



BRADFORD
LITERATURE
FESTIVAL

**SECONDARY SCHOOLS
AUTHOR DAY**

**GOTHIC NOVELS
AND
CONTEMPORARY AUTHORS**

TEACHER PACK

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Introduction

Welcome to the Bradford Literature Festival's Secondary Author Day, funded by the Emerald Foundation. You can access the programme [here](#) - events go live on the **26th June and then will remain available for viewing on demand.**

This year we are focusing on the theme of the Gothic novel and local contemporary authors. This day is suitable for students in KS3, KS4 or A/S & A level and can be used as an introduction to the gothic genre, or to deepen and widen contextual awareness and understanding. Whether your students are studying Charles Dickens' *A Christmas Carol*, Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*, Bram Stoker's *Dracula*, Emily Bronte's *Wuthering Heights*, Charlotte Bronte's *Jane Eyre*, or even Jane Austen's *Northanger Abbey* this day will further develop their understanding and knowledge of the key themes of contemporary and pre-1914 gothic novels.

During the day various authors will unpick the idea of the Gothic novel, discuss the influence of place and setting on Gothic novels and examine the genre of Gothic films. Contemporary local Bradford authors will also be discussing the influence of the city of Bradford on their writing.

The aims of the day are linked to the National Curriculum;

- To increase and further develop student's appreciation of our rich and varied literary heritage
- To further develop student's appreciation and love of reading
- To increase student's knowledge of the purpose, audience for and context of novels by discussion with contemporary authors
- Through examining the Gothic genre in film to further develop student's understanding of how the work of dramatists and authors is communicated effectively through performance on film
- To increase student's understanding of how to write stories for a wide range of purposes and audiences by understanding the perspectives of different contemporary authors
- To show the thematic connections between pre-1914 and contemporary fiction and thereby encourage wider reading of texts by students

We are also running competitions for all age groups- see further details below and on the website.

Content which will go live on 26 June includes:

The Deathless Girls: in conversation with Kiran Millwood Hargrave- most suitable for KS3, KS4 & KS5

Join award winning author Kiran Millwood Hargrave and book blogger Jean Menzies, for a hugely enjoyable conversation, exploring the Gothic world of Kiran's YA debut novel, *"The Deathless Girls"*. Written as a prequel to Bram Stoker's *"Dracula"*, the book marries the classic Gothic milieu with very contemporary themes such as representation of marginalised communities, feminism and friendship.

The Family Tree: in Conversation with Sairish Hussain – most suitable for KS3 & KS4

Sairish Hussain will be discussing her novel *The Family Tree*, how she became a published author, and how her Bradford and Northern identity informs her work as a writer. She will also discuss the importance of writing about the places and things that you know as well as issues of representation and diversity.

Gothic on Film by Colin McKraken - most suitable for KS4 & KS5

A visual essay using film and images, exploring tropes of Gothic storytelling in film, as part of the day's programme which links to the GCSE curriculum theme of Gothic literature, including books such as *Dracula*, *Frankenstein*, *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* etc. Most source films are rated U or PG but some are 15/18 rated - however all clips have been identified as suitable for all ages.

“Writing Gothic” Workshop with Michael Stewart- most suitable for KS3 Y9 & KS4

Michael Stewart’s debut novel, King Crow, was the winner of the Guardian’s Not-the-Booker Award. His latest novel is Ill Will: The Untold Story of Heathcliff. Join Michael for this pre-recorded workshop package which focuses on the Gothic, particularly the work of Anne Bronte, and seeks to develop young people’s creative writing skills.

Write Where You Are with AA Dhand- most suitable for KS3 & KS4

Join local author AA Dhand as he explores how Bradford informs, inspires and features in his work. In this pre-recorded talk and workshop package, you’ll hear how the place where you live can be a rich source of inspiration. This session will also explore themes of citizenship, civic pride, geography, community, history, the power of creative writing and introduce processes around conducting research.

