

UNIT

7

Romanticism and Realism

Terrace at Sainte-Adresse, Claude Monet, The Metropolitan Museum of Art



(1800–1890)



*“Would you realize
what Revolution is,
call it Progress;
and would you realize
what Progress is,
call it Tomorrow.”*

— Victor Hugo

Timeline 1800–1890

1800

1820

1840

European Events

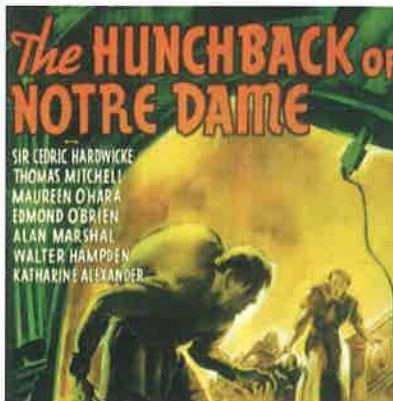


- **1800** Wordsworth and Coleridge publish *Lyrical Ballads*, 2nd edition.
- **1804** Napoleon declares himself emperor. ◀
- **1804** Beethoven completes *Symphony*

No. 3, the first Romantic symphony.

- **1808** Goethe publishes Part I of *Faust*.
- **1812** Napoleon invades Russia.

- **1825** In Russia, the forces of the czar crush an uprising by army officers.
- **1827** Heinrich Heine publishes *The Book of Songs*.
- **1829** In England, George Stephenson creates a better steam locomotive.
- **1831** Victor Hugo publishes his novel *Notre-Dame de Paris*. ▼



- **1848** Insurrections break out across Europe; the Second French Republic is declared.
- **1849** Gustave Courbet paints *The Stone Breakers*, a Realist work. ▼



- **1852** Second French Republic ends; the Second Empire begins.
- **1856** In England, Robert Bessemer develops process for mass-producing steel.
- **1857** Flaubert publishes *Madame Bovary*, a masterpiece of Realist fiction.

World Events

- **1803 (United States)** The Louisiana Purchase doubles the size of the country. ▼



- **1808 (Sierra Leone)** Britain acquires Sierra Leone as a colony; goes on to acquire Gambia (1816) and Gold Coast (1874).

- **1818 (India)** British control most of India.

- **1820–1821 (Egypt)** Muhammad Ali, ruler of Egypt, begins creating an African empire.
- **1825 (United States)** Erie Canal opens.
- **1825 (United States)** An organized baseball club exists in upstate New York.
- **1828 (Japan)** Poet Kobayashi Issa dies.



- **1842 (China)** China loses to Western powers in the Opium War.
- **1842 (United States)** Dr. Crawford Long begins using ether as an anesthetic.
- **1853–1854 (Japan)** Commander Matthew Perry forces Japan to trade with the West. ◀

European and World Events

1860

1880

1900

- **1861** In Russia, the serfs are freed.
- **1861** A united Italy is established.
- **1864** Fyodor Dostoyevsky publishes *Notes from the Underground*.
- **1867** Karl Marx publishes the first volume of *Das Kapital*, a criticism of capitalism.
- **1869** Leo Tolstoy completes his novel *War and Peace*.
- **1870** The Franco-Prussian War begins.
- **1871** The Franco-Prussian War ends with France's defeat; the Third French Republic is established.
- **1871** The German empire begins.
- **1873** Arthur Rimbaud stops writing poetry, at the age of 19.



- **1880s** Swedish chemist Alfred Nobel builds dynamite factories.
- **1881** In Russia, Czar Alexander II is assassinated.
- **1885** Émile Zola publishes the novel *Germinal*, which depicts life in a mining town. ◀
- **1896** Alfred Nobel's will endows the Nobel Prizes.

- **1861 (United States)** The American Civil War begins.



- **1864 (China)** A destructive civil war ends.
- **1865 (United States)** The Civil War ends; President Lincoln is assassinated.
- **1869 (Egypt)** Suez Canal opens.
- **1876 (United States)** Alexander Graham Bell invents the telephone. ◀

- **1883 (Tunisia)** France gains control over Tunisia. ▶
- **c. 1884 (United States)** Hiram Stevens Maxim uses smokeless powder in a new type of machine gun.
- **1886 (United States)** John Pemberton invents Coca-Cola.
- **1890 (United States)** In the West, fenced pasture has largely replaced range land.
- **1898 (Palestine)** Theodor Herzl visits Palestine to look into setting up a Jewish state.



Romanticism and Realism

(1800–1890)

Historical Background

Throughout Europe, the nineteenth century was marked by political and industrial revolutions, progress, and hope for the future. Yet it was also an era characterized by unfulfilled expectations and by the emergence of new problems.

The Seeds of Revolution Inspired by the ideas of political and social philosophers such as John Locke (1632–1704) and Jean-Jacques Rousseau (zhān zhāk' rōō sō') (1712–1778), the American colonists revolted against British rule and declared their independence in 1776. The success of the American Revolution helped stir up political unrest throughout Europe, especially in France. There, revolutionary activities that had begun in 1787 reached their first high point in 1789 when a Paris mob attacked and destroyed the prison known as the Bastille. In the years that followed, the monarchy was abolished, and France was declared a republic. On January 21, 1793, the leaders of the newly established French republican government

Point/Counterpoint

Do people have a right to revolt against their rulers?

Stirred by the French Revolution (1787–1799), two important thinkers of the time expressed opposing views on this question.

No! Men have a right . . . to justice. . . . They have a right to the fruits of their industry; . . . They have a right to the acquisitions of their parents; to the nourishment and improvement of their offspring; to instruction in life, and to consolation in death. . . . [A]nd as to the share of power, authority, and direction which each individual ought to have in the management of the state, that I must deny to be amongst the direct original rights of man in civil society. . . .

—from *Reflections on the Revolution in France*
by Edmund Burke

Yes! There never did, there never will, and there never can exist a parliament, or any description of men, or any generation of men, in any country, possessed of the right or the power of binding and controlling posterity to the “end of time,” or of commanding for ever how the world shall be governed, or who shall govern it; and therefore, all such clauses, . . . are . . . null and void. . . . Man has no property in man. . . .

—from *Rights of Man: Being an Answer to Mr. Burke's Attack on the French Revolution*
by Thomas Paine

The Empire of Napoleon



executed the king. Then, from September 5, 1793, to July 27, 1794, there was a period in France known as the Reign of Terror, during which the revolutionary government executed 17,000 people.

Napoleon In 1799, a successful and popular young general, Napoleon Bonaparte (*nə pō lē əŋ bō nə pärt*), assumed political power in France. Five years later, he made himself emperor. Although in many respects Napoleon ruled as a military dictator, he did accomplish many domestic reforms. In addition, he aroused a strong sense of nationalism among the French people.

Europe at War Between 1792 and 1815, France was almost constantly at war with other nations. At first, France defended itself against monarchies that were frightened by the Revolution and hoped to destroy it. Later, as Napoleon came to power, France embarked on a series of military conquests in which it seized control of nearly all of Europe as far east as the Russian border (see map above).

In 1812, however, Napoleon overextended himself by invading Russia. There, his army suffered a disastrous defeat. Napoleon's final defeat came in 1815 at the Battle of Waterloo, when his forces were overpowered by an allied army led by Great Britain.

Although Napoleon dominated Europe for only a brief period, his conquests had lasting effects. His armies spread many of the achievements of the French Revolution throughout Europe.

Critical Viewing
In 1810, which countries or territories were part of the French empire, dependent on it, or ruled by members of Napoleon's family? Explain. [Read a Map]

While such reforms were welcomed by many, public opinion turned against Napoleon when his occupying forces began assessing high taxes and conscripting local men into his armies.

Revolutions and Reactions Following the collapse of Napoleon's empire, a large group of national delegates gathered in Vienna to reestablish the traditions that had existed before the French Revolution. Although they were able to restore royal authority throughout Europe, they were unable to erase the desire for political and social justice. As a result, the rest of the century was marked by an ongoing conflict between traditional political beliefs and democratic ideals.

Nowhere was this conflict more apparent than in France. In the aftermath of Napoleon's downfall, royal rule had been reestablished. In 1830, however, when the king took measures to restrict the people's freedom, the people revolted and forced him out of power. Although this revolt brought about a number of important reforms, it did not bring an end to the monarchy. The new king, however, was a member of the upper middle class rather than the aristocracy. When another revolution occurred in 1848, however, a second French republic was established. Yet the Second Republic lasted only four years, and it was not until 1871 that the Third French Republic was born.

The French uprising of 1848 was one of several armed rebellions breaking out in Europe that year. Others took place in Italy, Austria, and Germany, but unlike the rebellion in France, they did not lead to the abolition of absolute monarchy. Meanwhile, in Denmark, Belgium, and the Netherlands, the spirit of the age manifested itself in reform rather than armed revolt.

The Unification of Germany Also in 1848, a movement arose among the German people that was aimed at unifying the many German states into a single nation controlled by a democratic government. Like the revolts in the other European nations, this movement was thwarted. In 1871, however, after Prussia defeated France in the Franco-Prussian War, the Prussian prime minister, Otto von Bismarck (biz' mār'k'), did succeed in unifying the German states. While the newly established German empire was a source of pride for nationalists, it was a major disappointment for reformers.

