

READING/TRACKING SHEET FOR CLOSE READING

I. BEFORE READING:

1) Read Author's brief biographical information: Any Interesting points that you might expect to be important to a story by this author, just based on what you know or the title?

This novel is a classic by Jane Austen. Most of her novels usually connect or reach out to younger women, and those with an interest in romance and young love. This novel is said to be her funniest based off of word of mouth and reviews that I have seen. Jane Austen is a well-known author across the entire world, and her works are highly recommended. Each one displays a different emotion towards the reader. There aren't many books that she wrote that became published during her lifetime, and some not even completed. Austen's ability to surprise her readers makes her novels so popular.

2) When was it written? Anything significant happening historically and locally (country, state, etc.)

This specific novel was the first of her novels to be completed for publication in 1817, after her death. This is a gothic novel, which was very popular at the turn of the 19th century.

3) Impression from title: What do you think it could be about?

The title was originally "Susan" but was renamed Northanger Abbey when it was published posthumously. Jane Austen's title refers to a building within the novel.

4) Theme for which the story is being read for or classified under?

The main theme of this novel is love and loyalty. This novel is also referred to as "Gothic parody" because it in a way "makes fun" of Gothic novels that were within the same era of time.

II. AFTER READING JUST 1st PAGE, Review

1) Your expectation of what the story is about or will discuss, based only on reading the review, first page, or author's reputation/biography?

Based off of reviews I read online, I expect this book to be like Austen's other novels; young romance, naïve female who falls for some guy and throws herself at him. Although this is what most people stated in reviews, I love these types of stories. I'm a sucker for a romance.

2) Mood set by first page?

The mood that is set within the first page is of a loving, close-knit family. The author talks about the father and mother in detail and how they are not like other parents in how they treat their children. The father and mother of the main character, Catherine, have 10 children including Catherine. The author goes into detail about who Catherine is and how she is different and loves to read novels.

3) **On first page**, Quotes, words, or lines that (as you are reading) catch your eye as strange, odd, interesting, bizarre or unique and leave an impression?

A line within the first page that catches my eye is, “*a family of ten children will always be called a fine family*”. This line caught my eye because I thought it was odd to think of a family being “fine” with that many children, but I guess when you think about the time that this novel was placed and written it makes sense to say that.

4) **On first page**, What Characters seem important as the good guy, bad guy, major character, etc.?

Many characters are listed right off the bat, but we can see that the main character will be Catherine Morland. Catherine’s parents are also described as “good” people.

5) **By end of the first page**, what is your impression of plot/what the story might be about?

The end of the first page talks about the mother’s relationship with the daughter, Catherine and how she was very different from her siblings. The ending of the first page shows the reader that the story will be about Catherine.

III. AS YOU ARE READING: THE STORY

1. **Vocabulary to look up:**

- Vicissitudes- Chapter 1
Definition: a change of circumstances or fortune.
- Baronets – Chapter 1, 2, 25
Definition: a member of the lowest hereditary titled British order, with the status of a commoner but able to use the prefix “Sir.”
- Muslins – First mentioned in Chapter 2
Definition: lightweight cotton cloth in a plain weave.
- Pump-room – First mentioned in Chapter 3
Definition: a common name for a drinking establishment.
- Threadbare – Chapter 5
Definition: (of cloth, clothing, or soft furnishings) becoming thin and tattered with age.
- Vexation – Chapter 8
Definition: the state of being annoyed, frustrated, or worried.
- Diffidence – Chapter 9
Definition: modesty or shyness resulting from a lack of self-confidence.

2. **As you are reading**, any **symbols**? What might they mean?

I’ve run into a few symbols as reading. One that I’ve seen repeatedly is the book that the main character has been reading, “The Mysteries of Udolpho”. I think this book is symbolic for Gothic novels. Ann Radcliffe is the author of the novel. The book is mentioned within this novel a few times so far. In chapter 6 she says, “*While I have Udolpho to read, I feel as if nobody could make me miserable. Oh! The dreadful black veil!*”

The carriages are also another symbol first within chapter 7. John uses the carriage as an expression of money and his success. It is mentioned again in chapter 13 by Mrs. Allen. She says, “Young men and

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women driving about the country in open carriages! Now and then it is very well; but going to inns and public places together! It is not right; and I wonder Mrs. Thorpe should allow it". I think that the carriages represent being well-off and boldness.

3. **As you are reading, Quotes, dialogue, or lines** that catch your eye as strange, odd, interesting, bizarre or unique and leave an impression?

