

# ENGLISH SUMMER 1 KNOWLEDGE ORGANISERS

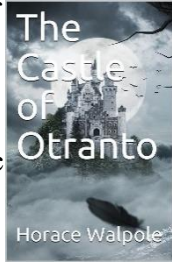




# Gothic Literature



**Definition:** Gothic Literature is a style of writing that blends elements of fiction and horror, as well as romanticism. This style of fiction began in the mid-1700s with a novel titled *The Castle of Otranto* by Horace Walpole; the novel is considered to be the first of the Gothic fiction tales, because of its characteristics of the genre. Despite the Gothic novel having a long history, it has since changed as a consequence of authors such as Stephen King, who is known for titles that are both commercially successful and sometimes critically acclaimed. Gothic literature has been and continues to be an influential and popular genre.



**Purpose:** Gothic Literature is a direct response to eighteenth century ideals of realism which is why it is essential to understand formal realism, in order to understand Gothic Literature. A gothic novel often refers to supernatural events, or events in nature that cannot easily be explained; dark and / or supernatural imagery is a key device to use against the confines of realism. Where formal realism uses diction, Gothic Literature elaborates; fantasy and realism are blended to create unpredictability. Paranormal characters become more realistic than those in other genres. However, the protagonist's reaction should be in a way that is true to everyday responses; therefore, providing natural explanations toward supernatural occurrences.

Week	A ghastly glimpse into ...
Week 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ the gothic genre</li> <li>✓ an extract from the first ever gothic novel 'The Castle of Otranto'</li> </ul>
Week 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Edgar Allen Poe's life</li> <li>✓ 'The Tell-Tale Heart'</li> </ul>
Week 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Mary Shelley's life</li> <li>✓ <b>checkpoint – an extract from 'Frankenstein'</b></li> </ul>
Week 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Bram Stoker and his interest in Vlad the Impaler</li> <li>✓ an extract from 'Dracula'</li> </ul>
Week 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ the life of Charles Dickens</li> <li>✓ <b>Assessment – 'Great Expectations' extract</b></li> </ul>
Week 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ how to read your own dramatic piece of gothic literature</li> </ul>

Plot

**Key words:**

- Antihero - a main character usually isolated from society.
- Formal realism - creating a reality through the experience of a character.
- Media res - opening in the midst of the plot
- Prophecy - predication.
- Protagonist - leading character.
- Supernatural - attributed to a force beyond scientific understanding or the laws of nature.

supernatural occurrences

sinister setting

romance

antiheroes / heroes

curses and prophecies

death and decay

emotions

madness

*N.B. Gothic Literature does not strive to reflect everyday life, but the contrasting realism.*