr. Heathcliff and the young man, who identifies himself as Hareton Earnshaw. Mr. Heathcliff's son, Mrs. Heathcliff's husband, is dead. No other information is given.

There are no men available to guide Mr. Lockwood back to his house and Mr. Heathcliff insists that if he is to stay he must share a bed with one of the men of the house. Mr. Lockwood is angered at their lack of hospitality. It is now that the dogs choose to attack him once again. Zillah, the housekeeper enters the room and rescues Mr. Lockwood from the dogs and Mr. Heathcliff and Earnshaw's laughter. She tends to his wound and tells him that she will lead him to a place he can stay the night.

Chapter 2 Analysis

As Hareton and Mrs. Heathcliff are introduced to the reader it seems as if all of the inhabitants of Wuthering Heights share Heathcliff's nasty disposition. Neither the relationship between the characters, nor why they all reside in the same house, is known to the reader or Mr. Lockwood. What is apparent is that none of them seem very happy about their circumstances or their fellow residents. Mr. Heathcliff's arrival does nothing to improve the mood of the house. He is very unwelcoming to his guest and is not quick to offer any information about Mrs. Heathcliff, Hareton, or his deceased son.



Chapter 3

Chapter 3 Summary

Zillah warns Mr. Lockwood not to make any noise or light the lamps, as Mr. Heathcliff does not let anyone go into the room that she leads him to. Mr. Lockwood finds an old fashioned cabinet-like room within the room; it's not a normal bed. The cabinet affords its user privacy without giving them their own room. He opens the cabinet, finds a bed within, and shuts the doors. In addition to the bed there is a small nightstand and lots of books. Mr. Lockwood pages through them and notices that the owner of the books has written in every blank space. The books had belonged to Catherine Earnshaw.

Mr. Lockwood reads passages that Catherine had written when she was a small child. Her father had left her and Heathcliff under the charge of her older brother, Hindley, and his wife. Hindley Earnshaw did not think Heathcliff was their equal and treated him poorly.

Mr. Lockwood drifts off to sleep and quickly falls into a deep nightmare. He screams in terror, waking himself up. Heathcliff rushes into the room to investigate the noise. He is not angry to see Mr. Lockwood in the room; he only wishes that he would not scream again. Mr. Lockwood then tells Mr. Heathcliff that Catherine was tormenting him in his nightmare. She was pleading with him to let her in through the window. Mr. Lockwood remembers too late that Catherine had written kindly of Heathcliff in her books and they seemed to have been friends.

Heathcliff is noticeably angered by Mr. Lockwood's comments. He tells Mr. Lockwood to leave the room and join him in a couple minutes. Mr. Lockwood is unsure of where to go and sees Heathcliff go to the window and plead for Catherine to come back. Heathcliff is in tears. Dawn arrives and Mr. Lockwood walks back to his house.

Chapter 3 Analysis

Chapter three first introduces the reader to Catherine, as a child. Through her journal she explains the arrival of Heathcliff into their family. Her father is described as a kind, generous man who found Heathcliff on the streets and brought him home. No one takes to Heathcliff kindly, as he is darker in skin tone and not of their social station. No one hates Heathcliff more than Hindley, although Catherine eventually warms up to him and they become best friends. Chapter three also introduces Heathcliff's torment to the reader. From the way Heathcliff cries for Catherine to come back to him the reader can infer that she is dead.



Chapter 4

Chapter 4 Summary

Mr. Lockwood is curious for gossip about Heathcliff so he talks to his housekeeper, Ellen or Nelly, who has lived there for eighteen years. Mr. Heathcliff is a very rich man, who could afford to live in the grander, Thrushcross Grange, but chooses to rent it out and make even more money. Heathcliff's son is dead and his young widow's maiden name was Catherine Linton. Hareton Earnshaw is Catherine's cousin.

The housekeeper tells Mr. Lockwood that she used to play with Catherine and Hindley and she was there when their father, Mr. Earnshaw, had brought home a little homeless boy. The boy was not well received by the rest of the house, including the housekeeper; however, in only a couple days he and Catherine were good friends. Hindley never liked him.

Chapter 4 Analysis

Chapter four introduces Nelly, or Ellen, Thrushgrove Cross's housekeeper. She has known Heathcliff and Catherine since they were children and she will be the narrator for much of the rest of the story. The narrative order uses flashbacks to tell the story of Heathcliff through Nelly's memories.



Chapter 5

Chapter 5 Summary

Nelly continues telling her story. Mr. Earnshaw had grown ill. He could not bear the fighting between his son, Hindley, and Heathcliff so he sent the former to college. Catherine was a very pretty, but very mischievous little girl. Her best friend was Heathcliff and she spent most of her time with him.

Mr. Earnshaw passed away in his chair. Catherine had been at his feet and Heathcliff lay in her lap. Catherine had sung to her father and he slipped into death without anyone realizing what had happened. When they finally did everyone was stricken with grief. Catherine and Heathcliff comforted each other with their descriptions of what heaven was like.

Chapter 5 Analysis

Chapter five describes Catherine and Heathcliff's childhood through the eyes of Nelly. The children were best of friends, and although mischievous, are described as relatively good kids. The reader is meant to feel sympathy for Heathcliff because Hindley never accepted him.



Chapter 6

Chapter 6 Summary

Hindley comes back home for the funeral and brings with him his wife, whom he had kept a secret. Hindley is mean-spirited and condemns all of the servants to the back rooms. He also turns Heathcliff into a servant instead of one of the family. He is no longer allowed to learn with Catherine and he has to do manual labor in the fields. If either Catherine or Heathcliff disobeyed Hindley, which they often do, they are disciplined. One day the pair runs off and cannot be found when the housekeeper calls them for dinner. Hindley locks all of the doors and ordered the servants not to let them in.

Nelly has stayed up to watch for them. It is only Heathcliff that comes back. Catherine is staying the night at Thrushcross Grange. The Linton's, who live there, did not ask him to stay. Heathcliff describes the scene he and Catherine had witnessed at Thrushcross. The two children, Edgar and Isabella, had everything they could want, a warm fire, plush room, but instead of begin happy they were fighting with each other over the dog.

Catherine and Heathcliff began laughing at the children and the Linton's heard them. The dogs were sent out and one of them bit Catherine's ankle. A servant dragged them both into the house. They believed Heathcliff to be a gypsy and sent him outside to walk home by himself. They doted on Catherine and allowed her to stay the night.

Chapter 6 Analysis

Chapter six furthers the degradation and humiliation that Hindley forces on Heathcliff. Heathcliff had once been a member of the family but was now considered an indentured servant. The reader begins to feel sorry for the boy as he is denied an education.

Heathcliff is also discriminated against because of his darker skin tone. The neighbors call him a gypsy and do not offer to him the same kindness offered to Catherine. Furthermore, Catherine does not correct them and accepts their care without comment.



Chapter 7

Chapter 7 Summary

Catherine ends up staying at Thrushcross Grange for five weeks. In those five weeks her ankle healed from the dog bite and she grew into a little lady. When it comes time for Catherine to return to Wuthering Heights, Heathcliff's pride would not allow him to clean up. He had grown resentful over the friendship that she developed with Edgar and Isabella. When Catherine sees her old friend she makes a comment about his unwashed appearance and laughs. Heathcliff is angered that his friend, who used to play with him has changed and has laughed at him.

Nelly tries to convince Heathcliff to improve his appearance and finally he agrees. The Linton's are coming over for a party and Heathcliff promises to be a good boy. Heathcliff is clean and presentable, ready to meet his old friend and her new friends, but Hindley steps in and sends him to the tower. During the party Catherine sneaks off to talk with Heathcliff.

Nelly realizes the late time and apologizes to Mr. Lockwood for talking so long to tell the story. Mr. Lockwood tells her that he likes the longwinded version and is quite curious over all of the details of the characters in the story. Nelly then continues the story where she left off. It was the summer of 1778.

Chapter 7 Analysis

Chapter seven marks the appearance of Heathcliff's strong pride. He will not be laughed at and will not forgive those who do wrong to him. There is a strong sense of foreboding, a sense of pride he has for himself that will do harm to those who hurt him in the future.

As the reader knows that Heathcliff had eventually become a mean-tempered man it is likely inferred that the injustices and various blows to his pride he suffered contributed to this change. At the end of the chapter the reader feels sympathy again for Heathcliff as he attempts to clean up and behave well, only to have his efforts thrown in his face by Hindley.



Chapter 8

Chapter 8 Summary

That summer, Hareton Earnshaw, Hindley's son, is born. Hindley's wife is stricken with consumption and dies when Hareton is still a baby. It is Nelly's responsibility to raise him. Catherine is fifteen. She is very beautiful but selfish and Nelly does not like her. Having been denied an education for so long Heathcliff had fallen behind in his studies compared to Catherine. He is reduced to manual labor and no longer believes in himself. Catherine and he are still friends but he shrinks away from her touch.

Edgar has started calling on Catherine and Nelly and is ordered by Hindley to stay in the room on such visits. Catherine does not like this and shows her true character to Edgar by pinching and verbally abusing Nelly in front of him. Edgar tells Catherine he will leave but he turns around and continues his visit with the young beauty.

Chapter 8 Analysis

Catherine's true character is revealed in chapter eight as being selfish and petty. The reader no longer assumes that Catherine is merely a mischievous child. The cast of unhappy, spiteful characters residing at Wuthering Heights grows. The only promise of goodness is with the new baby, Hareton.



Chapter 9

Chapter 9 Summary

Hindley's drinking has increased since his wife's death. Nelly grows accustomed to hiding Hareton and removing the bullets from Hindley's rifle on nights he has been drinking heavily. One night Hindley catches Nelly trying to hide Hareton in the kitchen cabinet and accuses her of trying to kill the young boy. He threatens her life and takes the child away. Hindley brings his son upstairs and Nelly follows. The three hear steps below; Nelly recognizes them as Heathcliff's. Hindley loses his grip on his son and he falls to the ground. Heathcliff catches him just in time. Nelly knows that Heathcliff realizes that by saving Hindley's son he had missed his opportunity at the greatest revenge. Nelly believed that if they had not already saw Heathcliff save the child he would have smashed it upon the ground himself.

Nelly took Hareton down to the kitchen to calm him. Heathcliff was going to the barn but instead, chose to sit on a bench, hidden and quiet. Catherine joined Nelly, wanting to talk to her. She told Nelly that Edgar had proposed and would not tell Nelly whether or not she accepted, until the housekeeper gave her opinion on what she should have done. Nelly questions whether she loves Edgar. Catherine tells her, yes. Nelly asks her why she loves Edgar. Catherine says she loves Edgar because he is handsome, kind, wealthy, and that he loves her. Nelly tells her that these are not reasons why one loves another person.

Catherine then tells her that she does not think she should marry Edgar. She tells Nelly that if her brother had not diminished Heathcliff's standing then she would have married him but now it would degrade her to do so. She tells Nelly that she loves Heathcliff, not for the reasons she loves Edgar, but because they are so much alike, that he is more like herself than she is. Nelly sees Heathcliff when Catherine is talking. He silently exits the room after hearing that Catherine feels it would degrade her to marry him. Heathcliff never heard Catherine confess her love for him.

Catherine goes on to tell Nelly that she will marry Edgar and use his influence and money to build Heathcliff's standing so that he may be more powerful than Hindley. Nelly tries to persuade her that her reasoning is wrong. She tells Catherine that Heathcliff likely heard much of what she had just told her.

Catherine goes to find Heathcliff in the barn but he is not there. In fact no one can find Heathcliff. Catherine stays up pacing and throwing a crying fit. She is outside when a terrible storm occurs. She refuses to move inside until after the storm has passed. She is soaked through and settles herself on the settee. She is still sitting there the next morning, still damp. Catherine falls ill with fever, Mr. and Mrs. Linton also fall ill with the same fever, and die. Three years later Catherine marries Edgar. Heathcliff has not returned. Nelly is forced to leave Hareton and accompany Catherine to Thrushcross Grange. It is then that Nelly realizes the late time. She tells Mr. Lockwood that he had



better go to bed, and that she will continue the story at a later time. She remarks that Mr. Lockwood does not look so well.

Chapter 9 Analysis

Hindley, although not a sympathetic character, loved his wife. He grieves her loss by drinking heavily. Hindley's love for his wife presents the theme of the book as love. Throughout the book, the theme reveals that love rarely takes the most perfect form. Nasty characters can find love, while sweet ones may never find it. Also, love may be unfulfilled or one-sided. The reality on how far Heathcliff is willing to go to enact his revenge on Hindley is apparent in Nelly's feelings that he would have killed Hareton had they not been there.

The theme of loves announces itself again in chapter nine. Catherine announces that she intends to marry Edgar and that she loves him. Although she loves him for convenient reasons and it is Heathcliff that she loves with her soul. She refuses the idea of marrying Heathcliff because he is a lesser man than Edgar. If she truly loved Heathcliff it would not have mattered what rung on the social ladder he occupied.



Chapter 10

Chapter 10 Summary

Mr. Lockwood has been ill, confined to bed for four weeks. He is beyond restless and so he asks Nelly to come in and continue her story. She continues where she had left off.

Nelly accompanied Catherine, now Mrs. Linton, to Thrushgrove Cross. She notices that both Isabella and Edgar try hard not to make Catherine angry and for the most part bend to her will.

One night Nelly is returning from the garden and hears her name called. At first she does not recognize the voice or the man behind it, but soon he identifies himself as Heathcliff. Heathcliff is very polite and asks Nelly to fetch Catherine for him. Nelly does as she is asked. Catherine returns with great excitement that her old friend has returned.

Heathcliff is invited inside for tea. Catherine spends the entire time staring at Heathcliff and he steals frequent glimpses of her. Edgar is angered at the visible flirting going on between his wife and a man he still considers beneath himself. Before Heathcliff goes, he mentions that he will be staying at Wuthering Heights at the invitation of Hindley.

Nelly is awakened that night by Catherine, who is too happy to be awake alone. Nelly wonders at the strangeness of Heathcliff staying at Wuthering Heights. Catherine tells her that Heathcliff had explained it to her. He had gone to Wuthering Heights to see Nelly, in order to find the whereabouts of Catherine. Hindley had some men over for a game of cards and Heathcliff was asked to join. He did and won quite a sum of money from Hindley. Heathcliff was invited for another game and finally to stay at the house in exchange for rent. Heathcliff told Catherine that he wished to stay there so he will be closer to Thrushgrove Cross, and therefore, her.

