Monsters in the Basement: Gothic Literature and Critical Thinking

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This literary unit incorporates Gothicism as an aid to critical thinking. The unit integrates many different forms of gothic literature, emphasizing two Young Adult novels and one classic text. This scaffolding process is integral to the learning process. Moreover, the Young Adult literature is essential because it is written for adolescents: these texts are engaging, relevant, and meaningful to students. Because they can make personal connections, students will be able to think critically about the texts. Furthermore, students will use background knowledge from the Young Adult novels in order to make connections to the classic text. Many people deem gothic and Young Adult literature as unworthy of literary merit, but this unit plan demonstrates the potential for these texts to engage interest, provoke analysis, and inspire lifelong reading habits.

As teachers, we are asked to cover a vast range of topics and standards throughout the school year, such as knowledge of literature, language, and writing. We ask our students to memorize the material we present them and recite it back to us on a test, and we give them letter grades based on whether or not they were able to do so. While this method is effective on a short term basis, it does not benefit students throughout their lives. Rather than teach students what to think, we need to teach them how to think so that they can apply the skills to every aspect of their lives. Fostering critical thinking skills is the foundation and ultimate goal of this unit plan; the unit accomplishes this task through many different strategies that epitomize the 21st century classroom: collaborative learning, scaffolding, differentiated instruction, and inquiry-based learning.

My high school experience has greatly impacted the choices I made in this unit plan, specifically the incorporation of Young Adult literature and critical thinking. I have always been a straight A student, so naturally, I have always felt like I knew what the teachers expected of me—and that may have been the case. However, their low expectations were part of the problem; we only read books that fell under the "canon" umbrella—the canon is a subjective list of literary works that scholars deem worthy of study, such as *To Kill a Mockingbird*, "Romeo and Juliet," and *The Scarlet Letter*. Because these texts were so difficult for us to understand, we were only asked to know what happened in the stories. If we did delve into the rich depths of these timeless texts, the teacher did it for us as we passively absorbed her pearls of wisdom. We were never taught or challenged to think about the literature that we read, and a substantial reason for that was the choice of literature. Adolescents cannot relate to the classic texts they are asked to read in high school—and they were never meant to do so. As a high school student, I had to work hard just to understand the plot in a classic text because there was a massive language barrier.

Even when I got past the challenging vocabulary and syntax, I never became engaged with the text because I did not relate to the characters or themes; for instance, I could not connect to Hester Prynne in *The Scarlet Letter* because I had never experienced guilt or isolation to that extent as a high school junior. Hester is a 19th century character who becomes ostracized by society because she commits adultery and has a child—I could not relate to any of those experiences, and I definitely could not relate to that time period. Moreover, I did not have any background knowledge to compare to the text and make connections. I was set up for failure from the beginning. Of course, I did not realize this until I reached college—and perhaps AP English as a high school senior. As cliché as this may be, I felt like someone finally turned on the light after walking for miles in the dark; but the crazy part was that I never knew I was surrounded by darkness. I have always loved reading, and I have always viewed it as pleasurable—but when I realized that it could be the most intellectually stimulating and emotionally fulfilling activity available to me, my future was sealed. Students should not have to wait until college or an advanced placement class to learn the power of reading, and they should not be forced to read texts that they cannot relate to without the vital tools to help them. Teachers may be covering the standards by doing so, but they are not creating lifelong learners—and definitely not lifelong readers.

In particular, two classes in my college career have influenced my choice to incorporate Young Adult literature into this unit plan: Children's Literature and Young Adult Literature. In Children's Literature, I read many stories that I have always loved, such as versions of *Red Riding Hood*, *Holes*, *The Wizard of Oz*, *Coraline*, and much more. Even though these were written for children, I learned how much depth and capacity for analysis they possess—all you have to do is look. For instance, I learned that *The Wizard of Oz* is considered the first American

fairy tale, and it is really a symbol of the American dream. With that knowledge, I was able to identify numerous different symbols in the novel like the yellow brick road as the path to success and the Emerald City as the city of vast wealth and greed; furthermore, yellow and green represent forms of money. We discussed how to use these stories in a high school setting, and the possibilities really surprised me, sparking my creative juices and passion for teaching. For instance, students could read several different versions of *Red Riding Hood* and analyze their similarities and differences; they could also examine the supernatural elements in *Holes* and *Coraline.*

By the same token, Young Adult Literature inspired me to use this type of literature as a primary source of learning in the classroom rather than the classics. Young Adult literature is uniquely written with adolescents in mind in terms of plot, characters, themes, dialogue, etc. Young Adult literature integrates many of the eight developmental tasks that adolescents experience throughout high school: achieving mature relations with age-mates; achieving gender roles; accepting physical changes; achieving independence from parents and adults; preparing for marriage and a family; preparing for a career; developing an ideology; achieving socially responsible behavior. All of these tasks collaborate to help adolescents form their own identities, and this identity formation is prevalent in nearly all Young Adult literature. The need for students to relate to the reading is absolutely essential; when they can make connections between themselves and the text, they automatically become more engaged and begin to deepen their thinking.

In addition to Young Adult literature and critical thinking, Gothicism is a prominent component in this unit plan—all of the literature used falls under this genre. Looking back on my reading and viewing habits, I realize that I have always been drawn to the gothic. Ever since I

was a little kid, I have loved watching scary movies—horror, violence, and suspense have all become regular characteristics in my personal film library. Part of the reason I enjoyed these films is the feeling of empowerment they gave me; I rarely got scared while watching, so I felt a certain sense of invincibility. Of course, now I realize that the more I allowed myself to feel, the more rewarding the experience would be. In addition, I always seemed to pick out novels throughout middle and high school that contained gothic elements, such as the *Harry Potter* and *Twilight* series. The fact that so many others my age gravitated towards these series shows that I am not alone in my passion for the gothic: there is a dark side of human nature that is inherently fascinating, and we cannot help but satisfy our emotional and intellectual desires by reading and watching stories that encompass this darkness. As I look back on my college career, I realize that in almost every literary analysis paper I have written, I examined a gothic text: Stoker, Hawthorne, Poe, Wilde, and so many more authors have sparked my passion over the last four years. With the help of several professors, I delved into the welcoming depths of these gothic texts, coming out with a greater understanding of what good literature entails.

On the surface, gothic literature exists to make us jump and haunt our dreams; however, the true purpose is to explore aspects of the human condition. By nature, gothic texts are replete with symbolism, which means that students have to think past the surface of horrible incidents and ask themselves every teacher's favorite question: *why?* Moreover, gothic texts provide an unconscious outlet for students' repressed emotions—this outlet aids in identity formation, which ultimately makes the reading experience more meaningful and leads to deeper comprehension.

This project is a six-week unit plan that uses gothic literature to foster critical thinking skills. The unit is aligned with a cluster of objectives—theme development, characterization, plot structure, compare and contrast, drawing textual evidence, vocabulary development, figurative

language, collaborative discussions—derived from the Common Core State Standards. These new standards are designed to facilitate deeper thinking among high school students. A vital aspect of the unit plan is the scaffolding of literature according to text complexity; the unit begins with song lyrics and short stories, then moves to the two Young Adult novels, and ends with a classic text. While many educators debate whether teachers should use classic or age-appropriate texts in the classroom, this unit is designed to embrace both types of literature because students deserve the opportunity to read to the best of their ability. In order to do so, teachers need to prepare students for such a task by challenging them to delve deeper into texts that they can relate to their own lives. Students will be able to use their background knowledge from the first two novels and other literary texts to make connections with the final novel. Through the use of collaborative learning, inquiry-based learning, and differentiated instruction, students will participate in a variety of activities in order to master the objectives. This mastery will be demonstrated in the summative assessment: students will choose a gothic short story from a given list and write a 3-4 page essay that analyzes the development of a specific theme in that story. Every choice I made in the unit plan—the literature used, method of assessing, instructional activities, and processes of teaching critical thinking—reflects relevant and valid research. Not only will this unit plan be a useful addition to my curriculum in the future, but it will also serve the English Education community by integrating different research-based methods of teaching critical thinking through literature, and act as an alternative to only teaching the classics.

One of the most important aspects of the literary unit is the combination of Young Adult literature and canonical literature. Of course, Young Adult literature has been considered an "emerging genre" in the past, so its appearance in schools has been sparse. In fact, Young Adult

was not recognized as a separate genre until after World War II; many people associate the birth of Young Adult literature with J.D. Salinger's *Catcher in the Rye*. The novel's protagonist, Holden Caulfield, has become an icon for teenage rebellion. With complex issues like sexuality, identity, belonging, and alienation, this novel has made a huge impact on the world of literature: it has shown the need for a specific genre that appeals to adolescents. On the other hand, the literary canon was developed between the late 1800s and early 1900s for the purpose of standardized testing in college entry exams ("Reading the Canon"). However, the evolution of the canon has not been drastic by any means. Different scholars discuss whether or not Young Adult literature should be used in the classroom and explain their reasoning. In addition, critical thinking is a vital component of the unit plan; scholars explain different methods of teaching students how to think critically. The third prominent tier in the unit plan is the incorporation of gothic literature; many people condemn the literary merit of this genre, but several scholars examine how gothic literature can stimulate thinking.

Unfortunately, many scholars do not deem Young Adult literature as high quality. Advocates of the canon argue that the literature represents the past intellectual world that makes up the basis for today's society and to take away the canon would mean that students are not being held to the same standards. Susan Groenke and Lisa Scherff, co-authors of *Teaching YA Lit Through Differentiated Instruction*, would argue that Young Adult literature is just as effective as classic literature in teaching the same standards, and the qualities of Young Adult literature meet the same expectations of any work that is considered to be worthy of use in the classroom (3). In fact, they describe Carol Jago's art to choosing novels and reveal how both genres can generate success; each novel used in the classroom should possess the following elements: literary merit, language suited to the author's purpose, complex human dilemmas,

compelling characters, universal themes, thought-provoking content, and an engaging storyline (4). Therefore, if a Young Adult novel fits all of these criteria, then it could easily be used in the classroom.

In addition, John Bushman advocates a shift in the classroom towards Young Adult literature because it allows students to better connect emotionally due to the range of their experiences. He uses the adolescent developmental tasks to further this argument because the primary tasks that high school students deal with include identity formation and emotional and social development—not intellectual development. Young Adult literature adheres to the former while classic texts adhere to the latter (1). This is evident because classic texts are usually written for adults while Young Adult literature is written primarily for adolescents. Bushman also conducts a study in order to find what pieces of literature are being taught in schools, how they are being taught, and students' dispositions toward them. He comes to the conclusion that classic texts are being taught far more than Young Adult texts, and teachers are not creating lifelong readers. Essentially, students need to be able to comprehend, enjoy, and relate to the texts they read in order to foster reading outside of the classroom. To defend this last point, he draws on other sources that have explored the same issue: a newspaper article from the *Wichita Eagle* asserts that children do not read as much as their parents did, and a National Adult Literacy Survey shows that students are not carrying the habit into adulthood (6-7). As teachers, our main goal should not just be to get students to read a book in class; rather, we should strive to inspire our students to *want* to read in class, outside of class, and as they go on with their lives—or else we are just feeding the fire of generations that will consistently choose "World of Warcraft" and "Family Guy" over the beautiful words of O'Connor and Wordsworth.

