

Unit Synopsis

The Poetry of Fear

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This unit is most appropriate for a high school setting as it is based on a niche curriculum unit tracking the evolution of Gothic Literature and deals specifically with the final unit of modern and contemporary horror. While the contents of this unit could be adapted for 9th-12th grade, it is particularly focused on a 12th grade subject sample. This unit considers the possibility of using ekphrastic poetry as a method of discussing the nuances of horror, its popularity despite its vulgarity and rawness, and how we speak about fear and phobias. The trajectory of the unit defines ekphrasis and includes various, structured poems that can be used as models for introducing the genre and writing ekphrastic poems. The unit then delves into the biological evolution of horror in an attempt to connect it to our love of horror, as evidenced in its popularity and monetary victories in film. The unit then connects this primal relationship and reaction to horror to ekphrasis as a way to confront fears and phobias through art and writing to open a dialogue about embracing fears, connecting to each other, and addressing the importance of mental health.