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Is he  
a man or  
a devil?

**Emily Bronte's** novel features a very unusual villain: a passionate and vengeful anti-hero, incapable of any forgiveness: **Heathcliff**. Heathcliff's hatred and vengeful plans move the plot forward and produce most of the action of the book. He starts life as a homeless orphan who is found and adopted by Mr Earnshaw and brought to live at Wuthering Heights with Earnshaw's other children, Catherine and Hindley. Heathcliff's brown skin, his poverty and his mysterious origins

Who are outsiders in today's society?

Share ideas with a partner.

immediately make him a threatening outsider. He is a displaced person living with people of a higher social class. Although Heathcliff befriends and falls in love with Catherine, Hindley hates him and treats him badly. Catherine too, betrays him and marries a rich upper-class neighbour, Edward Linton. So Heathcliff decides to spend his life seeking revenge on Hindley and the Lintons, and on anyone who stands between him and his love for Catherine. He uses his mysteriously acquired money to buy both Wuthering Heights, the Earnshaw's home and the Grange, Linton's house, destroying everyone that reminds him of his obsessive and destructive love.

As the story progresses Heathcliff seems to become the incarnation of the devil and he was soon compared by scholars to Goethe's *Mephistopheles* and to Satan in Milton's *Paradise Lost*. Even other characters in the book frequently compare him to a devil (see Isabella's letter on page 68). But Heathcliff is much more than a simple devil, he shows personality traits and hidden qualities

that make him look much more like a romantic hero. After all, the author's model for Heathcliff was Byron's poem *Manfred*, an anti-hero who in turn showed features of Milton's Satan.

- **acquired:** got; earned
- **betrays:** hurts him when he trusts her
- **displaced:** not in the right place
- **forgiveness:** act of pardoning people for bad things they have done
- **hatred:** hate; strong dislike
- **mourn:** be sad when someone dies
- **orphan:** without parents
- **outsider:** someone who is not part of a group
- **revenge:** punishment for people who have hurt him
- **sorrow:** sadness
- **threatening:** that could cause problems
- **traits:** aspects (of personality)
- **vengeful:** with a need to punish people who have hurt you

Over to you

What is the difference between **anti-hero** and **villain**? Use your dictionaries to find out. With a partner think of examples of both.

An illustration in a stylized, painterly style. A woman with dark, wavy hair is shown in profile, wearing a dark, patterned cape. She is riding a brown horse. The background features rolling hills, a field of tall grass, and a few trees. The sky is a pale yellow-green with large, stylized, dark green clouds. The overall color palette is muted and earthy.