Similarly, Russian reformers had little success in bringing about political and social changes. Russia remained a repressive, autocratic state throughout the nineteenth century.

The Industrial Revolution Like the French Revolution, the Industrial Revolution took shape in the 1700s. In the British textile industry, inventors produced new machines that reduced the time needed to spin and weave cloth. The new machines led to the growth of the factory system, which brought workers and machinery together in one place to manufacture goods.

▼ **Critical Viewing**

Does this portrait of Bismarck offer any evidence that his government was authoritarian and militaristic? Why or why not? [Interpret]



Prince Otto von Bismarck in uniform with Prussian helmet, Franz von Lenbach

Industry got a further boost with the invention of the steam engine. By the 1850s, steam was the main source of power, not only in factories but also in new means of transportation such as the railroad and the steamship.

By the end of the century, the Industrial Revolution had transformed Europe's entire way of life. Scientists and inventors had developed countless new products, including the first automobiles. Electricity became an important new source of power.

Industrial Hardships The Industrial Revolution brought many benefits. It created millions of new jobs and produced a variety of goods more cheaply than ever before. At the same time, the rise of industry brought new problems. Early industrial workers often faced great hardships. Pay was low, hours were long, and working conditions were often dangerous. As people moved from the countryside to the growing industrial cities, they crowded into unhealthy urban slums.

By the end of the century, reformers were at work to raise wages, outlaw child labor, and win better conditions in factories and slums. Gradually, the standard of living for workers and their families improved.

The Middle Class and Women's Rights Industry and the growth of cities sparked the rise of a new middle class. The values of this new class—values that influenced all of society—included duty, thrift, honesty, hard work, and, above all, respectability.

By the middle of the century, some reformers had begun to protest restrictions on women. Even in the most democratic nations, such as Britain, women could not vote. They were banned from most schools, and married women could not legally control their own property.

A Controversial New Idea In the mid-nineteenth century, the theories of British biologist Charles Darwin created a tremendous uproar that shook the entire Western world. According to Darwin, all forms of life evolve, or change, over a long period of time. Simpler forms of life evolve into more complex forms, and new forms evolve out of older ones. Some people attacked Darwin's theories, believing that they contradicted the Bible. Today, however, evolution is (according to the *Encyclopedia Britannica*) "one of the fundamental keystones of modern biological theory."



Gare Saint-Lazare, Claude Oscar Monet

Critical Viewing
Which details in this picture reveal the influence of the Industrial Revolution? Explain. [Infer]

Literature

Shaped by the major events and developments of the time, four major artistic movements dominated nineteenth-century literature: Romanticism, Realism, Naturalism, and Symbolism.

Romanticism: The French Revolution on a Page The first of these movements, Romanticism, rejected the objectivity, rationality, and harmony that many eighteenth-century writers admired in ancient Greek and Roman artists. Romantic writers, painters, and musicians responded not to an idealized image of ancient civilization but to the real unrest of their own times: the fervor of political revolution and the squalor of the Industrial Revolution. Rebelling against Neoclassical values, they prized subjectivity, the imagination, and the wildness associated with untamed nature.

Although there were many differences in the concerns and approaches of the various writers associated with this movement, they generally shared a desire to discard the dominant forms and approaches of the eighteenth century and to forge a new type of literature. In this sense, Romanticism might be called the French Revolution carried over to the literary page. The English poet William Wordsworth, a pioneer of literary Romanticism, was at first inspired by the French Revolution and its emphasis on the worth of the ordinary person. Later, when he became disillusioned with the violence in France, he began plotting the literary revolution known as Romanticism. He would uphold the dignity of ordinary people by writing about them with imagination and respect.

In his preface to *Lyrical Ballads* (1798), a collection of poetry he co-authored with his friend Samuel Taylor Coleridge, Wordsworth outlined the dominant principles of Romanticism. He stressed the need to employ “language really used by men” in describing “situations from common life,” emphasized the role of nature as a source of inspiration, and asserted that poetry should be a “spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings.” These principles contrasted with the practice of eighteenth-century Neoclassical writers, who used witty language to portray upper-class people in social rather than natural settings.

The Lure of the Exotic and the Supernatural Among the other important characteristics of the Romantics were their fascination with folklife in general and the folklore of the Middle Ages specifically, their attraction to exotic cultures and the supernatural, their sense of optimism, their emphasis on individualism, their refusal to accept human limitations, and their desire for social change. Again, most of these characteristics contrast with those of Neoclassical writers.

▼ **Critical Viewing**
Which details in this painting suggest that it is a Romantic work? Explain.
[Connect]



The Wanderer Over the Sea of Clouds, 1818, Caspar David Friedrich, Kunsthalle, Hamburg

Music in the Historical Context

Beethoven Writes the First Romantic Symphony

It is 1802 and the virtuoso pianist and promising composer Ludwig von Beethoven (lōōt' viH vān bā' tō' vən) can no longer deny that he is growing deaf. He retreats to a country village to write a confession of his deepest fears: "... reflect now that for six years I have been in a hopeless case, made worse by ignorant doctors, yearly betrayed in the hope of getting better, finally forced to face the prospect of a permanent malady. . . ." He will soon have to end his career as a pianist, focusing more and more on composing.

It is 1802 and Napoleon, commanding the armies of the French Revolution, has recently defeated the Austrians and forced a peace treaty with the British. At home, a grateful populace votes him consul, or ruler, for life.

Soon, Beethoven begins working on his Symphony No. 3, which will inaugurate a musical revolution. It will be the first Romantic symphony, an expression of thought and feeling on a more ambitious scale than can be found in symphonies of the previous century. Unlike these classical works, it will have an audience wider than a small circle of aristocrats. Beethoven labors on this composition in his sketchbooks, leaving empty spaces where he will fill in melodies later. Heroic in defiance of his "malady," the composer will dedicate his work to the hero who is bringing freedom to all of Europe: Napoleon.

It is 1804 and Napoleon's agents have just discovered an assassination plot against him. An influential adviser whispers that by making himself emperor, Napoleon will discourage future conspiracies. The consul agrees. The empire begins.

It is 1804 and Symphony No. 3 is complete. When he learns that Napoleon has declared himself emperor, Beethoven angrily strikes the leader's name from the dedication. This will be the *Eroica* ("Heroic") Symphony, dedicated not to a great man but, in disillusionment and defiance, to "the memory of a great man."



Ludwig van Beethoven, Joseph Karl Stieler, 1820, Beethoven-Haus, Bonn

▲ Critical Viewing

Which details in this portrait of Beethoven suggest aspects of the new Romantic music—for example, the powerful expression of emotion and the heroic stature of the composer? Explain.

[Interpret]

In addition to Wordsworth and Coleridge, the Romantic movement included the German poet and dramatist Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (yō' hān vōlf gāŋ fōn gō' tē), the Russian poet Alexander Pushkin, the German poet Heinrich Heine (hīn' rīH hī' nē), and the French author Victor Hugo (hyōō' gō).

Realism: The Discovery of Contemporary Life During the middle of the nineteenth century in France, a new literary movement known as Realism emerged, partly as a reaction against Romanticism and partly as a result of the industrial and scientific developments that were transforming society. Just as the Romantics had focused on humble people ignored by the Neoclassicists, Realists sought to portray previously ignored figures in contemporary life, such as middle- and working-class city dwellers.

The French writer Honoré de Balzac (ô nô rā' dae bál zák') (1799–1850) anticipated Realism in scores of novels that give a vast and detailed picture of nineteenth-century French society, from criminals and lowlifes to upper-class women. Balzac's compatriot Gustave Flaubert (güs táv' flō ber') (1821–1880) wrote the classic Realist novel, *Madame Bovary*, which dissects the life of an unhappy middle-class woman. Other Realists were the English novelist Charles Dickens (1812–1870) and the Russian novelists Feodor Dostoyevsky (fyō' dôr dôs' tô yer' skē) (see below) and Leo Tolstoy. In the latter part of the century, Henrik Ibsen wrote the first realistic prose dramas.

Naturalism and Greek Tragedy Realism eventually gave birth to the literary movement known as Naturalism. One of the leaders of this movement was the French writer Émile Zola (ā mē' zō' lā') (1840–1902). Like realists, Naturalists attempted to depict life accurately, but Naturalists were even more pessimistic than their forebears. They were reacting to the worst excesses of the Industrial Revolution and to misinterpretations of Darwinian theory that viewed society as a jungle in which only the fittest survived. As a result, they believed that the scientific laws governing heredity and society, like the Fates in ancient Greek mythology, determined the course of a person's life. Characters in naturalistic novels are therefore shaped

A Living Tradition

Feodor Dostoyevsky and Ralph Ellison

One nineteenth-century work with many literary descendants is *Notes from the Underground* (1864) by Russian author Feodor Dostoyevsky. In this novel, a nameless first-person narrator begins by announcing, "I am a sick man. . . . I am a spiteful man." This narrator is an angry stepchild of the Industrial Revolution, a nasty disbeliever in the progress of science and reason.