Edgar allows Catherine to visit Heathcliff at Wuthering Heights accompanied by Isabella. Heathcliff also begins visiting Catherine at Thrushgrove Cross. Isabella developed an intense crush on Heathcliff. She resented Catherine for not including her in conversation with him and one day told Catherine so. Isabella confessed that she loved Heathcliff. Catherine tries to convince her sister-in-law that Heathcliff would be a bad match for her.

Heathcliff arrives the next day for a visit. Catherine and Isabella are in the same room, yet have not spoken to each other since their fight. Catherine reveals Isabella's feelings for Heathcliff and they both laugh at the young woman.



Chapter 10 Analysis

Chapter ten marks the return of Heathcliff. It is obvious that neither he nor Catherine had stopped loving the other during the past three years. Although it angers Edgar to see his wife with Heathcliff, he wishes to make her happy and consents to their visits. Isabella falls for Heathcliff and once again Catherine shows her true colors by laughing at the young girl in front of Heathcliff. Heathcliff also laughs at the idea of Isabella. It is from this that the reader can infer that Heathcliff has not changed into a better person during his time away. Although Heathcliff will be staying at Wuthering Heights on the invitation of Hindley the reader cannot help but think he may have an ulterior motive for living with his enemy.



Chapter 11

Chapter 11 Summary

One day Nelly had a bad feeling about Hindley, as if something was going to happen to him. She goes to Wuthering Heights to see her former master. There, she runs into Hareton, her former charge. The little boy swears and throws things at her. Upon her inquiry the boy tells Nelly that Heathcliff has taught him those words. He tells Nelly that he likes Heathcliff because he curses at his father and his father had sent away his tutor, whom he did not like.

Heathcliff has begun his revenge on Hindley by turning his son against him and teaching him bad behavior. He has also forced the tutor away, leaving Hareton uneducated. This is the same thing that Hindley had done to Heathcliff as a boy.

The next time Heathcliff comes to visit Thrushgrove Cross, Nelly notices that he calls on Isabella before finding Catherine. Nelly tells Catherine that Heathcliff had turned his affection toward the young girl. Catherine confronts Heathcliff. She asks him if he truly has feelings for Isabella. Heathcliff tells Catherine that she has treated him as though he was beneath her and it has not gone unnoticed. He tells her that he will use Isabella's feelings for him to his advantage.

While they are fighting, Edgar finds Nelly and tells her to bring in a couple men at his signal. He enters the room where Catherine and Heathcliff are fighting and orders them not to see each other anymore. He accuses his wife of having feelings for Heathcliff. He gives his signal to Nelly to find the other men, as he will not fight Heathcliff by himself, but Catherine sees the signal and locks Nelly in a closet.

Edgar begins to tremble and leaned over a chair. He is unable to face Heathcliff alone. Heathcliff calls him a coward and moves toward him; just then Edgar springs up and punches him in the throat before running out of the room. Heathcliff leaves and Catherine locks herself in her room. She refuses any food that night or the next morning. Edgar tells his sister that if she continues to pursue a relationship with Heathcliff then she can no longer consider him her brother.

Chapter 11 Analysis

Heathcliff also begins to court Isabella. The reader is privy to the fact that Heathcliff has no feelings for the young women. Courting her has the advantages of revenge over Edgar, whom he hates because he married Catherine, and Catherine too, who has treated him as if he were below her. He denies to Catherine that he wants revenge on her but his actions clearly differs.

Chapter eleven shows Edgar as a coward, causing the reader to be unsympathetic. He knew Catherine's true selfish character before he married her, thus he knew what he

was getting himself into. He also teased Heathcliff as a child and now will not stand up to him without his servants backing him up.



Chapter 12

Chapter 12 Summary

On her third day of fasting, Catherine asks for some water and food. Nelly brings her water and toast, which she finishes quickly. Catherine throws a temper tantrum. She is acting crazy and is furious that her husband is not worried for her. She is talking nonsense and it turns out that she has a fever. Edgar passes by the room and is mad that he has not been alerted to her illness but no one had known that she was sick since she had locked herself in her room. Nelly goes to find the doctor.

Catherine is quite ill. One of the maids, back from an errand in the nearby town, brings with her news of Isabella's departure in the night. She has run off and married Heathcliff. Edgar responds to the news by telling Nelly that Isabella is no longer to be considered his sister.

Chapter 12 Analysis

Catherine's selfish temper tantrum turns into delirium. It is to be inferred that along with a fever Catherine might also suffer some sort of mental disease.



Chapter 13

Chapter 13 Summary

Catherine was very ill for the next two months until finally the doctor announced that she was out of danger. It was soon announced that she was pregnant. Heathcliff and Isabella were still unaccounted for. Approximately six weeks after Isabella left, she sent a short note to her brother informing him of her marriage. She also included a note for Nelly's eyes only. In the letter she tells Nelly about her first couple days at Wuthering Heights where the newly married couple has settled. Everyone at Wuthering Heights has been quite unwelcoming towards her and Heathcliff has turned nasty. She believes that Nelly has been correct in her judgment of his character and that she has made a mistake in leaving Thrushgrove Cross. She pleads in her letter to Nelly that her former housekeeper will visit her often.

Chapter 13 Analysis

It is not explained how far along Catherine's pregnancy is nor where Heathcliff and Isabella were before returning to Wuthering Heights. Isabella's letter to Nelly describes the unwelcoming environment of her new home and the nasty characters living there. Heathcliff's true character was revealed to his bride immediately following their wedding.



Chapter 14

Chapter 14 Summary

Nelly pleads with Edgar to forgive his sister and write her a note that she may take with her to Wuthering Heights, but he refuses. When Nelly arrives at her former house, Heathcliff greets her looking very much the gentleman. Isabella looks unkempt, an outward signal of the neglect she has been given.

Heathcliff asks Nelly questions about Catherine. She tells him that she has gotten over the worst of her illness but she will never be the same person in appearance or character. Nelly tells Heathcliff not to try to communicate with her. Heathcliff explains passionately to Nelly that he loves Catherine more than any man, including Edgar, ever could, and he knows that Catherine still loves him. He tells Nelly that he will once again see Catherine. Nelly tells him that such a meeting might kill Catherine.

Heathcliff informs Nelly, and Isabella, that he never loved his wife, Isabella. In fact, he has never met anyone as detestable to himself, as her. She had conjured up feelings of love for him that were completely one-sided and once they were married he tried his best to make her hate him and he succeeded. He had even hung her dog. At the end of his speech he gives Isabella permission to leave, as he would rather her annoying presence be gone, even if it meant giving up the pleasure he took from tormenting her.

Isabella tells Nelly that he has given her permission to leave before, only to revoke it. Heathcliff proves her right by ordering her to her room. Heathcliff then sets his sights on convincing Nelly to help him see Catherine. He wants to hear from her why she had fallen sick and if there was anything he could do. Heathcliff found this the best way to be done with the uncertainty. Nelly finally allows herself to be convinced to give Catherine a letter from Heathcliff and inform him the next time Edgar leaves the house.

Mr. Lockwood's doctor arrives at Thrushgrove Cross. As Nelly goes to meet him Mr. Lockwood thinks of Catherine Heathcliff and her eyes. He wonders that if he falls for her, will she turn into her mother.

Chapter 14 Analysis

Heathcliff is outwardly torturing Isabella. He gives her freedom one moment only to take it away the next. He confesses that he married her not for love, but for revenge. He does not mind that Isabella had never wronged him. Heathcliff does not care who he hurts on his path of revenge.



Chapter 15

Chapter 15 Summary

It is now a week later. Mr. Lockwood is feeling better and recounts what Nelly has told him of her story since she had last left off. Nelly carries the letter from Heathcliff to Catherine but does not give it to her until three days later, when Edgar and the rest of the house leave for church. Heathcliff, as he promised, is waiting outside in the garden. Catherine has a glaze to her eyes that will not allow her to focus on anything nearby. She looks lost as her mental illness is getting the best of her. After reading the letter, Nelly can tell that she has not comprehended anything. Nelly has to explain that Heathcliff wants to see her. Before she can finish explaining, Heathcliff enters the house of his own accord and finds Catherine's bedroom. The two embrace fiercely and cover each other with kisses. The look in Heathcliff's eyes shows his belief that Catherine is indeed dying. The two confess their love for each other and apologize for betraying the other.

They embrace, kiss, and weep for some time. Soon it is time for Edgar to come home. Nelly warns that he is near and can hear his footsteps. Heathcliff tries to extricate himself from Catherine's embrace, promising to come back within the hour, but she will not let him go. She faints as Edgar enters the room. The two men forget their hatred for one another long enough to tend to Catherine. Heathcliff leaves to spend the night below, in the garden.

Chapter 15 Analysis

Catherine's illness has gotten the best of her. Catherine and Heathcliff embrace, yet their love for one another is not to be fulfilled. They have waited too long to tell each other their feelings and now it is too late.



Chapter 16

Chapter 16 Summary

The Catherine that Mr. Lockwood knows is born that night. Catherine Linton dies two hours afterward. Baby Catherine is born unwanted, Edgar is grieving the loss of his wife and the little baby girl is not considered an heir. The next morning Nelly finds Heathcliff waiting out in the garden. She only confirms his statement that Catherine is dead. He asks how she died and is answered that it was quietly. Heathcliff voices his hope that Catherine haunts him, because he cannot live without her, she is his life, his soul. He violently bangs his head against a tree.

Catherine's body is laid out in the parlor until her funeral. Edgar stands watch over her body, hardly sleeping. When he finally seeks rest, Nelly opens the window so that Heathcliff, who has also been standing guard outside, can say one last goodbye to his love.

Chapter 16 Analysis

After Catherine dies Heathcliff voices his hope that she will haunt him because he cannot live without her. It is wondered why Heathcliff does not just kill himself so that he may be with her but he is instead driven by revenge.



Chapter 17

Chapter 17 Summary

During one stormy evening Nelly is rocking baby Catherine, whom her father calls Cathy, while Edgar sleeps upstairs. Isabella enters the house, soaking wet. She gives her account to her former housekeeper on the recent events at Wuthering Heights that have caused her to leave in the middle of a storm.

The night before Heathcliff found himself locked out of the house by Hindley. Hindley confessed to Isabella that he planned to kill Heathcliff that night and all she had to do was remain silent. Although Heathcliff had broken Isabella's heart, she could not stand by and watch a man be killed, even if it was him. She warned Heathcliff of Hindley's intentions. Heathcliff gained entry into the house and the two engaged in a physical fight. Hindley was wounded but not mortally.

The next day Heathcliff was once again mourning the death of Catherine to Isabella. She provoked his anger by teasing him about Catherine and he threw a knife at her head. Isabella turned and ran all the way to Thrushgrove Cross. She is finished telling her story to Nelly and so she leaves in a horse and carriage that has been prepared for her. She does not believe that Edgar will let her stay in the house and she is never going to go back to Heathcliff. A couple months after she leaves, Isabella gives birth to a son, Linton.

Hindley dies less than six months after his sister, Catherine. He drank himself to death. Hindley mortgaged Wuthering Heights very heavily to pay for his gambling and drinking. Heathcliff owned the mortgage and now was the master of his childhood home. Edgar had wanted to take custody of Hareton but Heathcliff threatened that if he tried, he would subsequently try to gain custody of his own son. Edgar relented and so Hindley's son, Hareton, would become Heathcliff's servant.

Chapter 17 Analysis

Isabella has escaped from Wuthering Heights. The birth of her son is mentioned and considering the fact that Heathcliff and Isabella hated each other, it is assumed that Heathcliff had raped his wife. Heathcliff's plan for revenge and his reasoning behind living with his enemy becomes apparent upon Hindley's death. He has used Hindley's addictions to gambling and alcohol as a means to lend money to him and thus, be able to own Wuthering Heights. As he owns the house he also owns Hareton, who was left nothing from his broke father. Instead of sympathizing with Hareton, he puts the boy in the same position that Hindley had put him in upon the death of Catherine's father. He denies Hareton an education and reduces him to the status of a servant forced to do hard labor. What was once Hareton's birthright is now owned by Heathcliff.



Chapter 18

Chapter 18 Summary

The next twelve years are very happy for Nelly, or Ellen, as she is now called and the other inhabitants of Thrushgrove Cross. Cathy is growing up to be a beautiful, sweet, yet spirited young lady and Edgar and Ellen both adore her. Edgar, however, has become somewhat of a hermit and thus, so has Cathy. She begins to become curious as to what lay outside their property.

It was around this time that Isabella passed away. She had written to Edgar telling him that she did not have much time left and she wished for him to raise Linton. Edgar rushed to his sister's side and stayed for three weeks.

To occupy Cathy during that time, Ellen allowed her to go out on the property with her pony during the day. She would come back and tell Ellen of her adventures, making up great stories. One day; however, Cathy does not come back at tea time as she is supposed to. Ellen's search leads her to Wuthering Heights. Cathy meets Hareton and mistakes him for the owner's son. When she is corrected, she treats Hareton like a servant. Ellen explains to her that Hareton is her cousin. Cathy does not believe this as she feels Hareton is below her. Heathcliff had forced the boy to do hard labor and had robbed him of use of a tutor.

Chapter 18 Analysis

Edgar is redeemed in the eyes of the reader. He loves and cares for his daughter like a dutiful father. It seems as if Cathy has not inherited the nasty, selfish characteristics of her mother. However, Cathy's true character is soon revealed as she is mean to Hareton upon realizing that he is not the son of the owner of Wuthering Heights but merely a servant. She does not accept the fact that the servant could be her cousin.



Chapter 19

Chapter 19 Summary

Edgar brings Linton back with him to Thrushgrove Cross. Cathy is quite excited about the prospect of having a real cousin to play with. Linton is a very weak boy. That night, one of Heathcliff's servants arrives at Thrushgrove demanding that they give him Heathcliff's son. Edgar promises that he will be brought to Wuthering Heights the next morning. Cathy is not to be told where Linton has gone.

Chapter 19 Analysis

Chapter nineteen serves to describe Linton's fragile constitution and the fact his father, Heathcliff, has demanded that he reside at Wuthering Heights.



Chapter 20

Chapter 20 Summary

Early the next morning Ellen delivers Linton to Wuthering Heights. Heathcliff is surprised but disappointed that the boy is so fragile and looks nothing like him. He assures Ellen that he has already readied a room for his son and employed a tutor. Linton is to be master and has the right to give orders to any of the servants, including Hareton.

Chapter 20 Analysis

Heathcliff means to make Linton the master of the house, and his heir. However Linton's initial appearance is upsetting to Heathcliff. The boy looks nothing like him and is weak.