Groenke and Scherff agree with Bushman that Young Adult literature should be central in the English classroom. They assert that research shows that engagement with reading, and motivation to read, increases when adolescents read Young Adult literature. Because Young Adult literature is written about adolescents and with adolescents in mind, it allows literature, and consequently, school, to be relevant to students' lives. While Bushman focuses on the emotional connection that students can obtain through this genre, Groenke and Scherff stress the value of this category of literature because of its capacity to teach fluency, inference, and prediction making skills (5). Mystery novels are especially conducive to fostering these skills, and all three of the novels in this unit plan contain elements of mystery. Students will be able to make predictions based on the clues that the authors carefully placed, which requires a substantial amount of critical thinking. Jim Burke's ideas also reflect the beliefs of Young Adult literature advocates because he values the importance of a "literate mind" over a "literary mind." While a wide range of literary knowledge is beneficial, it is not nearly as beneficial as a wide range of analysis skills.

Cindy Lou Daniels reinforces this standpoint on the issue, stating that there is a "theory barrier" problem rather than a problem with the literary nature of Young Adult novels. Essentially, critics and teachers alike need to hold Young Adult literature up to the same standards as classic literature in order for a change to occur in the classroom (78-79). Since J.K. Rowling's *Harry Potter* series, Young Adult literature has seen a rise in appreciation, but Daniels believes that the issue of respectability is still more prominent than anything else. She quotes Davis's "On the Question of Integrating Young Adult Literature into the Mainstream" in the following statement: "Serious writers don't condescend in terms of style or any other way. They try to perceive human life as deeply and clearly as they can every time they tell a story, and

every time they tell a story they try to present their perceptions in the best—the most vivid—prose they can craft. That's why we call it art and that's why serious writers deserve to be called artists" (79). Compared to classic texts, Young Adult novels' audience may be different, but the quality is the same. Therefore, Young Adult authors deserve the same respect and admiration as Dickens or Tolstoy—or at least the same opportunity to prove themselves as artists.

Apart from the canon or Young Adult literature, many other scholars talk about this process of choosing literature to use in the classroom. Pfordresher stresses the importance of choosing specific pieces of literature for the classroom and gives advice for what qualifies as "good literature." He goes a little further than Jago's method by specifying elements that texts should explore: emotion, intuition, mystery, the numinous, and the transcendent. Without a doubt, the gothic literature used in this unit plan includes all of these elements. In addition, he argues that a good piece of literature should possess relationships to other works that can be discussed in the classroom, and the text should contain figurative language (27-28). While figurative language can be extremely difficult for students to comprehend, it is also one of the most important aspects of analyzing literature—to leave it out would be a detriment to students' learning. Moreover, the ability to activate background knowledge by making connections between texts is integral to engagement and deep comprehension; this concept is evident in this unit plan through the use of several different gothic texts that students can compare and contrast.

While choosing the best literature is key, Stephen DiCarlo believes that how educators teach is much more important than what they choose to teach. Many teachers have the tendency to "cover the content" rather than make sure their students really understand the concepts and have the ability to apply the skills. Teachers need to foster lifelong and flexible skills, such as critical thinking and problem solving. Of course, not many people would contend the fact that

critical thinking is a vital skill that should be taught in all disciplines through different means. The problem lies in the process of teaching critical thinking to students in a way that is relevant, meaningful, and retainable. DiCarlo's advice is somewhat broad, but nonetheless useful: students need to talk about the content, write about it, relate it to their experiences, and apply it to their lives (262). Throughout this unit plan, students are asked to engage in collaborative discussions, write various responses to the literature, and make connections to themselves, other literature, and the world.

Literature is perfectly conducive to teaching critical thinking skills because it naturally prompts questions, thoughts, and feelings in readers. In the past, teachers and textbooks have focused on the student's ability to recall information about a text rather than actually think about what the text is saying. In regards to literature, there is rarely just one right answer, assuming the question asks students to make a judgment based on textual evidence rather than memorize plot details. The article, "Research Says Literature Can Teach Critical Thinking," urges the use of class discussions, more than anything else, to foster critical thinking among students. These discussions should be facilitated in order to raise important issues, clarify thoughts, and test and compare students' ideas. Moreover, the teacher should assume different roles in the discussions as the need arises (53). This is seen in the unit plan through the use of various types of discussions almost every day: literature circles, socratic seminars, jigsaw, carousel brainstorming, small groups, and whole class discussions are all incorporated. By the same token, Harvey and Daniels stress the importance of collaborative learning in the classroom; they emphasize the benefits of inquiry-based learning because it allows students to explore the material for themselves rather than absorb the teacher's knowledge. The most effective and relevant example of inquiry-based learning in the unit plan is the use of literature circles; students are asked to take

on different roles, such as the discussion director, illuminator, illustrator, connector, word watcher, and summarizer. This is beneficial because students are able to take ownership of their learning, cooperate with peers, engage with the material, and retain the information.

David Fournier and Michael Graves explain a more specific strategy that can be used to aid students' deep comprehension: SRE, or scaffolded reading experience. This method provides support to learners and enables them to bridge the gap between their abilities and the objective. The goal, like Bushman's idea in integrating Young Adult literature into classrooms, is to create lifelong readers, which can only be done if students understand the reading and learn from it. The SRE approach separates the process into two phases: planning and implementation. Teachers need to consider their students' abilities, the text, and the reading objectives during the first phase. During implementation, teachers select pre-, during-, and postreading activities to support deeper analysis of the text (31). Fournier and Graves found that students demonstrated deeper comprehension and more positive attitudes toward the text using the SRE. The unit plan integrates a modified version of the SRE: while time does not always allow students to participate in pre-reading activities, they are definitely asked to engage in during and postreading activities in order to aid analysis.

Burke offers a different perspective on the task of teaching students how to think. With years of teaching experience and several published books under his belt, he stresses that teachers need to allow time for students to think, and teachers need to incorporate different strategies to encourage thinking; in addition, teachers need to model thinking in the classroom, just like they should model reading and writing (238). Many teachers forget this step, but the benefits to students are undeniable. Telling a student what to do or how to do is useless without that visual element: they need to see the process in action. This is best exemplified in the unit plan on the

second day as I model how to analyze gothic song lyrics. By the same token, Burke explains the six different domains of thinking that students should be exposed to while learning: talking, writing, drawing, questioning, reading, and integrating (240). All of these domains are evident at some point in the unit plan: discussions, written responses, graphic organizers, socratic seminars, and drawing images in a poem are some of the best examples. In "Teaching Reading in High School: the Continuum of Possibilities," Burke suggests several specific strategies of teaching critical thinking through reading. For instance, students can use "bookmarks" while reading, students can assume the role of teacher, teaching can be more reciprocal, students can read aloud, read for patterns, use study questions, answer in the form of "reader response," annotate while reading, or perform a dramatic interpretation of the text (98-108). While the unit plan does not incorporate all of these ideas, the students are asked to annotate, read aloud at times, assume the role of teacher in a jigsaw activity, and read for patterns.

Groenke and Scherff provide an alternative outlook on the process; they emphasize the need to scaffold texts in the classroom. They describe the idea of "reading ladders," which are a set of related books tied by a common theme or genre (132). While the concept emerged in 1947, not all teachers have necessarily bought into the method. Reading ladders demonstrate a gradual development from simple to complex texts, which is vital for the student's ability to build on skills and use background knowledge to think critically. The unit plan definitely incorporates this idea because students read two Young Adult novels before the final classic text. Groenke and Scherff also suggest the use of the discussion web with literature because students can engage in collaborative learning while they discuss the central elements of an issue and recognize the different viewpoints (140). Students are asked to use the discussion web multiple times in the unit plan.

One of the most important components in reaching deep comprehension is the use of text-dependent analysis. This is exemplified in the Common Core State Standards, because students need to be able to use evidence to support their arguments; in addition, this encourages the process of rereading a text. The more exposure that students have to a text, the more likely they will be to think about it and gain understanding from it. In addition, Cris Tovani argues the importance of a variety of formative assessments: conversation calendars, progress-monitoring folders, inner voice sheets, and conferences are some of the best examples. Tovani also stresses the use of debriefing at the end of the class to assess progress, and requiring students to annotate texts. Throughout the unit plan, there is some sort of closing activity every day that aims to assess students' progress, and there are several different during and postreading activities that act as formative assessments. In addition to formative assessments, Rick Wormeli provides 50 different techniques to improve comprehension; for example, the techniques include mind maps, matrices, analogies, chunking text, and paraphrasing. Similarly, in *Tools for Thought*, Burke suggests several different graphic organizers to use in the classroom to enhance learning: decision trees, episodic notes, interactive notes, sensory notes, think in threes, and conversational roundtables are just a handful of the possible learning tools—and they are all integrated throughout the unit plan at some point.

While scholars debate the use of Young Adult literature in the classroom and agree that critical thinking is an integral part of the learning process, they hardly voice their opinions on the importance of gothic literature as an aid to critical thinking. This is one of the main reasons that this unit plan will contribute to the English Education field: it proves that gothic literature has the ability to relate to students and make them think. Throughout the last several centuries, the meaning of the term "gothic" has transformed drastically. Originally, the term referred to the

Germanic tribe that contributed to the fall of the Roman Empire; gothic then became attached to a specific type of architecture that opposed the neoclassical style in the medieval period (think gargoyles, flying buttresses, stained glass, and pointed arches). During the late 18th and early 19th centuries, the term "gothic" was finally used to describe literature that emerged out of the Romantic period—this literature took place in gothic-style architecture and combined both horror and romance. Many people think of this genre as "the dark side of Romanticism." Of course, gothic continues to transform according to societal views and other modes of writing. Today, a gothic monster can be manifested in the mind rather than a huge, menacing, Frankenstein-like creature.

There are many elements that have come to define gothic literature, specifically the setting, atmosphere, plot, and characters that impact a gothic text. The setting itself is really a character responsible for establishing the scene and evoking emotions from the reader before any horrible incidents even occur. Some of the most common settings include castles, churches, graveyards, dark forests, winding stairways, and narrow chambers. By nature, these settings create an atmosphere of gloom, mystery, and tension--most of these places are associated with death and they represent the deterioration of a fallen world. The sublime is also illustrated in gothic settings: oceans, desolate landscapes, and mountainous regions are a few prime examples. The sublime is vital because it exemplifies the feelings of the characters in the novel and the reader simultaneously: an internal battle between terror and awe. In *Frankenstein*, Victor exemplifies this battle as he reflects upon his feelings evoked from a glacier: "It had then filled me with a sublime ecstasy, that gave wings to the soul, and allowed it to soar from the obscure world to light and joy. The sight of the awful and majestic in nature had indeed always the effect of solemnizing my mind and causing me to forget the passing cares of life" (100). Clearly, nature

can have a powerful effect on people; grand scenery makes us feel a sense of awe and wonder because of its beauty, but it also makes us feel powerless because we no longer have control, and it is beyond our comprehension—nature's power is stronger than our human abilities, and that can be a terrifying realization.

There are several different character archetypes, and one of the most prominent is the fallen hero. This character produces an underlying theme that can be applied to the real world: to "fall from grace" is to be human. We make mistakes and give into temptations consistently throughout our lives, therefore, we lose our innocence—but we also have opportunities to redeem ourselves and grow stronger in the end. In addition, Gothic novels figuratively illustrate the many unknown fears that we face in life; the monsters or villains in the novels can represent villains in real life, such as criminals, or perhaps the intangible monsters that plague our minds, such as cruel memories, anxiety, depression, and trauma. After all, there are hundreds of "phobias" that exist in the world—everyone is scared of something. Moreover, the strong imagery of horror and abuse reveals truths through realistic fears, which allows readers to attain understanding. Whenever a person experiences vulnerability through fear, sickness, or heartache, that person reaches a new realm of understanding about life and identity. While facing challenges and sometimes horrific events is an unavoidable part of life, the journey strengthens our growth and shows us that we can overcome any obstacles. The fact that gothic literature emphasizes imagination and emotion as opposed to reason relates directly to adolescents, whose thoughts and actions revolve around emotions (Botting 4). One of the most unique and effective traits of gothic literature is, in fact, its ambivalence and its ability to illustrate the many oppositions in life: dark and light, reason and morality, superstition and corruption, good and evil (9). Moreover, readers never have to choose one or the other because both occur simultaneously;

this is important for adolescents to witness because the world will always be a mixture of contradicting ideas. By the same token, finding the middle ground between the good and bad becomes vital while reading a gothic text.

