

Gothic grids

Gothic literature is a genre of novel that was popular in the late 18th and 19th century and is 'characterized by an atmosphere of mystery and horror, and with a pseudo-medieval setting.' (Oxford Encyclopaedic Dictionary)

Some of the features of gothic literature are:

- **settings:** wild and remote, with old castles, gloomy dungeons, monasteries
- **the supernatural:** ghosts, dreams, danger and death
- **atmosphere:** claustrophobic and sinister, with turbulent or gloomy weather
- **mood:** fear of imprisonment, strong emotions, desire for self-expression and freedom



Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights* was first published in 1847. Chapter 3 uses gothic conventions to create the conditions for Mr Lockwood's encounter with the ghost of the older Cathy. Read this chapter and write a brief summary of its plot and narrative.

The examples of gothic features below focus on Mr Lockwood's confrontation with the ghost, which begins about half way through the chapter. Read these examples and answer the questions about them, then find more from the rest of the chapter.

| Chapter 3: | Questions |
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| <p>Setting: the bed where Lockwood is to sleep is enclosed in a wooden closet, with oak doors and squares cut out to form windows, inside a locked room.</p> <p>'I rose and endeavoured to unhasp the casement. The hook was soldered into the staple.'</p> | <p>How does this last detail make Mr Lockwood's isolation complete?</p> |
| <p>Supernatural effects: 'my fingers closed on the fingers of a little ice-cold hand! The intense horror of nightmare came over me: I tried to draw back my arm but the hand clung to it'</p> | <p>Following this, identify the ways Lockwood tries to make Cathy's ghost let him go.</p> |
| <p>Atmosphere: 'the branch of a fir tree that touched my lattice as the blast wailed by, and rattled its dry cones against the panes!'</p> | <p>What literary technique does Brontë use to make the weather sound more frightening?</p> |
| <p>Emotions: 'a most melancholy voice sobbed, 'Let me in – let me in!' ... still it wailed, 'Let me in!' and maintained its tenacious gripe, almost maddening me with fear.'</p> | <p>Following this, how does Lockwood express his fear and what is the consequence?</p> |



In Chapter 29 Heathcliff comes to Thrushcross Grange for young Catherine. He sees Cathy's portrait there and remembers the night of her funeral. He goes to see her coffin while the grave is open ready for Edgar's funeral.

Gothic effects convey the intensity of love that Heathcliff still feels for Cathy, even after her death. Add examples of the gothic features from this chapter along with questions about the quotations you choose.

| Chapter 29 | Questions |
|------------------------------|-----------|
| Setting: | |
| Supernatural effects: | |
| Atmosphere: | |
| Emotions: | |