Chapter 21

Chapter 21 Summary

Cathy is very sad when she realizes that Linton has left. Ellen knows the housekeeper who is employed at Wuthering Heights and so she is able to get information concerning Linton. He is still a sick, weak boy and not a very grateful patient. His nature is to complain. Heathcliff dislikes the boy.

On Cathy's sixteenth birthday she and Ellen go for a long walk. Cathy runs ahead and before Ellen can catch up with her she has run into Heathcliff who has mistaken her for a poacher. Heathcliff convinces Cathy that he has someone he wants her to see, someone she has already met. Cathy insists that she go and Ellen has no choice but to follow.

Cathy is surprised to discover that Heathcliff is Linton's father. She questions the fact that neither Edgar nor Ellen had allowed her to see Linton when he had lived so close. Heathcliff tells Cathy that Edgar had not liked the fact that he married his sister. He tells Cathy that she and her father are welcome anytime.

Heathcliff explains to Ellen that he wishes for his son to marry Cathy, for then his son will also be the heir to Thrushgrove Heights. Linton at first does not pay much attention to Cathy. Heathcliff employs Hareton to show Cathy the property then sparks Linton's jealousy so that he may take over the task. Linton and Cathy both make fun of Hareton's lack of education, apparent in his speech and his lack of ability to read.

The next day Cathy told her father of her visit to Wuthering Heights. Edgar explained the real reason he kept Cathy from that place is that Heathcliff was a bad man. He tells Cathy that she is not allowed to visit Linton. As the weeks go by Ellen suspects that Cathy and Linton have been secretly sending notes. She confirms her suspicion by unlocking Cathy's desk drawer, one night while Cathy is sleeping. She reads the childish declaration of love in the letters and removes them. The next afternoon, Cathy discovers her drawer is empty. Ellen threatens to show the letters to Edgar but agrees to burn them if Cathy promises to stop the letters.

Chapter 21 Analysis

Linton reveals himself as an unlikable character. He whines and complains and is only too happy to use his power over Hareton and the other servants. Heathcliff's dislike of his son increases as his son's weakness increases.

Heathcliff's new plan of revenge is revealed. He wants Cathy and Linton to marry, thus ensuring that Edgar's property would move into the hands of his heir. Linton has to be coaxed to entertain Cathy. Hareton willingly takes on the task but is only rewarded with teasing from Linton and Cathy about his lack of education. Linton lies to Cathy telling



her that it is Hareton's laziness that causes him to not be able to read, however in truth, it is Heathcliff that denies him an education.

Cathy misbehaves by secretly writing to Linton. What begins as a cousinly love for one another develops into puppy love. It seems as if Heathcliff's desire of a marriage between Cathy and Linton might be desired by the pair as well.



Chapter 22

Chapter 22 Summary

Edgar falls ill with a cold and Ellen takes Cathy out on her daily walk. They reach a wall with a door that goes out to the road and Cathy climbs the wall. While reaching for a flower her hat falls off. She scales the wall and is at once on the other side. She cannot climb back over and Ellen does not have a key for the door. Heathcliff approaches Cathy and tells her that Linton is dying from a broken heart because she has stopped her letter writing. He tries to convince her to come to Wuthering Heights and visit Linton but Ellen breaks the lock and escorts Cathy back home. The next day Ellen accompanies Cathy to Wuthering Heights. Cathy is worried for Linton's health and Ellen wants to show Cathy that Heathcliff is telling another lie.

Chapter 22 Analysis

Cathy does not go against her father's wishes when she encounters Heathcliff. She now believes that Heathcliff is an unsavory character and she should not interact with him.

Cathy is however, such a compassionate young lady that she must go to see Linton to make sure he is not dying of a broken heart, as Heathcliff has said.



Chapter 23

Chapter 23 Summary

When they arrive, Linton is yelling for a servant. He is not in a good mood and is full of complaints. Ellen assists the weak boy, without thanks. Linton is ungrateful but Cathy is kind to him. The boy then tells Cathy that her father is evil and she retaliates by telling him what her father had said of Heathcliff. Cathy gets so angry that she knocks his chair. Linton is so weak that he rattles in the chair. He makes Cathy feel bad for hurting him and calls her names. Cathy felt very bad and tried to make him more comfortable. He complained and made her promise that she would visit him again because she had hurt him so that she must make up for her actions. That evening Ellen caught a cold and had to stay in bed for three weeks. Cathy tended both her father and Ellen during that time. She was the best nurse they could have had.

Chapter 23 Analysis

Linton's true character is revealed to Cathy. The number of antagonists far outweighs the protagonists in the story. Cathy, Ellen, and Edgar are the only characters that the reader is able to root for. Linton is the character foil of Linton. His traits are exactly the opposite of Cathy's. While he complains, she does not. While she loves her father, he fears his. While he is weak and fragile, she is strong and vibrant. Cathy nurses her father and Ellen when they are sick, and Linton cannot and will not help another.



Chapter 24

Chapter 24 Summary

Ellen becomes well enough to move around the house and finds that Cathy is not in her bed. Ellen waits until Cathy returns and she confesses that she has been visiting Linton during the evenings while Ellen and Edgar slept. She tells Ellen that on one of her visits Hareton told her that he had learned to read and write. When he told her he did not know his numbers Cathy laughed at him. Ellen scolds her for acting cruel and Cathy continues telling her about all of her secret visits. The next day Ellen tells Edgar about the visits. Edgar tells Cathy that she is not to go to Wuthering Heights again but that he will write and invite Linton to visit Thrushgrove whenever he liked.

Chapter 24 Analysis

Cathy again disobeys her father to see Linton. While she does go against her father's orders she does so because she did not want to disappoint Linton, who is weak. She believes that she can raise his spirits.



Chapter 25

Chapter 25 Summary

Ellen explains to Mr. Lockwood that the events she describes have only happened one year ago and yet so much has changed. Edgar becomes sicker and Cathy spends all of her time at his bedside. Edgar wonders to Ellen why his nephew, Linton, has never visited. Ellen hides from Edgar, Linton's unhappy and complaining character. She also does not tell him the extent of Linton's physical incapability. She does tell him that if Cathy were to marry Linton she would always be the stronger half and would therefore not suffer any abuse. Edgar tells Ellen that he would rather see Cathy die with him than marry Linton. Ellen promises to watch after Cathy and be with her until she, herself dies.

Edgar writes to Linton and the nephew does write back. His letters lack the negative attitude that he has in person. Ellen tells Mr. Lockwood that she later learns that Heathcliff told his son what to write. Through his letters, Linton tries to convince Edgar to let Cathy visit him. Edgar does not relent but does invite Linton to visit Thrushgrove.

Chapter 25 Analysis

Heathcliff is working the strings of his puppet, Linton. He knows that Linton is too complaining and he wishes to gain Edgar's approval for Cathy to visit his son so that they may form a match and marry.



Chapter 26

Chapter 26 Summary

Edgar finally allows Cathy to visit with Linton, in between both properties. Ellen goes with Cathy and finds Linton much closer to Wuthering Heights than he had promised. Linton is in much worse health than when they had last seen him. He is so sick that he cannot concentrate on anything that Cathy says. Cathy wishes to leave but he begs her to stay explaining that he is fearful of his father. He tells her to tell Heathcliff that he was in good spirits and was looking very healthy. Cathy agrees to stay awhile longer and Linton doses off. When he awakes Cathy reluctantly agrees to meet again next week before Ellen and her leave.

Chapter 26 Analysis

Heathcliff gets his wish and is granted a visit from Cathy for his son. Linton is in very bad health. It is clear that he is not too far from death and will not live to grow into adulthood. He is again of a complaining, nasty temperament, but this time he is also fearful. He confesses that his father would be angry if he does not have a good visit with Cathy. Although Cathy does not wish to visit with him she promises to come again next week. out of pity for her cousin.



Chapter 27

Chapter 27 Summary

Cathy and Ellen reluctantly keep their promise to visit Linton the next week. Cathy is upset at having to leave her father's bedside and demands an explanation from Linton. It does not seem as if he really wants to visit with her. Linton confesses that his father has threatened him and that he should be killed if Cathy does not consent to marry him.

Just then Heathcliff arrives. He orders Linton to get up. Linton tells his father that he cannot. Heathcliff offers Cathy's support and tells him that she will surely help him home. Cathy does not want to go against her father's orders but she also cannot refuse her cousin when he is so weak and fearful. The four walk back to Wuthering Heights.

As they enter the house Heathcliff locks them inside. Cathy yells at Heathcliff and tries to get the key. He hits her in the head several times. Heathcliff leaves the room to make tea.

Cathy and Ellen plead with Linton to help him. Linton is looking a little better, betraying the fact that he had faked his fainting spell in order to lure Cathy to Wuthering Heights. He explains that he is to marry Cathy the next morning and the two will stay the night at Wuthering Heights. Linton will not help either Cathy or Ellen, as his marriage to Cathy secures his safety from Heathcliff.

Cathy and Ellen were sent to a bedroom to spend the night. The windows were too narrow to climb through. Neither of them slept. The next morning Heathcliff removed Cathy from the bedchamber. Hareton arrived later with a days worth of food for Ellen. He feeds her each morning this way and for the next four nights she is locked in the room.

Chapter 27 Analysis

Heathcliff feels that he will never be able to convince Edgar to let his daughter marry Linton and Cathy would not go against her father to do so, even if she did love Linton, which she did not, so he takes the situation into his own hands and physically forces Cathy. This represents the climax of the story. It is a turning point in which Cathy is now under Heathcliff's control. Linton helps his father so that he will be left alone. Linton is a coward and he is unwilling to stand up to his father even if it means hurting someone else.



Chapter 28

Chapter 28 Summary

The fifth morning the housekeeper, Zillah, opens the door to her bedroom, surprised to see Ellen. Zillah had been away and had heard that both Cathy and her were missing and believed to have fallen into the marsh. When she arrived back at Wuthering Heights Heathcliff explained that they had been found and had been staying there. Zillah was under the impression that Heathcliff had saved the pair.

Ellen leaves Zillah's room and goes to find Cathy. She finds Linton instead, lounging in front of the fire, sucking on some candy. He tells Ellen that they will not let Cathy leave and everything that she had is now his. Linton seems quite pleased with himself. He will not tell her where Cathy is being kept and waves her away.

Ellen leaves Wuthering Heights and goes to Thrushgrove Heights. Upon hearing Ellen's account of Heathcliff's capture and his daughter's forced marriage, Edgar calls for the lawyers to change his will so that Cathy may be assured of her money when he dies. Ellen sends servants to Wuthering Heights to fetch Cathy and to the village to fetch the lawyer. Both groups return empty-handed. They were told at Wuthering Heights that Cathy was too sick to travel and the lawyer had business to attend to and would be there tomorrow morning.

That afternoon Cathy arrived at Thrushgrove Heights. Linton had finally given her the key to make her escape. Edgar died in his daughter's arms. The lawyer did not arrive until after Edgar's death and it turned out that Heathcliff had paid him to do so. The lawyer fired all of the servants except for Ellen.

Chapter 28 Analysis

Linton's attitude toward Cathy is pure evil. He is happy and content that all of Cathy's property is now his and his father is pleased that he helped in the deception.

Heathcliff's plan is so complete that he pays off the lawyer to make certain that Edgar cannot change his will.



Chapter 29

Chapter 29 Summary

It is after Edgar's funeral that Heathcliff arrives at Thrusgrove Heights. He takes Cathy back with him but makes Ellen stay to take care of the new tenet. As Cathy was packing her things, Heathcliff tells Nelly that as the sexton was digging Edgar's grave he paid him to open Catherine's grave so that he make look at her. He also paid the sexton to bury himself with Catherine when he dies. Heathcliff tells Ellen that he will be happy when he dies because he will be able to lie next to Catherine and their bodies will decompose together. He also confesses to her that he had tried to dig her up the night of her funeral, eighteen years before, but before he could get the coffin open he had felt her presence. Catherine had haunted Heathcliff many times since.

Chapter 29 Analysis

Heathcliff cuts Cathy off from the only friend she has, Ellen, and makes her come to Wuthering Heights alone. Cathy will be responsible for taking care of Linton, until he dies. This frees Heathcliff from doing so himself, as he does not like his own son.

Heathcliff reveals his creepy side to Ellen. His love, or obsession, for Catherine had gone so far that he had her coffin opened so that he may see her. He feels that he will only be happy when he is together with her, dead and buried. The question as to why he does not just kill himself and shorten his wait to happiness is still unanswered. The reader is led to believe that perhaps he is not finished with his revenge.



Chapter 30

Chapter 30 Summary

Ellen had not seen Cathy since she left Thrushgrove Cross. She got her information from Zillah. Cathy spent her time at Wuthering Heights caring for Linton. Then one night he died. Linton had left all of his property, which was once Cathy's, to his father. Zillah had also told her that she did not like Cathy for she found her too haughty. Hareton, on the other hand, showed some fondness for Cathy although he did not know how to express himself. This is the end of Ellen's story.

Chapter 30 Analysis

Cathy's fate was sealed with Linton's death and the fact that he had left all of his property to Heathcliff. It is important to know that Hareton does show a liking for Cathy. Hareton is a sensitive boy but one that has been raised by Heathcliff and he has grown to respect the man, even when he does horrible things. Cathy has turned into an angry, sad, young woman and does not accept Hareton's attempt at a friendship or even a civil conversation.



Chapter 31

Chapter 31 Summary

Mr. Lockwood is feeling much better and decides to move out of Thrushgrove Cross and spend the next six months in London. He goes to Wuthering Heights to tell Heathcliff his plans. Mr. Lockwood promises that he will continue paying rent for the full year, as agreed upon, but that Heathcliff may find himself another tenet.

While he is at Wuthering Heights waiting for Heathcliff he passes a letter from Ellen to Cathy. Cathy tells him that she would like to write back but she has no paper. She has even been denied books. She confesses that she had searched Hareton's room and found some books. She tells Mr. Lockwood and Hareton, that the books are wasted on him as he does not know how to read well. Hareton removes the books from his room, offers them to Cathy and upon her denial, burns them.

Chapter 31 Analysis

Mr. Lockwood leaves Thrushgrove Cross and therefore the story told by Ellen ends. The reader is left in suspense as to what the future holds for the characters and how it will be told. It is revealed that Hareton is still making attempts at bettering himself by secretly trying to improve his reading. Cathy laughs at these attempts, just as she did the first time Hareton told her that he had learned to read. The reader is meant to gain sympathy for Hareton. While once he was considered an antagonist he is now looked upon as a protagonist, third only to Ellen and Cathy.



