**WRITING TUTORIAL**

Associated Text: *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*

PROMPT: in a well-developed and well-organized essay, analyze how the novel deals with the issues of respectability, concealment, and hypocrisy. Why might these be important for individuals living in Stevenson’s time period?

**LEAD & BRIDGE**: The Victorian period has been characterized as one of repression. Under the rule of Queen Victoria, individuals were encouraged to repress any desires that led to improper conduct. However, some individuals found this suppression stifling; therefore, they secretly indulged their unrefined desires while creating a façade of respectability. Men inclined to adventure were able to explore these desires while traveling to exotic lands during the reign of British Imperialism. In his novel *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, R.L. Stevenson not only creates characters that adhere to established Victorian mores, but also creates characters that struggle against them. Because Stevenson’s protagonist Dr. Henry Jekyll recognizes that both good and evil exist within man, he develops an experiment that allows him to explore the duality of his nature.

**THESIS**: Stevenson depicts Dr. Henry Jekyll as a member of the favored upper class who outwardly behaves with the utmost propriety, while secretly giving into his corrupt desires (“**WHAT**”) to expose the restrictive and hypocritical nature of Victorian society that caused individuals to question their own moral beliefs (“**WHY” – THEMATIC STATEMENT**).

**CLAIM**: To preserve his untarnished reputation, Henry Jekyll creates his evil alter-ego Mr. Edward Hyde to secretly explore the savagery of man.

**ADD TO IT**: The Victorian upper class was unable to openly explore its dark curiosity of savage cultures because of the anxieties surrounding the consequences for civilization once these impulses were indulged.

**SUPPORT**: For example, Dr. Jekyll’s house and laboratory symbolize Jekyll’s dual nature. Like Jekyll, his house is clean, welcoming, looks perfectly natural, and “[wears] a great air of wealth and comfort” (Stevenson 40). While maintaining a respectable home, Jekyll is able to preserve his reputation as a proper, decent Victorian gentleman. Conversely, like Hyde, the laboratory is dark and dingy, representing Hyde’s evil nature. The laboratory door is “equipped with neither bell nor knocker…[and] is blistered and distained” (Stevenson 39), suggesting an unwelcoming and foreboding presence. The house looks perfect from the front view, but behind this façade lurks something malicious. Furthermore, while Jekyll continues to attend respectable dinner parties with friends, such as Dr. Lanyon and Mr. Utterson, Hyde explores the underbelly of Soho, engaging in acts of violence and prostitution. When Mr. Utterson arrives in SoHo, he notices the “slatternly passengers” and feels it is “a district of some city in a nightmare” (Stevenson 20). Therefore, through Mr. Hyde, Dr. Jekyll is able to engage in unrestrained acts that his society believes are inappropriate while maintaining his reputation as a gentleman.

**TIE BACK**: Because Dr. Henry Jekyll is restricted from outwardly indulging in his natural impulses, he goes to great lengths to balance his dual nature, and, ultimately, begins to question the morality of allowing his evil alter ego to roam free.