

## Year 8 – OURSELVES– KNOWLEDGE ORGANISER – THE MONSTER IN THE MIRROR: HOW IS THE UNCANNY AN EXTENSION OF OUR FEARS?

### What is the purpose of this topic?

I will explore how Gothic literature uses key conventions to demonstrate our own fears, in addition to fears of those around us.

I will focus on Gothic conventions, as well as explore and critique the portrayal of and attitudes towards women and mental health during the 19<sup>th</sup> Century.

I will study the 19<sup>th</sup> Century American Gothic short story: **The Yellow Wallpaper by Charlotte Perkins Gilman**. I will focus on the language and themes used, linking to the true experiences that influenced this text.

I will be inspired by literary conventions and language to create my own Gothic tale.

### Questions to ask yourself:

- What is Gothic literature?
- Which Gothic texts have I already read?
- What is ‘the uncanny’?
- Where have I seen/read examples of the uncanny before?
- Have attitudes towards mental health changed since the 19<sup>th</sup> Century?
- Who is Charlotte Perkins Gilman?
- What influenced Charlotte Perkins Gilman to write *The Yellow Wallpaper*?

## English Subject Terminology

No.	Term	Definition
1	Antagonist	A person who actively opposes or is hostile to someone or something; and adversary.
2	Anthropomorphism	Showing or treating animals, objects and gods as if they are human in appearance, character or behaviour.
3	Character	A person, animal, being or creature in a story.
4	Connotation	The idea, feeling or abstract meaning that a word invokes/creates for the reader.
5	Context	The circumstances surrounding a text, which may have influenced the writing.
6	Convention	The features or characteristics that texts use to help the reader understand its genre.
7	Critical Theory	A lens used to interpret literature according to the critical theory that we are studying.
8	Denotation	The literal meaning of a word that is found in a dictionary.
9	Flashback	A scene in a text that is set in a time earlier than the main story.
10	Genre	A style or category of literature.
11	Gothic Literature	A genre that focuses on the dark, eerie and mysterious. These stories often contain elements of terror, romance and the chilling or the bizarre.
12	Pathetic Fallacy	Giving human feelings and emotions to something non-human.
13	Protagonist	The main character who drives the story forward.
14	Return to the scene	Returning to the main story after a flashback.
15	Setting	The time and place in which the story takes place in a piece of literature. Setting can establish the mood or atmosphere of a scene or story.

## BIG IDEAS

No.	Term	Definition
1	Conflict	A serious disagreement, argument, or state of opposition.
2	Fear	An emotion caused by being afraid of something that is likely dangerous, painful or harmful.
3	Hysteria	Freud defined hysteria as uncontrollable emotion that appears physically. ‘Hysteria’ originates from the Greek word for uterus (‘hystera’). In the 19 <sup>th</sup> century, hysteria was used as a medical diagnosis given to women.
4	Isolation	Being or feeling alone, separated or segregated from others.
5	Manipulation	To control or influence a person or situation, often using exploitation and immoral behaviour.
6	Mental Health	A person’s psychological and emotional well-being.
7	Obscurity	Something that is unclear or difficult to understand.
8	Patriarchy	A system of society or government in which men hold the power.
9	Perception	The way in which something is regarded, understood or interpreted.
10	Power	The ability or capacity to do something or act in a particular way; the ability to influence the behaviour of others or events.
11	Reality	The state of things as they actually exist.
12	Relationship	The way in which people or things are connected.
13	Tension	Anticipation that evokes (creates) emotions, such as worry, anxiety, fear and stress.
14	The Uncanny	Freud defined the Uncanny as places, characters and objects that are familiar, yet strangely and frighteningly unfamiliar.
15	Trauma	Experiencing stressful, frightening or distressing events, causing an emotional response.