

AQA English Literature GCSE

Character Profile: *Dr Lanyon*

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Dr Hastie Lanyon

SYMBOLISES REPUTABILITY & ACTS AS A FOIL TO DR JEKYLL

INTRODUCTION

Lanyon plays a minor role in the plot of the novel but he provides the **voice of scientific skepticism** which balances out the wild and experimental attitudes of Dr Jekyll. He is also the **first person to witness Jekyll's transformation** into Hyde. He serves as the voice of tangible, material science rather than the metaphysical science which Dr Jekyll practices.

CHARACTER IN CONTEXT

- **Advances in science and technology:** Lanyon also researches in the field of science, but **his research is able to coexist with religion and spirituality**, as he focuses on the material rather than metaphysical (theoretical) realm.



https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Jekyll_and_Hyde_Ch6_Drawing1.jpg

KEY CHARACTERISTICS

- **STUBBORN** - Whilst Utterson remains a good friend and loyal confidant of Jekyll, Lanyon sticks to his beliefs and morals and **distances himself from Dr Jekyll** after discovering his experiments with Hyde. This demonstrates his dedication to reason and how much **he values rationality and integrity**.

RELATIONSHIPS

Dr Jekyll | “my colleague and old-school companion” - Lanyon and Jekyll had a disagreement over the **“unscientific balderdash”** Jekyll begins to experiment with (which results in the creation of Hyde) and their friendship never recovered. They are both scientists, however Lanyon evidently prefers materialistic science, whereas Jekyll dabbles in a more metaphysical side of the topic. Jekyll forces him to face the truth revealed by his experiments, and cannot cope with the drastic change in his view of science. In this respect, he acts as a **foil** to Jekyll, showing the **extremes of scientific practice and belief**.



At the time, many people were beginning to try and understand human anatomy however, Jekyll's investigation goes beyond the purely physical human form. Lanyon's apparently conservative approach to scientific investigation represents those who resented the changes being induced by the innovators of the industrial revolution.

Utterson | Lanyon writes Utterson an account of the incident with Jekyll's transformation, showing that they have a good relationship despite having little in common. When Utterson comes to visit him, he comments: **"We are three very old friends, Lanyon"**, which shows that at this point Utterson serves as the common bond between Jekyll and Lanyon. This may further emphasise his rational, unbiased and balanced role in the novel as he is mediating between Jekyll and Lanyon.

KEY MOMENTS

CH	OCCURRENCE	SIGNIFICANCE
6	Utterson finds Dr Lanyon on his deathbed however, he conceals the cause of his condition. When Lanyon dies he leaves behind a letter addressed to Utterson with instructions not to open "till the death or disappearance of Dr Henry Jekyll" , a sentiment which Utterson respects.	This chapter works to emphasise the tension surrounding the mystery of the Jekyll & Hyde case, playing into the gothic themes of the novel. It also shows the reader the weakness of Lanyon's character as we are introduced to him in a vulnerable state, on his deathbed. This juxtaposes the presentation of Lanyon as a strong character when telling Utterson that he disagrees with Jekyll's science.
9	In this chapter, Dr Lanyon's Narrative, the contents of Dr Lanyon's letter is revealed to the reader. This includes a letter in which Jekyll asks him to find a drawer of chemicals and other materials and bring it to a man calling that night. That night, in front of Lanyon, Hyde transforms into Jekyll. Witnessing this ruins Lanyon completely, rendering him seriously ill.	We are provided with an articulate insight into the rational way Lanyon's mind works as well as the intense impact afflicted onto him by the discovery and proof of this new pathway of science which Jekyll has discovered. We are faced with another fatality, indirectly, at the hands of the Jekyll & Hyde combination.

KEY QUOTES

"I felt bound to do as he requested"

- This shows Dr Lanyon is a faithful friend to Jekyll, despite falling out over scientific differences.

"Welcomed him with both hands"

- Suggests his character is kind and respectful and symbolic of a Victorian gentleman. It also shows him to be **a warm character**.



“Jekyll became too fanciful for me”

- Hints that Dr Lanyon is traditional and remains staunch in the reason, rationale and integrity of traditional science. He is used to demonstrate the extremes that exist in the realm of scientific research. His role within the text is as a **foil to Jekyll** and he is used to highlight the absurdities in some of Jekyll’s experimentation. It also **foreshadows** the end of the novella, when Hyde becomes all-consuming and Jekyll can no longer control him. The **fricatives** employed in **“fanciful”** creates a **harsh tone** to his rejection of Jekyll.

“I put him back, conscious at his touch of a certain icy pang along my blood. ‘Come, sir,’ said I. ‘You forget that I have not yet the pleasure of your acquaintance. Be seated, if you please.’ And I showed him an example, and sat down myself in my customary seat and with as fair an imitation of my ordinary manner to a patient, as the lateness of the house, the nature of my preoccupations, and the horror I had of my visitor, would suffer me to muster.”

- Demonstrates Lanyon is shaken and shocked by his encounter with Hyde shown by the **metaphor** **“icy pang among my blood”** as Hyde doesn’t obey custom as Lanyon does.

