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Emily Brontë

Wuthering Heights

Illustrated by Alarico Gattia



Retold by **Maud Jackson**
Activities by **Justin Rainey**



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Editors: Emma Berridge, Frances Evans
Design and art direction: Nadia Maestri
Computer graphics: Simona Corniola
Illustrations: Alarico Gattia
Picture research: Laura Lagomarsino

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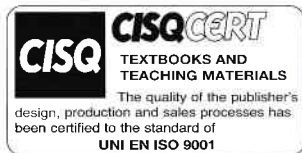
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info@blackcat-cideb.com
blackcat-cideb.com



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FCE First Certificate in English Examination-style exercises

T: GRADE 8 Trinity-style exercises (Grade 8)

The text is recorded in full.

n. track  These symbols indicate the beginning and end of the passages linked to the listening activities.

end



Emily Brontë
by Patrick Branwell Brontë
(c. 1833).

Emily Brontë

In the 1820s and 30s, three remarkable sisters – Charlotte, Emily, and Anne Brontë – grew up in Howarth, a village in Yorkshire. Their father was the vicar of the local church. The landscape around Howarth was flat and desolate, and the weather was often windy and cold. The village was small and far away from the nearest town. Life at Howarth was one of physical isolation, but the Brontë sisters compensated for this by the extent and variety of their reading. They had access to their father's large library and were deeply influenced

by their reading, which included the Bible and the works of Homer, Virgil, Shakespeare, Milton, Byron and Scott. After their mother's death in 1821, their aunt came to live with them. Her severe religious views – expressed in tales of hell and divine punishment – made a lasting impression on the girls.

In 1846 a volume of poems by Charlotte, Emily and Anne appeared under the title *Poems by Currer, Ellis and Acton Bell*. They had decided to use male pseudonyms because Emily was very reluctant to publish under her own name. The following year, Charlotte's *Jane Eyre*, Emily's *Wuthering Heights*, and Anne's *Agnes Grey* were published. Emily died of tuberculosis in 1848; she was only thirty years old.

Wuthering Heights is one of the most powerful novels ever written. Set in the desolate windy landscape in which Emily Brontë spent her life, it is a story of passion and hatred, jealousy and revenge, religion and superstition. It has much more in common with the Gothic novel¹ than with the more typically Victorian works of Dickens, Thackeray and George Eliot. For example, Victorian protagonists are usually good – or at least they wish to be good. By contrast, the protagonists of *Wuthering Heights* – Heathcliff and Catherine – have no interest in being good. They want to live life to the fullest, to satisfy their desires. They are two of the most interesting and disturbing characters in English fiction, but their attraction does not depend on goodness or even on reason: both are frequently nasty, possibly evil, and probably mad. Despite, or perhaps because of, this we read on, fascinated by their story.

1. **Gothic novel** : horror stories and ghost stories popular in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

1 Comprehension

Match the people and places (1-6) to the appropriate information (a-f).

People and places

Information

- | | | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1. <input type="checkbox"/> | The Brontë sisters' father | a. <i>Agnes Grey</i> |
| 2. <input type="checkbox"/> | Howarth | b. She influenced the sisters |
| 3. <input type="checkbox"/> | The library at Howarth | c. <i>Jane Eyre</i> |
| 4. <input type="checkbox"/> | The Brontë sisters' aunt | d. He was the local vicar |
| 5. <input type="checkbox"/> | A novel by Charlotte Brontë | e. It was isolated and desolate |
| 6. <input type="checkbox"/> | A novel by Anne Brontë | f. It contained many important works |

2 Why are the following dates important in Emily Brontë's life?

- a. 1821 b. 1846 c. 1847 d. 1848

3 What did Howarth and *Wuthering Heights* have in common?

4 Why are Heathcliff and Catherine different from other Victorian protagonists?

Before you read

1 Look at the title of Chapter One ('A Misanthropist's Heaven'). Which sentence (a, b or c) explains the title?

The story begins in a place which is perfect for someone who...

- a. likes other people's company.
- b. likes giving money to people.
- c. dislikes other people's company.

The Characters



Catherine Earnshaw



Heathcliff



Catherine Linton



Edgar Linton



Hindley Earnshaw



Hareton Earnshaw



Linton Heathcliff



Mrs Dean (Nelly, Ellen)



Isabella Linton

Mr Lockwood

The narrator

Joseph

Heathcliff's servant

Zillah

A servant at Wuthering Heights



A Misanthropist's Heaven

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CHAPTER ONE

I HAVE JUST RETURNED from a visit to my landlord, who is my only neighbour. This is certainly a beautiful place! In all England, there is nowhere so completely removed from society. It is a misanthropist's heaven: perfect



track 02

for Mr Heathcliff and me, for we are both misanthropists. He is a fine man! His black eyes looked at me suspiciously, and he did not offer to shake my hand. I was interested to meet a man who seems even more reserved than I am.