# WUTHERING HEIGHTS

LOCKWOOD



CATHERINE EARNSHAW



HEATHCLIFF



EDGAR LINTON



HINDLEY EARNSHAW



MRS DEAN



ISABELLA LINTON



CATHY LINTON

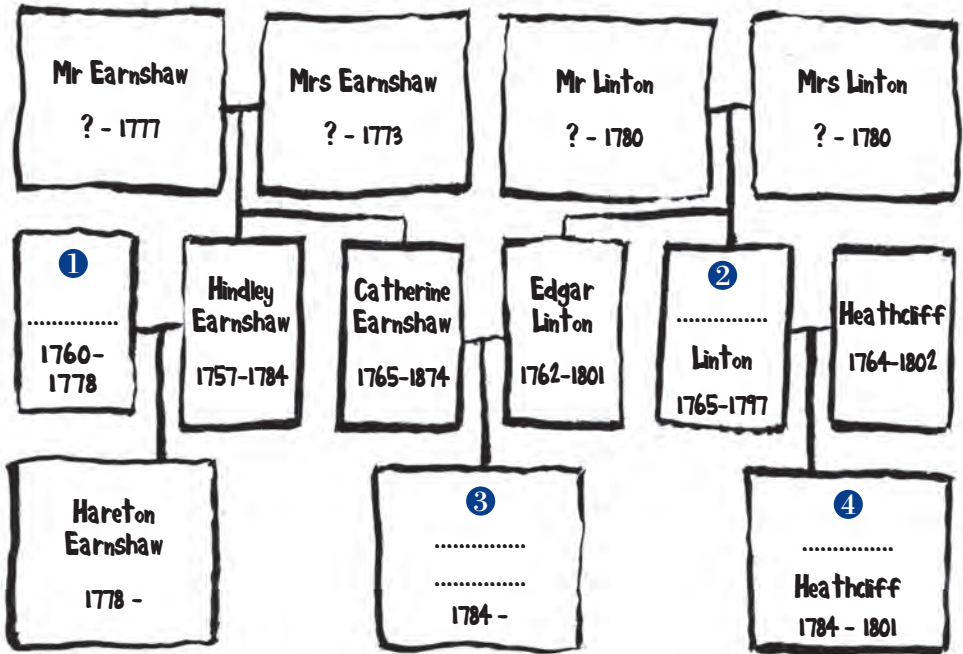



HARETON EARNSHAW

# BEFORE READING

1 Look at the family tree of the main characters in the story. Read the sentences and fill in the missing names 1–4.

- a Catherine and Edgar's daughter is called Cathy Linton.
- b Hindley married a woman called Frances.
- c Linton is Heathcliff's son's first name.
- d Edgar's sister's name is Isabella.



2  Create your own family tree. Ask your family for the information. Compare family trees with a partner.

**3 Look again at the information in the family tree in Exercise 1. Answer the questions.**

- a How many cousins did Cathy Linton have?
- b How old was Hindley Earnshaw when he died?
- c Which two characters died in 1780? And which two in 1801?
- d Who was younger – Heathcliff or Edgar Linton?
- e What was the relationship between Hareton Earnshaw and Edgar Linton?

**4 The following sentences describe 5 of the characters. Match a beginning (a-e) with a suitable ending (1-5).**

- a Heathcliff had dark hair and eyes and dressed
- b Cathy Linton had golden curls that fell
- c Hareton's hair was uncombed and his hands were brown
- d Catherine Earnshaw had thick dark curls, dark eyes
- e Linton Heathcliff was a delicate boy

- 1  over her shoulders.
- 2  with a pale, sad face.
- 3  and a passionate nature.
- 4  like a gentleman.
- 5  from working outside.

**5 Look at the pictures from the book. Match them with the descriptions in Exercise 4. Write the name of the character below.**



## 1 A VISITOR AT WUTHERING HEIGHTS

 I have been to see my landlord• Mr Heathcliff today. He's my only neighbour• here in this beautiful but wild part of England.

He was standing at the gate to his farm when I arrived. His black eyes looked at me suspiciously•.

'Mr Heathcliff?' I said.

He nodded•.

'I am Mr Lockwood, your new tenant• at Thrushcross Grange, sir.'

'Come in!' he said coldly, opening the gate.

I'm not a sociable man but I had the impression that Mr Heathcliff was even less sociable than me.

I rode through the gate and he followed me up the small road to the house. As we entered the courtyard• he shouted to an old man, 'Joseph! Take Mr Lockwood's horse and bring us some wine.'

The name of Mr Heathcliff's house is Wuthering Heights. 'Wuthering' means 'stormy' or 'windy' in the local language and it describes the place well. The house stands on the top of a hill. On one side of it there are a few trees. They all lean• in the same direction, blown by the strong north winds.

We went into the sitting room. The floor was made of smooth•, white stone. There was a big fireplace at one end of it and a large dresser• at the other end. Several large hunting dogs were lying in the dark corners of the room.

- **courtyard:** open area surrounded by buildings
- **dresser:** piece of furniture
- **landlord:** man who rents a house
- **lean:** bend; are inclined
- **neighbour:** person who lives near one's house

- **noded:** moved his head up and down to say 'yes'
- **smooth:** flat; not rough
- **suspiciously:** in a distrusting way
- **tenant:** person who rents a house



It was a simple, pleasant room, a farmer's room. Mr Heathcliff seemed out of place there. He doesn't look like a farmer. He's a tall, handsome man, very dark like a gypsy, but he dresses like a gentleman. The expression on his face is cold and hard, perhaps cruel. I might be wrong of course.

