Subject: English Year 8: Autumn Term, *The Gothic*

Overarching Topic:			
Why is this topic being studied at this time? How does it fit into the wider subject curriculum?	Building on the knowledge of Year 7 where we learned about the novel and practiced our own creative writing, in Year 8 we begin to explore one of the most famous and influential genres of literature: the Gothic. Using a variety of extracts from a wide selection of Gothic texts, we will start to analyse just what makes this genre so enduringly popular today. We will follow the whole journey of the Gothic from its origin in 1764 to its most recent iterations in the 21st century. From this starting point, all students will then have the chance to explore two renowned and challenging texts - Dracula and Frankenstein - in greater depth, and recognise just what makes them both still so relevant to today's modern society. Frankenstein is a culturally rich novel with great historical significance and contemporary relevance. Written in the midst of The Enlightenment period, Frankenstein offers a fascinating window into a time of scientific discovery and intrigue. There are also many links to ethics – is it okay to play God in the name of scientific advancement? Is Frankenstein himself the real monster? Where would we be today if it were not for many of the dark and disturbing things that went on in history?		
	Critical	**Core**	**Pinnacle**
The Big Questions (What questions will students be able to answer upon mastery of the topic?)	What are the features of gothic fiction? When did Gothic fiction emerge? When were most Gothic texts written? What type of characters do we expect to see in Gothic fiction? What types of themes do we expect to see in Gothic fiction? What is the plot and who are the characters in Dracula? Who is Bram Stoker? What is the plot and who are the characters in Frankenstein? Who is Mary Shelley?	What do we mean by Gothic? How did romanticism influence gothic writing? What was happening in 19th Century society and the lives of the author that might influence the text? How do character conventions influence our reading? How do Dracula and Frankenstein reflect the conventional Gothic themes? Why and how was Dracula written? Why and how was Frankenstein written? What is the effect of pathetic fallacy? Are there moral messages in Dracula and Frankenstein? What structural features can you identify and how do we use them? What is the sublime?	Romantic or Gothic: what's the difference? How do the two texts reflect the progression of society during the 19th Century? Why are the Gothic character conventions still so popular? How influenced are we by the themes in a work of fiction? How do I think about the text using a critical interpretation? Why do people like to be frightened? What are the conflicts between science and religion both then and now? How far does structure affect your reading of a story? What's in a name? What's the effect of

	What is pathetic fallacy?	What is the uncanny? What is a paradox?	characternyms? What is the effect of the sublime/uncanny/ paradox in Gothic texts?

The Key Skills/ Techniques	The sophistication and application of skills will become more advanced as students' progress through the critical, core and pinnacle knowledge.	
	Skill/Technique	**How will this skill be developed?**
	Understanding and identifying language techniques	Learning new and increasingly sophisticated technical terminology. Using a variety of relevant extracts to feature spot, annotate and explore connotations. Developing alternative interpretations of significant language choices.
	Analytical writing	Regular practice using extended analytical writing. Embedding brief, apt quotations to support all points. Exploring and embedding relevant context in extended writing responses. Developing use of sophisticated subject terminology and discourse markers.
	Creative writing	Including techniques such as: pathetic fallacy in setting; sensory description; bringing characters to life through 'show not tell'; using varied sentence structures; using the full range of punctuation. Encouraging a bold approach to crafting a personal voice.