In addition, gothic texts act as a vehicle for psychoanalysis. As adolescents read a gothic text, they undergo a struggle between wanting to look away and wanting to know more—they unconsciously lose themselves in the plot and characters, and their own repressed emotions and conflicts arise through the reading. They are forced to engage in personal reflection when certain events trigger experiences or cause them to consider how they would react in a similar situation. In doing so, the literature has aided in their identity formation, which is the basis of the adolescent developmental tasks. Botting illustrates this process: "Gothic terrors and horrors emanate from the readers' identifications with heroes and heroines: after escaping the monsters and penetrating the forest, subterranean or narrative labyrinths of the Gothic nightmare, heroines and readers manage to return with an elevated sense of identity to the solid realities of justice, morality, and social order" (8). Because of this, students will be able to think critically about the gothic texts in the unit plan—they will become emotionally involved and engaged with the reading, and that is when deep thinking occurs.

The debate between teaching Young Adult literature as opposed to the canon is still a controversial topic today, but the tides are slowly shifting toward using age-appropriate literature in the classroom. Most people have accepted the fact that times are changing and educators have a responsibility to meet the different needs of their students. While there may not necessarily be debate over the importance of critical thinking skills, or even the need to reduce passive lecture and increase active learning, there are still many differing viewpoints on how to teach these skills to students. These scholars' beliefs on the process of teaching critical thinking come from years

of experience, research, and experimentation. In addition, the scholars' views on the value of gothic literature demonstrate that high school students can benefit both emotionally and intellectually from reading these texts.

Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children, by Ransom Riggs, is the first novel used in the unit plan. This novel has great potential to intrigue, engage, and challenge students. The gothic elements, relevance, and capacity for critical thinking are replete from beginning to end. The most prominent gothic elements lie in the setting, atmosphere, plot, characters, and themes. The setting is perhaps the most important element in any gothic novel, and this novel is no different—the majority of the story takes place on an isolated island in Wales. Jacob describes the island upon first seeing it: "Looming and bleak, folded in mist, guarded by a million screeching birds, it looked like some ancient fortress constructed by giants. As I gazed up at its sheer cliffs, tops disappearing in a reef of ghostly clouds, the idea that this was a magical place didn't seem so ridiculous" (66). This passage illustrates the sublime in the sense that Jacob experiences controversial feelings: he uses words like looming, bleak, mist, screeching, and ghostly, which all possess rather negative connotations, yet he still deems the island magical. Moreover, he says the island is guarded by birds and looks like a fortress which suggests a sense of captivity for the residents. The island is sparsely populated and stuck in the past, which is a perfect representation of the novel's central premise: the peculiar children are forced to repeat the same day over and over again. Riggs shows the true danger of the island as well with the description of shipwrecks, the bog, and war stories—these are all associated with death. In addition, the old house that Jacob finds is a perfect illustration of the deterioration of a once thriving world, which is such a prevalent idea in gothic novels. Jacob describes his first impressions of the house: "What stood before me now was no refuge from monsters but a

monster itself, staring down from its perch on the hill with vacant hunger. Trees burst forth from broken windows and skins of scabrous vine gnawed at the walls like antibodies attacking a virus—as if nature had waged war against it" (79). Without a doubt, this is a stark contrast to the way that Jacob's grandfather described his childhood refuge.

Riggs creates an atmosphere of mystery and suspense with his writing style and storyline. The weather, in particular, plays a vital role in creating an atmosphere of gloom. The plot exemplifies Gothicism through several deaths and supernatural elements. Of course, there are tangible monsters, hollowgasts and wights, that attack characters in the story. More than that, the premise of the story is the characters' special abilities: invisibility, bringing life to inanimate objects, incredible strength, and creating balls of fire are a few of the peculiar talents. Another supernatural element that occurs throughout the novel is time travel: the peculiar children are stuck in a time loop in which the same day repeats over and over again, and Jacob goes back and forth between the present and past through a portal. The characters are gothic in the sense that they represent good versus evil; the peculiars are good while the hollowgasts and wights are evil. Moreover, Jacob takes on the role of the gothic hero as he isolates himself from the world: when his grandfather dies, not only does Jacob lose his biggest hero, but he also loses his innocence. No one believes his version of what happened that night, therefore, he is perceived as crazy. He isolates himself to make life easier—the peculiar children are the only characters who really understand him. When Jacob kills the hollowgast, he realizes that he belongs in that world—he feels strong, capable, and comfortable as their leader. Essentially, he lost a part of himself and transformed into a new and better version of himself in the end. He is a hero for saving the peculiar children from the monster, but they also save him from his life of monotony.

Finally, the themes in the novel correlate with staple gothic themes like destructive love and madness. Destructive love is exemplified in the romantic development between Jacob and Emma; not only is this relationship borderline incestual, but it also puts the characters in danger at times. Jacob puts the peculiar children at risk by looping back and forth, but his connection with Emma is so strong that he considers staying. Moreover, his affection for her promises consequences for himself as well: "Maybe it wasn't so strange, what we could have. Maybe I could stay for a while and love her and then go home. But no. By the time I wanted to leave, it would be too late. She was a siren. I had to be strong" (240). Of course, Emma does not embody the typical "virginal maiden" that older gothic novels illustrate: she is an independent, strong-willed, and dynamic character. Despite this, she is still persecuted by the monsters in the story, which is a traditional gothic characteristic. In addition, madness is represented in the novel when Jacob has to deal with his grandfather's death. He describes his experiences: "I spent the months following my grandfather's death cycling through a purgatory of beige waiting rooms and anonymous offices, analyzed and interviewed, talked about just out of earshot, nodding when spoken to, repeating myself, the object of a thousand pitying glances and knitted brows" (35). His "madness" is defined by others' views of him, but he is determined to figure out the truth about what he saw that night—and his grandfather's past.

Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children is quite relevant to adolescents today. More than anything, this story is about a young boy finding where he belongs in the world, which is a direct correlation to the adolescent development tasks, specifically developing an ideology, acquiring relations with age mates, and achieving independence from parents. Riggs writes the novel through the eyes of Jacob as a first person narrator; this helps students become more engaged with the story because they feel closer to the main character and his experiences.

From the beginning, he explains how his life has been separated into Before and After—significant events have caused him to change throughout the story. High school is one of the most crucial times in adolescents' lives because they experience so many changes, and they have to decide what paths they want to take to do what is best for them and become the best possible versions of themselves. While adolescents may not be fighting tangible monsters, they definitely face intangible monsters and temptations every day; engaging in risky or dangerous activities and making bad decisions are inherent to the adolescent experience. For instance, many adolescents experiment with alcohol and sex, disobey their parents, and break various laws. Teenagers crave adrenaline rushes, which is exactly what they can experience vicariously through Jacob. In addition, adolescents can relate to the gothic idea of forbidden love that Jacob experiences. Jacob is drawn to Emma, but he knows he should not like her—almost every adolescent can understand this feeling. While the reasoning may be different, teenagers are naturally drawn to what and who they cannot have. Another prominent theme in the novel is normalcy; Jacob has always felt out of place back home, and he finally feels like he is normal when he is surrounded by the peculiar children. Then he is introduced to a whole world that is innately different from what he has always known, which brings to light the question: what is normal? High school students deal with this issue every day as they struggle to fit into their peer groups and change themselves accordingly. This novel could show them that no matter how out of place they feel, there is always somewhere in the world that will fit them perfectly—and they do not have to abandon who they are to get there.

This novel enables the students to think critically in a variety of ways. First of all, students will be able to connect emotionally to the characters and themes in the novel, which will prompt them to engage in deeper analysis. In addition, the students will be able to make

historical connections because the novel deals with the Holocaust and World War II. As an enrichment activity, students can research different aspects of this tragic time period and make connections to the novel—the story epitomizes the hollowgasts as monsters, but it also suggests monsters in the form of people and the mind. Students can look at other symbols in the novel such as the bog, time portal, and the Old Man, and explore their importance and effect on the story's meaning.

One of the most interesting aspects of the story is its structure: the combination of vintage photographs and narration. In order to truly understand the story, the students need to think about how these photos play a role in telling the story and why Riggs chose this method above all others. Finally, students can also connect the novel to various Celtic fairy tales and examine the effects that the fairy tale elements have on the story.

The Monstrumologist, by Rick Yancey, is the second Young Adult novel in the unit plan; this novel is longer and slightly more complex than *Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children.* As the unit's text complexity progresses, so does its Gothicism. *The Monstrumologist* epitomizes the gothic in almost every sense: plot, setting, atmosphere, characters, themes, and point of view. The plot reflects Gothicism through its horrible incidents, supernatural elements, and omens. Horrible incidents occur repeatedly throughout the story: the Anthropophagi devour Erasmus Gray in the graveyard; Captain Varner explains the voyage to the United States with the Anthropophagi and the loss of his crew; Varner dies because of Starr's lack of treatment; the Anthropophagi attack and slaughter almost an entire family; Kearns attempts to use a woman as live bait for the monsters; Malachi sacrifices himself to kill the female Anthropophagi; Kearns murders Starr. The string of violence and gruesome imagery barely pauses throughout the novel, which causes the story to move forward, evokes emotions, and maintains tension. The

supernatural element lies in the presence of the Anthropophagi and the parasite that extends Will Henry's life.

The setting in the novel is significant in each scene: Warthrop's house, cemetery, Motley Hill, the ship, and the Anthropophagi lair. The house is described as large, old, and perhaps decaying; there are many rooms and hallways and staircases, which is similar to the castles that appear so often in gothic texts. The cemetery and lair clearly resemble Gothicism because they are fear-provoking by nature. Motley Hill is also huge, old, and decaying—with the added bonus of several mentally ill and dangerous patients taking up residence. The ship's Gothicism also lies in its monstrous residents, the Anthropophagi, in addition to the fact that the ship acts as a prison on the open sea. The imagery of these places has a major effect on the story, but they would be nothing without the atmosphere that Yancey creates through foreshadowing, weather, and small but significant details. These devices effectively evoke emotions of suspense, shock, and gloom.

Many of the characters also represent gothic archetypes; for instance, Will Henry embodies both the isolated protagonist and the orphan. Orphanage is a common element in gothic tales because it lends itself to the idea of loss, loneliness, and isolation. Of course, he does not become isolated by choice—the doctor forces him into that role. Will Henry and the doctor both crave an emotional connection, but they never truly express that aloud; instead, they seclude themselves in an already secluded house. Even when they are together, they only speak about business. Will Henry learns primarily through observation—and he learns that he is much more capable than he thought. He may have been forced into this apprenticeship through the death of his family, but no one forces him to stay: he chooses to follow the doctor because he enjoys hunting monsters, although it may be unconsciously at times. He proves himself quite useful, especially at the end by killing three Anthropophagi, including the matriarch. His reaction to

killing the monster is quite similar to Jacob's in *Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children*: surprise. However, like Jacob, he quickly gains confidence and realizes that he has found where he belongs. He begins the novel as a lost orphan and ends as a boy with a mentor, father figure, home, passion, strength, and hope.

