

Context

- Arthur Ignatius Conan Doyle was born in Edinburgh on May 22, 1859.
- Doyle pursued a career in medicine and opened a medical practice in Portsmouth. He worked with Dr. Bell who was exceptionally observant. Doyle thought he would write stories in which the hero would treat crime as Dr. Bell treated disease and where science would take the place of chance.
- The Hound of the Baskervilles merges two popular literary genres: the Gothic tale and detective fiction.
- The Hound of the Baskervilles makes use of the typical Gothic themes and symbols - a family curse and the legend of a paranormal dog; a hero stranded in a strange place; gloomy manors and ruins with sinister secrets; flickering lights; dark shadows, and eerie, fog-covered landscapes.
- The Hound of the Baskervilles was first published in serialised format in Strand Magazine, a monthly magazine that was in print from 1891 to 1950. This serialisation accounts for the many skilful cliff-hangers in The Hound of the Baskervilles.

Methods

Alliteration: the repetition of the same sounds at the beginnings of words, or words near each other in a sentence.

Ambiguity: open to more than one interpretation; not having one obvious meaning.

Foreboding: a strong feeling that something terrible is going to happen.

Foreshadowing: a sign or indication of something to come in the story.

Hyperbole: using over exaggeration to get a point across.

Imagery: an author's use of vivid and descriptive language to add depth to their work.

Motif: a dominant or recurring idea in a text: a repeated image.

Pathetic Fallacy: the use of weather, nature and/or the environment to create a specific mood or atmosphere in a text.

Symbolism: the use of a sign or object to represent ideas or qualities.

Narrative Perspective

An author creates a person to tell the story, and this person is the narrator. The narrator delivers the point of view of the story. Multiple narrators of the story can also present multiple points of view.

First person narrator: uses the pronoun 'I' to tell the story. This narrator can be a major or minor character; it can be easier to relate to a story from this perspective.

Second person narrator: uses the pronoun 'you' to tell the story; it makes the reader a participant in the story.

Third person narrator: uses the pronouns 'he', 'she', 'them' to tell the story; the narrator does not take part in the story.

Omniscient narrator: omniscient means all knowing; the narrator has access to all the actions and thoughts within fiction.

Dual narrators: two or more people tell the story; they tend to share their own perspectives on the story.

Unreliable narrator: when a character tells the story with a lack of credibility; as a reader, we should not trust or believe their versions of events.

Key Characters

- **Sherlock Holmes:** a private detective who solves crimes and mysteries by using his superior powers of deduction.
- **Dr Watson:** Holmes' loyal sidekick and friend who accompanies Sir Henry to investigate the mysterious events at Baskerville Hall and reports back to Holmes.
- **Sir Henry Baskerville:** the apparent sole heir to the Baskerville estate and fortune. He is the current target of threats and mysterious events connected to the Baskerville legend.
- **Jack Stapleton:** a butterfly-hunting entomologist and former schoolmaster.

Vocabulary

- **Atrocious:** something extremely bad e.g. *The roads were closed because of the **atrocious** weather.*
- **Aghast:** filled with horror and surprise e.g. *Tania stared at him **aghast**, unable to speak.*
- **Bemused:** confused by many conflicting situations or statements e.g. *Lucy looked a little **bemused**.*
- **Corroborate:** establish or strengthen with new evidence or facts e.g. *The witness had **corroborated** the boy's account of the attack.*
- **Inadvertently:** without knowledge or intention e.g. *His name had been **inadvertently** omitted from the list.*
- **Luminous:** softly bright or radiant e.g. *She was wearing **luminous** green socks.*
- **Presume:** suppose that something is the case on the basis of probability e.g. *I **presumed** that the students understood my question.*
- **Speculation:** the forming of a theory or conjecture without firm evidence e.g. *There has been widespread **speculation** that they were going to cheat.*