

A dark, atmospheric landscape with a large fallen tree trunk in the foreground and a cloudy sky in the background. The scene is dimly lit, with a blueish-grey color palette, creating a somber and mysterious mood. The text "GOTHIC LITERATURE" is centered in a white, serif font.

GOTHIC LITERATURE



Goya

*The Sleep of
Reason Produces
Monsters*

1797

GOTHIC LITERATURE

- The text which is thought to have started the Gothic tradition is *The Castle of Otranto* by Horace Walpole, written in 1764.
- It became a popular genre in the late 18th Century, and its conventions have been used by authors ever since.
- In the 19th Century, parodies of the genre started appearing, because its conventions were so widely used.

CONVENTIONS OF THE GOTHIC

- Generally involve elements of the horror and romance genres
- Sinister settings – castles, dungeons, secret passages, winding stairs, haunted buildings.
- Extreme landscapes – rugged mountains, thick forests, generally bad weather.
- Omens, ancestral curses and secrets
- An element of the supernatural
- Representation and stimulation of fear, horror and the macabre.

GOTHIC CHARACTERS

- Tyrants, villains, maniacs
- Persecuted maidens, femme fatales, madwomen
- Ghosts, monsters, demons
- Byronic heroes – intelligent, sophisticated and educated, but struggling with emotional conflicts, a troubled past and ‘dark’ attributes.

WRITING CONVENTIONS

Short sentences for impact

Appeal to the senses

Well chosen verbs & adjectives

Showing not telling

Personification / simile / metaphor

Suggestive weather – pathetic fallacy

Rule of 3

Dramatic irony

EXAMPLES

- *Frankenstein* – Mary Shelley, 1818
- *Wuthering Heights* – Emily Bronte, 1847
- *The Strange Case of Dr Jeckyll and Mr Hyde* – Robert Louis Stevenson, 1886
- *Dracula* – Bram Stoker, 1897
- *Rebecca* – Daphne du Maurier, 1938
- *The Stepford Wives* – Ira Levin, 1972
- *The Shining* – Stephen King, 1977

CONTEMPORARY EXAMPLES:

- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kUWOCd894-Q>
- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5Cb3ik6zP2I>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R6O4Himch7g>