In addition, the Anthropophagi clearly represent the villains in the novel: they are the central focus from the beginning. With strong and towering statures, shark-like teeth in the center of their bodies, and razor-sharp claws, they are the quintessential predator. Unfortunately, they feed primarily on humans; the doctor focuses all of his attention on why these monsters have come, how they have come, and how to eradicate them. The doctor not only fights evil in the form of the Anthropophagi, but also his father's reputation—he refuses to believe that his father would bring them here. In addition to the Anthropophagi, several humans in the novel could also fill this evil role such as Kearns or Starr; they both murder countless innocent people, claiming that their victims' lifestyles, low social statuses, or mental states justify such an end. Starr describes his patients, "They are human garbage, discarded by men, toxic to the general populace and to themselves, forgotten, unwanted, cruel, comical mockeries of all things that make us human. They could rot here or they could be sacrificed to the higher good" (412). The woman who Kearns uses as live bait characterizes the persecuted woman that appears so often in gothic texts—he consciously chooses to use a woman rather than a man, which demonstrates his power over women and their passivity.

The gothic themes that appear throughout the novel include monstrosity and isolation. Specifically, the novel illustrates the similarities between monsters and men. This is blatantly expressed by Kearns several times; for example, he says to Malachi, "We are very much like them: indiscriminate killers, ruled by drives little acknowledged and less understood, mindlessly

territorial and murderously jealous" (306). Ironically, Kearns is the best example in the novel of a monster in human form. In addition, many characters experience isolation in the novel. Will Henry, Warthrop, and Malachi have all lost their families—they desperately desire some sort of emotional connection with another person because of this. The final gothic element that appears in this novel is the point of view: Yancey creates a frame story in which a writer reads Will Henry's journal entries after he has died. This structural choice adds a unique element to the novel, providing depth and intrigue to the reader. Frame stories, multiple points of view, and epistolary novels all lend themselves to the gothic because the reader can experience the story through different ways. Moreover, journal entries help connect readers to the characters because they are so personal—they are designed to relate the story as it happens, with all of the emotions and suspense that come with it.

The Monstrumologist has the potential to relate very well to adolescents. Like many Young Adult novels, this story is primarily about an adolescent discovering his place in the world. The novel integrates several developmental tasks, such as preparing for a career, developing an ideology, and achieving independence from parents and adults. Will Henry makes a significant transformation from beginning to end, especially in his relationship with Warthrop. He is forced into Warthrop's home and acts as his loyal assistant out of respect to his father; but he comes to realize that not only does he truly care for the doctor, but he also enjoys the unique field in which he is apprenticing. He is much stronger, braver, and more capable than many boys his age—although hunting and studying monsters may be terrifying, it is where he feels important and truly himself. Students can easily feel for Will Henry as he goes on this journey to find his identity because they are experiencing a journey themselves. Of course, their experiences reflect Gothicism figuratively, not literally: adolescents chase, fight, and run away

from monsters in all shapes and sizes—substance abuse, backstabbing friends, and depression are a few examples. In Will Henry's case, he is forced to confront his past demons as he goes on this journey; he accepts the fact that his family is gone, and more importantly, he takes on the challenge of moving forward. In addition, students can relate to the loneliness that pervades this novel; many adolescents feel lonely at times, even if they are surrounded by people they love. In the novel, Warthrop discusses the doom of the human race with Will Henry—that we never truly know one another. High school students struggle with finding genuine friendships amidst so much betrayal and dishonesty, so they can definitely relate to this idea. Deceit, mistrust, and drama are all inherently gothic ideals that fictional characters and adolescents both face.

This novel has many opportunities for students to think critically. Because of their ability to relate closely to the characters, they can make connections to themselves, which leads to engagement and deep comprehension. In addition, they can make connections to the world in different ways. For instance, the idea of justified murder arises in the novel many times—students can connect these murders to real life and think about the difference between science and ethics. There are many symbols in the novel that students can explore such as parasites, Will's hat, and eyes. Moreover, students will be able to use their knowledge from the first novel in the unit, *Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children*, to compare and contrast different elements with this novel. For instance, they can compare the two different monsters, the main characters, and how both authors develop the same theme, such as the similarities between monsters and humans. Finding similarities and differences is one of Robert Marzano's "Nine Instructional Strategies for Effective Teaching and Learning," so these activities can greatly improve students' comprehension of the text. Of course, students compare and contrast by means

of graphic organizers throughout the unit plan; this enables them to sort, clarify, defend, and extend their thoughts.

Frankenstein is the final novel in the unit plan; this is a classic text, therefore, it is the most complex and challenging for students. Quite frankly, one cannot think of the gothic without thinking of *Frankenstein*. This novel may not be the birth of gothic literature like *The Castle of Otranto*, but by nature, it must be the resurrection. Students will be able to find an abundance of gothic elements as they read. As for the plot, there are numerous horrible incidents, supernatural elements, omens, and of course, foreshadowing. Almost all of Victor's loved ones die throughout the novel at the expense of his own creation. The supernatural is seen in the creature's existence, even though Victor uses science and realistic elements to bring him to life. An omen appears when Victor destroys the female mate, and the creature threatens that he will be with Victor on his wedding night. Shelley creates foreshadowing with descriptions of nature, characters' moods, and the structure of the tale. Like all gothic texts, the setting is essential to the story's effect: in this case, the sublime is epitomized more than anything. Almost every place in the novel exhibits the sublime: the Arctic, Geneva, Inglolstadt, Chamounix, and the Orkney isles. They include oceans, mountains, desolate landscapes, and freezing temperatures. Victor and the creature both feel a strong connection to nature—its magnificence and danger simultaneously. After William and Justine are killed, Victor travels away from Geneva in an attempt to release his guilt and sorrow: "It was during an access of this kind that I suddenly left my home, and bending my steps towards the near Alpine valleys, sought in the magnificence, the eternity of such scenes, to forget myself and my ephemeral, because human, sorrows" (97). In addition, Shelley creates an atmosphere of gloom, suspense, and extreme emotion through her descriptions of nature and the

characters. For instance, there is a dangerous storm in the dead of night going on when Victor sees the creature on the outskirts of Geneva.

A few of the characters also embody Gothicism, including Elizabeth, Victor, and the creature. Of course, Elizabeth portrays the virginal maiden or persecuted woman—her passivity is demonstrated through her dramatic letters to Victor and finalized in her murder. Interestingly, Victor and the creature both represent the isolated protagonist and the villain because they are doppelgangers. Victor chooses to isolate himself from his loved ones as he works on his creation, then he isolates himself throughout the rest of the novel due to guilt and fear; he becomes the villain because he is the creature's creator and he abandons his creation, which is the ultimate cause of his downfall. The creature is forced to isolate himself because of society's negative view of him, which is the cause of his fall from grace. He begins his life as generous, loving, and ambitious—his desire for acceptance and a connection is overwhelming—but the world embitters him. Then, of course, he becomes the villain by committing numerous murders.

In addition, point of view plays a vital role in the novel; not only does Shelley structure her tale as a frame story, but she also uses multiple points of view. This adds different dimensions to the story and deepens understanding. Finally, several themes in the novel demonstrate Gothicism, such as destructive love, madness, and isolation. Destructive love is seen in Victor's relationship with both Elizabeth and Clerval, because their deaths are symbols of Victor's disgrace. Madness is demonstrated in Victor's character as he becomes obsessed with the idea of creating life—he loses himself in his work, and he reaps the consequences. The theme of isolation can be seen through the creature's desire for a female mate and Victor's unwillingness to tell his story until the end. Clearly, the gothic elements serve an important

purpose in this novel, and students will be able to make deeper connections with the novel by understanding them.

Although *Frankenstein* was written for adults, students will be able to use their knowledge from the previous gothic texts to make connections and find relevance. Similar to the first two novels in the unit plan, this novel is largely about finding one's identity. The developmental tasks that appear include developing an ideology, accepting physical changes, and achieving socially responsible behavior. Although there is not a young adult in the novel, the students will be able to relate to the creature, who represents a fast-growing baby or young adult—he is forced to adapt to his environment by learning how to eat and stay warm. Once he understands crucial survival skills, he becomes fascinated with language. Above all, he experiences a range of emotions—specifically towards mankind—during his days in the hovel. He experiences fear, confusion, love, fascination, and anger; he does not understand who he is or why he is seemingly destined to be alone. Many adolescents can understand these feelings, and they will undoubtedly sympathize with the creature. By the same token, students can relate to the way that Shelley emphasizes emotion over reason throughout the novel. Each character, especially Victor and the creature, act on pure emotions and suffer the consequences. For instance, Victor never truly stops to think as he works on his creation; rather, he becomes consumed with pride and ambition without leaving any room for logic. The creature becomes obsessed with revenge, stopping at nothing to make his creator feel the same pain that Victor forced upon him.

This novel easily lends itself to critical thinking as well. Of course, students will be able to make those crucial connections to themselves, which will enhance their ability to deepen comprehension. In addition, there are several worldly connections that students can analyze; for

instance, characters playing God is a significant issue in this novel as Victor creates life out of inanimate objects. Students can discuss the morality of his actions and think about how that is relevant today in science. This also brings other issues to light like the responsibility that parents have to their children and how environment affects a child as opposed to biology. The creature is not violent by nature, but the world molds him into a ruthless murderer—students can think about Victor's role in the creature's transformation and how his abandonment could have been the true catalyst for the creature's downfall. Another connection that students can make is to other literary works in the unit; Victor has many similar attributes to Dr. Warthrop in *The Monstrumologist* that students can analyze, such as obsession with science, secrecy, and determination to redeem previous sins. Similarly, students can compare the creature with the other monsters from the first two novels or discuss how the three different authors portray the idea of humans as monsters. In fact, the three novels contain many of the same themes, including isolation, madness, and destructive love. By the same token, the main characters in the novels all possess strong similarities: primarily their self-identity explorations. While Victor is not a young adult, he exemplifies certain adolescent characteristics, such as high emotion, obsession, betrayal, and denial. Students can also examine plot devices that appear throughout the novels, including foreshadowing, allusion, and doppelganger. Finally, students need to take into account the vital role that point of view plays in this novel: with the creation scene especially, students will be able to compare and contrast the same event from different points of view and analyze its effect on the novel. Students can build on their analysis of Yancey's frame story by looking at what Shelley does differently and how her choices impact the story. *Frankenstein* is definitely ripe with possibilities for critical analysis, but the only way that students will be able to think critically with such a difficult text is through connections to themselves, other literature, and the

world. Graphic organizers, collaborative learning, discussions, and writing exercises are all integral to this scaffolding process: with these tools, students are able to access their prior knowledge from the Young Adult novels to make more meaningful connections to *Frankenstein*.

Undoubtedly, this gothic literary unit takes many different educational views into account. The choice of literature, objectives, assessments, and instructional activities all coordinate to help students read to the best of their ability by developing vital critical thinking skills. The Young Adult literature in the unit is relevant for the students, which means that they will become engaged with the reading, make personal connections, and therefore, deepen comprehension. By the same token, the gothic emphasis in the unit allows the students to aid in identity formation, which is essential at this stage in their lives. This unit plan shows students that obstacles are an unavoidable part of life, but overcoming them will make us stronger in the end. Students may not be fighting tangible monsters like the characters in the novels, but everyone has monsters inside of them that they have to face; rather than deny or run away from these fears, we need to embrace them in order to discover our true selves. While the ultimate goal of the unit plan is to foster critical thinking skills, another important goal is to create lifelong readers by choosing relevant literature and scaffolding the learning process; rather than feel defeated with the texts, students will be able to analyze the literature in all of its depth and power. Through the use of collaborative learning, scaffolding, differentiated instruction, organizing and analysis tools, and inquiry-based learning, this unit plan shows how gothic and Young Adult literature can teach students not only how to read, but more importantly, how to think. The final line of *The Monstrumologist* says it all: "Yes, my dear child, monsters are real. I happen to have one hanging in my basement" (454). Students need to face their monsters—and the first step is letting them out of the basement.

