BRITISH COUNCIL

Task 1 - Speaking
Fill in the questionnaire below. Then compare your answers with your partner.

What kind of story do you enjoy reading?	Not at all/ never read one	It's alright, sometimes…	Quite like it	My favourite
Romance				
Espionage				
War stories				
Horror				
Science fiction				
Historic novels				
Fantasy				

- *In your opinion, is there a close relationship between reality and fiction? How close is it?*

Task 2 – Vocabulary and writing
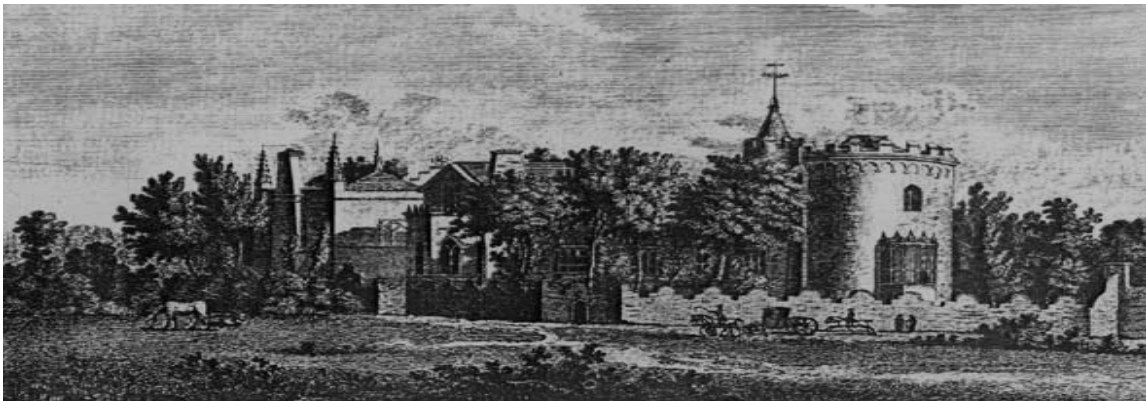Work in pairs. Look at the picture below and follow the instructions.

Image: Wikimedia Commons

a. Write at least 10 words or ideas that the picture suggests to you.	
b. Think of a *female* character to live in this place. Describe her.	
c. Think of a *male* character to live in this place. Describe him.	
d. What kind of story would this picture inspire you to write?	

Catherine Morland is the main female character in *Northanger Abbey*. She is a seventeen-year-old and a huge fan of Gothic novels. She imagines life lived as if in a Gothic novel, full of danger, intrigue and passion. 'Of all Jane Austen's novels, Northanger Abbey is the one that most powerfully reminds the reader about how important reading is to the ways in which we see the world and understand human relationships' (Clarke, 2013). It is also a novel where Jane Austen mocks the Gothic genre and alerts us about the dangers of believing fiction and life are the same. On the other hand, *Northanger Abbey* deals with the process of growing up and how this usually leads to the loss of imagination.

Task 3 - Vocabulary and reading
Check the meaning of the words in the box. Then read the dialogues and use these words to fill in the blanks.

A	horrid (2x) glad sweet obliged sweetest	B	interesting stupidest unnatural decent amusing stupid

A. Isabella Thorpe and Catherine Morland

"Dear creature! How much I am (1)_____ to you; and when you have finished *Udolpho*, we will read *The Italian* together; and I have made out a list of ten or twelve more of the same kind for you."

"Have you, indeed! How (2)_____ I am!— What are they all?"

"I will read you their names directly; here they are, in my pocket-book. *Castle of Wolfenbach*, *Clermont*, *Mysterious Warnings*, *Necromancer of the Black Forest*, *Midnight Bell*, *Orphan of the Rhine*, and *Horrid Mysteries*. Those will last us some time."

"Yes, pretty well; but are they all (3) _____, are you sure they are all (4) _____?"

"Yes, quite sure; for a particular friend of mine, a Miss Andrews, a (5)_____ girl, one of the (6)_____ creatures in the world, has read every one of them..."

B. John Thorpe and Catherine Morland

"Novels are all so full of nonsense and stuff; there has not been a tolerably (7) _____ one come out since *Tom Jones*, except *The Monk*; I read that t'other day; but as for all the others, they are the (8) _____ things in creation."

"I think you must like *Udolpho*, if you were to read it; it is so very (9) _____."

"Not I, faith! No, if I read any, it shall be Mrs. Radcliffe's; her novels are (10) _____ enough; they are worth reading; some fun and nature in them."

"*Udolpho* was written by Mrs. Radcliffe," said Catherine, with some hesitation, from the fear of mortifying him.

"No sure; was it? Aye, I remember, so it was; I was thinking of that other (11) _____ book, written by that woman they make such a fuss about, she who married the French emigrant."

"I suppose you mean *Camilla*?"

"Yes, that's the book; such (12) _____ stuff! An old man playing at see-saw, I took up the first volume once and looked it over, but I soon found it would not do; indeed I guessed what sort of stuff it must be before I saw it: as soon as I heard she had married an emigrant, I was sure I should never be able to get through it."

Task 4 – Speaking
In pairs or small groups, discuss the questions below.

- What captures your attention in the dialogue between Isabella and Catherine?
- How does Jane Austen establish the contrast between fiction and reality?
- Based on the dialogue, what kind of person do you imagine John Thorpe to be?

Task 5 - Language work
The words in **Task 3** are all adjectives. Some of them are in the superlative form. Complete the sentences from *Northanger Abbey* with the superlative form of the adjectives below.

fine   great (2x)   happy   harmless   lively   new   old   tall   thorough   well-chosen

a. Her _____ deficiency was in the pencil - she had no notion of drawing.

b. Dress was her passion. She had a _____ delight in being fine; and our heroine's entree into life could not take place till after three or four days had been spent in learning what was mostly worn, and her chaperone was provided with a dress of the _____ fashion.

c. "My dear Mrs. Allen, I long to introduce them; they will be so delighted to see you: the _____ is Isabella, my _____; is not she a fine young woman? The others are very much admired too…"

d. Friendship is certainly the _____ balm for the pangs of disappointed love.

e. And what are you reading, Miss—?" "Oh! It is only a novel!" replies the young lady, while she lays down her book with affected indifference, or momentary shame. "It is only Cecilia, or Camilla, or Belinda"; or, in short, only some work in which the _____ powers of the mind are displayed, in which the _____ knowledge of human nature, the _____ delineation of its varieties, the _____ effusions of wit and humour, are conveyed to the world in the _____ language.

Homework Read James Clarkes article on *Northanger Abbey* and answer the following questions:

1. What information does the writer provide on Catherine Morland?
2. How does the experience of being in Bath affect Catherine?
3. What does the writer perceive as the focus of Chapter 6?
4. What other examples does the writer use to justify his point of view?

Optional/extended homework: Look at your notes for **Task 2**. Use them as the basis to write your own Gothic short story (350-500 words)

Materials by Chris Lima