I sat down in one of the chairs near the fire and he stood opposite me. One of the dogs, a female, came up to me and I put out my hand to touch her. She snarled<sup>•</sup>, showing her teeth.

'Best not to touch her,' growled<sup>•</sup> Mr Heathcliff. 'She isn't a pet.'

Then he walked over to the door and shouted to the old man again, 'Joseph!'

There was no sign of the servant so Heathcliff went to look for him. He left me alone with the dogs. I sat quietly and looked at them for a while. Then suddenly the female dog jumped on me. I tried to push her away but the other dogs ran over and joined her. I shouted for help and a large woman with a frying pan ran in. She hit the dogs with the frying pan and shouted at them. They were afraid of her and went silently back to their dark corners.

At that moment Heathcliff came back.

'What's going on?' he asked angrily.

'Your dogs are as wild as tigers!' I said. 'They aren't safe to leave with strangers.'

'They're hunting dogs,' he replied. 'Here! Have a glass of wine!'

'No, thank you,' I replied coldly.

'Come on, Mr Lockwood! Don't be angry,' Heathcliff said. 'Drink some wine. We don't have guests very often here. My dogs and I have forgotten how to receive them.'

• **growled:** spoke in an unfriendly and angry way  
(like an angry dog)

• **snarled:** made an angry sound

I tried to forget my anger and we started talking. To my surprise, I enjoyed our conversation very much. When it was time for me to leave I said, 'I'll come and see you again tomorrow'.

He didn't seem to like the idea but that wasn't going to stop me.

## HEATHCLIFF

Why did Mr Heathcliff's appearance surprise Mr Lockwood?

What kind of life do you think Heathcliff leads?

What do you think will happen the next time Mr Lockwood visits Wuthering Heights?

I set out after lunch the following day. It was cold and the sky was grey. A few snowflakes were falling as I knocked at the door of Wuthering Heights. There was no reply. I knocked again and shook the latch. Hearing the noise, Joseph came to the barn door.

'The master is in the fields,' he shouted.

'Is there nobody at home?' I replied.

'Only the mistress and she never opens the door,' he said and went back inside the barn.

It was snowing heavily now and I was very cold. I tried to open the door but it was locked. Suddenly a young man appeared in the courtyard. He made a sign with his hand telling me to follow him. We went to the back of the house and through the kitchen to the sitting room. A big fire was burning in the fireplace and there were cups and plates on the table. A girl was sitting near it.

- **barn:** building on a farm for animals
- **latch:** bar on a door for keeping it closed
- **leads:** lives life
- **master:** man in charge of a house
- **mistress:** (here) woman in charge of a house
- **set out:** started my walk

‘She must be the mistress of the house,’ I thought.

She looked at me in a cool, disinterested way but didn’t say anything. I felt very uncomfortable.

‘Sit down! He’ll be back soon,’ said the young man. His manner wasn’t very welcoming•.

I could see the girl well now. She was about seventeen, slim• and very pretty. Her hair was the colour of gold and fell over her shoulders. Her eyes were beautiful but there was a disagreeable• expression in them.

The young man was looking at me angrily. I couldn’t decide if he was a servant or not. He was dressed like one and he spoke like one. His thick brown curls were uncombed• and his hands and face were brown from working outside. But his manner was proud and free, not like a servant’s.



- **disagreeable:** not friendly or polite
- **slim:** thin
- **uncombed:** untidy; not combed
- **welcoming:** friendly to a person who has just arrived

Neither of them spoke to me and I was glad when, a few minutes later, Heathcliff walked in.

‘I have come, sir, as I promised!’ I said. ‘And I’m afraid I’ll have to stay here until the snow stops. Perhaps one of your servants will take me home later.’

‘They are all too busy,’ he replied. Then he turned to the young girl and said, ‘Get the tea ready!’

We pulled our chairs to the table while the girl poured the tea. We drank our tea in silence and there was a very tense• atmosphere in the room. I thought it was my fault• so I tried to be sociable.

‘This is a beautiful part of the country,’ I said, ‘but very isolated•. However, you seem very happy here, with your wife and family...’

‘My wife!’ Heathcliff exclaimed looking around him. ‘Where? Are you talking about her spirit•?’

