

Gothic Fiction :

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1 In Gothic fiction the reader passes from the reasoned order of the everyday world into
2 a dark region governed by supernatural beings, a region that inspires dread* and horror,
3 where decay* abounds and death is always at hand. Also called Gothic romance and
4 Gothic novel, Gothic fiction emerged late in the 18th century as part of the Romantic
5 movement in the arts.

6 This type of fiction was called Gothic because much of its inspiration was drawn from
7 medieval buildings and ruins, many of which are Gothic in architectural style. It
8 commonly featured castles and monasteries equipped with subterranean passages*,
9 chambers of torture, and dark towers. The great age of the Gothic novel began in 1765
10 with the publication of Horace Walpole's successful *Castle of Otranto*, and it lasted
11 until about 1820. Afterward, though such fiction continued to appear for decades, the
12 Gothic type diverged into different styles, including the detective, or mystery, story
13 and the horror story.

14 In Gothic fiction forces of evil* predominate, usually in the person of a great villain.
15 Opposed to these is a virtuous maiden who is at once repelled* and attracted by the evil
16 around her. In the United States, Edgar Allan Poe wrote finely crafted* Gothic fiction
17 in such works as "The Fall of the House of Usher" (1839). He also created the American
18 detective story—with a Gothic atmosphere—in "Murders in the Rue Morgue," published
19 in 1841. One early Gothic novel that has become a classic is Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*

1 (1818), which also has elements of science and horror fiction. At the end of the 19th
2 century Bram Stoker wrote *Dracula* (1897), one of the most successful and truly Gothic
3 novels ever published. In it, as in earlier Gothic novels, overwhelming* evil in the person
4 of the vampire Dracula confronts and nearly destroys the beautiful young woman who is
5 attracted by his charm and repelled by his evil power.

Toolbox :

Dread : Crainte/terreur

Subterranean : Souterrain

Decay : Décomposition/pourrissement

Evil : Mal

Repelled : rebuter/dégoûter

Crafted : habileté

Overwhelming : accablant/écrasant.