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Objectives

Reading Literature Standards

CCSS.RL.9-10.2

"Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze in detail its development over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details; provide an objective summary of the text."

Deconstruction:

What should students know? Theme; development; details; summary

What reasoning will be used? Determine; analyze

What skills are required? Reading; writing

Student-friendly: Students will be able to summarize a text, determine the main idea, and explain how the main idea is developed.

CCSS.RL.9-10.3

"Analyze how complex characters develop over the course of a text, interact with other characters, and advance the plot or develop the theme."

Deconstruction:

What should students know? Complex; development; interaction; plot; theme

What reasoning will be used? Analyze

What skills are required? Reading; writing

Student-friendly: Students will be able to explain how characters in a text change and affect the story.

CCSS.RL.9-10.5

"Analyze how an author's choices concerning how to structure a text, order events within it, and manipulate time create such effects as mystery, tension, or surprise."

Deconstruction:

What should students know? Structure; events; manipulation of time; effects

What reasoning will be used? Analyze

What skills are required? Reading; writing

Student-friendly: Students will be able to study the organization of a text's plot and explore the meaning behind the choices made.

CCSS.RL.9-10.9

"Compare and contrast texts in different forms or genres in terms of their approaches to similar themes and topics."

Deconstruction:

What should students know? Form; genre; themes; topics

What reasoning will be used? Compare; contrast

What skills are required? Reading; writing

Student-friendly: Students will be able to explain the similarities and differences between different aspects of multiple texts.

<u>Writing Standards</u>

CCSS.W.9-10.9

"Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research."

Deconstruction:

What should students know? Evidence; claims; analysis; reflection; research

What reasoning will be used? Analyze; assess; conclude

What skills are required? Reading; writing; research

Student-friendly: Students will be able to analyze a text and use textual evidence to write an essay that argues a certain point.

Language Standards

CCSS.L.9-10.4

"Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on *grades 9-10 reading and content*, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.

a. Use context as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.
b. Identify and correctly use patterns of word changes that indicate different meanings or parts of speech.
c. Consult general and specialized reference materials, both print and digital, to find the pronunciation of a word or determine or clarify its precise meaning, its part of speech, or it etymology.
d. Verify the preliminary determination of the meaning of a word or phrase."

Deconstruction:

What should students know? Context; patterns; parts of speech; pronunciation; etymology; preliminary determination

What reasoning will be used? Determine; clarify; flexibly choose strategies; identify; consult

What skills are required? Reading; writing; research

Student-friendly: Students will be able to discover the meaning of words in a variety of ways.

CCSS.L.9-10.5

"Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.

a. Interpret figures of speech in context and analyze their role in the text.
b. Analyze nuances in the meaning of words with similar denotations."

Deconstruction:

What should students know? Figurative language; word relationships; nuances; context; role; denotations

What reasoning will be used? Demonstrate; interpret; analyze

What skills are required? Reading

Student-friendly: Students will be able to analyze the meanings of words and how they operate in a text.

Speaking and Listening Standard

CCSS.SL.9-10.1

"Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions with diverse partners on grades 9-10 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

a. Come to discussions prepared, having read and researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence from texts and other research on the topic or issue to stimulate a thoughtful, well-reasoned exchange of ideas.
b. Work with peers to set rules for collegial discussions and decision-making, clear goals and deadlines, and individual roles as needed.
c. Propel conversations by posing and responding to questions that relate the current discussion to broader themes or larger ideas; actively incorporate others into the discussion; and clarify, verify, or challenge ideas and conclusions.

d. Respond thoughtfully to diverse perspectives, summarize points of agreement and disagreement, and, when warranted, qualify or justify their own views and understanding and make new connections in light of the evidence and reasoning presented.

e. Integrate multiple sources of information presented in diverse media or formats, evaluating the credibility and accuracy of each source.

f. Evaluate a speaker's point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric, identifying any fallacious reasoning or exaggerated or distorted evidence."

Deconstruction:

What should students know? Discussion; persuasion; diverse; collaborative; connection

What reasoning will be used? Express; analyze; evaluate; infer; verify; justify

What skills are required? Reading; speaking

Student-friendly: Students will participate in discussions of literary works.

Day One: Introduction to Gothicism
Objective: Students will learn the definition, history, landmark texts, and elements of gothic literature. (CCSS.RL.9-10.5)

Opening Activity: (10 minutes) Show three brief film clips: Halloween, Psycho, and The Ring. "What comes to mind when you hear the word "gothic?" Students will share their answers and discuss the following: their favorite scary movies, how movies manage to scare us, and why we love to get scared.
Modeling/Instruction: (20 minutes) Part of PowerPoint lecture (definition, architecture, the sublime, history of gothic literature, plot, characters, theme, and point of view)
Group Work: (10 minutes) Split into four groups. Each group will read a passage from a gothic novel (*The Castle of Otranto, Dracula, The Haunting of Hill House,* and *The Shining*). *The Haunting of Hill House* and *The Shining* groups will attempt to describe the setting in terms that may apply to all gothic literature. The *Dracula* and *The Castle of Otranto* groups will do the same for the atmosphere.
Whole Class: (5 minutes) Discuss conclusions and finish PowerPoint (critical reception and objectives)
Closing Activity: (5 minutes) Exit slip—"How have your ideas of the word 'gothic' changed according to what you have learned?"
Remediation: Provide additional examples of gothic literature.
Enrichment: Research more examples of gothic literature. **Resources:** **Harvey and Daniels (Inquiry-based learning)** **Tovani (Exit slip)** **Burke (Technology- Film clips and PowerPoint)**

Day Two
Objective: Students will analyze song lyrics that portray Gothicism, focusing on how the gothic elements (theme and atmosphere) and figurative language shape the meaning of the

song (CCSS.RL.9-10.2 and CCSS.L.9-10.5)
Opening Activity: (5 minutes) Review the definition and elements of Gothicism.
Modeling/Instruction: (20 minutes) Listen to and analyze the lyrics of "My Heart is the Worst Kind of Weapon" as a whole class.
I spent most of last night dragging this lake
For the corpses of all my past mistakes
Sell me out—the joke's on you
We are salt—you are the wound
Empty another bottle and let me tear you to pieces
This is me wishing you into the worst situations
I'm the kind of kid that can't let anything go
But you wouldn't know a good thing
If it came up and slit your throat
Your remorse hasn't fallen on deaf ears
Rather ones that just don't care, 'cause I know
That you're in between arms somewhere
Next to heartbeats where you shouldn't dare sleep
Now I'll teach you a lesson for keeping secrets from me
Take your taste back, peel back your skin
And try to forget how it feels inside
You should try saying no once in awhile, and did you hear the news?
I could dissect you and gut you on this stage

Not as eloquent as I may have imagined
But it will get the job done (you're done)
Every line is plotted and designed to leave you standing
On your bedroom window's ledge
And everyone else that it hits that it gets to
Is nothing more than collateral damage
Modeling: (10 minutes)
• **Identify the key lines that demonstrate gothic elements/themes (violence, mystery, destructive love).**
• **Discuss the tone of the song and how figurative language is used.**
• **Compose a T-Chart that compares the literal and figurative meanings of "heart" and "weapon." How does this analysis bring new meaning to the song?**
Group Work: (10 minutes) In pairs, discuss the following questions:
• **Describe the speaker's character and who he/she is speaking to.**
• **How does the speaker play with language? What effect does it have on the song's meaning?**
• **What is the purpose of the violent imagery?**
• **What story does the song tell?**
Homework: (5 minutes to explain) Choose a song that demonstrates Gothicism and analyze the lyrics. Identify at least three specific lines that portray gothic elements/themes and describe how they affect the song's meaning. Create a T-Chart derived from a metaphor in your chosen song.

Remediation: Work with students to identify a metaphor in their chosen songs.
Enrichment: As independent practice, identify more than three lines in your chosen song, or create more than one T-Chart.
Resources: **Harvey and Daniels (Group work)** **Burke (T-Chart and range of texts)**

Day Three
Objective: Students will examine gothic elements through different versions of *Red Riding Hood*, focusing on theme. (CCSS.RL.9-10.2)

Beginning of class: Turn in song lyrics assignment.
Mini-Lesson: (10 minutes) Theme. Discuss definition and how students can derive a theme from a story.
Opening Activity: (5 minutes) Show a film clip of *Red Riding Hood* (2011 version with Amanda Seyfried). Discuss students' initial reactions—have you ever considered this classic fairy tale to be a horror story?
Whole Class: (15 minutes) Read the Grimm brothers' version, *Little Red Cap,* using sticky notes to hold thinking.
Group Work: (10 minutes) In pairs, identify the gothic elements that appeared in the story. Come up to the board and write an answer in at least three of the gothic element columns (setting, atmosphere, plot, character, theme).
Discussion: (10 minutes) How does this version differ from how you remember this classic tale? Why do we have different versions? Identify symbols and their impact on the story.
Independent/Homework: Read *The Erl-King* from Angela Carter's *The Bloody Chamber* and come to class with a specific passage that illustrates Gothicism.
Remediation: Listen to *Little Red Cap* on tape.
Enrichment: Research other versions of this classic fairy tale and compare to *Little Red Cap*.
Resources: **Burke (Technology- film clip)** **Tovani (Sticky notes)** **Harvey and Daniels (Group work)** **Marzano (Nonlinguistic representation)**

Blasingame and Bushman (Mini-lesson)

Day Four

Objective: Students will be able to compare and contrast different versions of *Red Riding Hood*. (CCSS.RL.9-10.9)

Opening Activity: (10 minutes) Students will fill in the following analogy: "Gothic elements are to literature as _____ is to _____. Free write: What passage from *The Erl-King* did you choose and why? How is the story similar and different to the Grimm's version of *Red Riding Hood*?
Whole Class: (20 minutes) Students will read aloud *Company of Wolves* from Angela Carter's *The Bloody Chamber*, stopping periodically to discuss key passages.
Group Work: (10 minutes) Carousel Brainstorming. There will be five posters around the room (themes, characters, plot, atmosphere, and setting) and each group will rotate around the room as they contribute to each poster.
Closing Activity: (10 minutes) How are these stories alike and different? Which aspects of each did you like the best and why? How do the gothic undertones change the meaning of the tale? Which version portrays the gothic best?
Homework: Read the Prologue through Chapter 2 of *Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children* while annotating.
Remediation: Listen to *Company of Wolves* on tape.
Enrichment: Fill out a Venn diagram that compares/contrasts the three different versions.
Resources: **Blasingame and Bushman (Free write)** **Marzano (Similarities and differences)** **Wormeli (Carousel)**

Day Five
Objective: Students will analyze the beginning of *Miss Peregrine's*, focusing on tone,

setting, atmosphere, and characters. Most importantly, students will examine the effects of the story's structure (narration and vintage photos). (CCSS.RL.9-10.3 and CCSS.RL.9-10.5 and CCSS.L.9-10.4)
Opening Activity: (15 minutes) Decipher meaning of vocabulary words based on context clues—earnest, reverence, viscous, coalesce, nostalgia, languid, placate, soporific, cajole, and succumb.
Whole class: (10 minutes) Create a character list with qualities and roles of each character introduced so far.
Group Work: (20 minutes) Separate into five discussion groups.
Possible questions:
• **What role do the photos play in the story? How would it be different if they were illustrations?**
• **What does the island remind you of?**
• **Why does a bird watch over the children? What could that signify?**
• **How is Jacob's relationship with his family?**
• **Why do you think he wants to be fired? What does that say about his character?**
• **How does the weather and setting reflect the plot?**
• **How does the grandfather's death affect Jacob? What do you make of his last words?**
• **Is Jacob crazy? Why or why not? How would you react to him if you met him? What would you do if you were in his shoes?**
Whole Class: Wrap up discussion as a class; have groups share synopsis of their discussion.

