

OCR English Literature GCSE

Character Profile: *Poole*

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Poole

INTRODUCTION

Poole is **Jekyll's servant**, and **facilitates** some of the discoveries Utterson is able to make in the case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde. He is loyal and has been in Jekyll's household for the past twenty years.

CHARACTER IN CONTEXT

- **Class structure** - Poole's position as Dr Jekyll's butler places him in a position of servitude. So, whilst he knows Dr Jekyll very well, it has always been through the lens of master and servant. At the end of the novel, Poole and Utterson work together to break into the laboratory and uncover the mystery. This may be Stevenson implying that **if those from different classes collaborated, more could be achieved**.

KEY CHARACTERISTICS

- **LOYALTY** - He is hesitant to inform Utterson about his worries about Jekyll for fear that it will hurt him - **"doggedly disregarding the question"** - and has worked for the same man for twenty years. This demonstrates that he always has his master's best interests at heart when making decisions which concern him, which also may suggest that Dr Jekyll treats him well as an employee.
- **UPTIGHT & SHORT TEMPERED** - Whilst Poole is generally shown as an agreeable character, when faced with the incident with Jekyll in chapter eight, he is visibly strict about everyone else's movements - this may be a response to the very stressful situation.

KEY MOMENTS

CH	OCCURRENCE	SIGNIFICANCE
2	We are first introduced to Poole when Utterson goes to warn Jekyll of Hyde but Poole informs him that Jekyll is out and all of the servants have been instructed to obey Hyde.	Demonstrates Poole's loyalty to Jekyll, but also sets him up as powerful due to his access to knowledge and ability to facilitate access to Jekyll's house.
8	In "The Last Night" , Utterson and Poole figure out the case of Jekyll & Hyde when they find Hyde dead in the laboratory, after Utterson "receives a visit from Poole" .	This chapter shows the good relationship Utterson and Poole have, as well as the care Poole takes over Jekyll. This is highlighted when he seeks Utterson to help him when he finds "something wrong" with his master.



RELATIONSHIPS

Jekyll | Poole has worked in Jekyll's household for twenty years, and the two have formed a strong relationship.

KEY QUOTES

“O, sir... do you think I do not know my master after twenty years? Do you think I do not know where his head comes to in the cabinet door, where I saw him every morning of my life? No, sir, that thing in the mask was never Dr Jekyll.”

- Evidently Poole is **loyal** and concerned for the safety of Jekyll. The use of the **possessive “my”** contrasts with the **connotation of ownership** from **“master”** which may imply that whilst Poole works for Jekyll, they maintain a two-way working relationship. The certainty of **“that thing in the mask was never Dr Jekyll”** implies that Poole is very **aware of his master's idiosyncrasies**.

““Hold your tongue!” Poole said to her, with a ferocity of accent that testified to his own jangled nerves.”

- Demonstrates his strict awareness of the levels of appropriate behavior for each situation, alongside his capacity for leadership. This is a rare expression of emotion in the novella, showing how Poole is less restricted due to his **lower class**.

““Changed? Well, yes, I think so,” said the butler. “Have I been twenty years in this man's house, to be deceived about his voice? No, sir; master's made away with”

- Refers to Dr Jekyll as **“master”**, reminding the reader of how they are supposed to interact with one another. Also **propels the narrative** as Poole is able to be sure that Jekyll has been replaced with Hyde.

“You know the doctor's ways, sir,” replied Poole, “and how he shuts himself up. Well, he's shut up again in the cabinet; and I don't like it, sir—I wish I may die if I like it. Mr. Utterson, sir, I'm afraid.”

- Poole shows enough concern about his master to involve himself for the first time in the investigation. Poole is progressing the narrative by seeking Mr Utterson's help and his character is showing the great deal of **care and respect that he has for Dr Jekyll**.
- Additionally, this demonstrates his very **respectful nature**; he is concerned about his appearance in society shown through the **repetition** of **“sir”**.