AA Dhand is a Bradford-based crime writer, whose books are for adult audiences and include themes which may not be suitable for younger children. The content of this recorded session, however, is appropriate for children across KS3 & KS4.

Short Story writing workshop - most suitable for KS3

Katy Darby is a Short Story Writing tutor at City University and the Director of The Liars League - a monthly themed fiction night and storytelling experience in which actors read new short stories from around the world. The Liars League is based in London, with franchises in Leeds, Blackpool, New York, Hong Kong and Portland, Oregon.

In this session Katy will offer an introduction to flash fiction writing for young people with top tips and workshop style exercises.

This pack has been structured to complement the digital programme which will go live on June 26th and then remain available on demand.

BEFORE THE EVENT ON 26 JUNE

1. What is a Gothic Novel?

Before your visit you may wish to introduce students to the idea of a Gothic Novel. There are a number of video resources available online which you might find useful.

KS3 & KS4

- **Conventions of Gothic Literature** is a short 5 minute video which uses still images, visual effects and written headings to summarise the key elements. There is no narration and could be used to introduce the genre to KS3 & KS4 students, or as a recap of the main elements.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wm23PSrJLRl>
- **Terror and Wonder: The Gothic Imagination** is a very short 2 minute video from the British Library promoting their 2015 exhibition which shows many gothic film conventions. After viewing the Conventions of Gothic Literature video above, to establish the key motifs of Gothic literature, students could be asked to view this video and count how many different motifs and themes are used in the 2 minute film. A class discussion of the effectiveness of the video in promoting the exhibition could focus on the reasons why certain elements are used and others are excluded.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J64QLn_a72g
- **Gothic Fiction Modern Horror** is a very short three minute video which traces the development from Gothic novels such as *The Castle of Otranto* to Stephen King's novels and modern horror films such as *Hellboy*. The video has no narrator but uses text and still images effectively to show the development. This video could be used with KS3/4 students to kick start discussion on the similarities and differences between classic Gothic novels and modern thrillers or horrors.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jm_YWgyfhNE

A & A/S students

- **Features of Gothic** is an 11 minute video which traces the origin of the gothic genre from Horace Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto*. The narrator considers gothic themes such as the physical setting, the supernatural, the sublime, confinement, doubling, the hero-villain, metonymy, poor weather, unnatural desires, violence, wild nature and women in distress. It also includes examples from well-known Gothic novels to illustrate the features. This video could be used by A and A/S students as a recap on the key features of the genre, or as an introduction to the social context of the genre. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fUNuFLHvVng>
- **A and A/S students -The Gothic** is a nine minute video by Professor John Bowen, University of York, filmed in Horace Walpole's house in Strawberry Hill, Twickenham. This video discusses the key motifs in Gothic novels, including the uncanny, the sublime and the supernatural. This video uses still images from films such as *Dracula* and *Frankenstein* and could be used by A and A/S students as a recap on the key features of the genre, or as an introduction.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gNohDegnaOQ>

2. Writing a blogpost

Jean Menzies is a booktuber and regularly reviews young adult books for publishers and magazines, who will be in conversation with Kiran Millwood Hargrave, discussing *The Deathless Girls*. One of Jean's blogposts written in April 2020 reviews eight young adult fantasy books. Jean Menzies reviews each book in just 100-150 words.

<https://www.panmacmillan.com/blogs/young-adult/fantasy-books-for-teens-ya-fantasy-books>

- **KS3/4 students** could be asked to work in groups of 4-5 and compile a list of eight of their favourite books which include gothic motifs and/or have been inspired by the gothic genre. Each student in

the group could write 100-200 word reviews on two of the books. Then working as a group all eight reviews would be compiled into a blogpost with the group collectively deciding on the order of the reviews, the wording of the introduction and conclusion to the blog, and any images which they would like to use.

