

## Introduction: What Makes it Gothic? (15 mins)

**Activity:** Begin with a discussion. What comes to mind when you hear 'Gothic literature'? (Think castles, secrets, mystery, damsels in distress, heightened emotions, supernatural hints, decay). Briefly discuss traditional Gothic elements. Then, ask: How might a story set in the 20th century, like "Flowers in the Attic," fit into this genre? Read the first few chapters (or review them if already read) specifically looking for mood, setting description (the attic, the house), and hints of secrets or forbidden knowledge. List potential Gothic elements found in the notebook.

## Activity: Characters Under Pressure (30 mins)

**Focus:** Cathy and Chris. How do they initially react to the attic? How do their roles, responsibilities, and personalities change over the years of confinement?

**Activity:** Create a simple timeline or character arc map in the notebook for Cathy and Chris. Note key events or realizations that significantly impact their development. Discuss: What coping mechanisms do they develop? How does their relationship evolve? Are their actions justifiable, understandable, or condemnable? Why? Find specific quotes that illustrate major changes in their outlook or behavior.

## Activity: Themes of Confinement and Secrets (20 mins)

**Discussion:** Beyond the physical confinement, what other types of confinement exist in the story (emotional, psychological, social)? How does the theme of secrets drive the plot? How do secrets affect the characters' relationships and mental states? Discuss the grandmother and mother's motivations – are they purely evil, or more complex? Use examples from the text to support your points.

## Activity: The Setting as a Character (15 mins)

**Analysis:** How does V.C. Andrews use the description of the attic and Foxworth Hall to contribute to the story's mood and themes? Does the setting feel like another character imposing its will on the children?

**Activity:** Find 3-5 descriptive passages about the attic or house. Analyze how the language used (word choice, imagery) creates feelings of isolation, decay, opulence, or dread. Write a short paragraph summarizing the role of the setting.

## Wrap-up & Reflection (10 mins)

**Discussion:** What aspect of the book did you find most compelling or disturbing? Did the novel effectively use Gothic elements to enhance its story? What questions do you have after reading (or reading up to a certain point)?

**Assignment Teaser (Optional):** Think about how you would visually represent one of the major themes or a character's internal state (e.g., a drawing, a collage, a short piece of music).

## Differentiation/Extension:

**Support:** Focus discussion on one or two main characters instead of all four initially. Use guided questions with sentence starters for written analysis.

**Challenge:** Research the characteristics of a 'Byronic Hero' and analyze if Chris fits this archetype. Compare "Flowers in the Attic" to a classic Gothic novel (like "Jane Eyre" or "Frankenstein") or explore critical reviews and controversies surrounding the book (with guidance).

## Assessment:

Assessment is primarily through discussion quality, depth of analysis in notebook entries, and the ability

to support points with textual evidence. The character arc map and setting analysis paragraph serve as informal written assessments.