

The Gothic



Elements of both the horror and romance genres

Texts feature sinister settings like castles, dungeons, secret passages, etc. Sometimes they feature vast landscapes too – Frankenstein has chapters set in the Swiss mountains and the Arctic!

The weather is often used to create fear: storms, thunder, lightning, mist and fog are all common examples

Curses, secrets, hauntings and bad omens are amongst the supernatural conventions Typical character types are ghosts, vampires, monsters, doppelgangers and scientists. This was because of people's greater supernatural beliefs and their increasing curiosity into the possibilities of scientific discover

The 19th Century was influential for the influx of gothic writing.

Key Knowledge	Definition
Supernatural	Attributed to some force beyond scientific understanding or the laws of nature.
Grotesque	Repulsively ugly or distorted
Isolation	The process or fact of being set apart
Power	The ability to act or have influence over others
Morality	The extent to which an action is right or wrong.
Imprisonment	The restraint of a person's freedom against their will.
Monstrosity	A thing which is outrageously evil or wrong.
Abandonment	The act of leaving someone or something or of ending or stopping something, usually forever:
Haunting	Having qualities that linger in the memory
Trope	A common theme or device
Terror	A state of intense or overwhelming fear
Villain	A person who harms other people or breaks the law, or a cruel or evil character
Ominous	Giving the worrying impression that something bad is going to happen
Ancestral curse	A repeating pattern of misfortune that affects a parent as well as their children, and beyond.
Trepidation	A feeling of fear or anxiety about something that may happen.