How stupid of me! Of course the girl wasn’t his wife! She was much too young for him. She must be married to the young man.

‘Mrs Heathcliff is my daughter-in-law,’ said Heathcliff, reading my thoughts. There was hatred• on his face as he spoke.

‘Ah, yes,’ I said. ‘You are very lucky to have such a lovely wife, young man.’ The youth• went red and looked down at his plate.

‘I said she was my daughter-in-law, sir. She was married to my son,’ said Heathcliff.

‘And this young man is...’

‘Not my son.’

‘My name is Hareton Earnshaw,’ growled the youth angrily.

- **hatred:** extreme dislike
- **isolated:** a long way from other places
- **it was my fault:** I was responsible for the difficult situation
- **spirit:** part of a person that some people believe continues to live after death
- **tense:** not relaxed
- **youth:** young man



The atmosphere began to depress me and I promised myself not to make a third visit to Wuthering Heights.

After a long silence I asked, 'Perhaps one of your servants is free now to take me home?'

'There's only Heathcliff, Hareton, Zillah the housekeeper•, Joseph and me here,' said the girl.

'Then I suppose I'll have to stay until the morning,' I replied.

'You'll have to share a bed with Hareton or Joseph, if you do,' Heathcliff said rudely. Although he dressed like a gentleman, he certainly didn't behave like one.

I felt very angry with all of them. I stood up, pushed past Heathcliff and ran out into the dark courtyard. There was a lantern• near the door. I picked it up and rushed towards the gate.

Suddenly two hairy monsters flew at my throat, knocking me down. They sat on me until Heathcliff and Hareton arrived and pulled them off. I was so frightened that my nose started to bleed•. Hearing the noise, Zillah came out. She quickly poured some icy water down my neck and pulled me into the kitchen. I felt weak• and couldn't stand up. Heathcliff told Zillah to find me a bed for the night.

## LOCKWOOD

Imagine you are Lockwood. How do you feel?



Tell a partner.

- **bleed:** when blood flows from a cut on the body
- **housekeeper:** woman whose job is to clean and cook
- **lantern:** light (see picture)
- **weak:** opposite of strong

# AFTER READING VOCABULARY

1  Complete the word formation table below. Make sentences with a partner.

ADJECTIVE	NOUN
EMPTY	Emptiness
WEAK	.....
.....	YOUTH
TENSE	.....
.....	ISOLATION
MUDDY	.....
.....	VENGEANCE
FOND	.....
.....	SCORN
GRATEFUL	.....
.....	MADNESS

2 Complete the sentences with five of the words used in Exercise 1.

- a Wuthering Heights is a story about love and .....
- b 'I remembered old Mr Earnshaw's..... for Heathcliff.'
- c 'At first I thought that Heathcliff wasn't a ..... boy. But I was wrong.'
- d Heathcliff didn't show any signs of affection or ..... for old Mr Earnshaw.
- e 'How did you manage to live in this house and not become ..... ?'

## **P** B1 Preliminary English Test Reading Part 5

**1** Read the sentences from the book and choose the best word (A, B, C, or D) for each space.

- 1 'Things have changed since then!' – 'I suppose they ..... ?'  
A did                      B changed      C haven't      D have
- 2 They were punished for it but ..... didn't matter.  
A they                      B it                      C what                      D then
- 3 He offered to take me across the moor. I'm glad he..... because it was impossible to see the road.  
A did                      B took                      C had                      D has
- 4 'Although I was very sleepy, I read a few ..... pages.'  
A more                      B those                      C many                      D of
- 5 'I wanted to be alone. I didn't want to ..... to talk to anyone.'  
A try                      B must                      C obey                      D have
- 6 'Hindley and I ..... the same age.'  
A had                      B were                      C born                      D lived
- 7 'Bored with my ..... company, I asked Mrs Dean to tell me the end of my landlord's story.  
A self                      B same                      C own                      D like
- 8 'Isabella went because she wanted ..... . Don't mention her name to me again.'  
A it                      B me                      C to                      D so
- 9 'Make sure Cathy stays inside the park. She ..... go outside the gates.'  
A must                      B may                      C couldn't                      D mustn't