

Context		Key Features of the Gothic Genre	
1. When did Gothic novels become popular?	Gothic novels have been scaring us for 250 years. The mid-18th Century saw public taste shift from traditional tales of romance and adventure to an appetite for terror.	1. Fear of the Unknown	The Gothic genre is a world of doubt, particularly doubt about the supernatural and the spiritual. It seeks to create in our minds the possibility that there may be things beyond human power, reason and knowledge.
2. Why did so many people read them?	In the 18 th and 19 th century the amount of people who could read grew dramatically. The production of Penny Dreadfuls also fueled peoples’ desire to explore their deepest fears.	2. Isolated settings	Strange castles, old ruins, monasteries and anywhere that had a strong sense of antiquity.
3. Industrialisation	During the late 18th and early 19 th century society was full of anxiety over change, due to the effects of industrialisation and the growth of towns and cities and the spread of disease. The dramatic change in the landscape lead writers to focus on the power of nature over mankind.	3. The sublime	Something that is truly extra-ordinary and awe-inspiring.
		4. The uncanny	The feeling that something is strangely familiar (Freud).
		5. The supernatural	A manifestation or event attributed to some force beyond scientific understanding or the laws of nature.
4. Questioning Religion/ Enlightenment	Whilst society was looking to find answers across science and religion, Gothic writers often explored the idea that not everything could be explained and rationalized.	6. A foolhardy protagonist	A main character who is recklessly bold or rash.
5. Interest in science and the workings of the mind	During the 18 th and 19th century many people had a keen interest in mental health. The amount of asylums grew and people would pay to visit them! They were also intrigued by technological advancements such as blood transfusions and galvanism.	8. Extreme psychological states	Being in the grip of fear, terror, phobia, physical paralysis, unable to function, living nightmares.
		9. Terror rather than horror	The pioneering Gothic novelist Ann Radcliffe was particularly interested in the difference between the two. Terror, she thought, does not show horrific things explicitly but only suggests them. Horror, by contrast, Radcliffe argues, ‘freezes and nearly annihilates’ the senses of its readers because it shows atrocious things too explicitly.
		Key Vocabulary	
1. Antiquity	The ancient past. <i>E.g. The ruins had a sense of antiquity.</i>	Descriptive Writing Techniques	
2. Malevolent	Wishing to cause harm to others. <i>E.g. The malevolent spirit.</i>	1. Simile	A comparison using ‘as’ or ‘like’. <i>E.g. ...were like ghost figres.</i>
3. Foreboding	A sense that something bad will happen. <i>E.g. I was filled with foreboding.</i>	2. Metaphor	A metaphor is there to make a strong image in the reader's head by describing a place, subject or object as something unlikely. <i>E.g. The mist was a prison that trapped me.</i>
4. Sinister	Evil and threatening. <i>E.g. Her eyes were sinister in their darkness.</i>		3. Personification
5. Inferno	A raging fire (often associated with Hell)	4. Sensory Imagery	Description that uses the senses.
6. Psychological	Of, affecting or arising in the mind.	5. Pathetic Fallacy	When the weather reflects the character’s mood.
7. Insufferable	Too extreme to bear. <i>E.g. Her nightmares were insufferable.</i>	6. Synesthesia	Blurring and confusing the senses. <i>E.g. It was a yellow fog, a filthy, evil-smelling fog.</i>
8. Demonic	Like a demon or spirit. <i>E.g. A demonic presence could be felt.</i>	7. Foreshadowing	A warning or an indication of a future event.
9. Irrational	Not logical or reasonable. <i>E.g. Helena knew her fears were irrational.</i>	8. Close description	Describing a feature in great detail.
10. Brooding	Appearing darkly menacing. <i>E.g. The brooding sky.</i>	9. Periodic Sentence	A sentence that features two or more subordinate clauses and withholds the main clause to the end.
11. Afflicted	To affect adversely. <i>E.g. He was afflicted with an irrational foreboding.</i>		
12. Better words for scary!	Chilling, terrifying, fearful, unsettling, alarming, disconcerting, disturbing, distressing, alarming, startling, shocking, appalling		