## Topic

Introduction to Bram Stoker's

Dracula

: Craft &amp; Structure in Epistolary Fiction

## Objectives

Students will:

Identify

Dracula

the structural elements of epistolary fiction used in (e.g., letters, diary entries).

Analyze

how Stoker's use of multiple narrators contributes to the narrative's meaning and aesthetic impact.

Predict

how these structural choices might influence their upcoming reading experience.

## Outline

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Phase | Time | Content | Activity Type |
| Warm-up &amp; Prior Knowledge Activation | 10 min | Brief introduction to Gothic literature and the concept of epistolary novels. Engage students with a word search puzzle containing key terms (e.g., "diary," "narrator," "letter"). | Individual activity |
| Input / Teacher Modelling | 20 min | Provide a brief overview of  Dracula  's plot and structure. Read aloud a public-domain extract (~200 words) and discuss its form. Use a graphic organiser to map the narrative structure. | Teacher-led discussion with visual aids |
| Guided Practice | 25 min | In pairs, students read another short extract and fill out a provided organiser to identify different narrators and their perspectives. Share findings with the class. | Pair activity |
| Laptop-based Pair or Group Task | 25 min | On OneNote/MS Teams, work in small groups to create a digital presentation predicting the influence of Stoker's structural choices on the novel's themes. Use blog article and "Classic story structure.pdf" as resources. | Group task with digital tools |
| Reflection &amp; Exit Ticket | 10 min | Reflect on learned concepts by completing a Microsoft Forms poll that includes a quick-write question on how epistolary structure affects storytelling. Exit ticket: One sentence prediction about  Dracula  's impact based on structure. | Individual reflection |

## Example Materials

### Copy-ready Prompts

Word Search Puzzle Prompt:

Find key literary terms related to epistolary fiction: DIARY, LETTER, NARRATOR, GOTHIC, STOKER

Extract from

Dracula

(public-domain):

"3 May. Bistritz.—Left Munich at 8:35 P.M., on 1st May, arriving at Vienna early next morning; should have arrived at 6:46, but train was an hour late..."

Graphic Organizer Layout:

[Name of Narrator] | [Form: Diary/Letter] | [Main events recounted] | [Emotional tone]

OneNote Page for Digital Task:

Use this page to create and organize your presentation. Include the title, key structural elements, and your predictions about their aesthetic impact.

## Differentiation &amp; Assessment

B1 Support

: Pair weaker learners with stronger B2 peers for assistance during tasks. Offer sentence starters for reflections and writing tasks.

B2 Extension

: Encourage advanced students to explore themes beyond structural aspects, such as character development or tension-building.

### Formative Checks

Live Microsoft Forms Poll

: Gauge understanding with quick multiple-choice and short-answer questions.

Think-Pair-Share

: Share insights on structural elements and epistolary impacts with a partner.

## Swiss / Intercultural Angle

Dracula

Discuss how mirrors or contrasts with Swiss cultural views of Gothic literature and regional folklore. Highlight perceptions of monsters in Swiss traditions, focusing on cultural symbolism and how it contrasts with Dracula's supernatural elements.

## Follow-Up Assignment

Found Artefact Task

Dracula

: Students create a -inspired artefact like a Victorian-style diary page or postcard, set in modern-day Zurich. They will hand-letter it, stage a photo or record audio on location, and upload on MS Teams.

Rubric

:

Originality

Effort

Connection to structural features of epistolary fiction

Clarity of English

### Additional Resources

Stoker’s Epistolary Approach: Crafting a Multifaceted Narrative

(Gilliam Writers Group) - For a narrative-focused analysis.

Classic story structure.pdf

- Reference for narrative forms.

Innovative Teaching Narrative Structure

- Site with strategies for innovative teaching of narrative structure. Recommended for engaging lesson insights.

### Assessment

Formative Assessment

Monitor participation during pair/group discussions.

Evaluate completion and accuracy of graphic organisers and digital tasks.

Summative Assessment

Evaluate students' found artefacts based on the rubric provided, ensuring creativity and understanding of epistolary form.

