

Gothic Settings A traditional Gothic setting is like a character itself, it is used by authors to trap victims and create a tense atmosphere.		Gothic Characters Gothic stories generally rely on extreme contrasts, frequently putting vulnerable people against powerful, dangerous forces.	
Isolated Building	Crumbling castles, abandoned mansions, and run-down buildings cut off from help.	The Tormented Villain	A deeply troubled 'bad' character who is haunted by secrets, guilt or past mistakes. They experience mental pain and torment.
Claustrophobic Spaces	Dark dungeons, underground crypts, winding staircases, and hidden passageways.	The Innocent Victim	Kind, pure and defenseless against the dark forces in the story. They are often trapped in scary locations and have to face terrifying threats alone.
Extreme Landscapes	Deep, tangled forests, foggy graveyards, and vast, windswept moors.	The Mad Scientist	A brilliant researcher/ inventor crosses the line between what is safe and what is dangerous. They think they are helping humanity or doing great science but their pride and obsession make them behave immorally.
Subterranean Spaces (Underground Settings)	Moving a story underground *dungeons/ secret tunnels) symbolises diving into dark secrets, the hidden past, or deep psychological fears.	Supernatural Beings	Creature and monsters that defy the laws of nature and science. They represent humanity's deepest fears of the unknown and death. Examples: werewolves, vampires, ghosts and witches.
Midnight Settings	Stories taking place pitch darkness or under a full moon to exploit the fear of the unknown.	The Flawed Hero	The 'good' character who has a weakness. They could be cowardly, be easily tricked, or struggle with a bad temper.

Gothic Poem	Poet	Summary
<i>Spellbound</i>	Emily Bronte (1837)	A haunting poem about being physically and mentally trapped by a freezing winter storm and a mysterious "tyrant spell" that prevents the speaker from leaving. .
<i>The Raven</i>	Edgar Allen-Poe (1845)	A grieving student who is driven slowly mad by a talking black bird that repeats the word " <i>Nevermore.</i> "
<i>The Highwayman</i>	Alfred Noyes (1906)	A dramatic, ghostly love story about a robber on horseback, the landlord's daughter who loves him, and the ultimate sacrifice she makes to save him.
<i>The Listeners</i>	Walter de la Mare (1912)	An eerie, quiet poem where a lone Traveler knocks on the door of an empty forest house, unaware that the building is full of silent, phantom ghosts—the "listeners".
<i>The Ghost</i>	Louise Gluck (2000)	The speaker realises that <i>they</i> are the ghost because of their loneliness and heartbreak, they feel invisible, like a phantom watching someone else live.

Top Literary Devices	
Sensory Language	Select words to describe more than what the character can see. Include: sounds, textures, smells, sights and tastes.
Pathetic Fallacy	A type of personification where an author gives human emotions to nature, weather, or inanimate objects. In Gothic writing, the environment isn't just a background—it mirrors or actively reacts to how the characters are feeling inside.
Verisimilitude	Gothic writers make spooky stories feel real (verisimilitude) by telling them through fake letters, diaries, or old documents (frame narratives).
Duality	Gothic fiction thrives on intense duality and conflict. Writers constantly place opposites right next to each other to highlight the tension between them.
The Uncanny	The uncanny is the psychological experience of something being simultaneously familiar yet alien. It creates a deeply unsettling feeling of wrongness.
The Sublime	The sublime is a mix of sheer awe and terrifying vastness. Gothic characters are constantly confronting vast landscapes (towering mountains, endless oceans, massive ancient ruins) that remind them of how small, isolated, and helpless they truly are.
Foreshadowing	Foreshadowing is a literary device where the writer drops hints or clues early in a story about what is going to happen later. Gothic writers uses this to create tension and a feeling of dread.
Hyperbole	Hyperbole is a literary device that uses extreme exaggeration to make a point or emphasise a strong feeling. It is not meant to be taken literally, but it helps paint a vivid picture in the reader's mind.

The 5 Big Questions 1. Where does real terror live—outside us, or inside our minds? 2. How does the past refuse to stay dead? 3. Why are we attracted to things that terrify us? 4. What happens when we lose control of our surroundings? 5. What does it mean to be a "monster"—and how thin is the line between human and beast?

Key Vocabulary	Definition
Abhorrence	A feeling of absolute disgust or hatred toward something.
Charnel	Associated with bones, death, or places where dead bodies are kept.
Cloistered	Hidden away from the world; feeling trapped or totally isolated.
Decrepit	Worn out, broken down, and falling apart because it is so old and neglected.
Desolate	Empty, lonely, and completely lifeless (like an abandoned town in winter).
Encroaching	Slowly sneaking up or taking over space (like shadows creeping across a room).
Foreboding	A creepy "gut feeling" that something terrible is about to happen.
Grotesque	A scary or ugly monster carving used just for decoration (no water pipe).
Labyrinthine	Like a massive maze; very confusing with lots of winding paths.
Macabre	Having to do with the scary, creepy, or gory sides of death.
Mausoleum	A grand stone building above ground built to hold a dead person's coffin.
Melancholy	A deep, quiet sadness that stays with you, even if you don't know why.
Pallid	Incredibly pale, colorless, or ghostlike (usually from being sick or terrified).
Sepulchral	Hollow, deep, and gloomy (like a voice echoing inside a dark tomb).