Chapter 32

Chapter 32 Summary

It is September of 1802. Mr. Lockwood finds himself near Thrushgrove Cross while traveling. He decides to visit his old home. When he arrives, he finds that Ellen no longer lives there. He has the new housekeeper ready a room for him while he goes on a walk. Mr. Lockwood walks to Wuthering Heights. He decides that he had better pay Heathcliff the rest of the rent that he owes as he does not think he will be in the area anytime soon.

As he arrives at Wuthering Heights he notices that it looks much more inviting, and not closed off as it was on his last visit. He arrives at the front door and through the window sees a young man and woman. The woman is teasing the young man for reading a word wrong. She tells him that he must try again until he has no mistakes. The young man finishes the passage and is rewarded with many kisses, which he returns. The couple walks toward the door, presumably out for a late stroll. Mr. Lockwood does not want to interrupt them so he walks around to the kitchen door.

In the kitchen he finds his old housekeeper, Ellen. Mr. Lockwood tells Ellen that he has come to settle his rent with Heathcliff. Ellen informs him that he is dead. She has Mr. Lockwood sit down as she tells the rest of her story from where she had left off the last time.

Soon after Mr. Lockwood left Thrushgrove Cross, Heathcliff summons Ellen to come to Wuthering Heights. Cathy is happy to have Ellen back with her and Ellen is too happy to be back with Cathy. For the most part Cathy keeps company with Ellen but when the housekeeper has work to do Cathy amuses herself with harassing Hareton or trying to get him to talk. Cathy would not leave Hareton alone.

Cathy begins to realize that Hareton does not wish to speak to her because she has laughed at his attempts to educate himself. For several nights Cathy had tried to get Hareton interested in the books she has been reading by leaving them out open. Hareton does not take the bait. Finally Cathy confronts Hareton and apologizes for her past behavior. She wishes for him to be her friend. Hareton believes that Cathy hates her while Cathy believes that Hareton hates her. Hareton explains that he has taken her side in battles with Heathcliff. Cathy had not known this. She wrapped one of her books as a gift and gave it to Hareton telling him that if he accepted the gift she would tutor him on how to read it. The friendship between Hareton and Cathy grows very fast in its intimacy. Ellen is looking very much forward to their wedding day.

Chapter 32 Analysis

Mr. Lockwood notices an immediate change in the look of Wuthering Heights. Even before it is revealed, it can be guessed that Heathcliff is dead. The scene that Heathcliff



sees through the window is of a young couple in love. The one is teaching the other to read and gently teasing him. It is inferred that the couple is Cathy and Hareton.

Ellen resumes her story where she left off. Cathy had begun teasing Hareton although the teasing was not implicitly mean-spirited rather; it resembled the teasing that goes on between children when one has a crush. After Cathy informs Hareton that she does not mean to hurt him with her teasing and he informs her that he has been on her side in regards to Heathcliff's actions, the two become fast friends. Quickly the friendship turns to that of young love. The theme of love has been carried out completely. Cathy and Hareton's love for one another represent the unfulfilled love of Catherine and Heathcliff. Cathy is Catherine's daughter and Hareton has been raised by Heathcliff in much the same manner that he had been. The only difference is that Cathy and Hareton are pure of heart. They do not retain the nastiness that both Catherine and Heathcliff had. Their love is an example of good triumphing over evil. Catherine and Heathcliff were not good so they would never be together, although continually wanting to be.



Chapter 33

Chapter 33 Summary

Hareton and Cathy are studying together one night as Ellen watches proudly. Heathcliff enters and sees the pair. The pair leave the room and Heathcliff begins speaking to Ellen. He tells her that he has schemed all of this time to destroy Wuthering Heights and Thrushgrove Cross and now that it is in his power to do so he has no desire to finish his plan. Heathcliff tells her that, as he does not have the will to destroy the two houses he also finds it hard to summon the will to eat, or sleep. He wishes to die, but fears that he may grow to be old.

Chapter 33 Analysis

Heathcliff suddenly quits his campaign of revenge. Although it is never explained why he does not finish ruining the two houses it may be because he sees so much of Catherine in Hareton. He may also recognize the love between Cathy and Hareton as like the love he had for Catherine. Heathcliff had always had an affection for Hareton because he was so much like him, despite how he treated the boy.



Chapter 34

Chapter 34 Summary

Heathcliff continues his strange behavior. One night he stayed out until morning, no one knew where he had been. He began the habit of only eating one meal a day. He had even started smiling when he was usually snarled. One evening, Ellen goes to check on Heathcliff. He is dead on his back and the rain is wetting his body through the open window. The doctor does not know what he died of. Heathcliff is buried as he wished, next to Catherine.

It is now said that Heathcliff haunts the moors. One evening as Ellen was making a trip to Thrushgrove she ran into a little boy who swears that he saw Heathcliff and a woman.

Ellen informs Mr. Lockwood that after Hareton and Cathy marry on New Year's Day they will all move to Thrushgrove Cross.

Chapter 34 Analysis

Heathcliff gets his wish of being buried with Catherine. Hareton and Cathy fulfill the story's promise of a love story through their impending wedding. The fact that Heathcliff and Catherine are said to be haunting the moors is representative of the fact that their souls are not happy and not in rest. Heathcliff had said that Catherine had haunted him and it was concluded that she did so because they could not bear to be apart. However, when they are finally together they are still at unrest, signifying that perhaps the pair would not have been happy even if they had married; perhaps they were two people that nothing could ever make happy.



Characters

Ellen Dean

One of the novel's two narrators, Nelly is loyal but conventional, and reads very little into events. In his introduction to *Wuthering Heights*, David Daiches remarks on the contrast between the tone of the narrative and the high drama of the goings-on of the story: "It is to what might be called the sublime deadpan of the telling that the extraordinary force of the novel can largely be attributed. . . . At no point does Nelly throw up her hands and exclaim: 'For God's sake, what is going on here? What kind of people *are* they?'" For instance, after Heathcliff has spent the night in the Linton's garden bashing his head against a tree trunk, Nelly notices "several splashes of blood about the bark of the tree, and his hands and forehead were both stained; probably the scene I witnessed was a repetition of others acted during the night. It hardly moved my compassion-it appalled me; still I felt reluctant to quit him so." Nelly's familiarity with the actors is an important element of the narration, and a hazard of her station is that she must repeatedly be the bearer of news that will move the action in a fateful direction. On the eve of Heathcliff's return, for example, Edgar and the first Catherine look "wonderfully peaceful," and Nelly shrinks from having to announce Heathcliff, though duty compels her to, just as she shrinks later from having to tell Heathcliff of the first Catherine's death, but does. Nelly has a mind of her own, and she does not hesitate to query the first Catherine about her reasons for marrying Edgar, or to suggest to Heathcliff at the end of the novel that he might want to make his confession before dying. Nevertheless, the kind of passion that exists between Heathcliff and the first Catherine is far beyond her imagination.

Nelly Dean

See Ellen Dean

Catherine Earnshaw

Cathy Earnshaw is six when her father brings back with him from Liverpool not the whip she asked for but the seven-year-old foundling Heathcliff, who is soon her constant companion. Cathy is a "wild, wick slip," beautiful, and "much too fond of Heathcliff." Though capable of sweetness, she likes "to act the little mistress," and it is the awareness of the social differences between her and Heathcliff that lead her, despite her love for him, to marry Edgar Linton, whom she finds "handsome, and pleasant to be with." When Nelly implies that her reasons are superficial, Cathy tells of her plan to use Edgar's money to help Heathcliff to rise. "It would degrade me to marry Heathcliff, now," she tells Nelly, "so he shall never know how I love

him"; yet "he's more myself than I am Nelly, I *am* Heathcliff." Five months after Cathy's marriage to Linton, during which time Nelly observes that the couple seem to be increasingly happy, Heathcliff returns, transformed. Their "mutual joy" at seeing each



other again is undeniable, and from that point on Cathy lives with a painfully divided heart. She refuses to respond to Edgar's request that she choose between the two men. Although Heathcliff has the looks and manners of a gentleman, the revenge he plans is diabolical, and though she loves him, Cathy is not fooled, "He's a fierce, pitiless, wolfish man...: and he'd crush you, like a sparrow's egg," she tells an infatuated Isabella. When Cathy and Heathcliff meet for the last time, she tells him, "You and Edgar have broken my heart, Heathcliff!". I shall not be at peace." She dies two hours after midnight, having given birth to a "puny, seven months' child,"

Cathy Earnshaw

See Catherine Earnshaw

Frances Earnshaw

Wife of Hindley. Dies after giving birth to Hareton.

Hareton Earnshaw

The son of Frances and Hindley Earnshaw, Hareton, too, is initially targeted by Heathcliff as an object of revenge, and is degraded by him. But Heathcliff develops a grudging affection for the boy, favoring him over his own weakling son, Linton, and when Heathcliff dies, Hareton weeps over his body, Nelly sees him as "owning better qualities than his father ever possessed. Good things lost among a wilderness of weeds," Hareton is, how ever, transformed by his love for Catherine, who teaches him to read.

Hindley Earnshaw

Hindley Earnshaw, the first Catherine's brother, is fourteen when Heathcliff is brought to Wuthering Heights. Hindley hates and envies him because Mr. Earnshaw clearly favors the new boy. Hindley continually degrades Heathcliff, a habit that intensifies after the death of Mr. Earnshaw. After the death of his beloved wife Frances, Hindley resorts to drinking and gambling, and neglects both his sister Catherine and his son Hareton. Upon Heathcliff's return to Wuthering Heights after a three-year absence, five months after Edgar Linton and the first Catherine have married, Hindley befriends Heathcliff in the hopes of winning money from him. Blaming Hindley for the loss of the first Catherine, Heathcliff ruthlessly encourages Hindley to drink and eventually wins Wuthering Heights from him. After Hindley dies, Heathcliff brutalizes Hareton, though he eventually abandons the attempt after the second Catherine Linton and Hareton fall in love.



Mr. Earnshaw

Father of Hindley and the first Catherine. He brings Heathcliff home into the family. He was strict with his children.

Mrs. Earnshaw

Mother of Hindley and the first Catherine. She didn't protest the mistreatment of Heathcliff and died two years after he joined the Earnshaw household.

Heathcliff

On his return from a business trip to Liverpool, Mr. Earnshaw brings with him "a dirty, ragged, black-haired" orphan from a Liverpool slum. The boy, seven-year-old Heathcliff, and the first Catherine Earnshaw are almost immediately inseparable. Hindley Earnshaw, however, is jealous of Mr. Earnshaw's obvious preference for Heathcliff, and he abuses him. Heathcliff returns the hatred. "From the very beginning he bred bad feeling in the house," says Nelly Dean, one of the two narrators of *Wuthering Heights*, about the force that has entered their lives. Heathcliff knows only two loyalties, to the first Cathy and to Mr. Earnshaw, and at Earnshaw's death he and Cathy "both set up a heart-breaking cry." He tries to control his jealousy over Cathy's growing friendship with Edgar Linton for her sake—"Nelly, make me decent, I'm going to be good." But later, overhearing a conversation in which Cathy says it would degrade her to marry him, he steals away and does not return to Wuthering Heights until five months after Cathy has married Edgar Linton.

Heathcliff is transformed on his return—"tall, athletic, well-formed"—but he is hell-bent on avenging the loss of Cathy, and he sets about destroying the inhabitants of both Wuthering Heights and Thrushcross Grange with a fury. His assertion of what David Daiches, in his introduction to *Wuthering Heights*, calls Heathcliff's "natural claims" to Cathy "over the artificial claim of her husband" is welcomed by Cathy, though the strain eventually kills her. Heathcliff cruelly exploits Hindley, Isabella, Hareton, the second Catherine, and Linton, his own son. "I have no pity," he tells Nelly. Yet when the first Catherine dies, he is inconsolable, bashing his head repeatedly against a tree trunk: "I *cannot* live without my life! I *cannot* live without my soul!" And he has an obvious affection for Hareton, despite his determination to degrade the boy. Heathcliff is largely incomprehensible to those around him, seemingly human and inhuman, a walking contradiction. "Is Mr. Heathcliff a man?" Isabella writes to Nelly, following her marriage to him, "If so, is he mad? And if not, is he a devil?" Toward the end of the novel Heathcliff confesses to Nelly that he no longer cares for revenge: "I have lost the faculty of enjoying their destruction." As determined to join his "immortal love" as he once was to ruin his enemies, he tells Nelly that he feels "a strange change coming," and, forgetting to eat, starves himself. Even death, however, does not compose his features, and Joseph remarks that he looks as though the devil has carried him off.



Catherine Heathcliff

See Catherine Linton

Isabella Heathcliff

See Isabella Linton

Linton Heathcliff

Linton Heathcliff is the spoiled, weakling son of Isabella and Heathcliff. He is forced by Heathcliff to marry the second Catherine Linton to secure for Heathcliff, at Linton's death, Thrushcross Grange. Nobody except the second Catherine Linton likes Linton very much; the housekeeper at the Heights complains to Nelly that he is "a fainthearted creature" who can't bear to have the Window open at night. His character serves the dual purpose of providing a mechanism whereby Heathcliff can acquire Thrushcross Grange and re-create the Edgar-Cathy-Heathcliff triangle of the previous generation. Linton dies soon after his marriage to the second Catherine.

Joseph

Joseph is the curmudgeonly, judgmental long time servant at Wuthering Heights. He believes in eternal damnation and the likelihood of everyone he knows being bound for it, and he scolds constantly in a sometimes difficult-to-follow Yorkshire accent. As in the case of the narrators of the novel, Joseph's authenticity anchors the wilder elements of the story. Winifred Genn observes in *Reference Guide to English Literature* that "in creating such a character as Joseph, Emily Brontë showed that, undoubted visionary as she was, she also had her feet firmly planted on earth."

Catherine Linton

Catherine Linton is the daughter of Cathy and Edgar, beautiful, like her mother, but cooler. "Her anger was never furious, her love never fierce," Nelly remarks about her. Although forced by Heathcliff to marry Linton Heathcliff, she genuinely seems to care for her cousin. She is obviously less a force than her mother, but spirited nonetheless, and refuses to be cowed by Heathcliff: "You *are* miserable, are you not? Lonely, like the devil, and envious like him? *Nobody* loves you, *nobody* will cry for you, when you die! I wouldn't be you!" Although Catherine is at first put off by Hareton's loutishness, the sheer bleakness of their existence propels them toward each other, and she teaches him to read. They fall in love, and the understanding at the end of the novel is that they will marry and go to live at Thrushcross Grange.