Dracula

This lesson plan ensures students actively engage with the structural nuances of and prepares them intellectually for their reading journey.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
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| H | K | W | G | F | Y | Q | F | O | B | R | B |
| P | Z | M | O | K | O | L | H | R | P | C | Z |
| R | D | S | T | O | K | E | R | J | U | M | P |
| E | D | A | H | T | T | T | S | N | V | R | P |
| X | B | B | I | Q | Z | T | D | D | J | O | P |
| C | M | K | C | W | R | E | P | I | V | N | K |
| Y | C | T | L | N | A | R | R | A | T | O | R |
| N | V | U | V | F | N | I | U | R | X | V | X |
| H | H | K | U | S | J | H | N | Y | X | E | P |
| K | M | Y | K | H | V | D | G | M | I | L | X |
| Q | Q | F | W | C | A | S | T | L | E | J | W |
| C | A | K | K | D | M | N | C | E | B | W | K |
| Y | A | P | R | V | P | B | H | N | V | F | I |
| E | W | M | E | Z | I | V | Y | Z | Z | K | O |
| A | U | T | H | O | R | Q | V | C | X | Z | U |
| Q | K | Y | U | E | E | U | U | H | C | G | U |

DIARY

NARRATOR

LETTER

GOTHIC

STOKER

VAMPIRE

CASTLE

JOURNAL

NOVEL

AUTHOR

### Guided Practice Worksheet:

Instructions:

Dracula

Read the extract from below with your partner.

Use the graphic organiser provided to identify the different narrators and their perspectives.

Be prepared to share your findings with the class.

Extract from

Dracula

:

Extract:

"25 April. Whitby. Lucy Westenra's Diary. We have been over to the East Cliff and looked at the house that is to be our home when we can get the key; we are to have furnished it. Mrs. Westenra tells me that the house is 500 years old, and is of just the style that I am fond of. I was afraid it might be too airy and cold, but the walls are of honey-comb, and I find I would suffer much more discomfort from draughts inside than out. The way to it is up an L-shape staircase. We loved each other more deeply and sincerely as every day goes by…"

### Graphic Organiser

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Narrator Name | Form: Diary/Letter | Main Events Recounted | Emotional Tone |
| Lucy Westenra | Diary | Plans to move into a 500-year-old house, discussions about furnishings | Fondness, anticipation |

Discussion Points:

Discuss how the use of a diary entry influences your perception of the event described.

Consider the emotional tone of the passage. How does it reflect the narrator's perspective and what might it suggest about upcoming events in the story?

Extension for B2 Learners:

B2 students can extend this activity by discussing how the historical setting might influence the characters' perspectives and emotional responses.

Support for B1 Learners:

B1 students can work with provided vocabulary lists to better understand the text and context clues to recognize emotional tones.

Formative Check:

After completing the organiser, engage in a "think-pair-share" activity where pairs compare their findings with another pair and discuss any differences in interpretation.

### Answer the questions

###### **How does an epistolary structure affect the way a story is told?**

It provides multiple perspectives to understand characters better. It makes the story shorter and simpler. It limits the narrative to only one character's thoughts. It removes any dialogue from the story.

###### **Why might an author choose to use letters in a narrative?**

To create a sense of urgency and immediacy. To avoid using descriptive language. To ensure the story is told in chronological order. To focus only on the main character's emotions.

###### **What is one advantage of using an epistolary structure in a horror story?**

It allows readers to experience the fear and suspense through personal accounts. It ensures the story ends with a clear resolution. It helps in developing a single character deeply. It makes the plot predictable and straightforward.

###### **How can an epistolary format contribute to character development?**

It provides insights into characters' thoughts and feelings through their own words. It limits the depth of character exploration. It prevents any interaction between characters. It focuses solely on the plot, not on characters.

###### **What impact can letters have on the pacing of a story?**

They can vary the pace by showing events from different viewpoints. They make the story slow and monotonous. They ensure every event happens rapidly. They remove any need for action scenes.

###### **Why is the epistolary structure effective in creating suspense?**

Because readers learn information gradually through different accounts. Because it reveals all plot details at once. Because it focuses only on dialogue between characters. Because it avoids any character interaction.

###### **How does the epistolary structure impact the reader’s engagement with the story?**

It invites the reader to piece together the narrative from various perspectives. It makes the reader passive by withholding information. It provides a straightforward narrative without complexity. It reduces the reader's involvement by focusing on action.

###### **How might the epistolary structure influence the theme of a story?**

By illustrating themes of communication and isolation. By ensuring that themes are hidden and unclear. By focusing solely on a single theme without complexity. By removing any thematic elements from the narrative.