

Edexcel English Literature GCSE

Character Profile: *Mr Enfield*



Mr Richard Enfield

INTRODUCTION

Mr Enfield is a recurring, rather neutral character who appears frequently throughout the novel, always accompanied by Utterson. Together, Utterson and Enfield enjoy their Sunday walks together. Enfield is arguably one of the **key driving forces of the plot**; he is the man who initially, indirectly introduced Utterson to Hyde in the story of the door which leads Utterson to start investigating. He embodies similar **Victorian values** as his distant cousin Mr Utterson however, has a very different personality. Whilst he makes sure that Hyde compensates the girl he tramples in chapter one, showing he does have **strong morals**, he **isn't curious** about finding out more about him like Utterson is.



https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Jekyll_and_Hyde_Ch5_Drawing1.jpg

CHARACTER IN CONTEXT

- **Divided Edinburgh:** Enfield links to the context of Stevenson's hometown as it was split into the old, more sleazy town, and grander, wealthier town, which is also relevant to the theme of duality. It is implied that whilst he has the exterior of a perfectly reputable Victorian gentleman, he also leads a hidden life.
- **Victorian gentleman:** as a man in Victorian London, going for walks would help maintain your public appearance.

KEY CHARACTERISTICS

- **MORALLY DUBIOUS** - Enfield is a perfect Victorian gentleman and avoids gossip for fear of affecting his reputation, although **he does tend to gossip with Utterson**. In this respect, he could also be considered to channel the theme of duality.
 - When introducing his story of the door in the first chapter, he starts with ***"I was coming home from some place at the end of the world, about three o'clock of a black winter morning"*** which leads the reader to consider that Enfield may not be as morally strict as originally thought. By showing that even **the epitome of the Victorian gentleman** harbours secrets, Stevenson is showing the harmful nature of the stereotype.
- **UNINTERESTED** - Enfield appears to think nothing more of the story about Hyde, whilst Utterson does, showing a dire **lack of curiosity** in his personality. He is completely disinterested in finding out more about Hyde. His lack of interest also implies that he tells Utterson merely to gossip rather than out of concern for anybody's safety.



KEY MOMENTS

CH	OCCURRENCE	SIGNIFICANCE
1	Enfield tells Utterson the story of the strange-looking door, but also tells him his rule: “the more it looks like Queer Street, the less I ask.”	Here, Enfield serves to subtly introduce the theme of duality into the text: whilst he is gossiping to Utterson, he is also criticising this habit and dismissing his curiosity. It also guides the reader and Utterson’s interest into the identity of Hyde. In this respect, Enfield ignites the case of Jekyll & Hyde . We also get a wider oversight of Utterson’s personality through how he interacts with Enfield.
7	“Incident at the Window” is the shortest chapter of the book. In it Enfield and Utterson are on another Sunday walk. They see Jekyll at the window but as they engage in conversation they start to see Jekyll hit with “an expression of such abject terror and despair” they are left completely shocked. They “turned and left the court without a word” , scared by what they’ve seen.	The Sunday walks serve as both a reminder of the presence of religion in the novel and as a reminder of continuity which contrasts with the transformative events of the novella. This propels the plot forward.

RELATIONSHIPS

Utterson | Mr Enfield maintains a good relationship with his distant cousin, Utterson, despite acting also as a **foil** to him. He demonstrates that individuals don’t always have to follow or even have curious instincts.

KEY QUOTES

It is Enfield that sees **“two figures: one a little man who was stumping along eastward at a good walk, and the other a girl of maybe eight or ten who was running as hard as she was able down a cross street”**

- This emphasises the idea that Enfield has a **passive, yet observant**, set of qualities which adds to the plot of the novella, however juxtaposes the portrayal of Enfield as refusing to get involved with gossip.

“I am ashamed of my long tongue. Let us make a bargain never to refer to this again.”

- The metonymy **“long tongue”** for story shows that he feels comfortable using informal language around Mr Utterson, which demonstrates their familiarity with each other. It shows his flaws also - he is criticising himself for gossiping despite claiming that it is his moral rule not to care nor do it.



“And you never asked about – the place with the door?” said Mr Utterson. ‘No, sir: I had a delicacy,’ was the reply. ‘I feel very strongly about putting questions; it partakes too much of the style of the day of judgment. You start a question, and it’s like starting a stone. You sit quietly on the top of a hill; and away the stones goes, starting others; and presently some bland old bird (the last you would have thought of) is knocked on the head in his own back garden and the family have to change their name. No, sir, I make it a rule of mine: the more it looks like Queer Street, the less I ask.”

- Enfield is clearly a very intelligent man, however lacks curiosity. He values remaining safely in his comfort zone over discovering more about Mr Hyde.
- This relates to earlier in the chapter where he reveals that he witnessed the attack at ***“about three o’clock of a black winter morning”***, neglecting to explaining his own activities at this time of night - this concealment of the truth **highlights the dual lives** lived by members of the Victorian elite.
- His self imposed rule of not engaging in matters which could be incriminating for other people may initially seem admirable but also shows that if Utterson did not defy societal expectations by investigating, Jekyll would have been totally isolated.

““God forgive us, God forgive us,’ said Mr Utterson. But Mr Enfield only nodded his head very seriously, and walked on once more in silence.”

- This implies that Enfield is in shock over the event he has just witnessed, to the extent that it has left him speechless. Enfield’s silence also highlights his **inaction**, which reinforces Utterson’s admirable traits.