Catherine Earnshaw Linton

See Catherine Earnshaw

Cathy Linton

See Catherine Linton

Edgar Linton

Edgar Linton is all the things Heathcliff is not: handsome, refined, kind, and patient, although the first Cathy later describes Edgar and his sister Isabella as "spoiled children, [who] fancy the world was made for their accommodation." When Heathcliff says he wishes he had Edgar's looks and breeding, Nelly retorts: "And cried for Mamma at every turn, and trembled if a country lad heaved his fist against you, and sat at home all day for a shower of rain." On the other hand, Nelly observes that the first Cathy's spells of bad humor are "respected with sympathizing silence by her husband," and that Edgar has a "deep-rooted fear of ruffling her humor." Linton loves his wife genuinely, but he is ineffectual. Unable to get her to choose between himself and Heathcliff, he retreats to his library, oblivious to her distress until alerted to it by Nelly. After his wife dies, Edgar sits all night beside her body. Taking the measure of both Edgar and Hindley, Nelly remarks that Linton "displayed the true courage of a loyal and faithful soul: he trusted God; and God comforted him." Hindley, with the stronger head, proved the worse and weaker man.

Isabella Linton

Like her brother Edgar, Isabella is perceived by the inhabitants of Wuthering Heights as spoiled. Having glimpsed them through a window quarreling amid the splendor of Thrushcross Grange, Heathcliff tells Nelly, "We laughed outright at the petted things, we did despise them!" Nelly observes that Isabella is "infantile in manners, though possessed of keen wit, keen feelings, and a keen temper, too, if irritated." On Heathcliff's return to Wuthering Heights after the first Cathy's marriage to Edgar, Isabella becomes infatuated with him, despite Cathy's warning that he "couldn't love a Linton." At first indifferent, Heathcliff responds when he realizes he might gain control of her property through marriage. Once she is committed to him, he cruelly mistreats her. Despite the abuse, Isabella refuses to help Hindley in his attempt to murder Heathcliff, though she has enough of a sense of self-preservation to escape back to Thrushcross Grange, where she crushes her wedding ring with a poker. "I can recollect yet how I loved him," she tells Nelly, "and can dimly imagine that I could still be loving him, if-." Pregnant, Isabella flees to London, where she bears Linton. She dies when Linton is twelve, after which the boy comes to live with Heathcliff at the Heights.



Mr. Linton

Father of Edgar and Isabella. He is the owner of Thrushcross Grange.

Mrs. Linton

Mother of Edgar and Isabella. She takes the first Catherine in for a short while and exposed her to fine clothes and social behavior.

Mr. Lockwood

The other narrator of *Wuthering Heights*, Mr. Lockwood is, like Nelly Dean, conventional. But he lacks Nelly's perception, and appears even a little foolish. At first he judges Heathcliff to be a "capital fellow," and later he fantasizes a liaison with the second Catherine Linton. Several critics have remarked on his name as hinting at a "locked or closed mind." In his introduction to *Wuthering Heights*, David Daiches describes his general timidity: "he had aroused the love of 'a fascinating creature,' but retreated in panic when he realized it." Mr. Lockwood foreshadows the theme of cruelty that pervades the novel, rubbing the wrist of the ghost of the first Catherine Linton across a broken pane of glass in an attempt to loosen her grasp of his hand. Mr. Lockwood serves to vary the narrative perspective of the novel; his view of events in the present contrasts with Nelly's retrospective view.

Zillah

A servant at Wuthering Heights.



Themes

Love and Passion

Passion, particularly unnatural passion, is a predominant theme of *Wuthering Heights*. The first Catherine's devotion to Heathcliff is immediate and absolute, though she will not marry him, because to do so would degrade her. "Whatever our souls are made of, his and mine are the same, and Linton's is as different as a moonbeam from lightning, or frost from fire." Although there has been at least one Freudian interpretation of the text, the nature of the passion between Catherine and Heathcliff does not appear to be based on sex. David Daiches writes, "Ultimate passion is for her rather a kind of recognition of one's self-one's true and absolute self-in the object of passion." Catherine's passion is contrasted to the coolness of Linton, whose "cold blood cannot be worked into a fever." When he retreats into his library, she explodes, "What in the name of all that feels, has he to do with *books*, when I am dying?"

Revenge

Heathcliff's devotion to Catherine, on the other hand, is ferocious, and when frustrated, he conceives a plan of revenge of enormous proportions. Catherine's brother Hindley shares her passionate nature, though he devotes most of his energies to degrading Heathcliff. In some respects the passion that Catherine and Heathcliff share is so pure that it approaches a kind of spirituality. "I cannot express it," says Catherine, "but surely you and everybody have a notion that there is, or should be an existence of yours beyond you." In the characters of Heathcliff and Hindley, who both feel slighted in love, Brontë draws a parallel between the need for love and the strength of revenge.

Violence and Cruelty

Closely tied to the theme of revenge, but sometimes independent of it, are themes of cruelty and sadism, which are a recurring motif throughout the novel. Cruelty can be manifested emotionally, as in Mr. Earnshaw's disdain for his natural-born son, or in the first Catherine's apparent rejection of Heathcliff in favor of Edgar. The characters are given to physical cruelty as well. "Terror made me cruel," says Lockwood at the outset of the story, and proceeds to rub the wrists of the ghost Catherine against a broken windowpane in an effort to free himself from her grasp. Hindley torments Heathcliff, as Heathcliff will later torment Hareton. And although he has no affection for her, Heathcliff marries Isabella and then treats her so badly that she asks Nelly whether he is a devil. Sadism is also a recurring thematic element. Heathcliff tries to strangle Isabella's dog, and Hareton hangs a litter of puppies from the back of a chair. The first Catherine's early refusal of Heathcliff has elements of masochism (self-abuse) in it, as does her letting him back into her life, since her divided heart will eventually kill her.



Class Conflict

To the characters of *Wuthering Heights*, property ownership and social standing are inextricable.

The Earnshaws and the Lintons both own estates, whereas Heathcliff is a foundling and has nothing. The first Catherine plans to marry Linton to use her husband's money to raise Heathcliff's social standing, thus freeing him from Hindley's domination. Her plan is foiled when Heathcliff disappears after hearing Catherine say that to marry him would degrade her. When he returns, he exerts great efforts to do people out of their property: first Hindley, then Isabella, then the second Catherine Linton. He takes revenge on Hareton by ensuring that the boy is raised in ignorance, with loutish manners, so that he will never escape his station. The story comes full cycle when Catherine Linton teaches Hareton to read, thus winning his love. The understanding at the end of the novel is that the couple will move to Thrushcross Grange.

Nature

"Wuthering" is a Yorkshire term for roaring of the wind, and themes of nature, both human and nonhuman, are closely associated with violence throughout the story. The local landscape is as storm-tossed as are the hearts of the inhabitants of *Wuthering Heights*; cycles of births and deaths occur as relentlessly as the cycles of the seasons. The characters feel themselves so intrinsically a part of their environment that the first Catherine compares her love for Edgar to "foliage in the woods," and that for Heathcliff to "the eternal rocks beneath." In detailing his plan to debase Hareton, Heathcliff says, "We will see if one tree will not grow as crooked as another, with the same wind to twist it!" The novel opens with a snowstorm, and ends with the flowering of spring, mirroring the passions that fuel the drama and the peace that follows its resolution.

Supernatural

There are many references in the novel to the supernatural, and even when the references seem fairly literal, the characters do not seem to think them odd. When Lockwood first arrives, he encounters the ghost of the first Catherine Linton, and his telling of the event to Heathcliff arouses not disbelief but a strange passion. The bond between the first Catherine and Heathcliff is itself superhuman, and after she dies, Heathcliff implores her spirit, "I pray one prayer-I repeat it till my tongue stiffens-Catherine Earnshaw, may you not rest, as long as I am living! You said I killed you-haunt me then!" At Edgar Linton's death, Heathcliff persuades the gravedigger to open Catherine's coffin, and later confesses to Nelly that he has been haunted by Catherine's spirit for eighteen years. At the end of the novel, after Heathcliff's death, Nelly reports to Lockwood a child's claim that he has seen Heathcliff and a woman walking on the moors.



Style

Narration

The power of *Wuthering Heights* owes much to its complex narrative structure and to the ingenious device of having two conventional people relate a very unconventional tale. The story is organized as a narrative within a narrative, or what some critics call "Chinese boxes." Lockwood is used to open and end the novel in the present tense, first person ("I"). When he returns to Thrushcross Grange from his visit to Wuthering Heights sick and curious, Nelly cheerfully agrees to tell him about his neighbors. She picks up the narrative and continues it, also in the first person, almost until the end, with only brief interruptions by Lockwood. The critic David Daiches notes in his introduction of *Wuthering Heights* the "fascinating counterpoint" of "end retrospect and present impression," and that the strength of the story relies on Nelly's familiarity with the main characters.

Setting

The novel is set in the Yorkshire moors of England, even now a bleakly beautiful, sparsely populated area of high rolling grassy hills, few trees, and scattered rocky outcroppings or patches of heather. The lowlands between the hills are marshy. The weather is changeable and, because the area is so open, sometimes wild. The exposed location of Wuthering Heights high on the moors is contrasted with the sheltered calm of Thrushcross Grange, which is nestled in a soft valley. Both seats reflect the characters of those who inhabit them. The descriptions of both houses also reflect the influence of the local architecture at the time of Brontë's writing, which often incorporated a material called grit stone.

Images and Symbolism

Emily Brontë's poetic vision is evident in the imagery used throughout *Wuthering Heights*. Metaphors of nature and the animal kingdom are pervasive. For example, the first Catherine describes Heathcliff to Isabella as "an arid wilderness of furze and whinstone," and as Catherine lies dying, Heathcliff foams "like a mad dog." References to weather are everywhere. A violent storm blows up the night Mr. Earnshaw dies; rain pours down the night Heathcliff runs off to London and again the night of his death. There are many scenes of raw violence, such as the bulldog attacking Catherine and Isabella crushing her wedding ring with a poker. The supernaturalism evoked in the many references to Heathcliff as diabolical (literally, "like the devil") and the descriptions of the ghost of the first Catherine Linton. David Daiches points out in his introduction to *Wuthering Heights* that the references to food and fire, and to what he calls domestic routine, help "to steady" the story and to give credibility to the passion.



Structure

One of the major strengths of *Wuthering Heights* is its formal organization. The design of the time structure has significance both for its use of two narrators and because it allows the significant events in the novel to be dated precisely, though dates are almost never given explicitly. The triangular relationship that existed between Heathcliff, Catherine, and Edgar is repeated in Heathcliff's efforts to force young Catherine to marry Linton, though its resolution is ultimately different.

On his arrival at *Wuthering Heights*, Lockwood sees the names "Catherine Earnshaw, Catherine Linton, Catherine Heathcliff" scratched into the windowsill. In marrying Hareton, young Catherine Heathcliff will in turn become Catherine Earnshaw, thus completing the circle.



Historical Context

The Victorian Age (1837-1901)

England under the reign of Queen Victoria was in a prolonged phase of expansion. The Industrial Revolution saw the transformation of a predominately agricultural economy to a factory economy.

Millions would eventually flock to London in search of the new jobs, but Emily Brontë grew up in the last days of rural England. The tenor of the times was conservative, and sensitive to society's unwillingness to accept women as authors, Emily, Charlotte, and Anne Brontë all published under male pseudonyms.

The tempestuous climate of northern England in Haworth, Yorkshire, left its mark on the Brontë children, whose fascination with the expanse and storms of the moors is emphasized in the novel. For Emily, who was never happy far from home, the local moorland and valleys, and the grit stone architecture typical of the age were the basis for the setting of *Wuthering Heights*.

Another influence on Brontë's writing was the folklore of the Yorkshire community. Tabitha Ackroyd, a maid in the Brontë household, was a rich source of stories about fairies and ghosts. References to folk beliefs and rituals are scattered throughout *Wuthering Heights*, particularly with reference to the deathwatch traditional in Yorkshire, as when Edgar sits the entire night with Catherine's body after her death, or to rituals surrounding funerals such as "bidding," an invitation to accompany a body to the grave. Extending or withholding such an invitation gave some indication of the state of family relationships.

Illness, Death, and Funeral Customs

Owing to the unforgiving climate and poor heating, illness and death were common occurrences in Yorkshire at the time the novel was created. Ill partly as a result of his stay at *Wuthering Heights*, Lockwood laments, "Oh, these bleak winds, and bitter, northern skies, and impassable roads, and dilatory country surgeons!" Emily Brontë's older sisters Maria and Elizabeth died of tuberculosis before they were fifteen, and in *Wuthering Heights*, Edgar and Linton also die of wasting diseases. Maria Branwell's death when Emily was only three may be the inspiration for the many motherless children in *Wuthering Heights*.

A period of mourning was formally observed after the death of a family member. The appropriate period of mourning depended on whether the deceased was a close or distant relative. For example, a year's mourning was usually observed for a husband or wife, and a week for the death of a second cousin. In *Wuthering Heights* Nelly is "bid to get mourning"-that is, to layout dark clothes for Catherine, whose aunt Isabella has died.



As the children of a minister, the Brontës felt the influence of religion both at home and at school. A fire-and-brimstone instructor may have been Emily Brontë's inspiration for Joseph, who can barely speak a word that does not invoke hellfire. Critics also suspect that this influence is at the root of Lockwood's dream at the beginning of *Wuthering Heights*, in which he is forced to listen to the Reverend Jabes Branderham preach a sermon divided into 490 parts.

Literary Traditions and Romanticism

Whereas Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre* won immediate acclaim, the wild passion and coarseness of *Wuthering Heights* baffled its readers. In an essay in *Reference Guide to English Literature*, Winifred Gerin attributes the failure of the novel to its theme of indestructibility of the spirit, which was a "subject ... far removed from the general run of Victorian fiction-it belonged, if anywhere, to the gothic tradition, still being followed by Mary Shelley with her *Valperga* (1823) in Emily Brontë's childhood."

The time in which the action of *Wuthering Heights* takes place, and its themes of nature and the individual, coincides with the Romantic Movement in Europe, a turning away from reason and intellect in favor of free and more mystical ideas, inspired in part by the French Revolutionary War of 1789.

Inheritance and Social Position

Social position and respectability in this period were directly tied to possession of property. A country house owned by landed gentry like the Earnshaws and the Lintons was known as a "seat," a broad term that included both the tangible assets (for instance, the house and land) and intangible assets (for instance, the family name and any hereditary titles) of the family that owned it. In *Wuthering Heights*, the first Catherine tells Nelly that she is marrying Edgar Linton because to marry Heathcliff would degrade her (they would be beggars) and because she plans to use Linton's money to help Heathcliff to rise.

