

WOMAN IN BLACK TERM 1

CONTEXT	THEMES	SUBJECT TERMINOLOGY	
<p>Set at the beginning of 20th century in England. Written in 1983. Inspired by the Gothic tradition. Susan Hill wanted to write the ideal Victorian ghost story and borrowed styles of writing from Dickens and Henry James. <u>Social class</u>: Both the characters of Mrs. Drablow and The Woman in Black are created to represent women from the upper-middle classes. Bentley tells Kipps that Mrs Drablow owned Eel Marsh House, as well as other properties in Crythin Gifford, trusts and investments. <u>Women</u>: Illegitimate children had no inheritance rights Social stigma Forced to give babies up for adoption if conceived outside of marriage Often women were committed to lunatic asylums due to the shame brought on their families Abortion illegal until 1960s – back-street abortions were dangerous Jennet Humfrye is Alice Drablow’s unmarried sister. She gave birth to a baby boy who was taken against her will and adopted by Alice and her husband. Religion: No sex outside marriage No contraception <u>1983</u>: Conservatives under Thatcher Women were not supported be working mothers and the government actively expected women to stay at home. Unequal pay to ensure it was not financially viable for women to work</p>	<p><u>Betrayal</u> - Was Jennet betrayed by Alice who forced her to give up Nathaniel? Or was she trying to give Nat a better life? Was Arthur betrayed by JH? <u>Isolation</u> - set in the middle of nowhere, among bogs and fogs. Arthur finds himself literally separated from society at EMH. It is physically cut off by the tide. Also he finds happiness again with Esme but can even share the hours of his youth. <u>Revenge</u> - JH is all about revenge. Even though Nat’s death was no one’s fault. She takes her revenge on other people’s children and AK as well. Fear - What causes it? Who feels it? What does fear prompt us to do? Is it just a fun emotion to evoke while we’re sitting safely by the fire, or does it have a more primitive and profound purpose? <u>Appearances</u> - it;s not a story where nothing is as it seems. Appearances matter especially TWIB’s and other character details. <u>Memory and the Past</u> - TWIB is one long trip down memory lane which is live on in AK’s memory forever. Supernatural - TWIB is chock-full of creepy, inexplicable details that point towards the existence of ghosts. It doesn’t leave any room for doubt, unless the whole tale is a way for AK to deal with the death of his wife and child? <u>Man and the Natural World</u> - Mother nature plays a role - London = man made and contained. CG - the elements have power over AK. <u>Madness</u> - JH’s anger and despair actually make her go crazy. Confronting the reality of a ghost, makes AK a little crazy, or feel crazy at any rate.</p>	<p>Pathetic fallacy Dynamic verbs Minor sentences Repetition Description Sound Colour Rhetorical questions Isolated setting Frame narrative Rational protagonist First person narrative Simile Symbolism</p>	
QUOTES	VOCABULARY		SYMBOLISM
<p>[It was] a modest house and yet sure of itself, and then looking across at the country beyond. I had no sense of having been here before, but an absolute conviction that I would come here again (1.10)</p> <p>I was the one who, to judge by my agitation of this evening, was still affected by it deeply, it was from me alone that the ghost must be driven. (1.65)</p> <p>I felt nothing other than curiosity, a professional interest... coupled with a mild sense of adventure. (2.6)</p> <p>Doubtless, in such a place as this, with its eerie marshes, sudden fogs, moaning winds... any poor old woman might be looked at askance; once upon a time, after all, she would have been branded as a witch... (4.19)</p> <p>But I did not go inside. I did not want to, yet awhile. I wanted to drink in all the silence and the mysterious, shimmering beauty, to smell the strange, salt smell that was borne faintly on the wind, to listen for the slightest murmur. (5.16)</p> <p>I stood absolutely helpless in the mist that clouded me and everything from my sight, almost weeping in an agony of fear and frustration, and I knew that I was hearing... appalling last noises of a pony and trap, carrying a child in it... (6.6)</p> <p>In Scotland, a son was born to her and she wrote of him with a desperate, clinging affection. (9.35)</p> <p>But what was "real"? At that moment I began to doubt my own reality. (10.10)</p>	<p>Foreboding Pallor Malevolent Perilous Morose Disarray Repellent Intangible Fervent Resolute Novella Trauma Obscurity Poignant Gothic Revenant Scepticism Sinister Enigmatic</p>		<p><u>Innocent death</u>: lots of death, but specifically innocents. Nathaniel, Stella, Joseph. <u>The Pony and Trap</u>: this recurs throughout the book. It represents a flashback for AK, as well as PTSD/ trauma, it occurs finally when Stella and Joseph die. <u>Nature</u>: not just a backdrop here, but a force. Man is small and inconsequential opposed to nature. Tide, marshes, peaceful views from Monk’s Piece.</p>

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