A literary descendant of this character is the narrator of Ralph Ellison's novel *Invisible Man*, written nearly 100 years after *Notes*. Ellison, who had been studying Dostoyevsky's work, created an African American protagonist who feels "invisible" in white society and therefore does not share that society's belief in progress:

I am an invisible man. No, I am not a spook like those who haunted Edgar Allan Poe; nor am I one of your Hollywood-movie ectoplasms. I am a man of substance, of flesh and bone, fiber and liquids—and I might even be said to possess a mind. I am invisible, understand, simply because people refuse to see me. Like the bodiless heads you see sometimes in circus sideshows, it is as though I have been surrounded by mirrors of hard, distorting glass. When they approach me they see only my surroundings, themselves, or figments of their imagination—indeed, everything and anything except me.

by forces they can neither understand nor control. In a sense, these novels are like Greek tragedies rendered in prose, with characters who live in slums, not palaces, and with scientific laws replacing the decrees of the gods.

The Symbolist Movement Throughout the nineteenth century, literary movements reacted to previous movements as well as to social conditions: Realism was a response to Romanticism, and Naturalism grew out of Realism. The Symbolist movement, proclaimed in an 1886 manifesto in France but based on the work of earlier writers, followed this same pattern. It rejected the fate-driven world of the Naturalist novel and the Realist drama. In a sense, it was a rebellion of poets against novelists and dramatists.

Led by Stéphane Mallarmé (stā fān' mā lār mǎ') (1842–1898), these poets were looking for an exit from the materialistic nineteenth century. Dismayed by the drabness of everyday life and the vulgar taste of the rising middle class, they searched for an otherworldly spiritual reality. Taking the earlier French poet Charles Baudelaire (shārl bōd lēr') as their guide, Symbolist poets sought to suggest this reality through musical phrasing and unusual figurative language.

In addition to Baudelaire, poets who anticipated this movement were Paul Verlaine (pōl ver lən') and Arthur Rimbaud (ār tür' ram bō'). Verlaine, famous for the musicality of his verse, expressed a Symbolist credo when he wrote in "The Art of Poetry," "Let there be music, again and forever!" Rimbaud, a visionary poet who believed he could create a new world and a new language in his verse, stopped writing poetry when he was still a teenager!

The Visual Arts: From Splendor to Strangeness Some of the same movements influencing literature affected the visual arts, as well. Romantic painters like Caspar David Friedrich (frē' driH) (page 762) depicted mysterious, lonely views of natural splendor. Then, as in literature, Realists rebelled against Romantics. Gustave Courbet (güs tāv' kōōr bē'), for example, painted such gritty subjects as laborers breaking stones (page 756). He declared, "I cannot paint an angel because I have never seen one." In their turn, Impressionists rebelled against Realists. Trying to capture fleeting impressions of shimmering light and color, they treated their paintings less like windows onto reality and more like colorful flat surfaces. Still later, Symbolists like Odilon Redon (ō dē lōn' rə dōn') painted such strange and unreal subjects as a drifting balloon in the form of a gigantic eyeball.



On the Bank of the Seine, Bennecourt, 1868, Claude Monet, The Art Institute of Chicago

▲ Critical Viewing

In what ways might this Impressionist painting by Monet differ from a photograph of the same scene?

Explain. [Compare and Contrast]



Prepare to Read

from Faust

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749–1832)

Because of the tremendous diversity of his talents and interests, Johann (yō hān') Wolfgang von Goethe (gō' tə) is best described as a true Renaissance man. He was not only a gifted writer but also a scientist, a painter, a statesman, a philosopher, and an educator.

The son of a wealthy lawyer, Goethe was born in the German town of Frankfurt am Main. After receiving a thorough education from private tutors, he was sent to the University of Leipzig to study law. More interested in the arts than in law, Goethe spent most of his free time writing poetry, studying art, and attending concerts. Nonetheless, he finished his legal studies in 1771.

A Developing Novelist Goethe practiced law for a brief period, during which he wrote *The Sorrows of Young Werther* (1774), an autobiographical novel inspired by an unhappy love affair and the suicide of one of his friends. One of the most important novels of the eighteenth century, *The Sorrows of Young Werther* earned Goethe international fame.

A year after the novel's publication, Goethe accepted an invitation to the court of the reigning duke of Weimar, Charles Augustus. Developing a close friendship with the duke, Goethe lived in Weimar for the rest of his life, and for ten years he served as the duke's chief minister. In 1786, he traveled to Italy in an effort to dedicate time and energy to his writing. He remained there for two years, writing, traveling, painting, and studying classical culture.

Shortly after returning to Weimar, Goethe fell in love with Christiane Vulpius, whom he later

married. He also became the director of the court theater and began devoting much of his energy to scientific studies. Through a close friendship with the noted German writer Friedrich von Schiller (1759–1805), Goethe gained valuable guidance and advice concerning his writing and assistance in revising a number of his important works.

A Legendary Figure Probably the most notable of these works was *Faust*. With Schiller's advice and direction, Goethe revised an early draft of the play, adding a prologue. Unfortunately, Schiller died three years before *Faust, Part I* (1808) was published.

The final and greatest achievement of Goethe's literary career was the completion of *Faust, Part II*. The poet's vision of the legendary Faust transformed the traditional character into a newer, more sympathetic one that has fascinated readers and scholars for centuries. Goethe had begun his work on *Part II* while still a young man; because he contributed to the piece throughout his life, *Faust, Part II* ultimately reflects the deep philosophy of life and wry wisdom of the poet's mature years. Goethe never knew of the success of *Faust, Part II*, as it was published late in 1832, a few months after his death.

Faust was by no means the only literary work that Goethe completed. Among his other notable works are his novels—*Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship* (1795), *Elective Affinities* (1809), and *Wilhelm Meister's Travels* (1821–1829)—and his autobiographical work *Poetry and Truth* (1811–1832). By the time of his death, Goethe had become a legendary figure throughout the Western world.



Preview

Connecting to the Literature

The Devil lurks in many forms in literature across time and cultures, often trying to convince victims to sell their souls in exchange for their heart's desire. Compare Faust's dilemma to the situation of other characters from books or movies who were tempted by the Devil.

Literary Analysis

Romanticism

Romanticism is a literary and artistic movement that is characterized by the following elements:

- The Romantics favored emotion over reason, intuition over intellect, the subjective over the objective.
- They celebrated creativity, individuality, and imagination.
- Their writings reflect nature, self-knowledge, folklore, and the mysterious and exotic.

Look for these characteristics of Romanticism in *Faust*.

Connecting Literary Elements

A **legend** is a traditional story, handed down through many generations. It usually deals with a hero, a saint, or a national leader. Often, legends reflect a people's cultural values. Notice how Goethe uses facts from the real Faust's life to develop his story.

Reading Strategy

Drawing Inferences

Drawing inferences means making educated guesses based on specific details the author provides.

- Read between the lines to look for any implied meaning.
- Explore passages for clues about characters, setting, plot, and mood.
- Examine significant word choices, patterns of events, and other clues to help you understand the writer's implied message.

Use an organizer like the one shown as you read.

Vocabulary Development

envoys (än' voiz') *n.* messengers (p. 769)

fervent (fər' vent) *adj.* intensely devoted or earnest (p. 770)

primal (pri' mäl) *adj.* original; fundamental (p. 771)

obstinate (äb' stə net) *adj.* determined to have one's way; stubborn (p. 775)

fetters (fet' ərz) *n.* shackles, chains (p. 780)

tenacity (tə nas' ə tē) *n.* persistence; stubbornness (p. 783)

insatiableness (in sã' shə bəl nēs) *n.* the quality of being impossible to fill (p. 784)

Passage

"I work as the cat does with the mouse."

What Can Be Inferred

Mephistopheles is sly, using man's weaknesses and catching man when he's unaware of his predicament.



from **Faust**

JOHANN WOLFGANG VON GOETHE
translated by Louis MacNeice

Background

Few historical figures have fueled the imagination of the Western world as much as the German scholar and traveling magician Georg Faust (or Faustus), who lived from about 1480 to 1540. According to legend, Faust sold his soul to the Devil in exchange for youth, knowledge, and magical powers. At the time of its origin, the Faust legend was widely thought to be true. In contrast, when Goethe's *Faust* was published, few people believed that the type of events it depicted could actually happen.

Many versions of the Faust legend portray Faust as a man with an unquenchable thirst for knowledge. In Faust's time, only the very wealthy could afford to dedicate their lives to learning. Faust's quest, though noble in theory, drives him into a contract with the Devil. Goethe's version transforms Faust into something of a Romantic hero, embodying the ideal of limitless spiritual aspirations.

Prologue in Heaven

*The LORD. The HEAVENLY HOSTS. MEPHISTOPHELES¹ following.
The THREE ARCHANGELS² step forward.*

- RAPHAEL:** The chanting sun, as ever, rivals
The chanting of his brother spheres
And marches round his destined circuit—
A march that thunders in our ears.
5 His aspect cheers the Hosts of Heaven
Though what his essence none can say;
These inconceivable creations

1. **Mephistopheles** (mef ə stăf ə lēz') the Devil.

2. **three archangels** the three chief angels—Raphael, Gabriel, and Michael.



Keep the high state of their first day.

