

Week 1: The Gothic and Paranormal

- The gothic genre became very popular during the late 18th century.
- This genre and its conventions have been used to evoke strong emotions in readers, usually involving fear, suspense and worry.
- The Gothic focuses on the elements which are considered irrational and only believable through imagination over the idea of being rational and reasonable.
- The gothic genre involves conventions of the horror and romance. These include: sinister setting, death, decay, supernatural, darkness, mystery, terror, extreme weather and a belief in omens.
- Byronic heroes are intelligent, sophisticated and educated, but struggling with emotional conflicts. They usually have a troubled past and 'dark' attributes.

Ambitious vocabulary to boost your writing

- Gothic Conventions: Agreed elements that you would find in the Gothic genre.
- Genre: A style or category of literature.
- Motif: A reoccurring idea, symbol or image within a text.
- Meticulous: Showing great care, precision and attention to detail.
- Symbol: The use of a sign or object to represent a wider idea.

Week 2: Cultural Perspectives: Africa

- Colonialism is the practice of acquiring full or partial control over another country, often using military force.
- Although almost always done for economical gain, colonisers claimed they wanted to 'civilise' native population by spreading Christian doctrine and European lifestyle.
- Before Chinua Achebe wrote his novel, 'Things Fall Apart', all stories written about Africa were from the perspective of Europeans. Achebe wanted to give an honest account of cultural conflict and change.

Ambitious vocabulary to boost your writing

- Imperialism: Extended a country's power and policy through colonisation.
- Pacification: An attempt to create or maintain peace.
- Primitive: Early in the evolutionary or historical development of something.
- Interminable: Endless or apparently endless.
- Indigenous: originating or occurring naturally in a particular place; native.

Week 3: Dystopia

Dystopia - An imagined world in which everything is unpleasant or bad, perhaps with evil people in power or a world close to destruction.

Utopia - An imagined world in which everything is amazing and wonderful.

Common features of dystopia:

- Totalitarianism: a system of government where the ruler has complete control and everyone has to be obedient
- Propaganda: information, especially of a biased or misleading nature, used to promote a political cause or point of view
- Fear of punishment
- Rebellion (an act of armed resistance to an established government or leader)
- Loss of identity

- Limited relationships

Possible fears covered in dystopian literature:

- Social inequality (the belief that people have different opportunities or rewards depending on their status)
- War
- Disease
- Technology and surveillance (close observation)
- Pollution
- Genetic engineering
- Climate Change
- Technology

Week 4: Historical and War Time

- The Second World War took place between 1939 and 1945
- Writers might choose to write a fictional story based on these events, in order for us to gain an insight into the lives of a particular group of people, or to empathise with individual experience of the war
- A flashback is a common technique which is used to help us understand how the character has been shaped, and how past events have influenced future events. Often, significant historical information is revealed through these sections of narrative
- Inner thoughts in a narrative enable us to gain greater insight into the experiences of one particular character. Often, these can be emotionally revealing and cause a reader to experience a change in emotion or understanding.

Ambitious vocabulary to support your fiction writing:

- Unnerving : Causing somebody to lose courage or confidence
- Informant : A person who gives information to another
- Volatile : somebody or something which changes rapidly and often for the worse
- Trepidation: A feeling of fear or anxiety
- Naïve: A lack of experience, wisdom or judgement
- Withered: Shriveled, wrinkled, or lifeless with age
- Military precision : To do something in a very organised and exact way
- Juxtaposition : Two things, seen or placed close together, which contrast each-other

Week 5: Family Dynamics and Growing up

- Writers might choose to tell their story through the perspective of a child for many reasons. One example could be that the child's innocence is used to contrast the harsh realities of the world they are depicting.
- In **literature**, a character loses their **innocence** by becoming more aware of the world around them, possibly through actions that bring about a sense of guilt.
- Tone - Tone refers to an author's **use of words** and **writing style** to convey his or her attitude towards a topic.

Ambitious vocabulary to support your writing:

- Epiphany - A moment of sudden and great revelation or realisation.
- Revelation - A surprising and previously unknown fact that has been disclosed to others.
- Adolescence - The period following the onset of puberty during which a young person develops from a child into an adult.
- Enlightenment - The state of attaining or having attained spiritual knowledge or insight.
- Symbolism - The practice of using an object or a word to represent an abstract idea. To identify symbolism, first identify any repeated themes in the text and then consider what objects could be used to represent those themes within the writing.

Week 6: Science - Fiction and Action

- **Science Fiction** is fiction based on imagined futures with scientific or technological advances (improvements) and major social or environmental changes.
- Science Fiction stories often portray space or **time travel** and life on other planets, so settings might be futuristic, and multiple periods of time can be explored.
- **Journeys** are a crucial part of Sci-Fi; whether that be a character's journey to different worlds/planets/times or their own personal journey or **quest** throughout the story. This a key structuring device within this genre.
- If space travel is included in a Si-Fi story, it is likely to feature extra-terrestrial life (life forms from outside earth).
- **Action stories** often include a clear division between 'good' and 'bad' characters.
- Action will often include some of the following: war, crime, rescue and escape.
- If a story starts in the middle of action (a battle, a war-zone etc.) we refer to it as opening in **media res**.

Ambitious vocabulary to support your writing:

- **Annihilate** – To destroy or utterly obliterate.
- **Conspiracy** – A plot or secret plan by a group to do something unlawful or harmful.
- **Vanquish** – To defeat thoroughly.

Week 7: Ambitious Vocabulary

Synonyms/better words for good or interesting	Synonyms for bad	Synonyms for unusual/confusing	Synonyms for boring	Synonyms for sad
Captivating	Insignificant	Indecipherable	Tedious	Downcast
Enlightening	Worthless	Bewildering	Dull	Sorrowful
Mesmerising	Noxious	Perplexing	Monotonous	Despondent
Uplifting	Detestable	Mystifying	Repetitive	Dispirited

Remember: Keep reading the information from previous weeks; this will help you in future weeks, as well as allowing you to remember a whole range of new vocabulary