



Year 8 Bridging Learning

Part 1: Revising the Gothic Genre

Read the extract below, which comes from the online encyclopaedia, *Kids Britannica* and answer the questions:

- 1) List 3 features of Gothic fiction. (paragraph 1)
- 2) How did Gothic fiction get its name? (paragraph 2)
- 3) List 3 architectural features of Gothic settings. (paragraph 2)
- 4) Between what dates was the age of Gothic fiction? (paragraph 2)
- 5) List 3 literary genres which diverged or came from Gothic fiction. (paragraph 2)
- 6) Name 2 types of characters featured in Gothic fiction (paragraph 3)
- 7) What is notable about the Gothic novel, *The Monk* by Matthew Gregory Lewis? (paragraph 3)
- 8) Apart from Gothic, what 2 other genres does *Frankenstein* have elements from?
- 9) Which Gothic novel is described as “one of the most successful and truly Gothic novels ever published?”

In Gothic fiction the reader passes from the reasoned order of the everyday world into a dark region governed by supernatural beings, a region that inspires dread and horror, where decay abounds and death is always at hand. Also called Gothic romance and Gothic novel, Gothic fiction emerged late in the 18th century as part of the Romantic movement in the arts. This movement represented a reaction against the “age of reason,” or the Enlightenment, that had dominated the thought of the time.

This type of fiction was called Gothic because much of its inspiration was drawn from medieval buildings and ruins, many of which are Gothic in architectural style. It commonly featured castles and monasteries equipped with subterranean passages, hidden panels, chambers of torture, and dark towers. The great age of the Gothic novel began in 1765 with the publication of Horace Walpole’s successful *Castle of Otranto*, and it lasted until about 1820. Afterward, though such fiction continued to appear for decades, the Gothic type diverged into different styles, including the detective or mystery story; sci-fi; and the horror story.



In Gothic fiction forces of evil predominate, usually in the person of a great villain. Opposed to these is a virtuous maiden who is at once repelled and attracted by the evil around her. In some of the novels virtue triumphs; in others the evil is so monumental that everything good in its path is destroyed, and then it destroys itself. One such story of great evil was *The Monk* (1796) by Matthew Gregory Lewis. Another of the popular early Gothic writers was Ann Radcliffe, whose *Mysteries of Udolpho* (1794) and *The Italian* (1797) are among the best examples of this fiction.

One early Gothic novel that has become a classic is Shelley's *Frankenstein* (1818), which also has elements of science and horror fiction. At the end of the 19th century Bram Stoker wrote *Dracula* (1897), one of the most successful and truly Gothic novels ever published. In it, as in earlier Gothic novels, overwhelming evil in the person of the vampire Dracula confronts and nearly destroys the beautiful young woman who is attracted by his charm and repelled by his evil power.

Part 2: Moving from Traditional Gothic Fiction to Later Gothic Fiction

Task A:

- Use the information on the website to find out about 3 famous Gothic novels. In September you will read and study extracts from these novels.
- Complete the chart to show what happens in each novel. Read the statements and tick the novel each statement describes.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/articles/zybytrd>

Statement	Frankenstein	Jekyll and Hyde	Woman in Black
The main character has an alter ego.			
A scientist tries to create a perfect creature.			
A character called Carew is murdered.			
Revenge is an important theme.			



A character is haunted by noises.			
An evil character doesn't repent for his crimes.			
The story begins on Christmas Eve.			
A scientist rejects the creature he creates.			
The main character is a solicitor called Arthur Kipps.			

Task B:

- Use the short films on the website to find out about how the Gothic genre evolved in the 19th Century and answer the questions.
<https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/spine-chillers-and-suspense-a-timeline-of-gothic-fiction/zvr9vk7>
- You will need to watch the films on *The Castle of Otranto*, *Frankenstein* and *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*

The Castle of Otranto:

- 1) What do you think the presenter means when he describes Gothic fiction as “a bundle of motifs”?

Frankenstein:

- 2) What gave Mary Shelley her inspiration for writing *Frankenstein*?
- 3) List 2 features of the monster's appearance in *Frankenstein*.
- 4) How does Victor react to and treat the monster he has created?
- 5) What causes the monster to become wicked?



The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde:

- 6) Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde was performed as a play in London's West End. What event happened 2 days after the play opened?
- 7) Why did some people confuse the murderer Jack the Ripper with the fictional character of Dr Jekyll / Mr Hyde?

Part 3: Vocabulary

Learn the following terms relating to Gothic fiction for a test in September.

Alter-ego: a second and different version of yourself

Chronological: following in the order events happened

Cliffhanger: exciting or uncertain ending

Degenerate: a non human creature which is corrupt or immoral, or less complex than a human.

Disgust: hatred or loathing

Dread: worry or anxiety

Foreboding: a feeling that something bad will happen

Foreshadow: a hint about what will happen later

Gothic: a literary genre which uses mystery and intrigue, the supernatural and what is unknown

Horror: intense fear, shock or disgust

Juxtapose: opposite

Motif: a recurring idea or symbol in a text

Narrative perspective: narrator's point of view e.g. 1st or 3rd person

Narrative shift / Shift in perspective: when the writer moves our attention to something else

Overreacher: mental and emotional

Pathetic Fallacy: weather or nature to create mood



Pity: sadness or compassion for someone else's suffering

Psychological: mental and emotional

Science Fiction

Suspense: excitement, anxiety or uncertainty about what will happen

Tension: anxiety, worry and fear

Terror: unbearable fear