







YEAR 8 AUTUMN TERM KNOWLEDGE ORGANISER: THE MONSTER IN THE MIRROR THE YELLOW WALLPAPER BY CHARLOTTE PERKINS-GILMAN






Plot Overview: Set in 1890's New England, Charlotte Perkins Gilman's classic short story, "The Yellow Wallpaper" tells the story of a young woman's gradual descent into psychosis.

Key Characters

Plot Summary	
Beginning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The unnamed narrator begins her journal entry describing at the house and grounds her husband has taken her to for the summer due to her nervous depression. The narrator writes that John, the narrator's husband and doctor, mocks her illness and her perspective. John has prescribed the 'rest cure' treatment. The narrator reveals that she disagrees, and feels that activity, freedom and interesting work would help her condition. She begins her secret journal for this reason. The narrator notes how the house used to be beautiful but has been neglected for years due to its emptiness. At the very top floor of the house, the narrator finds what she assumes is a nursery with yellow wallpaper. The strange pattern disturbs the narrator.
Middle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As the weeks pass, the narrator manages to hide her journal from her husband. The narrator writes about her frustration with John's treatment choice- the rest cure. She takes a new interest in the yellow wallpaper. John worries about her strange obsession and refuses to re-paper the room. The narrator describes her bedroom and assumes it was used as a nursery due to the paper being torn off in spots, the huge scratches on the floor and the furniture being fixed to the wall. John's sister Jennie, who is also staying with them as a housekeeper and nurse, keeps interrupting the narrator's writing. The Fourth of July passes, and the narrator writes that her family came to visit which made her very tired. John threatens to send her to Weir Mitchell, the fearsome real-life doctor who treated the author and caused her great suffering. The narrator reveals in her journal that she is alone most of the time and often studies the wallpaper as she finds it entertaining. The narrator shares that she starts to see a woman 'stooping down and creeping' behind the pattern on the wallpaper which, at nighttime, looks like the bars of a cage. John thinks his wife's condition is improving, but the narrator is barely sleeping and believes she can smell the wallpaper over the house. The narrator reaches the conclusion that there is a woman trapped in the wallpaper at night, and escapes during the day.
End	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Suspecting that John and Jennie know of her obsession, the narrator decides to destroy the wallpaper by peeling it off during the night. The next day, the narrator goes mad, biting and tearing the paper in order to free the trapped woman. The narrator is hopelessly insane and is convinced that there are many women creeping in the wallpaper and so grabs a chair and a rope to reach more of the paper. The narrator starts to think she has also come out of the wallpaper. John breaks into the locked room and sees her insanity. John faints in the doorway. The narrator 'creeps over him.'

	<p>The Narrator (Jane) Protagonist / narrator / young married woman / a new mother / upper-middle class / suffers with postnatal depression / manipulated / highly imaginative / obsessive.</p>	<p>Doctor John Husband / doctor / practical and logical / attempts to control his wife / dominant / believes in the rest-cure.</p>	
	<p>Jennie John's sister / housekeeper / traditional / content with performing a domestic role / suspects the narrator is more troubled than she lets on.</p>	<p>The Woman in the Wallpaper A figment of the narrator's imagination / trapped / desperate / prisoner of the wallpaper.</p>	
	<p>Mary Nurse who looks after the narrator's baby / embraces her domestic role / subservient.</p>	<p>Weir Mitchell Real-life doctor / created the rest-cure / cruel / lack of empathy for women / treated the author in real life.</p>	

Key Symbols

Wallpaper 	Journal 	Light/dark 
The Woman 	The Bedroom 	

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Big Ideas

Patriarchy

A system of society or government in which men hold the power and women are Excluded from it.



Manipulation

To influence or control another, usually in an unfair or cruel way.



Deceit

The act of convincing one or many people of untrue information by concealing or misrepresenting the facts.



Perception

The way in which something is regarded, understood, or interpreted.



Trauma

When we experience stressful, frightening or distressing events that are difficult to cope with or out of our control.



Context – *The Yellow Wallpaper* written by Charlotte Perkins-Gilman is a semi-autobiographical short story and was published in 1892.



