

# Advanced English: Creative Writing - The Evolving Gothic: A Creative Approach to the Genre

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Academic year 2023-2024 - **Language Department** - Spring semester.

**This course is meant for students of the advanced C1 and C2 levels. Theme-based language classes aim at developing written and oral skills through the study of a specific topic.**

## Course Objectives

This is a 12-week course exploring the Gothic genre as a means of improving student understanding and use of English.

The course has three main objectives:

- Introducing students to the Gothic genre as it has evolved from the 18<sup>th</sup> century to the present.
- Facilitating critical analysis of selected works in various media.
- Expanding appreciation of the genre through creative writing.

## Course Description

In the first weeks of the semester, students will be introduced to the Gothic genre. Its tenets and characteristics will be identified so as to serve as signposts throughout the semester, guiding our analysis of selected works. A particular focus will predominate each semester. For example, this may be the Victorian “self” as reflected in the era’s Gothic novels; the evolving figure of the vampire; hauntings, both interior and exterior; and/or Gothic works tied to a particular place, such as Irish or American (Southern) Gothic.

Together we will read selected short stories and novels in line with the semester’s chosen focus. These may span the 18<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup> centuries, and writers ranging from Mary Shelley to Toni Morrison.

In addition, students will explore other aspects of the Gothic, which may include poetry, the Gothic in translation, and the genre’s influence on other literary genres and popular culture in general. Throughout, our analysis will center on identifying the Gothic elements in each work, exploring how these have evolved from the genre’s roots.

Finally, students will “practice” the genre by writing an original short-form piece of fiction or criticism. Time allowing, we will refine these original works via in-class workshops and readings.

### Organization

Activities will cover the four language skills:

- Speaking.
- Writing.
- Listening.
- Reading.

While in-class discussion of course content will emphasize **speaking** (including pronunciation, stress, et cetera), preparation will require **reading** (assigned novels, stories, critiques and scholarly articles regarding the Gothic's social/historical context); **writing** (both critical and creative); and **listening** (including film extracts, author readings and presentations).