- **A/S & A Level students** could be asked to write a blog about their top five books, or the texts that they have been studying, which include gothic motifs and/or have been inspired by the gothic genre. Each book review would be 100-200 words each.
- **KS3 & KS4 students** might like to work in groups creating a script for a Youtube video. Jean Menzies also has a Youtube channel which students could use as inspiration for their own book reviews. Jean's videos are usually 8-10 minutes long, so each student in the group would be responsible for scripting two minutes of the script. Students might also like to research images to use in their videoblog. <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCmwiWQwe73pgJlv7M3MX2Nw/>
- **A/S & A Level students** might like to create their own individual 8-minute vlog reviewing a gothic set text, drawing out the key themes, features and motifs that are unique to that novel, making comparisons with other texts and setting it in its social context.

Flipgrid is a free online platform which can be used to share student's videos with the class and get feedback from peers. It is a protected online environment and teachers can moderate student's posts. <https://info.flipgrid.com/>

3. Jean Menzies Book Challenge

Jean Menzies has also written a reading challenge blog which has some top tips to help readers expand their reading horizons. This might form the basis of a class discussion about the ways that students read books; for instance do they prefer audio, cartoon, or video versions of classic books? <https://www.panmacmillan.com/blogs/general/reading-tips-reading-challenges>

4. Preparation for watching the "In Conversation" video with Kiran Millwood Hargrave

Kiran Millwood Hargrave will be discussing her debut novel "*The Deathless Girls*" which was written as a prequel to Bram Stoker's "*Dracula*" in which she tells the story of the brides of Dracula. As well as discussing gothic themes in her book Kiran will also be discussing how she researched her novel, writing female characters, her literary inspirations and how communities such as travellers and LGBTQ are represented. Kiran also discusses the influence of Daphne de Maurier's book *Rebecca* on her work, and the influence of television series such as *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* and *Charmed*.

Before watching Kiran Millwood Hargrave's 45-minute video students' s may find it useful to read summaries of the novels Kiran discusses as her inspiration.

- A summary of *Rebecca* by Daphne du Maurier can be found here <https://www.sparknotes.com/lit/rebecca/summary/>
- A summary of Bram Stoker's *Dracula* can be found here <https://www.sparknotes.com/lit/dracula/summary/>
- A summary of *Jane Eyre* by Charlotte Bronte can be found here <https://www.sparknotes.com/lit/janeeyre/summary/>
- A summary of *Wide Sargasso Sea* by Jean Rhys can be found here <https://www.sparknotes.com/lit/sargasso/summary/>
- A synopsis of Malorie Blackman's *Noughts and Crosses* and suggestions for activities can be found here https://dl.pearson.co.jp/resources/9781408231623/searchdata/pdf/TN-Noughts_and_Crosses.pdf

5. Preparation for watching the “In Conversation” video with Sairish Hussain

Sairish Hussain is an author from Bradford, who will be discussing her novel “The Family Tree” and discussing the importance of writing about the place that you live in and the things that you know. She will also discuss how a Bradford and Northern identity informs her work as a writer and how she became a published author.

Before watching the conversation with Sairish Hussain it may be useful for students to investigate her book. A synopsis of the book can be found here

<https://www.hive.co.uk/Product/Sairish-Hussain/The-Family-Tree/22897876>

6. Preparation for watching the “Write Where You Are” videos with A.A. Dhand

Local author A.A. Dhand explores how Bradford informs, inspires and features in his work. In this short talk, supplemented by readings and workshop ideas, you’ll hear how the place where you live can be a rich source of inspiration – from derelict buildings to family traditions; from the shopping centres you visit at weekends, to the way your friends talk – all of this is brilliant source material for aspiring writers.

Before watching this video, students may wish to investigate Amit Dhand’s novels. You can find his books here <https://www.aadhand.com/>

7. Preparation for watching Colin McCracken’s video Gothic Films

Colin McCracken uses footage from these films in his 30-minute video essay; Kenneth Brannagh's *Frankenstein* and *Bram Stoker's Dracula* are a higher rating (15 / 18 respectively) but the clips included in the session are suitable for all. Teachers can review the film before showing it to students; it will be made available from 8am on the morning of the 26 June.