- GABRIEL:** And swift, with inconceivable swiftness,
 10 The earth's full splendor rolls around,
 Celestial radiance alternating
 With a dread night too deep to sound;
 The sea against the rocks' deep bases
 Comes foaming up in far-flung force,
 15 And rock and sea go whirling onward
 In the swift spheres' eternal course.

- MICHAEL:** And storms in rivalry are raging
 From sea to land, from land to sea,
 In frenzy forge the world a girdle
 20 From which no inmost part is free.
 The blight of lightning flaming yonder
 Marks where the thunder-bolt will play;
 And yet Thine envoys, Lord, revere
 The gentle movement of Thy day.

- 25 **CHOIR OF ANGELS:** Thine aspect cheers the Hosts of Heaven
 Though what Thine essence none can say,
 And all Thy loftiest creations
 Keep the high state of their first day.

[Enter MEPHISTOPHELES.]

- MEPHISTOPHELES:** Since you, O Lord, once more approach and ask
 30 If business down with us be light or heavy—
 And in the past you've usually welcomed me—
 That's why you see me also at your levee.³

3. **levee** (lev' ē) *n.* morning reception held by a person of high rank.

Critical Viewing

Which of the archangels' words could describe the scene in this photograph? [Connect]

Literary Analysis

Romanticism Which words in Michael's dialogue are charged with emotional intensity?

envoys (än' voiz') *n.* messengers

Reading Check

According to Michael, what girdles, or imprisons, the earth?

Excuse me, I can't manage lofty words—
 Not though your whole court jeer and find me low;
 35 My pathos⁴ certainly would make you laugh
 Had you not left off laughing long ago.
 Your suns and worlds mean nothing much to me;
 How men torment themselves, that's all I see.
 The little god of the world, one can't reshape, reshade him;
 40 He is as strange to-day as that first day you made him.
 His life would be not so bad, not quite,
 Had you not granted him a gleam of Heaven's light;
 He calls it Reason, uses it not the least
 Except to be more beastly than any beast.
 45 He seems to me—if your Honor does not mind—
 Like a grasshopper—the long-legged kind—
 That's always in flight and leaps as it flies along
 And then in the grass strikes up its same old song.
 I could only wish he confined himself to the grass!
 50 He thrusts his nose into every filth, alas.

LORD: Mephistopheles, have you no other news?
 Do you always come here to accuse?
 Is nothing ever right in your eyes on earth?

MEPHISTOPHELES: No, Lord! I find things there as downright bad
 as ever.
 55 I am sorry for men's days of dread and dearth;
 Poor things, *my* wish to plague 'em isn't fervent.

LORD: Do you know Faust?

MEPHISTOPHELES: The Doctor?⁵

LORD: Aye, my servant.

MEPHISTOPHELES: Indeed! He serves you oddly enough, I think.
 The fool has no earthly habits in meat and drink.
 60 The ferment in him drives him wide and far,
 That he is mad he too has almost guessed;
 He demands of heaven each fairest star
 And of earth each highest joy and best,
 And all that is new and all that is far
 65 Can bring no calm to the deep-sea swell of his breast.

LORD: Now he may serve me only gropingly,
 Soon I shall lead him into the light.
 The gardener knows when the sapling first turns green
 That flowers and fruit will make the future bright.

4. **pathos** (pă' thās) *n.* suffering.
 5. **Doctor** Doctor of Philosophy.

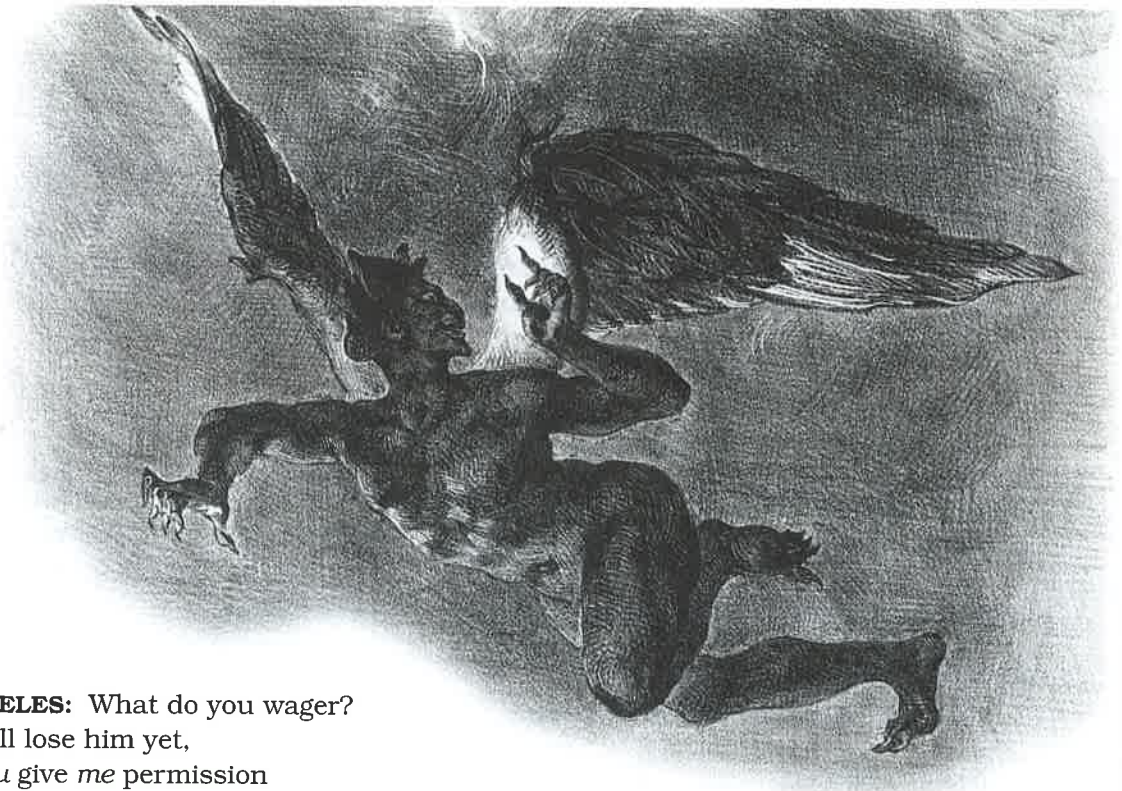
Reading Strategy Drawing Inferences

What does Mephistopheles imply that Faust is unable to accomplish with his ability to reason?

fervent (fər' vent) *adj.*
 intensely devoted or earnest

Literary Analysis

Romanticism Explain how these lines reflect the Romantics' attitude toward the importance of the individual and the value of unbounded spiritual aspirations.



Mephistopheles, 1863, Eugène Delacroix, Giraudon

▲ Critical Viewing

What impression of Mephistopheles does the artist convey? [Explain]

primal (pri' mæl) *adj.* original; fundamental

✓ Reading Check

What wager has Mephistopheles made with the Lord?

70 **MEPHISTOPHELES:** What do you wager?
 You will lose him yet,
 Provided *you* give *me* permission
 To steer him gently the course I set.

LORD: So long as he walks the earth alive,
 So long you may try what enters your head;
 75 Men make mistakes as long as they strive.

MEPHISTOPHELES: I thank you for that; as regards the dead,
 The dead have never taken my fancy.
 I favor cheeks that are full and rosy-red;
 No corpse is welcome to my house;
 80 I work as the cat does with the mouse.

LORD: Very well; you have my full permission.
 Divert this soul from its primal source
 And carry it, if you can seize it,
 Down with you upon your course—
 85 And stand ashamed when you must needs admit:
 A good man with his groping intuitions
 Still knows the path that is true and fit.

MEPHISTOPHELES: All right—but it won't last for long.
 I'm not afraid my bet will turn out wrong.
 90 And, if my aim prove true and strong,
 Allow me to triumph wholeheartedly.
 Dust shall he eat—and greedily—
 Like my cousin the Snake⁶ renowned in tale and song.

6. **my cousin the Snake** In Genesis, the devil assumes the form of a serpent in order to tempt Eve to eat from the Tree of Knowledge.

- LORD:** That too you are free to give a trial;
95 I have never hated the likes of you.
Of all the spirits of denial
The joker is the last that I eschew.
Man finds relaxation too attractive—
Too fond too soon of unconditional rest;
100 Which is why I am pleased to give him a companion
Who lures and thrusts and must, as devil, be active.
But ye, true sons of Heaven, it is your duty
To take your joy in the living wealth of beauty.
The changing Essence which ever works and lives
105 Wall you around with love, serene, secure!
And that which floats in flickering appearance
Fix ye it firm in thoughts that must endure.

- CHOIR OF ANGELS:** Thine aspect cheers the Hosts of Heaven
Though what Thine essence none can say,
110 And all Thy loftiest creations
Keep the high state of their first day.

[Heaven closes.]

- MEPHISTOPHELES** [*alone*]: I like to see the Old One now and then
And try to keep relations on the level.
It's really decent of so great a person
115 To talk so humanely even to the Devil.

Reading Strategy Drawing Inferences

What can you infer about the purpose of the Devil from the Lord's words?