Homework: Read Chapter 3 through 5 of *Miss Peregrine's* using Interactive Notes.
Remediation: For the vocabulary activity, give students multiple sentences for each word.
Enrichment: Find five other unknown words in the novel to decipher meaning.
Resources: **Marzano (Vocabulary)** **Harvey and Daniels (Group work)** **Burke (Interactive notes)**

Day Six
Objective: Students will analyze Chapters 3-5 of *Miss Peregrine's*, focusing on theme and Gothic elements like atmosphere and setting. (CCSS.RL.9-10.2 and CCSS.RL.9-10.5)

Opening Activity: (15 minutes) Look at one of Seamus Heaney's bog poems: "Bogland." This will bring more depth to students' knowledge of the historical connections in this novel, especially concerning the preservation of bogpeople.
Group Work: (35 minutes) Literature circles
Discussion questions and key passages:
• **How is the setting "gothic?"**
• **"Where this world ended and the next began, cold, damp, and sunless."**
• **What role does religion play in the story?**
• **How does the bog affect the story?**
Homework: Read Ch. 6-8 of *Miss Peregrine's* using sticky notes to hold thinking.
Remediation: Provide specific passages from this section for students to analyze.
Enrichment: Read other "bog" poems and analyze.
Resources: **Harvey and Daniels (Literature circles)** **Tovani (Sticky notes)**

Day Seven
Objective: Students will analyze Ch. 6-8 of *Miss Peregrine's*, focusing on plot structure,

theme, and characterization. (CCSS.RL.9-10.2, CCSS.RL.9-10.3, and CCSS.RL.9-10.5)
Opening Activity/Mini-Lesson: (10 minutes) Foreshadowing. Students will look at different techniques of foreshadowing and discuss its role in narratives. Students will determine what types of foreshadowing are used in *Miss Peregrine's*.
Whole class discussion questions and key passages: (20 minutes)
• **What themes can you identify in the story and how are they developed?**
• **Why do you think religious people don't approve of peculiars?**
• **"In a world so afraid of otherness"**
• **"…had arrested their emotions as well as their bodies"**
• **Why do they describe the raid as "our beautiful display?"**
• **How do the peculiar abilities define who the children are?**
• **"Hiding in plain sight"**
Group work: (15 minutes) In pairs, fill out a Discussion Web that analyzes the possible repercussions of Jacob's decision to stay at Miss Peregrine's or go back home.
Closing Activity: (5 minutes) Whole class wrap up; have students share their answers from the Discussion Web.
Homework: Read Ch. 9-11 of *Miss Peregrine's* using Episodic Notes.
Remediation: Provide several examples in film and literature of foreshadowing.
Enrichment: Write an introduction to a short story using foreshadowing.
Resources: **Groenke and Scherff (Discussion web)** **Burke (Episodic notes)**

Blasingame and Bushman (Mini-lesson)

Day Eight
Objective: Students will analyze the last three chapters of *Miss Peregrine's*, focusing on

theme and each gothic element. (CCSS.RL.9-10.2, CCSS.RL.9-10.3, CCSS.RL.9-10.5, and CCSS.W.9-10.9)
Opening Activity: (10 minutes) Free write—what are the main themes of this novel? Use textual examples to support your answer.
Whole class: (5 minutes) Discuss the different events that students chose to include in their Episodic Notes.
Group Work: (30 minutes) Jigsaw. Students will separate into five groups that each focus on a different gothic element (theme, character, plot, setting, and atmosphere). In each group, students will examine how the novel develops the corresponding gothic element using textual examples. Students will then disperse into different groups to explain what they learned in their home groups.
Homework: (5 minutes to explain) Choose at least five photos that tell your own story, tape them to notebook paper, and explain how they illustrate your own "theme."
Remediation: Provide key passages to students to analyze the Gothic elements.
Enrichment: Choose the main theme of the novel and explain its development throughout the story.
Resources: **Blasingame and Bushman (Free write)** **Wormeli (Jigsaw)**

Day Nine
Objective: Students will be able to compare/contrast Celtic fables with *Miss Peregrine's*.

(CCSS.RL.9-10.9)
Opening Activity: (5 minutes) Students can share their photos.
Independent: (40 minutes) Lab day. Students will research aspects of Celtic fables and draw connections to the novel, focusing on aspects such as setting, characters, symbols, themes, etc. I will provide a useful website (http://www.luminarium.org/mythology/ireland/) and tell students to pay special attention to the following sections: Oisin, Celtic Otherworld, and Irish Fairies. Find at least three significant parallels and write a one page response.
Closing Activity: (5 minutes) Exit Slip: Why would Riggs write a modern day fable? What effect does it have?
Remediation: Use a graphic organizer to take notes while researching; provide more specific links that students can read to make connections.
Enrichment: Research fables from a different country and make connections to novel.
Resources: **Tovani (Exit slip)** **Kymell-Harvey (Connection to Celtic fables)**

Day Ten
Objective: Students will analyze *The Monkey's Paw*, focusing on theme and plot structure.

(CCSS.RL.9-10.2, CCSS.RL.9-10.5, and CCSS.L.9-10.4)
Opening Activity: (5 minutes) Free-write—if you had three wishes, what would they be? Share answers.
Vocabulary Activity: (10 minutes) Decipher meaning of unknown words based on context clues: torrent, rubicund, doughty, credulity, prosaic, and avaricious.
Whole class: (25 minutes) Readers' Workshop. Each student will read short story in one of three ways: silent, listen on tape with headphones, or take turns reading aloud in a group outside the classroom. Use Interactive Notes during this process.
Group work: (10 minutes) Think-pair-share. Each student will fill out the "After" section in the Interactive Notes then pair up and discuss their responses.
Homework: Read the Prologue-Ch. 2 of *The Monstrumologist* and annotate text.
Remediation: For the vocabulary activity, provide multiple sentences for each word.
Enrichment: Find other unknown words in the story and decipher meaning.
Resources: **Blasingame and Bushman (Free write)** **Marzano (Vocabulary)** **Wormeli (Think-Pair-Share)** **Tovani (Annotations)** **Burke (Interactive notes)** **Gardner (Differentiation)**

Day Eleven
Objective: Students will analyze the beginning of *The Monstrumologist,* focusing

specifically on plot structure and setting. (CCSS.RL.9-10.5)
Opening Activity: (15 minutes) Decipher meaning of vocabulary words based on context clues—alcove, implore, macabre, emaciated, ambiguous, cacophony, chagrin, alacrity, recalcitrant, and abhorrent.
Whole class: (10 minutes) Reporter's Notes—establish who, what, where, when, how, why, and so what of the exposition and first two chapters of the novel.
Group Work: (20 minutes) Separate into four discussion groups.
Possible questions:
• **Why is the story told through journals?**
• **"The one who saved me…and the one who cursed me"**
• **How is the theme of secrecy developed so far in the novel?**
• **How does Yancey set the scene?**
• **Do you agree that the girl did not suffer? Why or why not?**
• **How would you describe the doctor's attitude? Will Henry's? Describe their relationship.**
• **How does the imagery of fire play a part in the story?**
• **"Our enemy is fear"**
• **Compare/contrast the Anthropophagi with hollowgasts**
• **What do the parallels with a lion and shark suggest about the Anthropophagi?**
• **How does Yancey create suspense?**
Closing Activity: Whole class wrap up; groups will share a synopsis of their discussion.
Homework: Read Ch. 3-4 of *The Monstrumologist*; come with a specific passage that

demonstrates a key moment.
Remediation: Provide multiple sentences for each word in the vocabulary activity.
Enrichment: Find other unknown words in the novel and decipher meaning.
Resources: **Marzano (Vocabulary)** **Burke (Reporter's notes)** **Harvey and Daniels (Group work)**

Day Twelve
Objective: Students will analyze Ch. 3-4 of the novel, focusing specifically on

characterization. (CCSS.RL.9-10.3)
Opening Activity: (10 minutes) Journal response—describe the dynamic between the doctor and Will throughout this section. What has changed between them and why? Use textual examples.
Mini-lesson: (15 minutes) Symbols. Define and give examples. Discuss the meaning of Will's hat and the doctor's keepsakes left behind from his father. Ask students to identify other symbols in the novel.
Independent: (20 minutes) Create a character analysis of both Will and the doctor. Compare and contrast them using textual examples—focus on personality traits, family history, motives, relationships, and roles in the story. Then either compare and contrast one of them with a character from another gothic text or a person in your own life.
Homework: (5 minutes to explain) Read Ch. 5-6 of the novel using Sensory Notes.
Remediation: Provide passages that illustrate symbols in the novel.
Enrichment: Find additional symbols and explain their relevance in the novel.
Resources: **Blasingame and Bushman (Journal response and mini-lesson)** **Tovani (Text-dependent analysis)** **Marzano (Compare and contrast)** **Burke (Sensory notes)**

Day Thirteen
Objective: Analyze Ch. 5-6 of the novel, focusing on theme, plot structure, and gothic

elements including setting and atmosphere. (CCSS.RL.9-10.2 and CCSS.RL.9-10.5)
Opening Activity: (10 minutes) Share responses from Sensory Notes as a class.
Group Work: (30 minutes) Literature Circles.
Discussion questions and key passages:
• **Why do you think the Anthropophagi covet the head most of all?**
• **Young girls at the beginning of womanhood were sacrificed to the monsters. What does this signify?**
• **How does the sea and weather affect the story?**
• **Why does the doctor not kill Varner?**
• **Why do you think his father brought the creatures to New Jerusalem?**
• **What themes can you derive from these two chapters?**
Closing Activity: (10 minutes) Whole class wrap up; groups will share a synopsis of their discussion.
Homework: Read Ch. 7 using stick notes to hold thinking; choose at least one passage that exemplifies a gothic element.
Remediation: Provide significant passages in this section.
Enrichment: Research other examples in history of sacrificial rituals.
Resources: **Harvey and Daniels (Literature circles)** **Tovani (Sticky notes)**

Day Fourteen

Objective: Students will analyze Ch. 7, focusing specifically on theme development. (CCSS.RL.9-10.2 and CCSS.W.9-10.9)
Opening Activity: (15 minutes) Journal response—Identify and describe the gothic elements in the novel and how they impact the overall story. Use textual examples.
Whole class activity: (35 minutes) Human continuum. I will place a line on the floor with an "A" for agree on one side and a "D" for disagree on the other side. I will say a statement (a passage or theme) from the novel and each student will take their stance on the continuum. I will call on various students to defend their position using textual examples.
Statement examples:
• **"Some falsehoods are borne of necessity, not foolishness"**
• **Running away would mean that Will's father died in vain.**
• **The doctor does not love Will.**
• **Some murders are justified according to who the victim is.**
Homework: Read Ch. 8-9 and choose one passage that describes the setting vividly.
Remediation: Provide passages and have students decide which gothic elements they each represent.
Enrichment: Have students think of a statement or theme to use for the Human Continuum.
Resources: **Blasingame and Bushman (Journal response)** **Tovani (Text-dependent analysis)** **Wormeli (Human continuum)**

Day Fifteen
Objective: Students will analyze Ch. 8-9, focusing specifically on plot structure.

