

Gothic Fiction

- Usually contains elements of horror and romance.

An example is 'Wuthering Heights' by Emily Bronte with the romance between Cathy and Heathcliff which continues after death.

Main protagonist

- The main protagonist or character is courageous and enters the haunted or supernatural building despite warnings. They are also characterized by an 'overwhelming' emotional response.
- They are often ambitious, isolated from society and highly intelligent.

Settings

Wild and remote, with old castles, gloomy dungeons, monasteries or dark, inhospitable houses.

There is often a focus on the 'natural scenes' of the settings.



Terror (psychological or physical)

- The atmosphere is often claustrophobic and sinister, with turbulent or gloomy weather (pathetic fallacy).
- Characters are plagued by their fears- real and imagined.



The supernatural: ghosts, haunted houses and Gothic architecture, castles, darkness, death, decay, doubles, madness, secrets, and hereditary curses.

The supernatural often represents the a common fear that humanity possess. The genre uses the supernatural to make the familiar strange and the strange familiar. 'Fear of the unknown'.



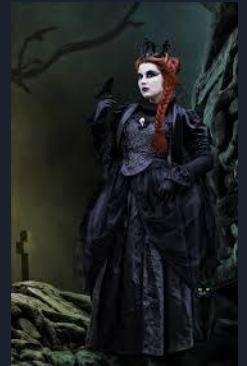
Mood

- There is often a fear of imprisonment, strong emotions, desire for self-expression and freedom.



Stock characters

- The stock characters of Gothic fiction include tyrants, villains, bandits, maniacs, Byronic heroes, persecuted maidens, femmes fatales, monks, nuns, madwomen, magicians, vampires, werewolves, monsters, demons, dragons, angels, fallen angels, ghosts, perambulating skeletons and the Devil himself.



Suspense and tension

- Events build up feelings of suspense and tension in the reader so that when awful events happen it is either: expected; a relief or worse because of the wait.