Seats passed from father to first-born male or to the next closest male relative if there were no sons in a family. The only way around this process was to invoke a device called "strict settlement," in force between 1650 and 1880, which allowed a father to dispose of his holdings as he liked through a trustee. Because Edgar Linton dies before ensuring that his daughter Catherine will inherit Thrushcross Grange, the land passes first to her husband, Linton, and after Linton's death to his father, Heathcliff.

In contrast to earlier times when incest was forbidden by law, in eighteenth-century England marriage between first cousins was looked upon favorably as a way of preserving position and property. A typical union was one of a woman who married her father's brother's son, which kept the seat of the bride's family under their control. In *Wuthering Heights*, in a perverse twist, the second Catherine Linton marries her father's sister's son, and in the absence of a strict settlement ends up losing her family's seat.



Landholding families typically maintained a large staff of servants who fulfilled the functions (for a man) of steward, valet, butler, and gardener, or (for a woman) of lady's maid, housekeeper, cook, and nurse. In a household the size of *Wuthering Heights*, whose inhabitants did not entertain, combining functions made economic sense. In the novel Joseph serves as both valet and steward, and Ellen as housekeeper, though her duties are fairly broadly defined.



Critical Overview

Initial reception to the publication of *Wuthering Heights* in 1847 was overwhelmingly negative. Published in a volume that also included her sister Anne Brontë's first novel, *Agnes Grey*, Emily's brooding tale managed to find favor only with Sydney Dobell and Algernon Charles Swinburne. "I have just read over *Wuthering Heights*," wrote Charlotte Brontë in her preface to the 1850 edition of her sister's book, "and, for the first time, have obtained a clear glimpse of what are termed (and, perhaps, really are) its faults. *Wuthering Heights* must appear a rude and strange production... in a great measure unintelligible, and-where intelligible-repulsive." The preface was intended as a defense of the writer and the work and must have achieved its aim, for the second edition of the novel was received more favorably. Algernon Charles Swinburne, writing in *The Athenaeum* in 1883, admitted to the awkward construction and clumsy method of narration "which no reader... can undertake to deny," although these were minor faults. He was more troubled by "the savage note or the sickly symptom of a morbid ferocity," but was overall so impressed by the "special and distinctive character of its passion" that "it is certain that those who do like it will like nothing very much better in the whole world of poetry or prose."

A monograph by Charles Percy Sanger published in 1926 marked a major turning point in critical appreciation of the sophistication and complexity of the writing in *Wuthering Heights*, and today the novel is indisputably considered a work of genius. That critics cannot agree whether the book falls more neatly into the Gothic or Romantic literary tradition is accepted as further evidence of the work's uniqueness. In his introduction to the novel, David Daiches argues that the central question of *Wuthering Heights* is "Who and what is Heathcliff?", a question Daiches argues can be answered only by looking at the effect Heathcliff has on those around him. While Daiches agrees with the conventional view that the relationship between Heathcliff and the first Catherine is "curiously" sexless, he does find persuasive Thomas Moser's (1962) case for recurring sexual symbolism in the novel. Daiches echoes other critics in praising the book's narrative structure and other elements of its organization. He places special emphasis on the details of everyday living, and descriptions of food and hearth, that help to anchor the story and to make it believable. "One of Emily Brontë's most extraordinary achievements in this novel is the domiciling of the monstrous in the ordinary rhythms of life and work, thereby making it at the same time less monstrous and more disturbing." Tom Winnifrith, in the *Dictionary of Literary Biography*, picks up on the idea of Heathcliff as a force of nature and attributes his attraction in part to his association with the landscape and to his honesty, however brutal. This last idea highlights one of many ambiguities of the novel, a strength often commented on by scholars and critics. "Brontë's defiance of rigid categories and her refusal to divide people into saints and sinners," says Winnifrith, "is very un-Victorian... Heathcliff's cruelty and Cathy's selfishness do not prevent them from being attractive. The Lintons are spoiled and weak, but Isabella's and her son's sufferings and Edgar's devotion to his wife win them sympathy." Winnifrith dismisses the oft-cited effort to fit the novel into an overall framework of storm and calm-that is, storm and calm opposed in the persons of



Catherine and Heathcliff, but fused in the union of Catherine and Hareton-proposed by Lord David Cecil in *Early Victorian Novelists* (1934) as too schematic. He argues that some modern sociological interpretations ignore the book's enigmatic ending. Other modern critical articles on the novel, he says, "tend to be eccentric or to deal with only a very small section of the book." In an essay in *Reference Guide to English Literature*, Winifred Gerin describes the message of "the indissoluble nature of earthly love" as "profoundly metaphysical," Its original failure easily explained by its gothic atmosphere, no longer in fashion at the time of publication. Gerin attributes the novel's "curious and lasting appeal" to the "unflagging excitement of the plot; the wild moorland setting; [and] " the originality of the characters." She calls Heathcliff's self-induced death by starvation "one of the most powerful and daring climaxes in English fiction."

"Whether it is right or advisable to create things like Heathcliff, I do not know," wrote Charlotte Brontë at the end of the preface to the 1850 edition. "I scarcely think it is. But this I know; the writer who possesses the creative gift owns something of which he is not always master-something that at times strangely wills and works for itself." It is English literature's gain that Emily lost herself in her creation.

Criticism

- Critical Essay #1
- Critical Essay #2
- Critical Essay #3



Critical Essay #1

In the following essay, Woodford, a doctoral candidate at Washington University, explores how an examination of the patterns that recur through out Wuthering Heights provide a useful way of reading and interpreting the novel.

Wuthering Heights was the only novel Emily Brontë ever published, and both it and the book of poetry she published with her sisters were printed under the pen name, Ellis Bell, a name which Emily chose because she was afraid works published under a woman's name would not be taken seriously. Emily Brontë died shortly after her book was published and just prior to her thirtieth birthday, but her single novel remains one of the classics of English literature. *Wuthering Heights* is a complex novel, and critics have approached it from many different standpoints. Feminist critics have examined the strong female characters and their oppression by and resistance to violent men. Marxist critics have pointed to the class differences that set in motion the primary conflicts of *Wuthering Heights*, and psychoanalytic critics have analyzed the dreams that fill the book. While all of these approaches are useful and valid, *Wuthering Heights* is, above all, a book of repeating cycles and recurring patterns, and perhaps the simplest way to begin an examination of this book is by tracing the course and resolution of some of these patterns.

When Lockwood spends the night at the Heights, he finds the window ledge covered with "a name repeated in all kinds of characters, large and small- *Catherine Earnshaw*, here and there varied to *Catherine Heathcliff*, and then again to *Catherine Linton*." Indeed, the repetition and variation of these four names, Catherine, Earnshaw, Heathcliff, and Linton, fills the book just as the writing fills the window ledge. The original Catherine begins life as Catherine Earnshaw. In what Terry Eagleton in *Case Studies in Contemporary Criticism: Wuthering Heights* calls "a crucial act of self-betrayal and bad faith," she rejects the opportunity to become Catherine Heathcliff and instead becomes Catherine Linton. She then gives birth to another Catherine Linton, who enters the world only hours before her mother leaves it, and this second Catherine first marries Linton Heathcliff, becoming Catherine Heathcliff, and finally, at the end of the book, becomes engaged to Hareton Earnshaw. The cycle of names thus comes full circle as this final marriage will give the second Catherine the original name of the first.

At the same time, Catherine's marriage with Hareton completes another cycle-the union of souls for which the reader has longed. The second Catherine is in many ways a reincarnation of her mother. Though she is softened by the characteristics which she has inherited from her father, she has "the Earnshaw's handsome, dark eyes" and, as Nelly states, she has the same "capacity for intense attachments" as her mother. Similarly, Hareton is a gentler version of his oppressor and foster father, Heathcliff. Though Heathcliff does his best to make Hareton a tool of his revenge against the first Catherine's brother Hindley Earnshaw, he succeeds instead in creating a reproduction of himself. He reveals his own knowledge of this strange turn of events when he tells Nelly, "Hareton [seems] a personification of my youth, the ghost of my immortal love, of my wild endeavours to hold my right, my degradation, my pride, my happiness, and my



anguish." Thus, even more than the reunion of Catherine's and Heathcliff's ghosts, the union of their spiritual descendants gives the reader the impression that a great wrong has finally been set right.

In addition to being later versions of Heathcliff and the first Catherine, Hareton and the second Catherine are the last in a long line of orphans and outcasts. In an article in *American Imago* Philip K. Wion has observed that the absence of mothers in *Wuthering Heights* has a profound effect on the identities of the orphaned children, and certainly the book is full of orphaned and abandoned characters seeking fulfillment through union with others. Heathcliff, of course, is a foundling taken in by Mr. Earnshaw, and after the old man's death Hindley makes him an outcast. The first Catherine, also orphaned by Earnshaw's death, becomes still more isolated after Heathcliff's departure. Heathcliff has been her one true companion, so much a part of herself that she tells Nelly, "if all else perished, and *he* remained, I should still continue to be; and, if all else remained, and he were annihilated, the Universe would turn to a mighty stranger." The loss of her soul mate thus leaves her alone in the world, and her death, likewise, orphans him for a second time, leaving him "lonely, like the devil, and envious like him." The next generation fares no better. Linton Heathcliff loses his mother and is raised by a father who despises him; Hareton's mother dies shortly after his birth, and the death of his alcoholic and abusive father leaves him penniless and at the mercy of Heathcliff. Likewise, the second Catherine is born only hours before her mother's death, and the death of her father leaves her "destitute of cash and friends." Once again, it is the marriage of Hareton and Catherine that will bring this cycle of orphanhood to a close. The housekeeper, Nelly, proudly tells the tenant Lockwood that they are both "in a measure, [her] children," and the union of her two charges finally ends the progression of lonely, isolated, orphaned individuals.

Heathcliff's death and the second Catherine's gaining control of the property also bring to an end the series of tyrannical men who rule the Heights with violence and curses. The first Mr. Earnshaw is easily vexed, and "suspected slights of his authority nearly [throw] him into fits." Hindley, Mr. Earnshaw's successor, is still worse. He threatens to "demolish the first who puts [him] out of temper," and his abuse of Heathcliff is "enough to make a fiend of a saint." Heathcliff, in his turn, does turn out to be a fiend, and deserves the term "Devil daddy" with which young Hareton christens him. He takes pleasure in inflicting on Hindley's son the same abuse which Hindley had given Heathcliff because he wants to see "if one tree won't grow as crooked as another, with the same wind to twist it," and he values his own son only because he wants "the triumph of seeing [his] descendent fairly lord of their estates; [his] child hiring their children, to till their father's lands for wages." Thus, even Heathcliff's plot to reverse past patterns by making his child lord of the Earnshaws and Lintons, only results in the reestablishment of an old pattern. Heathcliff, the former victim of tyranny, becomes yet another tyrannical man ruling Wuthering Heights. This cycle is only broken when, after Heathcliff's death, the property is granted to the second Catherine, the first woman in the book to own her own property. Her marriage to Hareton will, of course, make her property his, but it seems unlikely that his "honest, warm, intelligent nature" will allow him to become a tyrant like his predecessors. The pattern of violent men ruling the



Heights, like so many other patterns in the book, ends with the death of Heathcliff and the marriage of the second Catherine and Hareton.

Source: Donna C. Woodford, in an essay for *Novels for Students*, Gale, 1997.



Critical Essay #2

In the following essay, Federico maintains that Wuthering Heights is a bildungsroman-a novel which outlines the initiation of a young character into adulthood-focusing on the development of young Cathy Linton rather than that of her mother.

In their study of nineteenth-century women writers, *The Madwoman in the Attic*, Sandra M. Gilbert and Susan Gubar argue persuasively that because the story of *Wuthering Heights* is built around a central fall-generally understood to be Catherine and Heathcliff's anti-Miltonic fall *from hell to heaven*-"a description of the novel as in part a *Bildungsroman* about a girl's passage from 'innocence' to 'experience' (leaving aside the precise meaning of these terms) would probably be widely accepted."

This is an interesting interpretation, and brilliantly demonstrated. But like other views of *Wuthering Heights* as a feminine *Bildungsroman*, the focus of development is Catherine, and by association her male doppelgänger Heathcliff. The emphasis upon the first generation of the Heights is, of course, important, and certainly Catherine and Heathcliff suffer their own peculiar rites of passage in their search for identity and wholeness. And yet it is curious that the tortured first generation of *Wuthering Heights* fail to develop a mature understanding of themselves and others-in fact, Catherine and Heathcliff actually shrink from full participation in adult life, regressing into the adolescent preoccupation with self and the desperate need to feel loved. Catherine, especially, is not so much struggling to grow up as she is struggling *not* to: it is significant that it is the "waif" not the woman who appears in Lockwood's terrifying dream.

So the critical view of Catherine and Heathcliff as *Bildungsroman* protagonists neglects these characters' inability to interpret experience realistically and face the limitations of adulthood. In fact, in terms of the first generation, *Wuthering Heights* is not a *Bildungsroman* at all, but an *Entwicklungsroman*, a novel of mere physical passage without psychological development. Catherine and her male soul-mate remain stubbornly adolescent from beginning to end; granted, they are triumphant, rebellious, passionate characters, and Emily Brontë is obviously celebrating the untamed and undisciplined spirit of adolescent love. But in view of this first generation, *Wuthering Heights* is less a novel of development than a novel of arrested childhood. It is actually with Catherine's death in childbirth that Brontë's *Bildungsroman* begins. In fact, the second half of *Wuthering Heights* and the concern with young Cathy is a fascinating variation of the prototypic novel of female education in the nineteenth century, a dramatization of the struggle to relinquish childhood for the duties of womanhood in the most traditional, romantic capacity: marriage with the man of one's choice. Cathy emerges from a relatively happy childhood and a lonely adolescence as an assertive, sharing, and contented adult who is prepared to accept the responsibilities and limitations of marriage.

Cathy's marriage to Hareton is in a sense a revision of her mother's unsuccessful marriage to Edgar Linton, and a significant role reversal of the traditional feminine



Bildungsroman in which a woman can achieve intellectual and social advancement only through marriage. For example, the elder Catherine looks at marriage as a means of achieving outward sophistication, as well as an escape from mental and emotional stagnation: Edgar is the man who will define her, who will shape her identity and give her status-"He will be rich, and I shall be the greatest woman of the neighborhood, and I shall be proud to have such a husband," she tells Nelly Dean. Catherine's selfish and shortsighted attitude toward marriage is not only indicative of her childish sensibilities, but underscores the traditional theme of the feminine *Bildungsroman*- that is, the woman must seek knowledge by attaching herself to a knowledgeable male. Brontë varies this theme in her description of young Cathy's courtship with Hareton; instead of marrying to be advanced, Brontë's true female *Bildungsroman* protagonist marries in order to advance the intellectual and moral status of the male.