(CCSS.RL.9-10.5)
Opening Activity: (10 minutes) I will read some of the passages that the students chose to describe the setting and students will draw images that come to mind. Discuss how the setting affects the scene.
Whole class: (30 minutes) Socratic Seminar. I will observe students with a rubric as they discuss issues in the novel with each other. I will prompt them with various questions at times.
Discussion questions and key passages:
• **The mother of the home is found still clutching her baby; what does this represent?**
• **How does Yancey create suspense in these chapters?**
• **Is the doctor guilty of these murders? Why or why not?**
• **Why does the doctor repeat "I believe" and "It is my judgment?"**
• **How does orphanage play a role in the story?**
• **Identify moments of foreshadowing and its impact on the novel.**
• **"I am dead too. I feel your hand; I see you sitting there; I breathe. But inside there is nothing."**
• **"He is what he hunts."**
Closing Activity: (10 minutes) Exit Slip: Identify and describe at least two similarities and differences between *The Monstrumologist* and *Miss Peregrine's*.
Homework: Read Ch. 10-11 using Episodic Notes.
Remediation: Use a graphic organizer during the Socratic Seminar; provide list of key points to think about and discuss.

Enrichment: Research some gothic poetry that emphasizes the setting and bring to class.
Resources: **Marzano (Nonlinguistic representation)** **Wormeli (Socratic seminar)** **Tovani (Exit slip)** **Burke (Episodic notes)**

Day Sixteen
Objective: Students will analyze Ch. 10-11 of the novel, focusing on theme development

and characterization. (CCSS.RL.9-10.2, CCSS.RL.9-10.3, and CCSS.RL.9-10.9)
Opening Activity: (5 minutes) Share which events students chose to include in their Episodic Notes and why.
Mini-Lesson: (10 minutes) Theme. A prominent theme in the novel (especially these chapters) is the connection between humans and the monsters. Compare/contrast humans with the Anthropophagi as a class and discuss how this connection impacts the story.
Whole class discussion questions and key passages: (20 minutes)
• **What is the role of parasites in the novel?**
• **"There is no morality save the morality of the moment"**
• **How does the rain impact the scene? What does it represent?**
• **What does the fire symbolize?**
• **"I escaped; I am bound. I ran; I remain"**
Group Work: (15 minutes) In pairs, fill out a Think in Threes diagram. Choose a theme to put in the center and analyze how three different characters view this theme. For instance, a theme could be "justified murder." Turn in at end of class.
Homework: Read Ch. 12 and choose at least three passages that demonstrate a turning point in the story or suspense.
Remediation: Provide various ideas of the theme or passages that demonstrate a certain theme.
Enrichment: Compare and contrast how the two novels (*Miss Peregrine's* and *The Monstrumologist*) portray a similar theme, like the connection between humans and monsters.

Resources:

Marzano (Compare and contrast)

Harvey and Daniels (Group work)

Burke (Think in threes)

Blasingame and Bushman (Mini-lesson)

Day Seventeen
Objective: Analyze Ch. 12 of the novel, focusing on how the author creates suspense

leading up to the climax and characterization. (CCSS.RL.9-10.3 and CCSS.RL.9-10.5)
Opening Activity: (15 minutes) Free write—explain why you chose the three passages and how they create certain effects. Discuss as a class.
Whole class discussion questions and key passages: (20 minutes)
• **"Perhaps that is our doom, our human curse, to never really know one another"**
• **How does religion play a role in the novel, specifically this chapter?**
• **What do eyes symbolize in this chapter?**
• **Should Malachi have sacrificed himself? Why or why not?**
• **How does the maternal instinct play a part in the novel?**
Group Work: (15 minutes) Create bio poems in groups of four. Share as a whole class.
Homework: Read Ch.13-Epilogue of the novel using sticky notes to hold thinking.
Remediation: Provide film clips that demonstrate suspense to relate to how Yancey achieves suspense through narration.
Enrichment: Find film clips that demonstrate suspense and compare/contrast them to the techniques that Yancey uses to create suspense. What are the advantages and disadvantages of each medium?
Resources: **Blasingame and Bushman (Free write)** **Harvey and Daniels (Group work)** **Tovani (Sticky notes)**

Day Eighteen

Objective: Analyze the final chapters of *The Monstrumologist* and the novel as a whole, focusing specifically on theme and characterization. (CCSS.RL.9-10.2 and CCSS.RL.9-10.3)
Opening Activity: (10 minutes) Journal response—examine the gothic elements that appear throughout the novel using textual examples.
Group Work: (20 minutes) Theme Matrices. In groups of four, each student will fill out a diagram that compares the following: my opinion, my group's opinion, and the author's opinion of different themes.
Independent Work: (15 minutes) Choose a character and examine how he changed throughout the novel using three Conversational Roundtable diagrams (beginning, middle, end).
Closing Activity: (5 minutes) Whole class wrap up
Remediation: Provide textual examples that illustrate gothic elements and have students describe how the gothic elements are developed.
Enrichment: Examine the role of a few secondary characters in the novel using the Conversational Roundtable.
Resources: **Blasingame and Bushman (Journal response)** **Wormeli (Theme matrices)** **Tovani (Text-dependent analysis)** **Harvey and Daniels (Group work)** **Burke (Conversational roundtable)**

Day Nineteen
Objective: Students will examine gothic elements (focusing on theme and setting and atmosphere) and figurative language through a poem, "Annabel Lee." (CCSS.RL.9-10.2, CCSS.RL.9-10.5, and CCSS.L.9-10.5)
Opening Activity: (5 minutes) Free write—how do gothic texts view the subject of love?
Whole class: (5 minutes) Read "Annabel Lee."
Group Work: (30 minutes) Break up into six groups, each group will analyze one stanza of the poem. They will look for figurative language and analyze its effect on the poem's meaning and gothic elements that appear. They will break down their stanza line by line and turn in their analysis as a group.
Whole class: (10 minutes) Each group will share their analysis.
Remediation: Listen to the poem on tape; draw the images that come to mind.
Enrichment: Research another gothic poem that illustrates love in a similar way and compare it with "Annabel Lee."
Resources: **Blasingame and Bushman (Free write)** **Harvey and Daniels (Group work)**

Day Twenty

Objective: Students will examine gothic elements (focusing on setting and atmosphere and theme) and figurative language through a poem, "The Haunted Beach." (CCSS.RL.9-10.2, CCSS.RL.9-10.5 and CCSS.L.9-10.5)
Opening Activity: (10 minutes) I will read the poem aloud as the students draw any images that come to mind. When finished, we will discuss what they drew and the impact it has on the poem—what themes do you think this poem portrays based on its imagery?
Group Work: (20 minutes) Break into three groups. Each group will analyze two stanzas of the poem line by line, focusing on figurative language and gothic elements.
Whole class: (5 minutes) Each group will share their analysis.
Independent: (15 minutes) Compare and contrast "Annabel Lee" and "The Haunted Beach."
Homework: Read the beginning "Letters" of *Frankenstein* using Reporter's Notes.
Remediation: Provide list of vocabulary words derived from "The Haunted Beach" and their definitions.
Enrichment: Write a gothic-inspired poem that focuses on the use of imagery.
Resources: **Marzano (Nonlinguistic representation and compare/contrast)** **Harvey and Daniels (Group work)** **Burke (Reporter's notes)**

Day Twenty-One

Objective: Analyze the "Letters" at the beginning of *Frankenstein*, focusing specifically on plot structure. (CCSS.RL.9-10.5)
Opening Activity: (15 minutes) Go over answers from Reporter's Notes. Discuss each section to make sure students know what is happening and who the characters are before they attempt to critically think about the text.
Mini-Lesson: (10 minutes) Allusion. Explain what an allusion is and its purpose in a text. Give examples. Ask students to identify an allusion that has occurred so far in the story.
Whole Class Discussion: (20 minutes)
• **How is the sublime portrayed?**
• **What themes can you derive from the story so far?**
• **Describe the captain and stranger's relationship. Why do you think they feel connected?**
• **How do the setting and atmosphere affect the story?**
• **How does Shelley create suspense?**
• **What gothic elements have appeared? Which is the most prominent?**
Closing Activity: (5 minutes) Exit Slip. Summarize the "Letters."
Homework: Read Ch. 1-4 using sticky notes to hold thinking.
Remediation: Look at a map of Europe to visualize the places in the novel.
Enrichment: Read "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner" and explain why Shelley would allude to this poem.
Resources: **Tovani (Exit slip and sticky notes)**

Blasingame and Bushman (Mini-lesson)

Day Twenty-Two

Objective: Analyze Ch. 1-4 in terms of characterization and theme. (CCSS.RL.9-10.2, CCSS.RL.9-10.3, and CCSS.L.9-10.4)
Opening Activity: (15 minutes) Decipher the meaning of vocabulary words through context clues: fortitude, beneficent, indefatigable, countenance, abhorrence, vehement, incipient, arduous, palpable, and uncouth.
Group Work: (20 minutes) Separate into four discussion groups.
• **How does Victor describe his father?**
• **How did his father come to marry his mother? Describe their relationship.**
• **How does Victor feel about Elizabeth?**
• **What is the tone of the first four chapters? How do you think it will impact the rest of the novel?**
• **Why does Elizabeth stand out to Victor's parents when they meet her?**
• **What symbolism or themes can you derive so far?**
• **Who did Victor study Agrippa and Paracelsus?**
• **How would you characterize Victor? What motivates him?**
• **Why do you think so many characters undergo sickness?**
• **Compare/contrast the two professors that Victor meets**
• **What are some causes of Victor's "fate"?**
• **Why does Victor want to create life?**
Whole Class: (5 minutes) Wrap up; groups will share a synopsis of their discussion.
Closing Activity: (10 minutes) Exit Slip—compare/contrast Victor with Dr. Warthrop.
Homework: Read Ch. 5-8 using sticky notes to hold thinking.

Remediation: Provide multiple sentences for each word in the vocabulary activity.
Enrichment: Find additional unknown words in this section and decipher their meaning.
Resources: **Marzano (Vocabulary and compare/contrast)** **Harvey and Daniels (Group work)** **Tovani (Exit slip and sticky notes)**

Day Twenty-Three

Objective: Analyze Ch. 5-8, focusing on plot structure. (CCSS.RL.9-10.5 and CCSS.RL.9-10.9)
Opening Activity: (15 minutes) Show a film clip of the creature coming to life. Free write afterwards—how does this clip compare to the way that Shelley wrote the scene and how you imagined it while reading? How is this moment a turning point in the novel? Discuss as a class.
Group Work: (30 minutes) Literature Circles.
Possible discussion questions and key passages:
• **How does Shelley set the scene the night it comes to life?**
• **How does Victor react? Why?**
• **Describe/draw what the creature looks like.**
• **What happens to Victor shortly after seeing Clerval? What does this symbolize?**
• **How does Victor describe his relationship with Clerval?**
• **Why did Victor become Clerval's pupil in Oriental studies?**
• **Describe what happens in the latter part of Ch. 6. How do you think this happiness in these moments will affect the future?**
• **Why do you think the picture of the mother is gone?**
• **Why does Victor's father stress that he shouldn't come with vengeance?**
• **Victor was away from home for 6 years, yet he still hesitates on his way back—why? What urges him forward?**
• **What sight brings up emotions in Victor as he nears Geneva? Why?**
• **How does Shelley set the scene the night he reaches Geneva? What happens?**

• **Why does Victor believe the daemon murdered William?**
• **How does William's death compare to Erasmus Gray's in *The Monstrumologist*?**
• **Why does Victor not confess his knowledge?**
• **"The first hapless victims to my unhallowed arts"**
• **Analyze Elizabeth's character and her role in the story**
Closing Activity: (5 minutes) Exit Slip—who do you think is guilty for William's murder and why?
Homework: Read Ch. 9-13 using Sensory Notes.
Remediation: Look up pictures of the places in the novel to visualize the setting.
Enrichment: Find multiple film clips of the moment that the creature comes to life and compare/contrast them.
Resources: **Burke (Technology and sensory notes)** **Blasingame and Bushman (Free write)** **Marzano (Similarities and differences)** **Harvey and Daniels (Literature circles)** **Tovani (Exit slip)**

