

Historical Overview: Gothic Fiction

The Castle of Otranto: the Beginning of Gothic Fiction

Goals and Objectives:

- To introduce you to the first Gothic novel, *The Castle of Otranto*, by Horace Walpole
- To introduce you to the major elements of Gothic fiction, in plot, character, symbolism, etc.
- To introduce you to the ways in which this first work has influenced the many works that have followed
- To encourage you to connect *Castle* with more recent Gothic works in literature, film, and television

Assignments and Tasks: (Three Postings):

1. Read Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto*. In your first posting for this area, list as many "gothic" elements as you can. I'll get you started: darkness.
2. Relate Gothic elements in *The Castle of Otranto* to any of the elements we have discussed in Gothic architecture. For example, are any of the Gothic contrasts in architecture paralleled in fiction? What thematic elements relate Gothic architecture to Gothic fiction?
3. Discuss at least one recent movie, television show, or book that contains elements that you can connect to Walpole's *Castle*.