In young Cathy, Brontë gives us a woman whose acquired humility, patience, and affection yield what promises to be a satisfying marriage and a mutual broadening of experience. More than her mother, Cathy represents a successful passage through the difficult rites of adolescence: the search for self, and the sharing of self with others.

If one looks closely at the novel, it becomes clear that Cathy and Hareton are not merely watered down versions of Catherine and Heathcliff, as Richard Chase suggests. Although the strange, transcendental love of the first generation of the Heights is more stirring, more piquant than the settled affections of Cathy and Hareton, it is only because their type of frenzied passion is so rare-and so typical of adolescence. It is well to ask why Catherine marries Edgar at all, considering her feelings for Heathcliff; her naive belief that she can have *both* Edgar-who represents culture and security- *and* Heathcliff, who is the embodiment of sexual and natural energy, proves her complete inability to understand reality outside of her own narrow perspective. When Nelly Dean suggests that by marrying Edgar, Catherine will lose Heathcliff, she is incredulous: "Oh, that's not what I intend that's not what I mean! I shouldn't be Mrs. Linton were such a price demanded' He'll be as much to me as he has been all his lifetime. Edgar must shake off his antipathy and tolerate him, at least. He will when he learns my true feelings". It is obvious that Catherine is entering marriage with the stubborn adolescent sensibility that she can have her cake and eat it, too. Of course, this has been her spoiled way of looking at life all along; many times in the novel Brontë portrays Catherine as a selfish, demanding, manipulative child. "I demand it!" is, in fact, Catherine's favorite expression, and completely consistent with the adolescent determination to have everything.

By contrast, young Cathy gradually develops a sensitivity towards the feelings and needs of others. This is most explicit in her devotion to her father, Edgar Linton-and a complete contrast to Catherine's "naughty delight" in provoking Mr. Earnshaw. The young Cathy tells Nelly, "I fret about nothing on earth except papa's illness□And I'll never-never-oh, never, while I have my senses, do anything to vex him. I love him better than myself□"

Cathy's comparatively happy childhood has certainly influenced her idealized view of Edgar Linton, and she is naturally submissive to patriarchal authority. But Cathy is not



without spirit; she exhibits the typical adolescent preoccupation with love intrigues, and shares her mother's rebelliousness and scorn for those who interfere with her plans. The important difference between the two generations is in the nature of the rebellion; Catherine's disregard for others- *all* others, except her other-self, Heathcliff-has a cruel, manipulative quality that takes pleasure in deceitfulness and in "punishing" others for their lack of devotion to her. Her many melodramatic "scenes" illustrate Catherine's acting talent in the service of narcissism: as a child, after an argument with Edgar Linton, she says to him, "...get away! And now I'll cry-I'll cry myself sick!" and she proceeds to deliver a perfect fit of weeping which softens poor Edgar's heart. Catherine never outgrows these willful displays of mad emotion, and by feigning a fit to arouse her husband's concern, she ultimately brings about her own death. She begs Nelly to tell Edgar she is "in danger of being seriously ill□I want to frighten him□Will you do so, my good Nelly? You are aware that I am in no way blameable in this matter." Catherine often uses Nelly Dean as an instrument for her guile: "...and remind Edgar of my passionate temper verging, when kindled, on frenzy." Certainly Catherine's last performance is magnificent, if unsuccessful, for even Nelly is startled by "the aspect of death" her mistress is able to assume. This undisciplined and domineering child-the little girl who wanted her father to bring her a whip from Liverpool-fails to mature at all because she never learns to control her perverse egotism. That in her last breath Catherine looks to Nelly "like a child reviving" aptly suggests the adolescent spirit of the woman's rebellion, a fatal result of Catherine's last scene of "mad resolution."

Unlike her mother's obsessiveness, young Cathy's rebellion is actually a healthy curiosity about her relatives at Wuthering Heights. Certainly it is not surprising that a young and intelligent girl who has not been beyond the range of the park before the age of thirteen, whose only companion is her nurse, and whose only amusements are rambling on the moors and reading, should be eager to make new acquaintances. And of course Cathy passes through certain predictable stages of adolescence, but unlike her mother, she does *pass* through, and restlessness, romantic love, and rebellion are only stages of her development. For example, Cathy and Linton Heathcliff's "love affair" is typical of the adolescent absorption with romantic notions, and the fact that the relationship is somehow taboo makes it all the more alluring. Cathy exaggerates the importance of her love letters, weeping and pleading to Nelly "to spare one or two." Nelly Dean's common sense reply to the mere suggestion of Cathy loving Linton is, "Loving! Pretty loving indeed, and both times together you have seen Linton hardly four hours in your life!" That Cathy is able to open her mind to this objective, adult point of view is a credit to her maturity, and something the older Catherine never learned to do.

In her relationship to Linton, Cathy begins to learn that her desires are complex and that her experience of reality must be reconciled to actual reality-in other words, *her* view of Linton Heathcliff as "a pretty little darling" must be reconciled to Nelly's less generous description: "The worst tempered bit of a sickly slip that ever struggled into its teens!" In learning to distinguish between what she *thinks* she wants (Linton) and what she *really* wants (an energetic and empathetic companion), Cathy begins to achieve the disciplined growth and broad perspective which is the undertaking of the *Bildungsroman* protagonist. Simply the way she handles Heathcliff and her captivity at Wuthering Heights demonstrates an intelligent, unselfish, and practical kind of defiance which



Catherine never displayed, because Catherine acknowledged only her own needs and desires. When Linton says, "You *must* obey my father, you *must*," Cathy replies, "I must obey my own," reflecting her growing sense of responsibility. After her forced marriage, she is prepared to accept the consequences of her situation by loving Linton in spite of Heathcliff—"You cannot make us hate each other!" Cathy remains dignified and controlled, and speaks "with a kind of dreary triumph: she seemed to have made up her mind to enter into the spirit of her future family, and draw pleasure from the griefs of her enemies."

If Nelly's narrative makes Cathy's behavior sound reminiscent of the older Catherine's vengeful fits, it should be pointed out that Cathy's "enemies" are *real*, not fancied, conspirators. Heathcliff at this point has kidnapped her, kept her from her dying father, abused her physically, and forced her to marry his sickly, peevish son. Cathy's situation is wretched, almost hopeless; when Linton dies shortly after their degenerate union, she is left at Wuthering Heights with only Hareton and Heathcliff. And here her *bildung* or education needs to be emphasized. Part of education and development is arriving at an understanding of one's value; this, I would argue, is the major undertaking of adolescence. The older Catherine never sees herself realistically. She has notions of superiority and self-importance that can be justified only in terms of her exceptionally passionate nature and her extraordinary bond to Heathcliff. Catherine's immature and narrow vision cannot imagine that she is not the central concern in everyone else's life. It is almost an epiphany when she says to Nelly, "How strange! I thought, though everybody hated and despised each other, they could not avoid loving me." Despite Heathcliff's furious devotion and her husband's genuine affection, Catherine always feels unloved and undervalued. Even as she is dying, she cries, "That is how I am loved!" like a self-pitying child. Nor does Catherine value the love of others: "I have such faith in Linton's love," she says, "that I believe I might kill him, and he wouldn't wish to retaliate." Rarely if ever is Catherine described as a loving person, one who is willing to give the self freely to another; even her professed love for Heathcliff is strangely qualified by her claim, "I *am* Heathcliff!" He seems to be only a land of narcissistic double.

Young Cathy of course wants to be loved, but unlike her mother she is willing to take the risks and suffer the consequences of loving another. When she kisses Hareton in an effort to make peace, she is conquering her pride and scorn—and her loneliness—in a way that truly suggests maturity. She is beginning to see herself in relation to others, beginning to develop a realistic adult perspective. For example, Cathy knows she has been unfair and cruel to Hareton, and sincerely tries to improve their relationship in the best—the most straightforward—way she knows how. "When I call you stupid, I don't mean any thing—I don't mean that I despise you," she explains, and by articulating her meaning she arrives at a closer understanding of the way she affects others. By humbling herself, Cathy learns to master herself, and by offering her friendship to Hareton, she is on the verge of a new, perhaps more traditional, land of education: marriage. But the marriage of Cathy and Hareton is not the traditional union of the male teacher/master and the female learner/servant. By reversing the roles and making Cathy the educator, *Wuthering Heights* takes on the aspects of a new feminine *Bildungsroman* in which a woman emerging from childhood and adolescence



approaches marriage not merely as a means of social advancement, or knowledge, or security, but as a mutual broadening of experience in which love balances power, with "both their minds tending to the same point."

So it is with the second generation of the Heights that Brontë begins her feminine *Bildungsroman*. If Catherine and Heathcliff have a more tumultuous and exciting story, it may be because theirs is the tale of arrested childhood, a furious protest against the necessity of growing up. Perhaps Cathy's struggle is less stormy and her future too settled and neat to satisfy our lingering adolescent admiration for rebellion, stubborn self-satisfaction, and emotional intensity. But in the world of *Wuthering Heights*, as in our own, the passage from innocence to experience is an awkward limbo, a thin papery wall, between two selves—between the waif outside the window, and the woman within.

Source: Annette R Federico, "The Waif at the Window: Emily Brontë's Feminine 'Bildungsroman'," in *The Victorian Newsletter*, No 68, Fall, 1985, pp. 26-28.



Critical Essay #3

In the following essay, Bell comments on moral themes in Wuthering Heights, focusing in particular on the Biblical allusions in narrator Lockwood's first dream.

The two dreams Lockwood experiences early in *Wuthering Heights*—the first of a visit to Gimmerton Kirk, and the second of a visit from the ghost-child Catherine—have recently received critical attention from Ruth M. Adams and Edgar Shannon. Of the two interpretations Shannon's ["Lockwood's Dreams and the Exegesis of *Wuthering Heights*, *Nineteenth-Century Fiction*, September, 1959] seems the most convincing in that it offers the only plausible source for the Biblical allusion in the first dream; but in discussing the relationship of the dream sermon and its title to the tragedy of Heathcliff and Catherine, Shannon ignores significant aspects of the dream itself, and consequently the value of his interpretation seems impaired somewhat, like Miss Adams's, by its own ingenuity.

The preacher that Lockwood hears in the first dream is Jabes Branderham, and the sermon is entitled "Seventy Times Seven and the First of the Seventy-first." Shannon identifies the sermon's text as Matt 18.21-22. In this passage Peter asks Jesus, "Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? Till seven times?" and Jesus answers, "I say not unto thee until seven times, but, until seventy times seven." "The First of the Seventy-first," then, Shannon asserts, "advances the idea of an unpardonable sin beyond the ordinary scale of human wrongs." The subsequent nightmare, he continues, connects this idea with Catherine, who appears as an outcast, and we are asked to believe that it is she who has committed the unforgivable sin by marrying Edgar and denying the "natural and elemental affinity" inherent in her love for Heathcliff. "Adhered to, [love] is at once the source of joy and harmony; rejected or subverted, it becomes the fountainhead of enmity and strife."

One cannot challenge Shannon's assertion that thematically *Wuthering Heights* displays the "destructive consequences of thwarted love"; but it seems both unfair and inexact to imply that the guilt devolves upon Catherine exclusively. Moreover such an interpretation does not seem to be substantiated by a close reading of the literal and symbolic action of Lockwood's first dream. Shannon implies that the nature of the unpardonable sin is merely hinted at rather than defined, and that the reader is left to infer its nature from the second dream and from the action that follows. In fact, however, through a curious kind of logical paradox, the unpardonable sin is defined within the action of the dream itself. Not long after Branderham's sermon opens Lockwood begins to fidget, laboring under the four hundred and ninety heads of discourse—each in itself the length of a separate sermon. Finally, when Branderham reaches the "First of the Seventy-first" Lockwood can bear it no longer; he rises and denounces Branderham as

the sinner of the Sin that no Christian need pardon [emphasis supplied]. Seventy times seven times have I plucked up my hat and been about to depart—Seventy times seven times have you preposterously forced me to resume my seat. The four hundred and ninety-first is too much Fellow-martyrs, have at him!



Branderham's reply is equally significant as he turns the congregation back upon Lockwood.

"*Thous art the Man!*" cried Jabes. "Seventy times seven times didst thou gapingly contort thy visage seventy times seven times did I take counsel with my soul-lo, this is human weakness; this also may be absolved' *The First of the Seventy-first is come* [emphasis supplied]. Brethren, execute upon him the Judgment written"

Lockwood himself, in other words, commits (in the dream at least) the unforgivable sin in accusing Branderham of that sin no Christian need pardon. That is, the unforgivable sin is to accuse another of committing the unforgivable sin-or, more simply put, the absence of forgiveness, of forbearance, of mercy. Each man forgives the other four hundred and ninety times, as Jesus enjoins, but neither has the charity to forbear the four hundred and ninety-first offense; each then denounces the other, and chaos erupts-"Every man's hand was against his neighbour."

Moreover, it is manifestly forgiveness, and not, as Shannon suggests, sin that Jesus is talking about; Peter in using the verb *sin* refers to a personal offense, not to mortal transgression; and of course what Jesus is urging is perpetual forgiveness, perpetual charity, only he phrases it in finite terms.

The relation of the dream and its Biblical source to the tragedy that follows would seem obvious. It is the want of forgiveness-or phrased positively, it is vengeance-that disrupts the moral and social order of Wuthering Heights. Hindley cannot forgive Heathcliff for usurping the love of his father; so once he is master of the Heights, he sees that Heathcliff is methodically humiliated and degraded. Heathcliff's degradation in turn enforces a physical and psychological separation from Catherine which preordains marriage to Edgar Linton. When Heathcliff acquires his fortune, he uses the power it affords to avenge himself against Hindley, whom he easily corrupts and destroys; against Hareton and Catherine, the children, who of course are innocent; against Isabella, who is equally blameless; and through all of these, against Edgar Linton, whom he hates not just as a rival but as an embodiment of everything effete and conventional that erodes Catherine's spirit and finally destroys her. Father is turned against son, brother against sister, servant against master, husband against wife, lover against lover-"Every man's hand was against his neighbour."