Review and Assess

Thinking About the Selection

1. **Respond:** What do you imagine will be the outcome of Mephistopheles's wager with the Lord? Explain your answer.
2. (a) **Recall:** How would you characterize Mephistopheles as he appears in "Prologue in Heaven"? (b) **Infer:** What is his attitude toward humanity?
3. (a) **Recall:** How does Mephistopheles describe Faust? (b) **Deduce:** Based on Mephistopheles's description, what type of person do you imagine Faust to be?
4. (a) **Recall:** What is the Lord's attitude toward Mephistopheles? (b) **Support:** How is this attitude conveyed?
5. **Take a Position:** Do you agree with the Lord's statement that "Men make mistakes as long as they strive" (line 75)? Explain.



from Faust

Background

In "Prologue in Heaven," Mephistopheles and the Lord disagree about Faust's true soul, and the Lord gives Mephistopheles permission to compete for Faust's soul. Only a great test will determine whether Faust recognizes the value of the life he currently lives or whether greed and irrationality will drive him to sell his soul to the Devil. Mephistopheles knows Faust's weakness—an unquenchable desire for knowledge—and seeks to use it as his means of luring Faust into a high-stakes bargain. Will Faust be tempted? Will Mephistopheles be forced to admit that Faust is like other good men who know "the path that is true and fit"? Look for the answers to these questions in "The First Part of the Tragedy."

from The First Part of the Tragedy

NIGHT

In a high-vaulted narrow Gothic¹ room FAUST, restless, in a chair at his desk.

FAUST: Here stand I, ach, Philosophy
Behind me and Law and Medicine too
And, to my cost, Theology—
All these I have sweated through and through
5 And now you see me a poor fool
As wise as when I entered school!
They call me Master, they call me Doctor,
Ten years now I have dragged my college
Along by the nose through zig and zag

1. **Gothic** (gäth' ik) *adj.* of a style of architecture characterized by the use of ribbed vaulting, flying buttresses, pointed arches, and steep, high roofs.

Reading Check

Why does Faust consider himself a "poor fool"?

- 10 Through up and down and round and round
And this is all that I have found—
The impossibility of knowledge!
It is this that burns away my heart;
Of course I am cleverer than the quacks,
15 Than master and doctor, than clerk and priest,
I suffer no scruple or doubt in the least,
I have no qualms about devil or burning,
Which is just why all joy is torn from me,
I cannot presume to make use of my learning,
20 I cannot presume I could open my mind
To proselytize² and improve mankind.

- Besides, I have neither goods nor gold,
Neither reputation nor rank in the world;
No dog would choose to continue so!
25 Which is why I have given myself to Magic
To see if the Spirit may grant me to know
Through its force and its voice full many a secret,
May spare the sour sweat that I used to pour out
In talking of what I know nothing about,
30 May grant me to learn what it is that girds
The world together in its inmost being,
That the seeing its whole germination, the seeing
Its workings, may end my traffic in words.

After summoning the Earth Spirit and finding it unwilling to assist him in his quest for knowledge, Faust lapses into a state of despair. He decides to end his life by drinking a cup of poison but abruptly changes his mind when he hears the tolling of church bells and the singing of choruses, celebrating the arrival of Easter. Setting out on a walk through the countryside with Wagner, his assistant, Faust is inspired by the beauty of spring and soothed by the peasants' expressions of admiration and affection for him. When he returns to his study, however, his sense of contentment quickly dissipates. Alerted by the growling of his dog, Faust becomes aware of another presence in the room. When Faust threatens to use magic to defend himself against the unseen intruder, Mephistopheles comes forward from behind the stove, disguised as a traveling scholar. Faust soon becomes aware of Mephistopheles's true identity, and he is intrigued by the possibility of establishing a contract with the devil. However, Faust falls asleep before the two can reach an agreement. In the following scene, Mephistopheles returns to the study to resume his discussion with Faust.

2. proselytize (präs' ə li tīz') v. to try to convert.

Literary Analysis

Romanticism and

Legends How does Faust's speech reflect what you know about the real Faust from the Background on page 768?

▼ Critical Viewing

Why might Faust sympathize with the man in this painting? [Hypothesize]



[The same room. Later.]

FAUST: Who's knocking? Come in! Now who wants to annoy me?

35 **MEPHISTOPHELES** [outside door]: It's I.

FAUST: Come in!

MEPHISTOPHELES [outside door]:
You must say "Come in" three times.

FAUST: Come in then!

MEPHISTOPHELES [entering]:
Thank you; you overjoy me.

We two, I hope, we shall be good friends;
40 To chase those megrims³ of yours away
I am here like a fine young squire to-day,
In a suit of scarlet trimmed with gold
And a little cape of stiff brocade,
With a cock's feather in my hat
45 And at my side a long sharp blade,
And the most succinct advice I can give
Is that you dress up just like me,
So that uninhibited and free
You may find out what it means to live.

50 **FAUST:** The pain of earth's constricted life, I fancy,
Will pierce me still, whatever my attire;
I am too old for mere amusement,
Too young to be without desire,
How can the world dispel my doubt?
55 You must do without, you must do without!
That is the everlasting song
Which rings in every ear, which rings,
And which to us our whole life long
Every hour hoarsely sings.
60 I wake in the morning only to feel appalled,
My eyes with bitter tears could run
To see the day which in its course
Will not fulfil a wish for me, not one;
The day which whittles away with obstinate carping
65 All pleasures—even those of anticipation,
Which makes a thousand grimaces to obstruct
My heart when it is stirring in creation.
And again, when night comes down, in anguish
I must stretch out upon my bed

Reading Strategy

Drawing Inferences Why has Mephistopheles changed his costume from that of a traveling scholar to "a suit of scarlet trimmed with gold"?

obstinate (äb' stə nət) *adj.*
determined to have one's way;
stubborn.

Reading Check

What torments Faust every day?

3. **megrims** (mē' grəmz) *n.* low spirits.

70 And again no rest is granted me,
 For wild dreams fill my mind with dread.
 The God who dwells within my bosom
 Can make my inmost soul react;
 The God who sways my every power
 75 Is powerless with external fact.
 And so existence weighs upon my breast
 And I long for death and life—life I detest.

MEPHISTOPHELES: Yet death is never a wholly welcome guest.

FAUST: O happy is he whom death in the dazzle of victory
 80 Crowns with the bloody laurel in the battling swirl!
 Or he whom after the mad and breakneck dance
 He comes upon in the arms of a girl!
 O to have sunk away, delighted, deleted,
 Before the Spirit of the Earth, before his might!

85 **MEPHISTOPHELES:** Yet I know someone who failed to drink
 A brown juice on a certain night.

FAUST: Your hobby is espionage—is it not?

MEPHISTOPHELES: Oh I'm not omniscient⁴—but I know a lot.

FAUST: Whereas that tumult in my soul
 90 Was stilled by sweet familiar chimes
 Which cozened the child that yet was in me
 With echoes of more happy times,
 I now curse all things that encompass
 The soul with lures and jugglery
 95 And bind it in this dungeon of grief
 With trickery and flattery.
 Cursed in advance be the high opinion
 That serves our spirit for a cloak!
 Cursed be the dazzle of appearance
 100 Which bows our senses to its yoke!
 Cursed be the lying dreams of glory,
 The illusion that our name survives!
 Cursed be the flattering things we own,
 Servants and ploughs, children and wives!
 105 Cursed be Mammon⁵ when with his treasures
 He makes us play the adventurous man
 Or when for our luxurious pleasures
 He duly spreads the soft divan!⁶

Literary Analysis

Romanticism In what way does this passage exhibit the Romantics' interest in emotion and the individual?

4. **omniscient** (äm nish' ent) *adj.* knowing all things.

5. **Mammon** (mam' ən) Generally, Mammon refers to riches regarded as an object of worship and greedy pursuit; here, the word is used to refer to the Devil, as an embodiment of greed.

6. **divan** (di van') *n.* large, low couch or sofa, usually without armrests or a back.



◀ Critical Viewing

How does the study portrayed here fit Faust's personality? [Connect]

110 A curse on the balsam of the grape!
A curse on the love that rides for a fall!
A curse on hope! A curse on faith!
And a curse on patience most of all!

[*The INVISIBLE SPIRITS sing again.*]

SPIRITS: Woe! Woe!

115 You have destroyed it,
The beautiful world;
By your violent hand
'Tis downward hurled!
A half-god has dashed it asunder!
From under
120 We bear off the rubble to nowhere
And ponder
Sadly the beauty departed.
Magnipotent
One among men,

Reading Strategy

Drawing Inferences

Which details help you determine whether these invisible spirits are on the side of good or evil?

✓ Reading Check

What has Faust destroyed?

125 Magnificent
 Build it again,
 Build it again in your breast!
 Let a new course of life
 Begin
 130 With vision abounding
 And new songs resounding
 To welcome it in!

MEPHISTOPHELES: These are the juniors
 Of my faction.
 Hear how precociously⁷ they counsel
 135 Pleasure and action.
 Out and away
 From your lonely day
 Which dries your senses and your juices
 Their melody seduces.

140 Stop playing with your grief which battens
 Like a vulture on your life, your mind!
 The worst of company would make you feel
 That you are a man among mankind.
 Not that it's really my proposition
 145 To shove you among the common men;
 Though I'm not one of the Upper Ten,
 If you would like a coalition
 With me for your career through life,
 I am quite ready to fit in,
 150 I'm yours before you can say knife.
 I am your comrade;
 If you so crave,
 I am your servant, I am your slave.