Charlotte Perkins-Gilman: author /born in 1860 in Connecticut, USA/ lived in poverty after her father abandoned her family/ moved all over America during her childhood and teenage years/ wasn't allowed to make friends or read books to keep her 'domesticated' for her future husband/ suffered with her mental health after the birth of her daughter.

Hysteria: the medical term for what we now understand to be mild depression or anxiety. Some symptoms included: anxiety, shortness of breath, fainting, nervousness, insomnia, fluid retention, irritability and loss of appetite. This condition was associated with female patients. The Hysteria Theory was invented by Sigmund Freud, the famous Austrian psychoanalyst.



Silas Weir Mitchell: An American doctor, scientist, novelist and poet. Pioneered the rest-cure to treat women suffering from 'melancholia' or modernly known as post-natal depression. Weir Mitchell treated Charlotte Perkins-Gilman using the rest cure, which she used as her inspiration for *The Yellow Wallpaper*.

Melancholia: an illness that caused delusions and hallucinations which often led to the patient being diagnosed with psychosis (insanity) Today, we could refer to this illness as chronic depression or other forms of mental health conditions such as bipolar disorder or schizophrenia.







The Rest Cure: A form of treatment developed by Weir Mitchell in the 1800's for 'melancholia' also known as 'hysteria.' It was a strictly enforced regime of six to eight weeks of bed rest and isolation, without any creative or intellectual activity. Most patients considered the 'cure' to be worse than their original illness.


19th Century Attitudes Towards Mental Health: Mental health conditions weren't recognised in medicine during the 1800s therefore people didn't understand the symptoms of common mental health conditions such as a depression and anxiety. This caused fear and panic to spread amongst society, which led to cruel treatments such as the rest cure to be carried out on mainly female patients behind closed doors.




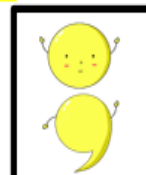
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TECHNICAL ACCURACY & KEY DEVICES







‘FOUR FOR MORE’-THE 4-PART SUCCESS STORY	
Part	Key Features
SETTING 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduce your story by focusing on the setting Describe the weather / environment / surroundings / objects DEVICES: Personification / pathetic fallacy / symbolism / prepositions
CHARACTER 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe your character(s) within your setting One or two characters – keep it minimal Craft their actions / behaviour to reflect their personality and emotions DEVICES: Sensory language / similes / metaphors / minimal dialogue
FLASHBACK 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Include a flashback to teach the reader something about your character and / or their world Begin this section with a trigger This memory should contrast your character’s current situation DEVICES: Sensory language / juxtaposition / light imagery / similes / metaphors / symbolism
RETURN TO THE SCENE 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Begin this section with a trigger that forces your character back to their current world Offer a glimpse of change / a subtle change to end your story Return to something that you described in your opening paragraph to create a cyclical structure DEVICES: Sensory language / personification / pathetic fallacy / symbolism / cyclical structure

Device / Feature/ Skill	
Metaphor <i>Describing something by stating it is something else</i> 	Anthropomorphism Giving human characteristics or behaviour to a god, animal, or object. 
Juxtaposition <i>Contrasting ideas / images</i> 	Personification Giving living qualities to something non-human 
Show Not Tell <i>Describing a character through their actions and facial expressions</i> 	Sensory language Five senses 
Temporal Reference <i>Using a time reference to indicate a flashback</i> 	Simile <i>Comparing something to something else: 'as', 'like'</i> 

Tenses
PAST Something that has already happened Had / went / said / walked
PRESENT Something that is currently happening Have / go / say / walk
FUTURE Something that will happen Will have / will go / will say / will walk

Punctuation	
Apostrophes To show that letters are missing in a word To show possession 	Semi-colons -To help join closely connected ideas in a sentence. 

Common Homophones
The  There  They're
Your  You're 
Its  It's 

Word Classes					
Adjective Describes a noun or pronoun. Blue / young / powerful 	Adverb How, when or where something happens. Furiously / yesterday / here 	Preposition Where something is; the time, direction or cause of something. On / under / above 	Pronoun Words that replace nouns or noun phrases. She / he / they 	Noun Person, place, thing, idea or state of being. Manchester / cat / love 	Verb An action or state of being. Jump / write / be 

Which  Witch 