Catherine is really less a perpetrator than a victim of this turmoil. She shares the guilt of course because her union with Edgar is the act which hastens the tragedy. But hers is an error in judgment rather than a mortal transgression; she marries Edgar in faith, naively assuming that she can preserve her intense sibling affinity with Heathcliff and perhaps redeem him (and herself) as well. But neither man can forgive her for loving the other and what he represents. In his last interview with Catherine, Heathcliff tells her, "It is hard to forgive, and to look at those eyes, and feel those wasted hands-I forgive what you have done to me. I love *my* murderer-but *yours!* How can I?" Torn between the two men, who inspire contrary impulses within her, she grows weak-almost as an act of will-and ultimately dies. When she appears to Lockwood as a ghost and an



outcast, his cruelty to her is merely a vivid physical image of the emotional torment she has been made to suffer during her mortal existence.

Among those whom Catherine loves there is no one who can forgive her human error; there is love abundant for her, but it is always conditional love that demands and punishes. Young Catherine and Hareton, we are led to believe, eventually come to love with patience and understanding, but only after Heathcliff's influence is removed. And Heathcliff's rancor merely epitomizes the chief moral defect of all of the characters concerned. That defect would seem to be not so much the denial of love that Shannon suggests as love's failure to attain charity, to achieve moral fulfillments as well as emotional intensity.

Source: Vereen M Bell, "Wuthering Heights and the Unforgivable Sin," in *Nineteenth-Century Fiction*, Vol 17, No 2, September, 1962, pp 188-91.

Adaptations

Wuthering Heights continues to inspire filmmakers: adaptations include those by William Wyler, starring Laurence Olivier and Merle Oberon, 1939, available from HBO Home Video and Home Vision Cinema; by Robert Fuest, starring Timothy Dalton and Anna Calder-Marshall, 1970, available from Congress Entertainment, Karol Video, The Video Catalog; a reworking under the title "Abismos de pasión", by Luis Buñuel, starring Jorge Mistral and Irasema Dilian, 1953, available from Xenon, Media Home Entertainment, Applause Productions; and by Peter Kosminsky, starring Ralph Fiennes and Juliette Binoche, 1992 (not released in the U.S., but later broadcast on Turner Network Television).

Sound recordings have been published by Listen for Pleasure, 1981; Recorded Books, 1981, and Bantam Doubleday Dell Audio, 1995. The novel was read by Michael Page and Laurel Merlington for an audio version, Brilliance Corporation, 1992, entitled *Wuthering Heights Readalong*, Lake Publishing Co., 1994.

The novel has been adapted as a four-act opera by Bernard Herrman, libretto by Lucille Fletcher, 1950. An adaptation by Carlisle Floyd, who also wrote the libretto, in three acts was first performed in 1958. The novel was also adapted for the stage by Charles Vance and published by Samuel French, 1990.

Compare and Contrast

Late 1700s: World economies are predominately agrarian.

1847: England is in the midst of an Industrial Revolution whose effects will be felt worldwide. Workers flock to cities from the countryside.

Today: World economies are increasingly linked in a "global community." Intercultural communication and cultural diversity in the so-called service economy are a direct result of advances in transportation and communications.

Late 1700s: Life expectancy is short, owing to harsh living and working conditions. Death in childbirth is common.

1847: Medical advances and improved public health and sanitation decrease maternal and infant mortality.

Today: Though high-technology medicine offers solutions to many medical problems, heart disease and cancer remain major killers, there is no cure for AIDS, and many countries grapple with increasing costs of health care for aging populations.

Late 1700s: Inheritance in England passes from the father to the first-born male. A procedure called "strict settlement" must be invoked to bypass inheritance laws.

1847: Full legal and economic equality for women is first championed in the United States by Elizabeth Cady Stanton.

Today: Women worldwide have the right to vote, except in a few Muslim countries. In the United States, while the Equal Rights Amendment failed to obtain ratification, women increasingly bring successful sexual discrimination and sexual harassment suits against employers.

What Do I Read Next?

The Complete Poems of Emily Jane Brontë (1910) is a collection of Brontë's metaphysical poetry.

The memorable heroine of Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre* (1847) finds love with her moody employer, Mr. Rochester, but manages not to give up her independence.

George Eliot's *Middlemarch: A Study of Provincial Life* (1871-72) is a portrait of life in a small rural town. George Eliot was the pseudonym of Mary Ann Evans.

Frankenstein (1818) is Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley's gothic tale of destructive pride. Dr. Victor Frankenstein makes a living monster out of inanimate matter and is ultimately destroyed by his creation.



Further Study

Miriam Allot, *The Brontës: The Critical Heritage*, Routledge, 1974.

A collection of criticism on the works of the Brontë Sisters, including reprints of early reviews of *Wuthering Heights* and *Poems by Currer, Ellis and Acton Bell* and Charlotte Brontë's observations on her sister's novel.

Terry Eagleton, "Myths of Power: A Marxist Study on *Wuthering Heights*" in *Case Studies in Contemporary Criticism. Wuthering Heights*, St Martin's, 1992, pp. 399-414.

Eagleton analyzes the novel in terms of class differences in nineteenth-century England.

Winifred Genn, *Emily Brontë: A Biography*, Clarendon, 1971.

Genn discusses Emily Brontë's life and the effect of her environment on her work.

Philip K Wion, "The Absent Mother in *Wuthering Heights*" In *American Imago*, Vol 42, No.2, 1985.

Wion suggests that the early death of Emily Brontë's mother accounts for Brontë's portrayal of orphaned characters in search of mother figures.

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Charlotte Brontë, "Editor's Preface to the New [1850] Edition of *Wuthenng Heights*," in *Wuthering Heights*, edited by David Daiches, Penguin, 1965, pp. 37-41.

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Winifred Gerin, "Emily Brontë," in *Reference Guide to English Literature*, edited by D L Kirkpatrick, St James Press, 1991, pp. 300-02.

Algernon Charles Swinburne, "Emily Brontë," in *The Athenaeum*, No 2903, June 16, 1883, pp. 762-63.

Tom Winnifrith, "Emily Brontë," In *Dictionary of Literary Biography, Volume 21 Victorian Novelists before 1885*, edited by Ira B Nadel and William E Fredeman, Gale Research, 1983, pp. 55-67.



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Introduction

Purpose of the Book

The purpose of Novels for Students (NfS) is to provide readers with a guide to understanding, enjoying, and studying novels by giving them easy access to information about the work. Part of Gale's □For Students□ Literature line, NfS is specifically designed to meet the curricular needs of high school and undergraduate college students and their teachers, as well as the interests of general readers and researchers considering specific novels. While each volume contains entries on □classic□ novels



frequently studied in classrooms, there are also entries containing hard-to-find information on contemporary novels, including works by multicultural, international, and women novelists.

The information covered in each entry includes an introduction to the novel and the novel's author; a plot summary, to help readers unravel and understand the events in a novel; descriptions of important characters, including explanation of a given character's role in the novel as well as discussion about that character's relationship to other characters in the novel; analysis of important themes in the novel; and an explanation of important literary techniques and movements as they are demonstrated in the novel.

In addition to this material, which helps the readers analyze the novel itself, students are also provided with important information on the literary and historical background informing each work. This includes a historical context essay, a box comparing the time or place the novel was written to modern Western culture, a critical overview essay, and excerpts from critical essays on the novel. A unique feature of NfS is a specially commissioned critical essay on each novel, targeted toward the student reader.

To further aid the student in studying and enjoying each novel, information on media adaptations is provided, as well as reading suggestions for works of fiction and nonfiction on similar themes and topics. Classroom aids include ideas for research papers and lists of critical sources that provide additional material on the novel.

Selection Criteria

The titles for each volume of NfS were selected by surveying numerous sources on teaching literature and analyzing course curricula for various school districts. Some of the sources surveyed included: literature anthologies; Reading Lists for College-Bound Students: The Books Most Recommended by America's Top Colleges; textbooks on teaching the novel; a College Board survey of novels commonly studied in high schools; a National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) survey of novels commonly studied in high schools; the NCTE's Teaching Literature in High School: The Novel; and the Young Adult Library Services Association (YALSA) list of best books for young adults of the past twenty-five years. Input was also solicited from our advisory board, as well as educators from various areas. From these discussions, it was determined that each volume should have a mix of "classic" novels (those works commonly taught in literature classes) and contemporary novels for which information is often hard to find. Because of the interest in expanding the canon of literature, an emphasis was also placed on including works by international, multicultural, and women authors. Our advisory board members—educational professionals—helped pare down the list for each volume. If a work was not selected for the present volume, it was often noted as a possibility for a future volume. As always, the editor welcomes suggestions for titles to be included in future volumes.

How Each Entry Is Organized



Each entry, or chapter, in NfS focuses on one novel. Each entry heading lists the full name of the novel, the author's name, and the date of the novel's publication. The following elements are contained in each entry:

- **Introduction:** a brief overview of the novel which provides information about its first appearance, its literary standing, any controversies surrounding the work, and major conflicts or themes within the work.
- **Author Biography:** this section includes basic facts about the author's life, and focuses on events and times in the author's life that inspired the novel in question.
- **Plot Summary:** a factual description of the major events in the novel. Lengthy summaries are broken down with subheads.
- **Characters:** an alphabetical listing of major characters in the novel. Each character name is followed by a brief to an extensive description of the character's role in the novel, as well as discussion of the character's actions, relationships, and possible motivation. Characters are listed alphabetically by last name. If a character is unnamed—for instance, the narrator in *Invisible Man*—the character is listed as "The Narrator" and alphabetized as "Narrator." If a character's first name is the only one given, the name will appear alphabetically by that name. Variant names are also included for each character. Thus, the full name "Jean Louise Finch" would head the listing for the narrator of *To Kill a Mockingbird*, but listed in a separate cross-reference would be the nickname "Scout Finch."
- **Themes:** a thorough overview of how the major topics, themes, and issues are addressed within the novel. Each theme discussed appears in a separate subhead, and is easily accessed through the boldface entries in the Subject/Theme Index.
- **Style:** this section addresses important style elements of the novel, such as setting, point of view, and narration; important literary devices used, such as imagery, foreshadowing, symbolism; and, if applicable, genres to which the work might have belonged, such as Gothicism or Romanticism. Literary terms are explained within the entry, but can also be found in the Glossary.
- **Historical Context:** This section outlines the social, political, and cultural climate in which the author lived and the novel was created. This section may include descriptions of related historical events, pertinent aspects of daily life in the culture, and the artistic and literary sensibilities of the time in which the work was written. If the novel is a historical work, information regarding the time in which the novel is set is also included. Each section is broken down with helpful subheads.
- **Critical Overview:** this section provides background on the critical reputation of the novel, including bannings or any other public controversies surrounding the work. For older works, this section includes a history of how the novel was first received and how perceptions of it may have changed over the years; for more recent novels, direct quotes from early reviews may also be included.
- **Criticism:** an essay commissioned by NfS which specifically deals with the novel and is written specifically for the student audience, as well as excerpts from previously published criticism on the work (if available).



- Sources: an alphabetical list of critical material quoted in the entry, with full bibliographical information.
- Further Reading: an alphabetical list of other critical sources which may prove useful for the student. Includes full bibliographical information and a brief annotation.

In addition, each entry contains the following highlighted sections, set apart from the main text as sidebars:

- Media Adaptations: a list of important film and television adaptations of the novel, including source information. The list also includes stage adaptations, audio recordings, musical adaptations, etc.
- Topics for Further Study: a list of potential study questions or research topics dealing with the novel. This section includes questions related to other disciplines the student may be studying, such as American history, world history, science, math, government, business, geography, economics, psychology, etc.
- Compare and Contrast Box: an "at-a-glance" comparison of the cultural and historical differences between the author's time and culture and late twentieth century/early twenty-first century Western culture. This box includes pertinent parallels between the major scientific, political, and cultural movements of the time or place the novel was written, the time or place the novel was set (if a historical work), and modern Western culture. Works written after 1990 may not have this box.
- What Do I Read Next?: a list of works that might complement the featured novel or serve as a contrast to it. This includes works by the same author and others, works of fiction and nonfiction, and works from various genres, cultures, and eras.

Other Features

NfS includes "The Informed Dialogue: Interacting with Literature," a foreword by Anne Devereaux Jordan, Senior Editor for Teaching and Learning Literature (TALL), and a founder of the Children's Literature Association. This essay provides an enlightening look at how readers interact with literature and how Novels for Students can help teachers show students how to enrich their own reading experiences.

A Cumulative Author/Title Index lists the authors and titles covered in each volume of the NfS series.

A Cumulative Nationality/Ethnicity Index breaks down the authors and titles covered in each volume of the NfS series by nationality and ethnicity.

A Subject/Theme Index, specific to each volume, provides easy reference for users who may be studying a particular subject or theme rather than a single work. Significant subjects from events to broad themes are included, and the entries pointing to the specific theme discussions in each entry are indicated in boldface.



Each entry has several illustrations, including photos of the author, stills from film adaptations (if available), maps, and/or photos of key historical events.

Citing Novels for Students

When writing papers, students who quote directly from any volume of Novels for Students may use the following general forms. These examples are based on MLA style; teachers may request that students adhere to a different style, so the following examples may be adapted as needed. When citing text from NfS that is not attributed to a particular author (i.e., the Themes, Style, Historical Context sections, etc.), the following format should be used in the bibliography section:

□Night.□ Novels for Students. Ed. Marie Rose Napierkowski. Vol. 4. Detroit: Gale, 1998. 234-35.

When quoting the specially commissioned essay from NfS (usually the first piece under the □Criticism□ subhead), the following format should be used:

Miller, Tyrus. Critical Essay on □Winesburg, Ohio.□ Novels for Students. Ed. Marie Rose Napierkowski. Vol. 4. Detroit: Gale, 1998. 335-39.

When quoting a journal or newspaper essay that is reprinted in a volume of NfS, the following form may be used:

Malak, Amin. □Margaret Atwood's □The Handmaid's Tale and the Dystopian Tradition,□ Canadian Literature No. 112 (Spring, 1987), 9-16; excerpted and reprinted in Novels for Students, Vol. 4, ed. Marie Rose Napierkowski (Detroit: Gale, 1998), pp. 133-36.

When quoting material reprinted from a book that appears in a volume of NfS, the following form may be used:

Adams, Timothy Dow. □Richard Wright: □Wearing the Mask,□ in Telling Lies in Modern American Autobiography (University of North Carolina Press, 1990), 69-83; excerpted and reprinted in Novels for Students, Vol. 1, ed. Diane Telgen (Detroit: Gale, 1997), pp. 59-61.

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The editor of Novels for Students welcomes your comments and ideas. Readers who wish to suggest novels to appear in future volumes, or who have other suggestions, are cordially invited to contact the editor. You may contact the editor via email at: ForStudentsEditors@gale.com. Or write to the editor at:

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