

OCR English Literature GCSE

Jekyll and Hyde: Themes *Appearance vs Reality*

This work by [PMT Education](https://www.pmt.education) is licensed under [CC BY-NC-ND 4.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/)



Appearance vs Reality

The **disparity between appearance and reality** is clear in the novella and is present in both characters and setting. This can be seen as another form of duality within the text. For something to be in fitting with the theme of 'appearance vs reality' something must project **an outward image that is very different from the truth**. An example would be rather than tidying a room you put a blanket over the mess to hide it. The room would appear tidier but the reality is very different.

The first chapter "The Story of the Door" introduces the idea of a door being able to prevent the realities of one's nature from being revealed. Enfield states that "**the fellow had a key**" in reference to Hyde, this shows the way in which Hyde is able to transcend the balance between appearance and reality. Doors become a metaphor of transition in the novel, and the theme of transition is closely linked to that of appearance and reality.

The theme is present in the **oxymoron "shady lawyers"** which is ironic as they should be delivering justice but in fact are exploitative criminals themselves. When applied to the novel, this phrase has greater depth as **Utterson defies this stereotype** by being the moral compass of the novella.



The overall form of the novella acts as an **extended metaphor** for the theme of appearance vs reality. The chapter titles are all relatively understated, and do not provoke emotion in the reader whereas their contents are composed of mystery and fear. This juxtaposition further emphasises the dual themes.