FAUST: And what have I to undertake in return?

155 **MEPHISTOPHELES:** Oh it's early days to discuss what that is.

FAUST: No, no, the devil is an egoist
 And ready to do nothing gratis
 Which is to benefit a stranger.
 Tell me your terms and don't prevaricate!⁸
 160 A servant like you in the house is a danger.

MEPHISTOPHELES: I will bind myself to your service in this world,
 To be at your beck and never rest nor slack;

Literary Analysis

Romanticism In what ways does Mephistopheles's speech reflect the Romantics' interest in emotions?

Reading Strategy

Drawing Inferences What does Faust mean when he refers to Mephistopheles as "a servant like you"?

7. **precociously** (pri kō' shəs lē) *adv.* exhibiting maturity to a point beyond that which is normal for the age.

8. **prevaricate** (pri var' i kāt) *v.* to tell an untruth.

When we meet again on the other side,
In the same coin you shall pay me back.

- 165 **FAUST:** The other side gives me little trouble;
First batter this present world to rubble,
Then the other may rise—if that's the plan.
This earth is where my springs of joy have started,
And this sun shines on me when broken-hearted;
170 If I can first from them be parted,
Then let happen what will and can!
I wish to hear no more about it—
Whether there too men hate and love
Or whether in those spheres too, in the future,
175 There is a Below or an Above.

MEPHISTOPHELES: With such an outlook you can
risk it.

Sign on the line! In these next days you will get
Ravishing samples of my arts;
I am giving you what never man saw yet.

- 180 **FAUST:** Poor devil, can *you* give anything ever?
Was a human spirit in its high endeavor
Even once understood by one of your breed?
Have you got food which fails to feed?
Or red gold which, never at rest,
185 Like mercury runs away through the hand?
A game at which one never wins?
A girl who, even when on my breast,
Pledges herself to my neighbor with her eyes?
The divine and lovely delight of honor
190 Which falls like a falling star and dies?
Show me the fruits which, before they are plucked,
decay
And the trees which day after day renew their green!

MEPHISTOPHELES: Such a commission doesn't
alarm me,

I have such treasures to purvey.

- 195 But, my good friend, the time draws on when we
Should be glad to feast at our ease on something good.

FAUST: If ever I stretch myself on a bed of ease,
Then I am finished! Is that understood?
If ever your flatteries can coax me
200 To be pleased with myself, if ever you cast
A spell of pleasure that can hoax me—
Then let *that* day be my last!
That's my wager!

Themes in World Literature



The Terrible Bargain

Over the years, the Faust legend has appeared in many variations and adaptations. Each retelling involves a person who trades his soul for experience, knowledge, or treasure. "The Devil and Tom Walker" by Washington Irving is just one of these variations. Set in colonial Massachusetts, the short story features the miser Tom Walker and his overbearing wife. Wishing for untold wealth, Tom makes a pact with the Devil, whom he encounters in a swampy forest. Like other fictional characters who sell their souls, he obtains his heart's desire in exchange.

Adaptations do not share the same ending—in some, such as "The Devil and Tom Walker," the protagonist is doomed; in others, such as "The Devil and Daniel Webster" by Stephen Vincent Benét, he is redeemed. Variations of the legend appear across genres and generations as well. In Oscar Wilde's novel *A Picture of Dorian Gray* (1891), Gray trades his soul for perpetual youth. In *Bedazzled*, a Hollywood film released in 2000, the terrible bargain is reinvented when a man trades his soul to the Devil—who appears in the form of a beautiful woman—in exchange for seven wishes. Look for variations of the Faust legend in art, movies, music, and, of course, literature.

Reading Check

What will Mephistopheles show Faust when he signs the agreement?

MEPHISTOPHELES: Done!

FAUST: Let's shake!

- 205 If ever I say to the passing moment
"Linger a while! Thou art so fair!"
Then you may cast me into fetters,
I will gladly perish then and there!
Then you may set the death-bell tolling,
210 Then from my service you are free,
The clock may stop, its hand may fall,
And that be the end of time for me!

MEPHISTOPHELES: Think what you're saying, we shall not forget it.

FAUST: And you are fully within your rights;

- 215 I have made no mad or outrageous claim.
If I stay as I am, I am a slave—
Whether yours or another's, it's all the same.

MEPHISTOPHELES: I shall this very day at the College Banquet⁹

- Enter your service with no more ado,
220 But just one point—As a life-and-death insurance
I must trouble you for a line or two.

FAUST: So you, you pedant, you too like things in writing?

- Have you never known a man? Or a man's word? Never?
Is it not enough that my word of mouth
225 Puts all my days in bond for ever?
Does not the world rage on in all its streams
And shall a promise hamper *me*?
Yet this illusion reigns within our hearts
And from it who would be gladly free?
230 Happy the man who can inwardly keep his word;
Whatever the cost, he will not be loath to pay!
But a parchment, duly inscribed and sealed,
Is a bogey¹⁰ from which all wince away.
The word dies on the tip of the pen
235 And wax and leather lord it then.
What do you, evil spirit, require?
Bronze, marble, parchment, paper?
Quill or chisel or pencil of slate?
You may choose whichever you desire.

- 240 **MEPHISTOPHELES:** How can you so exaggerate
With such a hectic rhetoric?

9. the College Banquet the *Doctorschmaus*, a dinner given by a successful candidate for a Ph.D. degree.

10. bogey (bō' gē) *n.* anything one especially, and often needlessly, fears.

fetters (fet' erz) *n.*
shackles, chains

Reading Strategy

Drawing Inferences

Why does Mephistopheles want the agreement recorded in writing?

Critical Viewing ►

How does this painting convey the powers of nature that Faust has experienced? [Analyze]

Any little snippet is quite good—
And you sign it with one little drop of blood.

FAUST: If that is enough and is some use,
245 One may as well pander to your fad.

MEPHISTOPHELES: Blood is a very special juice.

FAUST: Only do not fear that I shall break this contract.
What I promise is nothing more
Than what all my powers are striving for.
250 I have puffed myself up too much, it is only
Your sort that really fits my case.
The great Earth Spirit has despised me
And Nature shuts the door in my face.
The thread of thought is snapped asunder,
255 I have long loathed knowledge in all its fashions.
In the depths of sensuality

✓ **Reading Check**

Why does Mephistopheles want Faust to sign the agreement in blood?



Dunstanburgh Castle in a Thunderstorm, Thomas Girtin, Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, UK

Let us now quench our glowing passions!
 And at once make ready every wonder
 Of unpenetrated sorcery!
 260 Let us cast ourselves into the torrent of time,
 Into the whirl of eventfulness,
 Where disappointment and success,
 Pleasure and pain may chop and change
 As chop and change they will and can;
 265 It is restless action makes the man.

MEPHISTOPHELES: No limit is fixed for you, no bound;
 If you'd like to nibble at everything
 Or to seize upon something flying round—
 Well, may you have a run for your money!
 270 But seize your chance and don't be funny!

FAUST: I've told you, it is no question of happiness.
 The most painful joy, enamored hate, enlivening
 Disgust—I devote myself to all excess.
 My breast, now cured of its appetite for knowledge,
 275 From now is open to all and every smart,
 And what is allotted to the whole of mankind
 That will I sample in my inmost heart,
 Grasping the highest and lowest with my spirit,
 Piling men's weal and woe upon my neck,
 280 To extend myself to embrace all human selves
 And to founder in the end, like them, a wreck.

MEPHISTOPHELES: O believe *me*, who have been
 chewing
 These iron rations many a thousand year,
 No human being can digest
 285 This stuff, from the cradle to the bier¹¹
 This universe—believe a devil—
 Was made for no one but a god!
 He exists in eternal light
 But *us* he has brought into the darkness
 290 While *your* sole portion is day and night.

FAUST: I will all the same!

MEPHISTOPHELES: That's very nice.
 There's only one thing I find wrong;
 Time is short, art is long.
 You could do with a little artistic advice.
 295 Confederate with one of the poets
 And let him flog his imagination

11. **bier** (bir) *n.* coffin and its supporting platform.

Literary Analysis

Romanticism Identify two characteristics of Romanticism in lines 256–265.

▼ Critical Viewing

What arts and sciences represented in this still life would Faust find interesting? [Speculate]



Vanitas, Edwaert Collier, Johnny van Haeften Gallery, London, UK

To heap all virtues on your head,
 A head with such a reputation:
 Lion's bravery,
 300 Stag's velocity,
 Fire of Italy,
 Northern tenacity.
 Let *him* find out the secret art
 Of combining craft with a noble heart
 305 And of being in love like a young man,
 Hotly, but working to a plan.
 Such a person—I'd like to meet him;
 "Mr. Microcosm"¹² is how I'd greet him.

FAUST: What am I then if fate must bar
 310 My efforts to reach that crown of humanity
 After which all my senses strive?

MEPHISTOPHELES: You are in the end . . . what you are.
 You can put on full-bottomed wigs with a million locks,
 You can put on stilts instead of your stocks,
 315 You remain for ever what you are.

