

The Gothic Novel

The Gothic novel is a form of novel which developed towards the end of the 18th century.

Gothic novels are frightening tales of horror and mystery, with characteristic features like ghosts and haunted castles, dark dungeons and supernatural events.

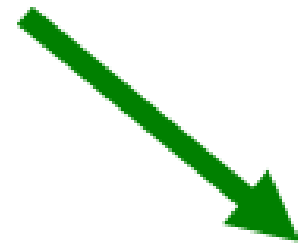
dungeon



*dark, underground room
used as a prison, especially
in a castle.*

In these tales there's a general feeling of darkness and pessimism.

The term "Gothic" was probably used to describe this style because the contents recalled the Middle Ages.



(the term "Gothic" sometimes means "Medieval") (=evoked)

The first novelist of this genre (which was a great success) was Horace Walpole, who wrote "*The Castle of Otranto*" (1765).

Other important Gothic novelists are Matthew Lewis who wrote "The Monk", published in 1796) and Ann Radcliffe (who wrote "The Mysteries of Udolpho", published in 1794).

*According to some critics,
Gothic novels were a reaction
against the good sense of the
period.*



reason, order, rationalism...