'Mr Heathcliff?' I said. 'I'm Mr Lockwood, your new tenant¹ at Thrushcross Grange.'

'Come in,' he replied reluctantly, as if he really wanted to say, 'Go to the devil!' As I followed him into the house, he called out, 'Joseph! Take Mr Lockwood's horse and then bring us some wine.'

Mr Heathcliff lives in a large stone house called Wuthering Heights. 'Wuthering' is an adjective used only by the people of

1. **tenant** : person who rents property from a landlord.

A Misanthropist's Heaven

CHAPTER ONE



this region, meaning 'windy' or 'stormy', and indeed the house is built on top of a hill and is completely exposed to the north wind. The few trees around it all lean¹ in one direction. Over the door of Wuthering Heights the date '1500' and the name 'Hareton Earnshaw' are inscribed. I wanted to ask Mr Heathcliff to tell me the history of the place, but he seemed so unfriendly that I decided not to.

The door opens straight into the sitting room. At one end of the room is a large oak dresser,² its shelves crowded with silver plates. Legs of beef and ham hang from the ceiling. Above the fireplace, guns are attached to the wall as ornaments. In one corner a female hunting dog lay surrounded by her puppies, and other dogs hid in the shadows.

Mr Heathcliff himself looks like a gypsy with the dress and manners of a gentleman, a little untidy but tall and handsome. Some people might think he is proud, but I think his reserve — like mine — is probably because he does not like to show his feelings. But no, perhaps the reasons for Mr Heathcliff's reserve are different from my own. Let us hope that there is no one else quite like me. I remember my dear mother saying to me, 'You'll never have a comfortable home!' My behaviour last summer showed that she was right.

While enjoying a month of fine weather at the coast, I met a fascinating young lady and fell in love with her. I never told her that I loved her, but I suppose she guessed from the way I looked at her. She began to look lovingly at me. I confess with shame that I became cold and distant. The young lady thought that she

1. **lean** : incline, bend.

2. **oak dresser** : wooden piece of furniture for storing plates and cups.

FCE 1 Comprehension

For questions 1-5, choose the answer (A, B, C or D) which you think fits best according to Chapter One.

- 1 What do Mr Lockwood and Heathcliff have in common?
 - A They are physically similar.
 - B They both like animals.
 - C They are both reserved.
 - D They both met a young woman at the coast last year.
- 2 Which sentence does NOT describe the house, Wuthering Heights?
 - A It is a solid construction.
 - B It is surrounded by woods.
 - C It is built on high ground.
 - D Its name is inspired by its location.
- 3 How does Heathcliff feel the first time Lockwood is attacked by the dogs?
 - A He is sorry.
 - B He is angry.
 - C He is embarrassed.
 - D He is amused.
- 4 What does Lockwood do when he meets the young lady for the first time?
 - A He talks about the weather.
 - B He asks her name.
 - C He introduces himself.
 - D He asks her how long she has lived at Wuthering Heights.
- 5 Lockwood finally decides to leave Wuthering Heights because
 - A he can no longer stand the rudeness of its inhabitants.
 - B the snowstorm stops.
 - C there is nowhere for him to sleep.
 - D he is afraid of Heathcliff's dogs.

2 Understanding the characters

On his second visit to Wuthering Heights, Lockwood cannot understand the people there. He says Heathcliff looks like a gypsy, is a little untidy but with the dress and manners of a gentleman. Complete the missing information about the young girl and the young man.

- a. The young girl is young and lovely with hair and eyes, but the expression in her eyes is and she is
- b. The young man is, with untidy and brown, but he is and

3 Complete the sentences to show how Lockwood thinks the three people are related. Then say what their real relationship is.

At first, Lockwood thinks the young girl is Heathcliff's, but she is really his Then Lockwood thinks the young man is, but he

4 Heathcliff says that at Wuthering Heights, 'guests are so rare... that my dogs and I don't know how to receive them.' Fill in the table with examples of the inhabitants' unconventional behaviour.

The young woman	The young man	Heathcliff	Joseph
		When Lockwood is attacked by the dogs, he offers no help	

5 At the end of Chapter One we know the names of four characters. Who are they?