Author Profile Packet:

An author profile is a three paragraph reflection on the life and work of a specific author. In order to gain an understanding of what an author is trying to say with their work, a reader must get to know the author. For instance, readers will gain a deeper understanding of the work of Charles Dickens when they realize that he was placed in a work house when he was young. He experienced poverty first hand, and was able to explore the themes of poverty, class distinction, and human nature in his writing.

An author profile helps place the book in history, and helps the reader see the broad picture of how the book affected the author's society, and our society today.

How to write an author profile:

This should be typed, 12point, Times New Roman font. It should be three paragraphs long.

Paragraph One: Should present a brief biography of the author. Talk about their childhood, their upbringing. Were their parents living? How many siblings? Where did they attend school? Did they go to University (college)? Did they serve in a war? Did they marry? Where did they live? How many books did they write? When did they pass away?

Paragraph Two: Should talk about what influenced the author to write. Why did they want to write? What did they want to say with their work? Who influenced them? Did they know any other famous writers? What was happening in the world at that time? What was happening in their own country at the time? What works of art or music might have influenced them?

Paragraph Three: Should speak about how the author is remembered today. What famous works did the author leave as a legacy? What was the author's worldview? How has the author's work influenced art, movies, music, culture, or politics in the 20th-21st century?

Sample Author Profile:

Mary Shelley, author of Frankenstein, was born to William Godwin and his wife, Mary Wollstonecraft in 1797. Shortly after she was born, Mary's mother passed away. Her father re-married and their family expanded. Shelley never went to school but she was an avid reader. She could often be found reading a book from her father's library. She was fascinated with telling stories, and had her first poem published at age nine. When Mary was in her late teens, she met renowned poet, Percy Shelley. The two ran away together, got married, and tried to start a family. All but one of their children died as infants. Percy himself passed away when Mary was only twenty-four years old. She supported herself and her son by writing. She lived to be fifty-three years old. She died of brain cancer in 1851.

Mary Shelley gathered inspiration from many sources. She said in the forward to her novel <u>Frankenstein</u>, that she would sit for hours and come up with stories in her mind. Nature was important to her, as was feeling like she was doing her stories justice by writing them down. She wrote during the Romantic time period, and was heavily influenced by poets such as Percy Shelley, and Lord Byron. She was a true Romantic writer in that her work challenged the normal structure of society. Britain was in a time of cultural reform. The Romantic movement was sweeping through art, music, literature, and pushing against the Enlightenment movement.

Mary Shelley is remembered today as the writer of the novel which was one of the forerunners of the Gothic genre. Her novel <u>Frankenstein</u> gathered an avid fan base when it was written and continues to be popular today. Her novel has had a tremendous influence on the Gothic genre, with several movie adaptations, television shows, and other stories stemming from the novel Shelley wrote. Her worldview has been debated through the years, but it is clear that she was a person who questioned. She questioned herself, her society, and her own writing. She wrote several other novels, but her lasting legacy remains with <u>Frankenstein.</u>