Billy Eilish “When the Party’s Over” copyright Interscope/Darkroom records

Coraline, copyright Laika Productions

Dracula, copyright Universal Pictures

Bram Stoker’s Dracula, copyright Columbia Pictures

Frankenstein, copyright Universal Pictures

Victor Frankenstein, copyright 20th Century Fox

Mary Shelley’s Frankenstein, copyright Tristar

Murders in the Rue Morgue, copyright Universal Pictures

Nosferatu/the cabinet of Dr Caligari The vampyr, Public Domain

The Cure “Lullaby”, copyright Fiction Records

The Invisible Man, copyright Universal Pictures

The Invisible Man, 2020 copyright Blumhouse

The Nightmare Before Christmas, copyright Disney/Laika Productions

The Raven Trailer copyright Universal

Before watching this video student’s may wish to discuss their favourite Gothic films such as *Coraline*.

ON THE DAY OF THE EVENT ON 26 JUNE

Kiran Millwood Hargrave in Conversation with Jean Menzies

Students can watch Kiran Millwood Hargrave and book blogger Jean Menzies in conversation, exploring the Gothic world of Kiran's debut Young Adult [YA] novel, *"The Deathless Girls"*. The conversation focuses on Kiran's inspiration and how she researched, created and wrote her novel. Students might like to consider these questions whilst watching the video;

1. What was Kiran's inspiration for the novel *Deathless Girls*?
2. How are women usually portrayed in Gothic fiction?
3. How did Kiran Millwood Hargrave try to change this perception of female characters in her novel?
4. How did Kiran research the historical aspects of her novel?
5. How does Kiran approach the issues of class, race, gender, settler or traveller societies in her novel?
6. When retelling a classic novel from another character's perspective, what sort of character would be the best to choose ?

There is a worksheet at the end of this document, which students may find useful

Gothic on Film with Colin McCracken

Students can watch Colin McCracken's visual essay exploring the tropes of Gothic storytelling in film. Colin compares film versions of the gothic classics *Dracula*, *Frankenstein*, *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* with the original text. He also unpicks classic Gothic elements in films such as *The Nightmare before Christmas*, *Coraline* and the *Invisible Man* and considers the impact of Gothic elements on contemporary culture. Colin ends his video essay considering Edgar Allan Poe's novels *Murders in the Rue Morgue* and *The Pit and the Pendulum*.

Teachers may wish to show 5-10 minute clips of the video essay and discuss some of the points that Colin McCracken makes during the video.

Students might like to consider these questions whilst watching the video;

1. What are the key elements of Gothic films?
2. What is the key difference between Gothic and horror films?
3. How do the films on *Dracula* and *Frankenstein* differ from the novels? Why is there this difference?
4. Why does Colin think that films such as *The Nightmare before Christmas* and *Coraline* are Gothic films. What is it that makes them gothic films?
5. Why are Gothic films so popular today? Can you name some modern and popular Gothic films?

There is a worksheet at the end of this document which students may find useful

Write Where You Are with AA Dhand

Students can watch three short videos in which local author AA Dhand discusses his experiences of "writing Bradford" and how the place where he lives can be a rich source of inspiration. He also explores the themes of citizenship, civic pride, geography, community, history, the power of creative writing and introduce processes around conducting research.

Students might like to consider these questions whilst watching the videos;

1. Video 1-AA Dhand in conversation about Bradford

- When and why did Amit Dhand start writing?
- What sorts of novels does Amit write?
- How does the city of Bradford inspire Amit's writing?
- What sorts of locations does he use?
- Why does Amit Dhand use Bradford locations for his books?
- Why does Amit only use real locations? What sorts of things does he change?
- How does Amit Dhand write convincing Bradford accents and dialect?

2. Video 2- AA Dhand's top tips for writing

- What is the first decision that Amit makes when starting to write?
- How does Amit Dhand go about the process of writing his novels?
- What is the first decision that Amit makes when starting to write?
- What are the key questions that Amit uses to write 1,000 words?
- Why does Amit read his work out loud?
- Does Amit plan his books? If not, why not?
- What are Amit's top tips for writing?

