

# Journey of knowledge: Gothic Short Stories

## Context and Introduction to Unit

In this unit, students will learn the key features of Gothic literature, including settings like castles and ruins, themes of fear, the supernatural, and isolation, and typical character types such as villains, victims, and mysterious figures. They will explore how writers create atmosphere and suspense through language, structure, and symbolism. By reading a range of Gothic short stories, students will develop their understanding of the genre's conventions and historical context, as well as build skills in analysis, interpretation, and creative writing.

**The bigger picture:** Studying Gothic literature helps students explore how writers use fear, atmosphere, and the supernatural to reflect human emotion, societal anxieties, and moral questions across time.

**Prior Learning:** KS3: Genre knowledge – learning features of horror, mystery, and supernatural fiction. Literary analysis – identifying and commenting on imagery, tone, and atmosphere. Theme exploration – developing understanding of fear, madness, isolation, and power. Narrative voice – recognising first-person narrators and the effect of unreliable narration.

**Future Learning:** KS4: Links to Gothic Literature in A Christmas Carol (ACC) Supernatural: Central role of the three ghosts. Isolation & Madness: Scrooge's emotional and social detachment mirrors Gothic themes. Atmosphere: Fog, darkness, and cold create an eerie, unsettling mood. Guilt & Redemption: Explores moral consequences and transformation. Characterisation: Scrooge as a Gothic figure—cold, haunted, and psychologically complex. Context: Victorian concerns with poverty, morality, and the supernatural reflect Gothic influence.

**Careers Links:** Creative Writer/Author, English Teacher, Editor, Librarian/Archivist, Screenwriter/Filmmaker, Literary Critic/Journalist, Museum Curator, Psychologist, Historian, Fashion Designer

### Core Knowledge:

**Definition:** Gothic literature is a genre that combines horror, death, and romance with mysterious, supernatural elements.

**Origins:** Emerged in the late 18th century with works like The Castle of Otranto by Horace Walpole.

**Common Features:** Dark, eerie settings (e.g., castles, graveyards) Themes of madness, isolation, and the supernatural. Complex, often unreliable narrators.

Heightened emotion, suspense, and psychological tension. Use of the sublime, the uncanny, and pathetic fallacy

**The Red Room by H.G. Wells:** A sceptic visits a supposedly haunted room to disprove the existence of ghosts.

**The Tell-Tale Heart by Edgar Allan Poe:** A narrator insists on their sanity while describing the murder of an old man.

**The Story of an Hour by Kate Chopin:** A woman reacts to the news of her husband's death with unexpected feelings of freedom.

**The Yellow Wallpaper by Charlotte Perkins Gilman:** A woman undergoing the "rest cure" for mental illness becomes obsessed with the wallpaper in her room

### Key words

Gothic  
Freytag's Pyramid  
Genre  
Setting  
Atmosphere  
Suspense  
Supernatural  
Foreshadowing  
Imagery  
Symbolism  
Pathetic Fallacy  
Unreliable Narrator  
Narrator  
Uncanny  
Motif  
First-Person Point of View  
Sublime

### Personal Development

R9: How stereotypes, in particular stereotypes based on sex, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation or disability, can cause damage (e.g. how they might normalise non-consensual behaviour or encourage prejudice). M2: Learning to make ethical and moral decisions. Spiritual 2: reflecting on the big questions of life. Moral 2 and 3: Learning to make ethical and moral decisions and Understanding how our actions impact others.

### Literacy Focus: (class specific)

### Reading is Power:

The Red Room H.G.Wells, The Tell Tale Heart by Edgar Allan Poe, The Story of an Hour by Kate Chopin, The Yellow Wallpaper by Charlotte Perkins Gilman

### Numeracy Focus:

Analysing the structure of Gothic texts through patterns (such as word counts, sentence length, or frequency of certain words), chronology, dates for context, timelines.



## Journey of Knowledge: Year 8

### In my Liverpool Home

#### 1. Context and Introduction to Unit:

We will be exploring our city's rich and complex cultural heritage and considering its powerful influence on a range of Liverpudlian writers, musicians, artists and poets. In particular, we will be studying the work of some of the area's most successful sons and daughters, including The Beatles, The Liverbirds, Levi Tafari, Children's Laureate Frank Cottrell-Boyce and wartime heroine, Lilian Bader. Liverpool, its landmarks and its people generate great emotion and we will learn how article writing can help us to effectively share powerful, personal opinions as well as key, factual information.

