

Google Bard Query, March 25, 2023:

Imagine you are a professor preparing a graduate seminar on 18th- and 19th-Century British Gothic Literature. What materials would you place on the syllabus, including a combination of primary texts and secondary criticism and interpretation, and how would you group them?

Bard's Reply

Here is a possible syllabus for a graduate seminar on 18th- and 19th-Century British Gothic Literature:

****Primary Texts****

- * Horace Walpole, *The Castle of Otranto* (1764)
- * Ann Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho* (1794)
- * Matthew Lewis, *The Monk* (1796)
- * William Godwin, *Caleb Williams* (1794)
- * Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein* (1818)
- * Charles Maturin, *Melmoth the Wanderer* (1820)
- * Thomas De Quincey, *Confessions of an English Opium-Eater* (1821)
- * John Polidori, *The Vampyre* (1819)
- * Bram Stoker, *Dracula* (1897)

****Secondary Criticism and Interpretation****

- * David Punter, *The Gothic Imagination: A Critical History of Gothic Fiction from 1764 to the Present Day* (1996)
- * Anne Williams, *Gothic Literature* (1994)
- * Stephen D. Gosling, *Gothic Literature: A Cultural History* (2000)
- * William Veeder, *Gothic Fiction: A Critical Introduction* (2005)
- * David Skidmore, *Gothic Literature* (2013)
- * Andrew James Smillie, *Gothic Literature* (2017)

I would group the primary texts chronologically, starting with *The Castle of Otranto*, the first Gothic novel, and ending with *Dracula*, the most famous Gothic novel of all. I would also group the secondary criticism and interpretation chronologically, starting with Punter's *The Gothic Imagination*, the first comprehensive critical history of Gothic fiction, and ending with Smillie's *Gothic Literature*, the most recent critical history of the genre.

I would assign the primary texts to be read in advance of class, and the secondary criticism and interpretation to be read before each class meeting. I would then lecture on the primary texts, focusing on their historical and cultural contexts, their Gothic elements, and their influence on later Gothic literature. I would also lead discussions of the secondary criticism and interpretation, asking students to consider the different ways that critics have interpreted the Gothic genre.

I would expect students to write a final paper on a topic related to the Gothic genre. They could choose to write about a specific Gothic novel, a group of Gothic novels, or a critical concept related to the Gothic genre. I would also expect students to participate actively in class discussions and to complete all of the assigned readings.