Dracula knowledge organiser

Plot, characters, terms, quotations and context - a starting point for your own evidence notebook.

Plot in five parts

Chapters 1-4: Transylvania
A legal visit becomes captivity.

Chapters 5-9: Whitby and separation
Letters, local observations and the ship's log connect several locations.

Chapters 10-16: illness, death and return
Treatment fails; the vampire explanation is tested at Lucy's tomb.

Chapters 17-22: the records and the alliance
Documents are shared and the hunt begins; Mina is then excluded and assaulted.

Chapters 23-27 and the final note: pursuit and aftermath
The Count retreats; transport, deduction and divided journeys converge.

Twelve main characters

The Count. Vampire and Transylvanian nobleman; buys property in England.

Jonathan Harker. Works for Hawkins; Mina's fiancé, then husband; survives the castle.

Mina Harker. Assistant schoolmistress; transcribes and arranges the group's evidence.

Lucy Westenra. Mina's friend; accepts Arthur; becomes the Count's victim.

Arthur Holmwood. Lucy's fiancé; inherits the title Lord Godalming.

Dr John Seward. Asylum doctor; Lucy's suitor; keeps a phonograph diary.

Quincey Morris. Texan traveller; Lucy's suitor; joins the hunters.

Van Helsing. Dutch professor; Seward's former teacher; brings specialist knowledge.

Renfield. Seward's patient; seeks life through consuming living creatures.

Mrs Westenra. Lucy's widowed mother; seriously ill herself.

Mr Swales. Elderly Whitby resident; challenges sentimental grave inscriptions.

Mr Hawkins. Exeter solicitor; Jonathan's employer and benefactor.

Ten key terms

Epistolary novel. A novel told through documents: letters, diaries, reports.

Limited narrator. A narrator who knows only part of the story.

Dramatic irony. The reader understands more than the character.

Frame and found document. A text presented as a real record assembled after the event.

The Gothic. Fiction of fear built on confinement, the past returning, the supernatural and transgression, from Walpole (1764) onwards.

The uncanny. The familiar made strange and threatening.

Liminality. Being on a threshold or boundary.

New Woman. 1890s term (popularised by Sarah Grand in 1894) for women seeking education, work and independence.

Degeneration. The late-Victorian fear that individuals, classes or nations could decline biologically and morally (Lombroso, Nordau).

Reverse colonisation. The fear that the colonised or "primitive" might invade the imperial centre (Arata).

Six context dates

1764. Walpole's The Castle of Otranto; an early point in Gothic literary history.

1872. Sheridan Le Fanu's Carmilla, set in Styria.

1877. Edison's phonograph.

1890. Bram begins his notes; reads Wilkinson at Whitby and finds the name Dracula.

1894. Sarah Grand's essay popularises the term "New Woman".

26 May 1897. Constable publishes Dracula: 3,000 copies in yellow cloth at six shillings.

Fifteen quotations

Read each passage in full. Identify its speaker, document and effect; choose evidence for the actual question.

"The castle is a veritable prison, and I am a prisoner!" **(Ch. 2)**

"Welcome to my house! Enter freely and of your own will!" **(Ch. 2)**

"Denn die Todten reiten schnell" ("For the dead travel fast") **(Ch. 1)**

"why are men so noble when we women are so little worthy of them?" **(Ch. 5)**

"I shall have to invent a new classification for him, and call him a zoöphagous (life-eating) maniac" **(Ch. 6)**

"Why can't they let a girl marry three men, or as many as want her, and save all this trouble? But this is heresy, and I must not say it." **(Ch. 5)**

"The blood is the life! The blood is the life!" **(Ch. 11)**

"A brave man's blood is the best thing on this earth when a woman is in trouble." **(Ch. 12)**

"Come to me, Arthur. Leave these others and come to me. My arms are hungry for you." **(Ch. 16)**

"Unclean, unclean! I must touch him or kiss him no more." **(Ch. 21)**

"the world seems full of good men — even if there *are* monsters in it" **(Chapter 17)**

"There are such beings as vampires; some of us have evidence that they exist." **(Ch. 18)**

"there is hardly one authentic document; nothing but a mass of typewriting" **(Ch. 27)**

"This boy will some day know what a brave and gallant woman his mother is." **(Ch. 27)**

"That poor soul who has wrought all this misery is the saddest case of all." **(Ch. 23)**

Build an answer

Understand the question. Gather quotations on both sides. Bring in relevant context. Reach a provisional judgement. Choose a structure. Write. Review the answer against the question.

Check the assessment objectives for your own course. Prepared knowledge should help you answer a new question, rather than replace it.

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