#### 5. The Bigger Picture – Links to Real Life

Careers: teacher, writer, lecturer, poet, historian, museum curator, musician, politician.

History: Empire - Africa, India and the trans-Atlantic slave trade, women and the vote.

Transferable Learning:

Reading skills, including recognising fact from opinion.

Planning, drafting, editing your writing; transactional (non-fiction) writing.

Expressing powerful opinions.

Other English Modules:

Women's Power – going against the odds, such as The Liverbirds

A Monster Calls – ordinary life and its impact

Shakespeare – Lord Derby's patronage in Prescot and Shakespeare North.

#### 2. Core Knowledge

I am learning about:

- Some of the key factors in Merseyside's development.
- Liverpool culture, including accent and dialect.
- Key contextual influences on Liverpool's writers, musicians, artists, poets and significant figures.
- The significance of Liverpool's writers, musicians and poets on the Arts.
- The historical celebrations and challenges of the city.
- The way in which language can be used to positively or negatively influence others.
- The concept of bias and stereotypes.

#### Literary Concept Knowledge:

We will study:

- Some music and lyrics of the Merseybeat movement.
- Dub poetry as a form of performance poetry.
- The role of the Children's Laureate.

However, we will explore more deeply the role of transactional writing (articles) in shaping understanding of any topic – this time the topic of course is our city, its culture and its people.

#### 3. Key Skills: Building on Year 7 and 8

I am learning to:

##### Reading

- Skim, scan and do continuous close reading.
- Infer meaning from language choices.
- Analyse language, form and structure.
- Comment on how facts and opinions are used.
- Comment on the writer's intention.
- Make links to context.

##### Writing

- Plan, draft, proof-read and edit.
- Gather information to build my ideas.
- Craft transactional writing in the form of an article.
- Express opinions powerfully.
- Refine the technical accuracy of writing.

Key Vocabulary – see full vocabulary list in your book.

#### 4. Assessments and Extended Work

*Multiple choice quiz.*

*Writing skills – personal opinions, based on article writing.*

*Reading skills – based on article writing.*

#### 6. Personal Development

- Community and togetherness.
- Pride.
- Breaking stereotypes.
- Celebration.

#### 7. Literacy Focus: Class Specific

#### 8. Where next?

Year 8 - War poetry and letter writing, contemporary play and review writing.

Year 9 -

Dystopian short stories – when community goes wrong.

The revolutionary nature of Romantic poets, influenced by what they saw in society and their efforts to make a difference.

# Journey of knowledge: Voices of women

## Context and Introduction to Unit

This unit introduces students to powerful female voices from different time periods and genres, including speeches, letters, essays, and poems. Through close reading and discussion, students will explore how women have used language to express identity, challenge injustice, and inspire change. The unit encourages empathy, critical thinking, and appreciation for diverse perspectives

**The bigger picture:** By exploring how women have used language to challenge inequality and express their truths, students gain a deeper understanding of the ongoing struggle for gender equality and the power of words to shape society.

**Prior Learning: KS3:** This unit builds on students' prior exploration of persuasive writing, poetry, and personal voice in Key Stage 3 by deepening their understanding of how real women throughout history have used these forms to influence, inspire, and advocate for change.

**Future Learning: KS4:** This unit lays a strong foundation for Eduqas GCSE by developing students' ability to analyse writers' viewpoints and methods, compare texts across time, and craft their own persuasive and imaginative writing—skills essential for both the English Language and Literature components.

**Careers Links:** Journalist, Poet, Author, Lawyer, Teacher, Activist, Social Media Manager, Editor, Public Speaker, Publisher

## Core Knowledge:

- Understanding the purpose and power of rhetoric and persuasive language in speeches and essays.
- Recognising how tone, voice, and perspective shape meaning in letters and poems.
- Identifying and analysing literary and rhetorical devices (e.g. repetition, metaphor, emotive language).
- Exploring how historical and social context influences women's writing and activism.
- Comparing how different female writers express themes of identity, resistance, and empowerment.
- Developing skills in critical reading, including inference, summarising, and evaluating viewpoints.
- Gaining confidence in writing for purpose and audience through letters, speeches, and poems.
- Building awareness of gender representation in literature and media.
- Making connections between personal expression and public impact in women's writing

