



Advanced | Exemplar Essay

Frankenstein and Bill Nye

Dr. Frankenstein, Bill Nye, and Genetic Engineering



Claim and Focus

The essay makes a clear claim based on the devices of the texts ("Both authors used specific word choice and use both sides of the argument in order to deliver their argument"). The writing maintains focus on analyzing the texts ("Nye uses the expert to contribute to the logos part of his argument because experts have high credibility"). The demands of the prompt are thoroughly addressed.



Analysis and Evidence

The essay cites the most appropriate evidence to support its claim and fully explains how the evidence cited leads to the message of the texts ("Mary Shelley uses ethos and diction as Doctor Frankenstein expresses his guilt and remorse"). The writing demonstrates insightful reasoning and full understanding of the strategies of the text ("which then allows the reader to feel compassion towards him and his situation").



Organization

The essay incorporates effective transitions and an organizational structure that enhances the analysis ("While the passage from Mary Shelley's Frankenstein offers a philosophical approach against genetic engineering"). The essay includes an effective introductory paragraph and a concluding paragraph.



Language and Style

The essay has a formal style and objective tone that is maintained throughout ("clearly shows the dangers of man using science without thinking of the repercussions"). Precise language and domain-specific vocabulary address the complexity of the topic ("clip from Nye's series provides a more influential argument through factual information"). There are few errors, and they do not interfere with meaning.



Using Exemplars in Your Lessons

Exemplar essays are tools to take abstract descriptions and make them more concrete for students. One way to use them is to print the clean copies of the essays and allow students to use the rubric to make notes or even find examples of important elements of an essay - thesis statements, introductions, evidence, conclusions, transitions, etc. Teachers can also use exemplars to illustrate what each score point within a trait 'looks like' in an authentic student essay. For additional ideas, please see "25 Ways to Use Exemplar Essays" by visiting the Curriculum Resources page in Help.

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Dr. Frankenstein, Bill Nye, and Genetic Engineering

Genetic engineering is the modification of the structure in any organic life on a molecular level in order to change some aspect of the organism or to create an entirely new organism. The topic of genetic engineering has been a widely argued topic because of the different views on life associated with STEM cell research and other aspects of genetic engineering. Bill Nye has a positive view on genetic engineering while Mary Shelley uses the character of Dr. Frankenstein to portray her negative view on genetic engineering. Although these authors have different viewpoints on this topic, they structure their argument in a similar fashion with some differences. Both authors used specific word choice and use both sides of the argument in order to deliver their argument about genetic engineering.

Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* offers a very riveting and gruesome account of the scientific journey of Dr. Victor Frankenstein. Though proving to have scientific influences within her story, Shelley's *Frankenstein* only delivers the reader a "what if" scenario instead of actual research and any sound theories. Dr. Frankenstein's "monster," who is created from fresh corpses, clearly shows the dangers of man using science without thinking of the repercussions. In many instances, Dr. Frankenstein battles with his emotions on the matter, stating, "My limbs now tremble, and my eyes swim with the remembrance; but then a resistless and almost frantic impulse urged me forward; I seemed to have lost all soul or sensation but for this one pursuit" (Source 1). Mary Shelley uses ethos and diction as Doctor Frankenstein expresses his drive for his work turned to guilt and remorse, which then allows the reader to feel compassion towards him and

his situation. These emotions lead the reader to think that genetic engineering is destructive and dangerous.

While the passage from Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* offers a philosophical approach against genetic engineering, the video clip from Nye's series provides a more influential argument through factual information in support of genetic engineering. Bill Nye's video "The Eyes of Nye – Cloning" explains how exactly genetic engineering can help people with chronic illnesses. Bill Nye introduced Dr. Jeffery Kahn, a bioethicist, to give his argument credibility. Nye uses the expert to contribute to the logos part of his argument because experts have high credibility and many people trust an expert's opinion. Probably the most compelling argument both for and against is the use of human embryos. The ethical question of whether using human embryos for STEM cell research is a sticking point for many, as Kahn asks "We have to decide at what point do we think it's acceptable to use human embryos, a potentially past human embryo, and we have to answer – is an embryo, a human embryo (in terms of its moral status) more like the cells that are scraped out of your cheek, or more like the person who is sitting before you today?" (Source 2) However, Kahn argues that by not using the embryos, you are placing more value on their lives than the lives of those who could be helped by such research.

Although genetic engineering is a controversial topic, both authors are able to manipulate the devices of diction, ethos, and pathos in order to appeal to the audience. Through the use of these devices, these authors are then arguing their viewpoint with support. The Bioethicist from "Bill Nye" uses ethos and pathos to give the audience a more realistic point because it is coming from a real scientist. Using these devices during an argument supports your argument immensely.