3. Video 3- Listen to Amit Dhand reading the first two chapters of his novel *One Way Out*

- How effective is the opening?
- The first two chapters of the novel are set in two locations in Bradford. Where are they?
- The reading ends "Run!". What do you think will happen next?

There is a worksheet at the end of this document which students may find useful

Writing Workshop- Gothic and Place with Michael Stewart

KS3 & KS4 students can watch and follow along with Michael Stewart's workshop -more details will be available on the BLF website very soon.

Writing Workshop - Flash Fiction with Katy Darby

KS3 & KS4 students can watch and follow along with Katy Darby's workshop -more details will be available on the BLF website very soon.

AFTER THE EVENT ON 26 JUNE

STUDENTS MAY WISH TO ENTER THE BLF “SHORT STORIES, TALL TALES” COMPETITION FOR STUDENTS AGED 11-19

Students may wish to enter the BLF competition see below. The deadline for entering the competition is 31 July 2020. Entries should be submitted using the online entry form – [click here](#).

To download the Competition Pack, visit: <https://www.bradfordlitfest.co.uk/schools-events/>

It's very straightforward – write the most outlandish, outrageous, engaging short story you can in 500 words or less!

The story can be about anything you like and can take place anywhere in the world; you might want to take us to London during the Blitz, or to the International Space Station a hundred years from now. You might be inspired by Gothic tropes, your own family histories, dystopic fiction, magical realism or Shakespeare.

We want your stories to transport us entirely from where we are, to a world (or a version of this world) where anything is possible... we can't wait to see.

OTHER RESOURCES

BBC Teach resources

- You can find KS3 resources here <https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/ks3-english-literature/z47n92p>
- You can find GCSE resources here <https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/gcse-national-5-english-literature/z6rjscw>

BOOKS BY THE AUTHORS

If you wish to purchase books by participating authors, you can find some links below:

The Deathless Girls by Kiran Millwood Hargrave

<https://www.waterstones.com/book/the-deathless-girls/kiran-millwood-hargrave/9781510108554>

The Family Tree by Sairish Hussain -

<https://www.waterstones.com/book/the-family-tree/sairish-hussain/9780008297459>

One Way Out by AA Dhand –

<https://www.waterstones.com/book/one-way-out/a-a-dhand/9780552176538>

Ill Will by Michael Stewart

<https://www.waterstones.com/book/ill-will/michael-stewart/9780008248192>

A. WORKSHEET ON: The Deathless Girls; Kiran Millwood Hargrave in Conversation

1. What was Kiran's inspiration for the novel *Deathless Girls*?
2. How are women usually portrayed in Gothic fiction?
3. How did Kiran Millwood Hargrave try to change this perception of female characters in her novel?
4. How did Kiran research the historical aspects of her novel?
5. How does Kiran approach the issues of class, race, gender, settler or traveller societies in her novel?
6. When retelling a classic novel from another character's perspective, what sort of character would be the best to choose ?

B. WORKSHEET ON : Gothic On Film by Colin McCracken

1. What are the key elements of gothic films?
2. What is the key difference between gothic and horror films?
3. How do the films on Dracula and Frankenstein differ from the novels? Why is there this difference?
4. Why does Colin think that films such as *The Nightmare before Christmas* and *Coraline* are gothic films. What is it that makes them gothic films?
5. Why are gothic films so popular today?
6. Can you name some modern and popular gothic films?

5. What sorts of locations does he use?
6. Why does AA Dhand use Bradford locations for his books?
7. Why does he only use real locations? What sorts of things does he change?
8. How does AA Dhand write convincing Bradford accents and dialect?

AA Dhand's top tips for writing

9. How does AA Dhand go about the process of writing his novels?
 - i. What is the first decision that he makes when starting to write?
 - ii. What are the key questions that AA Dhand uses to write 1,000 words?
 - iii. Why does he read his work out loud?

iv. Does AA Dhand plan his books? If not why not?

10. What are his top tips for writing?