FAUST: I feel my endeavors have not been worth a pin
 When I raked together the treasures of the human mind,
 If at the end I but sit down to find
 No new force welling up within.
 320 I have not a hair's breadth more of height,
 I am no nearer the Infinite.

MEPHISTOPHELES: My very good sir, you look at things
 Just in the way that people do;
 We must be cleverer than that
 325 Or the joys of life will escape from you.
 Hell! You have surely hands and feet,
 Also a head and you-know-what;
 The pleasures I gather on the wing,
 Are they less mine? Of course they're not!
 330 Suppose I can afford six stallions,
 I can add that horse-power to my score
 And dash along and be a proper man
 As if my legs were twenty-four.
 So good-bye to thinking! On your toes!
 335 The world's before us. Quick! Here goes!
 I tell you, a chap who's intellectual
 Is like a beast on a blasted heath
 Driven in circles by a demon
 While a fine green meadow lies round beneath.

12. **Mr. Microcosm** man regarded as the epitome of the world.

tenacity (tə nas' ə tē) *n.* persistence; stubbornness

Reading Strategy

Drawing Inferences

What can you infer about Faust from line 312?

Literary Analysis

Romanticism and

Legends Do you think Faust hopes to become a legendary figure? Explain.

Reading Check

After all Faust's efforts to gain knowledge, what will he become in the end?

340 **FAUST:** How do we start?

MEPHISTOPHELES: We just say go—and skip.
But please get ready for this pleasure trip.

[Exit FAUST.]

Only look down on knowledge and reason,
The highest gifts that men can prize,
345 Only allow the spirit of lies
To confirm you in magic and illusion,
And then I have you body and soul.
Fate has given this man a spirit
Which is always pressing onward, beyond control,
350 And whose mad striving overleaps
All joys of the earth between pole and pole.
Him shall I drag through the wilds of life
And through the flats of meaninglessness,
I shall make him flounder and gape and stick
355 And to tease his insatiableness
Hang meat and drink in the air before his watering lips;
In vain he will pray to slake his inner thirst,
And even had he not sold himself to the devil
He would be equally accursed.

Reading Strategy Drawing Inferences

What does Mephistopheles mean by “meat and drink”?

insatiableness (in sā' shə bel nəs) *n.* the quality of being impossible to fill

Review and Assess

Thinking About the Selection

1. **Respond:** Which of Faust's feelings in the selection, if any, surprised you? Explain.
2. (a) **Recall:** What is Faust's state of mind in the opening scene?
(b) **Deduce:** What does Faust mean when he says that he has discovered “the impossibility of knowledge”?
3. (a) **Recall:** What are the terms of the agreement between Faust and Mephistopheles? (b) **Evaluate:** Which character has the better part of the bargain?
4. (a) **Recall:** What does Faust use to sign his agreement with Mephistopheles? (b) **Infer:** What can you infer about Faust's attitude regarding the afterlife from his willingness to sign the agreement?
5. **Hypothesize:** Would Faust be a more satisfied person if he were living in today's world? Explain.

Integrate Language Skills

Vocabulary Development Lesson

Related Words: *prime*

The word *prime*, from a Latin root meaning “first,” is the basis for many related words.

From the following list, choose the related word that best completes each sentence below. Use a dictionary to check your responses.

a. primal b. primitive c. primary d. primeval

1. She is held back by the ____ nature of the technology she uses.
2. One of our ____ instincts is the need to protect our young.
3. He lives on one hundred acres of ____ forest, untouched by an ax.
4. The doctor's ____ concern is for the health of his patients.

Concept Development: Synonyms

Match each vocabulary word on the left to the word on the right that has a similar meaning.

- | | |
|-------------------|----------------|
| 1. envoys | a. shackles |
| 2. fervent | b. basic |
| 3. primal | c. greediness |
| 4. obstinate | d. eager |
| 5. fetters | e. messengers |
| 6. tenacity | f. stubborn |
| 7. insatiableness | g. persistence |

Spelling Strategy

In English, the suffix *-ity*, as used in the word *laity*, is more common than the suffix *-ety*. For each of the following words, write its noun form ending in *-ity*.

1. tenacious
2. scarce
3. possible

Grammar and Style Lesson

Usage: *who* and *whom*

The words *who* and *whom* are often used incorrectly. *Who*, like *he* or *she*, is used as a subject or subject complement. *Whom*, like *him* or *her*, is used as a direct object or as an object of a preposition. Study these examples:

“The God who dwells within my bosom . . .”

“Happy is he whom death . . . Crowns with the bloody laurel . . .”

Practice Copy each item below, adding *who* or *whom* as needed. Then, identify the word's function in the phrase or sentence.

1. “Now ____ wants to annoy me?”

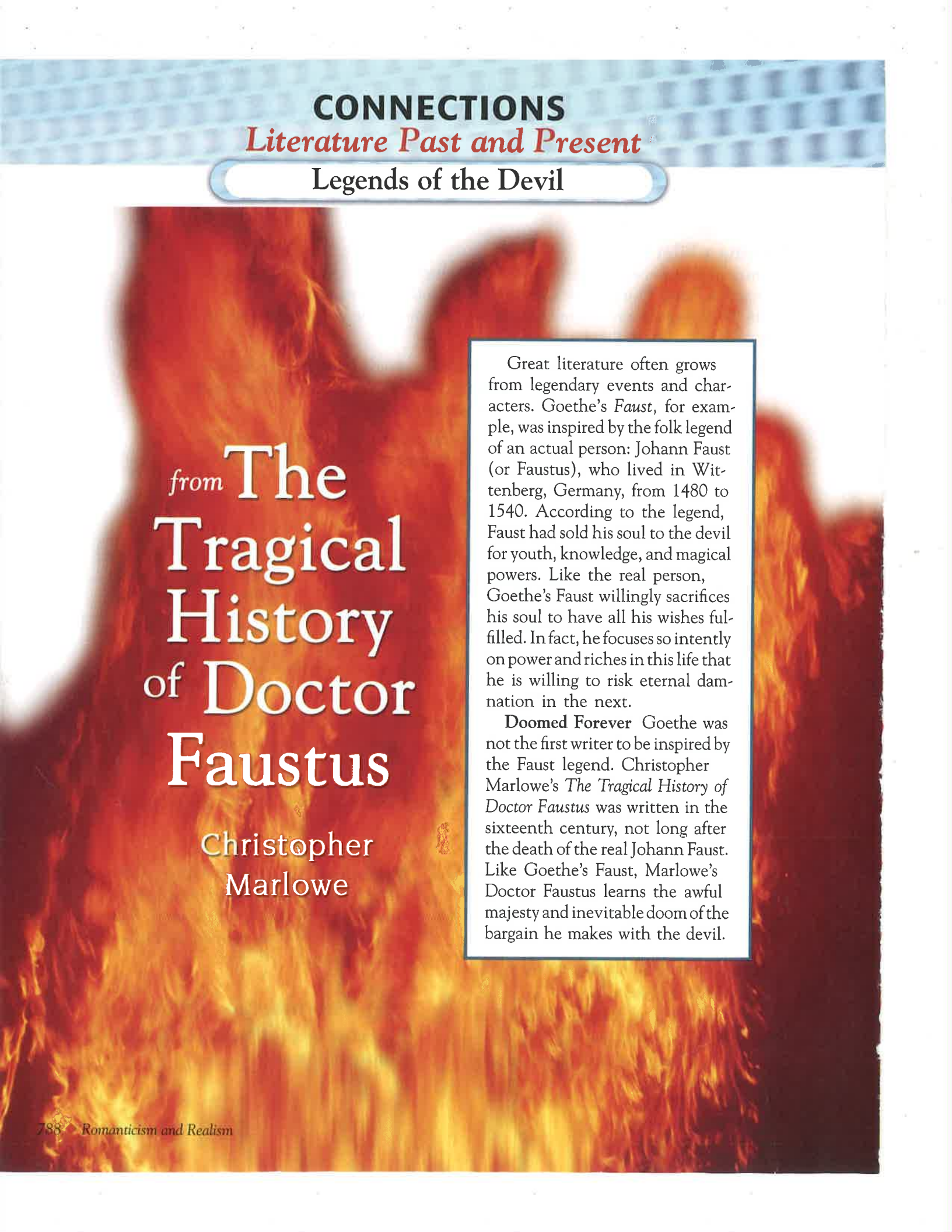
2. “The God ____ sways my every power / Is powerless with external fact.”
3. “O happy is he . . . ____ after the mad and breakneck dance / He comes upon . . .”
4. “Yet I know someone ____ failed to drink / A brown juice on a certain night.”
5. It is the Devil ____ Faust meets in the study.

Writing Application Write a paragraph in which you predict how this play might end. Include two sentences in which you use *who* and *whom* correctly.

CONNECTIONS

Literature Past and Present

Legends of the Devil



from The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus

Christopher
Marlowe

Great literature often grows from legendary events and characters. Goethe's *Faust*, for example, was inspired by the folk legend of an actual person: Johann Faust (or Faustus), who lived in Wittenberg, Germany, from 1480 to 1540. According to the legend, Faust had sold his soul to the devil for youth, knowledge, and magical powers. Like the real person, Goethe's Faust willingly sacrifices his soul to have all his wishes fulfilled. In fact, he focuses so intently on power and riches in this life that he is willing to risk eternal damnation in the next.

