

Isolation

The creature's isolation.

Isolation of JH at start of Dracula

Isolation of a setting- eg- Drac Castle, Islands, haunted houses

Suffering Women

Lucy, Mina both suffer greatly

All the women in Frankenstein die.

Nature

Pathetic fallacy used a lot as manifestation of emotion (eg thunderstorm)

Pursuit of knowledge/ the unknown

Victor is obsessed with the creature, but terrified at the same time as he can never truly understand life and death as he has no control.

Mystery

People like the unknown/suspense. Surprise is important for Gothic novels. Gothic plots were huge surprises to their readers. Readers were enthralled. There was no formula. Mysterious elements contributed to the atmosphere a lot.

Madness

Gothic can refer to stories involving strange and troubling events which seem to originate from unexpected forces.

EG- Jane Eyre. Whilst living in Thornfield Hall, she hears strange noises coming from floor 3 of the house. Jane eventually discovers that this is Rochester's mad wife who has been hidden. Dehumanisation and marginalisation of the mad.

Transgressing normality

Gothic texts tend to be about transgression, overstepping boundaries and entering a realm of the unknown. In this realm the ordinary is displaced by the extraordinary, the normal becomes the paranormal and the unconscious is as vivid, vital and valid as the conscious.

In this environment it becomes difficult to orientate oneself: it is often a dark world where winding passages lead deeper and deeper into an uncanny and uncertain world. Forests, wildernesses, extremes of nature predominate. The rational world is left far behind, reason no longer rules. The improbable is entirely possible and the impossible becomes even more probable. Often the protagonist is presented with a baffling series of choices with no clear sense of what the right one might be.

It is similarly difficult to navigate the morality of this new state. The certainty of the normal world is rendered void once the borders of the gothic have been breached and a further frisson is provided by the fact that this voyage into the gothic has been taken voluntarily and perhaps against one's better judgement. The Gothic has somehow seduced the reader so that he or she is complicit in engaging with whatever he or she might encounter. Part of the thrill lies in this sense that the reader shares this act of transgression with the character.