## Key words

1. Rhetoric – The art of using language to persuade or influence others.
2. Emotive Language – Words that stir emotions in the reader or listener.
3. Repetition – Repeating words or phrases for emphasis or effect.
4. Alliteration – Repetition of the same sound at the start of nearby words.
5. Metaphor – A comparison saying something is something else to create meaning.
6. Simile – A comparison using like or as to describe something vividly.
7. Anaphora – Repeating a word or phrase at the beginning of sentences or lines.
8. Tone – The writer's attitude or feeling shown through their words.
9. Voice – The unique style or personality of the writer or speaker.
10. Audience – The people the text is written or spoken for.
11. Purpose – The reason the text was created (e.g., to persuade, inform, express).
12. Imagery – Descriptive language that appeals to the senses.
13. Enjambment – When a line of poetry runs over to the next without punctuation.
14. Hyperbole – Exaggeration used for emphasis or effect.
15. Direct Address – Speaking directly to the reader or audience using "you."
16. Inclusive Language – Words like "we" or "us" that include the audience.
17. Prejudice – Judging someone unfairly based on their identity or background.
18. Sexism – Discrimination based on gender, often against women.
19. Patriarchy – A system where men hold more power and dominate leadership roles.
20. Misogyny – Hatred, dislike, or mistrust of women.
21. Feminism – The belief in and fight for gender equality, especially for women's rights.

**Personal Development:** R9: How stereotypes, in particular stereotypes based on sex, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation or disability, can cause damage (e.g. how they might normalise non-consensual behaviour or encourage prejudice). M2: Learning to make ethical and moral decisions. Spiritual 2: reflecting on the big questions of life. Moral 2 and 3: Learning to make ethical and moral decisions and Understanding how our actions impact others.

## Literacy Focus: (class specific)

## Reading is Power: texts selected from

Emmeline Pankhurst - freedom or death speech, What's the greatest lesson a woman should learn? Rupi Kaur poem, Audre Lorde – Lesbian and literature panel speech, If men could menstruate Gloria Steinem essay, Jane Austen's Letters, Virginia Woolf's letters, The Bronte's letters, Serena Williams Open letter in The Guardian.

**Numeracy Focus:** Interpreting statistics, Timeline creation, Data tracking and comparison, Graphing representation data, Analysing patterns in publication dates, Calculating gender-based disparities, Quantifying rhetorical appeals



# Journey of knowledge: Y7 Fantasy and Fabula including 'A Monster Calls'

## Context and Introduction to Unit:

This unit builds on your work in the first half term on 'The Hero's Journey' and your own knowledge of myths and legends. We will study how a modern writer uses 'The Hero's Journey'. We will read the novel 'A Monster Calls' by Patrick Ness and learn how the writer creates narrative voices. We will also learn about the writer's use of myths and legends to tell Conor's powerful story.

We will revisit and consolidate our learning from 'The Hero's Journey'

## The bigger picture

**Careers:** teacher, lecturer, historian, classicist

**RSE:** understanding aspects of human behaviour

**History:** the link between ancient history and ancient and modern literature

## Transferable learning:

- how to write a narrative
- narrative voice and perspective
- The Hero's Journey
- Characterisation and archetypes
- reading for meaning

## Core Knowledge: by the end of the unit, I will be able to answer the following questions:

### I am learning about

- Conor's journey and how it links to 'The Hero's Journey'
- the seven basic plots and how they are used in the novel
- the five/six stages of story structure and how they are used in the three tales in the novel.
- Why the author uses three tales within the novel
- How the characters are created and if they match any of the 12 archetypes
- A selection of English myths and legends

### I am learning how to:

- skim and scan
- read continuously and read closely
- write because/but/so sentences
- write topic sentences
- Apply my learning from 'The Hero's Journey' to my reading of the novel

### Literary concept knowledge:

- narrative voice, narrative viewpoint, narrative structure, seven basic plots
- use of tenses
- archetypes
- Conventions of myths and legends

## Key Skills

- to read for meaning using skimming, scanning, continuous and close reading
- use active reading strategies: predict, question, clarify, summarise, ask questions

## Vocabulary

1. folktale
2. hero
3. first person narrator
4. reliable narrator
5. unreliable narrator
6. figurative language: simile and metaphor

## Revisit and retrieve:

7. archetypes
8. nemesis
9. hubris
10. vengeance
11. narrator

## Personal Development

**SMSC:** understanding relationships and why some relationships are strong and some are not.

Understanding and managing powerful emotions

## Literacy Focus: (class specific)

## Where next?

Narrative reading and writing in Y8 and Y9

Narrative reading and writing in GCSE

Allusions to myths in poetry, plays and novels from Y7 to Y11.