Day Twenty-Four
Objective: Analyze Ch. 9-13, focusing on characterization and gothic elements (specifically point of view, theme, and setting). (CCSS.RL.9-10.2, CCSS.RL.9-10.3, and CCSS.RL.9-10.5)
Opening Activity: (10 minutes) Discuss responses on Sensory Notes. Why does Shelley focus so much on sensory details in these chapters? What are the effects?
Mini-Lesson: (15 minutes) Point of View. Discuss the different types of point of view and the effects of each. Ask students to identify which type of point of view Shelley uses in this novel and why it's important. Explain what a frame story is and why Shelley wrote *Frankenstein* in this way. Discuss how the use of multiple narrators affects this story—compare and contrast the moment of creation from the perspective of Victor and the creature.
Whole class discussion questions and key passages: (20 minutes)
• **Why does the lake provide solace for Victor?**
• **Why does he choose to not drown himself?**
• **Do you agree with Victor's reactions to this tragedy? Why or why not?**
• **"To whom thou are bound by ties only dissoluble by the annihilation of one of us"**
• **What is the role of religion in the story so far?**
• **Describe the encounter between Victor and the creature.**
• **How is the sublime portrayed?**
• **What ultimatum does the creature propose to Victor?**
• **How does the creature pass the first days of life?**

• **Analyze the creature's character in comparison to Victor**
• **How does the creature learn?**
• **What are his feelings for the inhabitants of the cottage?**
• **What are his deepest desires?**
• **What rejuvenates his feelings at the end of Ch. 4?**
• **What themes can you derive in these chapters?**
• **What gothic elements are prominent and how? Which is the most prominent?**
Closing Activity: (5 minutes) Exit Slip—pick a passage that demonstrates the sublime and explain its impact.
Homework: Read Ch. 14-17 using sticky notes to hold thinking.
Remediation: Listen to this section of the novel on tape; while reading, identify the narrator in each section.
Enrichment: Find works of art that portray the sublime.
Resources: **Marzano (Compare and contrast)** **Tovani (Exit slip and sticky notes)** **Blasingame and Bushman (Mini-lesson)**

Day Twenty-Five
Objective: Analyze Ch. 14-17, focusing on theme and characterization. (CCSS.RL.9-10.2 and CCSS.RL.9-10.3)
Opening Activity: (5 minutes) Journal—After reading the creature's side of the story, who do you sympathize with the most and why? Share responses.
Group Work: (15 minutes) Separate into groups of four people. Each group will fill out a discussion web that debates whether or not Victor should create a female companion for the creature. Students will identify reasons why he should and why he shouldn't, then come to a conclusion. Each group will have a spokesperson to share their decision and reasoning.
Whole Class Discussion: (20 minutes)
• **How does the family's reaction affect the creature's view of himself and the human race?**
• **Why does the creature compare himself to Adam and Satan?**
• **What does the murder of William tell the creature about himself? What could save him from doing evil?**
• **Why is the creature never given a name?**
• **In what ways is he like any human? In what ways is he different?**
• **Do you think he's justified in declaring an "ever-lasting war" against mankind and his creator? Is revenge ever justified? Compare this concept to *The Monstrumologist*.**
• **What are the most prominent themes in this section?**
Closing Activity: (10 minutes) Assign the unit assessment to be due in a week's time.

Homework: Read Ch. 18-21 using Episodic Notes.
Remediation: Listen to this section of the novel on tape.
Enrichment: Explain the most prominent theme in this section using textual examples.
Resources: **Blasingame and Bushman (Journal)** **Harvey and Daniels (Group work)** **Groenke and Scherff (Discussion web)** **Burke (Episodic notes)**

Gothic Literary Analysis Essay Guidelines

1. Choose a Gothic short story to read from the following list:
    - Any story (except *The Erl-King* and *Company of Wolves*) from *The Bloody Chamber* by Angela Carter
    - *The Lottery* by Shirley Jackson
    - *A Ghost Story* by Mark Twain
    - *The Night Flyer* by Stephen King
    - *The Wish* by Roald Dahl
    - *A Rose for Emily* by William Faulkner
    - *The Minister's Black Veil* by Nathaniel Hawthorne
    - *Rappaccini's Daughter* by Nathaniel Hawthorne
    - *The Monster* by Stephen Crane
    - *Where Are You Going, Where Have You Been?* by Joyce Carol Oates
    - *The Black Cat* by Edgar Allan Poe
    - *The Cask of Amontillado* by Edgar Allan Poe
    - *The Tell-Tale Heart* by Edgar Allan Poe
2. Analyze and annotate the short story based on the elements discussed in class: specifically characterization, theme, and plot structure. Look at how the author portrays Gothic elements (setting, atmosphere, characters, plot, theme, point of view). Think about *how* the author chooses to tell the story. Fill out Synthesis Notes.
3. Develop a thesis that traces the development of a theme in your short story, examining how characterization and plot structure affect that theme.
4. Meet individually with teacher to refine thesis before moving forward.

5. Write a 3-4 page essay that supports your thesis using textual examples.

Rubric

	Exceeds Expectations	Meets Expectations	Approaching Expectations
Thesis	Argument is clearly articulated and persuasive. Argument is original.	Argument is present, plausible, and contains a legitimate opinion, but somewhat broad.	Argument is present but not clear, focused, or legitimate.
Evidence	Highly persuasive and effective in supporting your argument. Each textual example serves a purpose and relates back to thesis.	Textual examples are present but not effective in arguing thesis.	Not enough textual examples are used or they do not support thesis.
Commentary	Creative/original ideas and insights. Effective elaboration of thesis, supporting points, and evidence.	Analysis supports argument, but ideas are obvious and basic.	Ideas lack development and creativity. Analysis does not connect back to thesis. Not enough analysis present.
Organization and Style	Flows smoothly from one point to the next. Supporting points, textual examples, and commentary are blended smoothly. Sentences are varied.	Supporting points, textual examples, and commentary are coherent and flow smoothly. Sentence variety is lacking.	Problems with sentence clarity, redundancy, and transitions. Quotations are not blended smoothly and no sentence variety.
Mechanics	Perfect! (1 or 2 minor errors)	Minor problems with spelling, punctuation, and grammar, but does not interfere with understanding.	Several distracting problems with spelling, punctuation, and grammar.

Rubric partly derived from Edutopia, 2009, YES Prep Public Schools.

Day Twenty-Six
Objective: Analyze Ch. 18-21, focusing on plot structure. (CCSS.RL.9-10.5 and CCSS.W.9-10.9)
Opening Activity: (10 minutes) Share responses from Episodic Notes. Why did you choose each specific event? What was the climax of this section and why?
Whole Class: (25 minutes) Socratic Seminar. I will observe students with a rubric and facilitate/prompt the discussion at times.
Possible discussion questions:
• **Which of the events surprised you the most and why?**
• **How does the decision to create a mate affect Victor's mood and life?**
• **What keeps Frankenstein from completing the female mate? Why does the creature direct his revenge to Frankenstein's wedding?**
• **How does Shelley create a feeling of suspense?**
Independent Work: (15 minutes) Examine how this novel illustrates the gothic elements using textual examples.
Homework: Read Ch. 22-24 using sticky notes to hold thinking.
Remediation: Provide some textual examples and have students identify and describe the gothic elements portrayed.
Enrichment: Write a hypothetical dialogue between two characters in the novel.
Resources: **Wormeli (Socratic seminar)** **Tovani (Text-dependent analysis and sticky notes)**

Day Twenty-Seven
Objective: Analyze Ch. 22-24 in terms of theme and characterization. (CCSS.RL.9-10.2 and CCSS.RL.9-10.3)
Opening Activity: (5 minutes) Free write—identify at least two symbols or motifs in the novel and explain how they make an impact.
Mini-lesson: (10 minutes) Doppelganger. Define the term and give examples (Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde). Discuss the significance of a doppelganger in relation to *Frankenstein* and ask students to find passages that demonstrate this concept.
Whole class discussion: (15 minutes)
• **Did the end surprise you? Can you imagine a different ending?**
• **What does Frankenstein promise to tell Elizabeth after they are married? How does he behave in the weeks leading up to their wedding?**
• **What is ironic or unexpected about the creature's revenge on Victor?**
• **How does Shelley show that Frankenstein and the creature are both obsessed with revenge? Does either of them truly win?**
• **How does Shelley return to her frame story in the last chapter? What effect does she achieve by using this method?**
• **How do you think Frankenstein failed as a human being?**
Group Work: (20 minutes) Each student will fill out a Theme Matrix with three columns next to each theme statement: my opinion, group's opinion, and author's opinion. After filling in the "my opinion" column, students will discuss in pairs and fill out the remainder of the matrix.

Remediation: Listen to this section of the novel on tape.
Enrichment: Write an alternative ending to the novel.
Resources: **Blasingame and Bushman (Free write and mini-lesson)** **Wormeli (Theme matrices)**

Day Twenty-Eight
Objective: Analyze *Frankenstein* as a whole and compare/contrast specific characters, plot devices, and themes between the different Gothic texts we have read. (CCSS.RL.9-10.2, CCSS.RL.9-10.3, CCSS.RL.9-10.5, and CCSS.RL.9-10.9)
Opening Activity: (20 minutes) Journal—choose one character from two of the texts and compare/contrast them; choose a specific plot device and compare how two authors use it the same and differently; choose a specific theme and compare/contrast how two authors develop that theme. Discuss responses.
Group Work: (30 minutes) Separate into four groups: Art, Music, Theater, and Film. The Art group will choose one of the following: create a comic strip of a crucial scene in *Frankenstein* and explain its significance or create a travel brochure of one of the prominent places in the novel. The Music group will create a soundtrack for the novel, choosing at least five songs that portray the mood, atmosphere, and emotions at certain moments. They will have to describe the song, the scene, and why they chose each one. The Theater group will imagine that Frankenstein and the creature had the chance to speak one last time and write a dialogue between them and perform it. The Film group will research the different portrayals of the creature according to popular culture (specifically films) and describe how they would film their own version of *Frankenstein* and why.
Remediation: Provide examples of possible pictures, songs, films, and dialogue scenes that the students could use.
Enrichment: Write a short script and film your own version of the novel.
Resources: **Blasingame and Bushman (Journal)**

Marzano (Compare and contrast)

Harvey and Daniels (Group work)

Gardner (Differentiation)

Day Twenty-Nine
Objective: Analyze *Frankenstein* in terms of theme, characterization, and plot structure. (CCSS.RL.9-10.2, CCSS.RL.9-10.3, and CCSS.RL.9-10.5)
Whole class: Lab day. Students can continue working in groups until projects are finished. Once group projects are finished, students can work individually on essays.
Homework: Finish group projects and essays.
Remediation: Work with students individually.
Enrichment: Find a different way to make connections to *Frankenstein* besides art, music, theater, and film.
Resources: **Harvey and Daniels (Group work)** **Gardner (Differentiation)**

Day Thirty
Objective: Students will continue to analyze gothic texts in terms of theme, characterization, and plot structure through individual and group presentations. (CCSS.RL.9-10.2, CCSS.RL.9-10.3, and CCSS.RL.9-10.5)
Opening Activity: (15 minutes) Students will share their analyses of their chosen short stories.
Group Presentations: (25 minutes) The four groups will present their projects to the class.
Closing Activity: (10 minutes) Discuss how students' views of Gothicism have changed.
Remediation: Use a graphic organizer to take notes on peers' presentations.
Enrichment: Write a gothic short story.
Resources: **Burke (Presentations)**