Doomed Forever Goethe was not the first writer to be inspired by the Faust legend. Christopher Marlowe's *The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus* was written in the sixteenth century, not long after the death of the real Johann Faust. Like Goethe's Faust, Marlowe's Doctor Faustus learns the awful majesty and inevitable doom of the bargain he makes with the devil.

ACT I. SCENE III. IN A GROVE.

Enter FAUSTUS.

FAUSTUS: Now that the gloomy shadow of the earth,

Longing to view Orion's drizzling look,
Leaps from th' antarctic world unto the sky,
And dims the welkin¹ with her pitchy breath,

5 Faustus, begin thine incantations,
And try if devils will obey thy hest,
Seeing thou hast pray'd and sacrific'd to them.

Within this circle is Jehovah's name,
Forward and backward anagrammatiz'd,²

10 The breviated names of holy saints,
Figures of every adjunct to the heavens,
And characters of signs and erring stars,
By which the spirits are enforc'd to rise:
Then fear not, Faustus, but be resolute,

15 And try the uttermost magic can perform.—

*Sint mihi dei Acherontis propitii! Valeat numen
triplex Jehovah! Ignei, aërii, aquatani spiritus, salvete!
Orientis princeps Belzebub, inferni ardentis monarcha, et
Demogorgon, propitiamus vos, ut appareat et surgat
Mephistophilis: quid tu moraris? Per Jehovah, Gehennam,
20 et consecratam aquam quam nunc spargo, signumque
crucis quod nunc facio, et per vota nostra, ipse nunc surgat
nobis dicatus Mephistophilis!*³

Enter MEPHISTOPHILIS.

I charge thee to return, and change thy shape;
Thou art too ugly to attend on me:

25 Go, and return an old Franciscan friar;
That holy shape becomes a devil best.

Exit MEPHISTOPHILIS.

I see there's virtue⁴ in my heavenly words:
Who would not be proficient in this art?
How pliant is this Mephistophilis,

Thematic Connection

Why do you think the physical appearance of Mephistophilis is important to Faustus?

1. **welkin** sky or vault of heaven.

2. **Jehovah's name . . . anagrammatiz'd** (an' ə gram' ə tīzd) Jehovah, the holy name of God in the Old Testament, has been spelled backward and forward in a magical rite.

3. **Sint . . . Mephistophilis** May the gods of the underworld (Acheron) be kind to me! May the triple deity of Jehovah be gone! To the spirits of fire, air, and water, greetings. Prince of the east, Beelzebub, monarch of the fires below, and Demogorgon, we appeal to you, so that Mephistophilis may appear and rise: why do you delay? By Jehovah, hell, and the hallowed water which I now sprinkle, and the sign of the cross which I now make, and by our vows, let Mephistophilis himself now arise to serve us!

4. **virtue** power, as well as goodness.

- 30 Full of obedience and humility!
Such is the force of magic and my spells:
Now, Faustus, thou art conjuror laureat,⁵
That canst command great Mephistophilis:
*Quin regis Mephistophilis fratris imagine.*⁶

Enter MEPHISTOPHILIS (like a Franciscan friar).

- 35 **MEPHISTOPHILIS:** Now, Faustus, what wouldst thou have me do?

FAUSTUS: I charge thee wait upon me whilst I live,
To do whatever Faustus shall command,
Be it to make the moon drop from her sphere,
Or the ocean to overwhelm the world.

- 40 **MEPHISTOPHILIS:** I am a servant to great Lucifer,
And may not follow thee without his leave:
No more than he commands must we perform.

FAUSTUS: Did not he charge thee to appear to me?

MEPHISTOPHILIS: No, I came hither of mine own accord.

- 45 **FAUSTUS:** Did not my conjuring speeches raise thee? speak.

MEPHISTOPHILIS: That was the cause, but yet *per accidens*:⁷

- For, when we hear one rack the name of God,
Abjure⁸ the Scriptures and his Savior Christ,
We fly, in hope to get his glorious soul;
50 Nor will we come, unless he use such means
Whereby he is in danger to be damn'd.
Therefore the shortest cut for conjuring
Is stoutly to abjure the Trinity,
And pray devoutly to the prince of Hell.

- 55 **FAUSTUS:** So Faustus hath
Already done; and holds this principle,
There is no chief but only Belzebub;⁹
To whom Faustus doth dedicate himself.
This word "damnation" terrifies not him,
60 For he confounds hell in Elysium:
His ghost be with the old philosophers!¹⁰
But, leaving these vain trifles of men's souls,
Tell me what is that Lucifer, thy Lord?

5. *conjuror laureat* the greatest magician.

6. *Quin . . . imagine* Why do you not return, Mephistophilis, in the appearance of a friar?

7. *per accidens* by the immediate, not the ultimate, cause.

8. *abjure* (ab jōōr') v. give up; renounce.

9. *Belzebub*, variant spelling of *Beelzebub* (bē el' zē bub') the chief devil, whose name means "god of flies" in Hebrew.

10. *For he . . . philosophers* He thinks that hell is really Elysium. In Greek mythology, Elysium was the dwelling place of the virtuous after death. In Dante's *Inferno*, it is a pleasant abode for righteous pagans in a special part of hell.

Thematic Connection

What reason does Mephistophilis give Faustus for not immediately obeying Faustus's commands?

Critical Viewing ►

What can you infer about the different personalities of Faustus and Mephistophilis from their clothing and their attitudes in this painting? [Infer]



Mephistopheles Appears Before Faust, Eugène Delacroix, The Wallace Collection

MEPHISTOPHILIS: Arch-regent and commander of all spirits.

65 **FAUSTUS:** Was not that Lucifer an angel once?

MEPHISTOPHILIS: Yes, Faustus, and most dearly lov'd of God.

FAUSTUS: How comes it, then, that he is prince of devils?

MEPHISTOPHILIS: O, by aspiring pride and insolence;
For which God threw him from the face of heaven.

70 **FAUSTUS:** And what are you that live with Lucifer?

MEPHISTOPHILIS: Unhappy spirits that fell with Lucifer,
Conspir'd against our God with Lucifer,
And are for ever damn'd with Lucifer.

FAUSTUS: Where are you damn'd?

MEPHISTOPHILIS: In hell.

75 **FAUSTUS:** How comes it, then, that thou art out of hell?

MEPHISTOPHILIS: Why this is hell, nor am I out of it;
Think'st thou that I, who saw the face of God,
And tasted the eternal joys of heaven,
Am not tormented with ten thousand hells,
80 In being depriv'd of everlasting bliss?
O Faustus, leave these frivolous¹¹ demands,
Which strike a terror to my fainting soul!

FAUSTUS: What, is great Mephistophilis so passionate
For being deprived of the joys of heaven?

85 Learn thou of Faustus manly fortitude,
And scorn those joys thou never shalt possess.
Go bear these tidings to great Lucifer:
Seeing Faustus hath incurr'd eternal death
By desperate thoughts against Jove's deity,
90 Say, he surrenders up to him his soul,
So he will spare him four and twenty years,
Letting him live in all voluptuousness;¹²
Having thee ever to attend on me,
To give me whatsoever I shall ask,
95 To tell me whatsoever I demand,
To slay mine enemies, and aid my friends,
And always be obedient to my will.
Go and return to mighty Lucifer,
And meet me in my study at midnight,
100 And then resolve me of thy master's mind.

MEPHISTOPHILIS: I will, Faustus.

Thematic Connection

What is Mephistophilis's definition of hell?

11. **frivolous** (friv' ə les) *adj.* of little value, trifling.

12. **voluptuousness** (və lup' chō əs nis) *n.* indulgence in sensual delights and pleasures.

Exit MEPHISTOPHILIS.

FAUSTUS: Had I as many souls as there be stars,
I'd give them all for Mephistophilis.
By him I'll be great emperor of the world,
105 And make a bridge thorough the moving air,
To pass the ocean with a band of men;
I'll join the hills that bind the Afric¹³ shore,
And make that country continent to Spain,
And both contributory to my crown:
110 The Emperor shall not live but by my leave,
Nor any potentate of Germany.
Now that I have obtain'd what I desire,
I'll live in speculation of this art,¹⁴
Till Mephistophilis return again.

Exit FAUSTUS.

13. Afric African.

14. speculation of this art deep study of this art.

Christopher Marlowe

(1564–1593)



Born the son of a shoemaker in Canterbury, England, Christopher Marlowe earned B.A. and M.A. degrees from Cambridge

University and later moved to London, where he wrote a series of plays. Marlowe was unorthodox in his opinions and his life. His plays treat controversial topics, and he had a reputation for heretical opinions. In 1593, he was brought before a government council on charges of speaking against the doctrines of the Church of England. Before the case was resolved, however, he was killed in a tavern brawl.

Connecting Literature Past and Present

1. What universal human temptations are at the heart of both *Faust* and *The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus*?
2. (a) In what ways is Faustus in *The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus* like Faust in Goethe's *Faust*? (b) In what ways are these two characters different?
3. Which of these two characters do you find more sympathetic? Explain.