1. "But when a young lady is to be a heroine, the perverseness of 40 surrounding families cannot prevent her. Something must and will happen to throw a hero in her way." – Chapter 1

2. "I see what you think of me," said he gravely—"I shall make but a poor figure in your journal tomorrow." Said by Henry. He was kindly making fun of Catherine and women writing in journals, but really, we see that he is being flirtatious with her. – Chapter 3

3. "This sort of mysteriousness, which is always so becoming in a hero, threw a fresh grace in Catherine's imagination around his person and manners, and increased her anxiety to know more of him." – Chapter 5

4. "I have no notion of loving people by halves; it is not my nature. My attachments are always excessively strong." – Chapter 6

5. "Oh, Lord! Not I; I never read novels; I have something else to do." Said by John. His statement shows that he would never be compatible with Catherine, because she thoroughly enjoys reading novels and we can see automatically the type of person he is. – Chapter 7

6. "She had not been brought up to ... know to how many idle assertions and impudent falsehoods the excess of vanity will lead." – Chapter 9

7. "You will allow, that in both, man has the advantage of choice, woman only the power of refusal." – Chapter 10

8. "And after all that romancers may say, there is no doing without money." – Chapter 17

9. "No man is offended by another man's admiration of the woman he loves; it is the woman only who can make it a torment." Said by Henry. Henry was telling Catherine that Isabella's relationship with Frederick isn't the one who will be hurting feelings, but Isabella herself will hurt James. – Chapter 19

10. "The money is nothing, it is not an object, but employment is the thing." – Chapter 22

11. "Catherine had read too much not to be perfectly aware of the ease with which a waxen figure might be introduced, and a supposititious funeral carried on." - Chapter 24

12. "Could you have believed there had been such inconstancy and fickleness, and everything that is bad in the world?" – Chapter 25

13. "But why he should say one thing so positively, and mean another all the while, was most unaccountable! How were people, at that rate, to be understood?" - Chapter 26

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14. “Wherever you are you should always be contented, but especially at home, because there you must spend the most of your time.” – Chapter 30

15. “She was guilty only of being less rich than he had supposed her to be.” – Chapter 30

4. **As you are reading**, any **Scenes or imagery** that catch your eye as strange, odd, interesting, bizarre or unique and leave an impression?

How the novel scene starts out, by stating that that Catherine is a heroine and that the story will be about the acquisition of a hero. I think that this is pretty common of a Gothic written within this time period as well as a romance and sets you up for those mindsets as the book unfolds. – Chapter 1

When Catherine first see’s Henry and her impression on him shows us that she is attracted to him, but she doesn’t feel like he is attracted to her.

The scene in which Catherine is riding in the carriage with John and how his actions are boastful, and he thinks that Catherine has feelings for him.

Scene where General Tilney explains to Catherine and Eleanor that he believes that all men should be employed and working, and he uses his sons as examples for this. He says that it is not about the income but about working. This gives you his viewpoint on not only the person he is but his expectation of his children. – Chapter 22

Catherine finds out that Isabella Thorpe break off her engagement to James, Catherine’s brother, and she turns to try to be with the Captain, Frederick Tilney. Catherine assumed that this would happen, and Henry helps explain and be there for her. – Chapter 25

Catherine’s suspicions of the General and what happened to the mother because it seemed mysterious, and her imaginative thoughts gained through reading her Gothic novel. I was pretty surprised that she actually said the thoughts out loud to Henry.

5. **As you are reading**, any **events or Action** that catch your eye as strange, odd, interesting, bizarre, unique, explain the heart of the story, and leave an impression?

How quickly Catherine and Isabella became friends was a surprise. Right off the bat I think that it can be expected that something was up, only for the reader to later find out that she had interactions with Catherine’s brother James.

An action that I was very surprised by was when the General dismissed Catherine from Northanger Abbey. Catherine thought that it was because of the presumptions she had made to Henry about his mother, but she didn’t know what the real reason was that she was to leave.

The cause of Catherine being forced to leave Northanger Abbey, because John convinced the General that her family had money and was full of wealth and he received the wrong impression of her and did not find out the truth until he had left for a few days then came back and made her leave.

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Catherine clearly struggled when she returned back home to Fullerton after all of the encounters she had in Northanger Abbey and in Bath. I think she knew all along that she loved Henry, but this is where is very clear and evident that she has strong feelings for him and longs to be with him.

5. **As you are reading**, Important settings or change of settings?

Local/ physical setting: Catherine's arrival at Bath and how it made her feel. "They arrived at Bath. Catherine was all eager delight — her eyes were here, there, everywhere, as they approached its fine and striking environs, and afterwards drove through those streets which conducted them to the hotel. She was come to be happy, and she felt happy already" – Chapter 2

Weather setting: "I was so afraid it would rain this morning, just as I wanted to set off; it looked very showery, and that would have thrown me into agonies!" – Chapter 6

Weather setting: "A bright morning so early in the year, she allowed, would generally turn to rain, but a cloudy one foretold improvement as the day advanced." – Chapter 11

Local/ physical setting: Catherine's brother going to head back to Fullerton to ask his parents to marry Isabella. "Her brother, she found, was preparing to set off with all speed to Fullerton, to make known his situation and ask consent; and here was a source of some real agitation to the mind of Isabella." – Chapter 15

Local/ physical setting: When the General invited Catherine to Northanger Abbey. "Northanger Abbey! These were thrilling words and wound up Catherine's feelings to the highest point of ecstasy." – Chapter 17

Weather setting: "The wind roared down the chimney, the rain beat in torrents against the windows, and everything seemed to speak the awfulness of her situation." – Chapter 21

IV. AS YOU ARE READING: THE CHARACTERS

STAGE 1: first impression/who you thought would be the major characters/describe them in 5 or less words

- Catherine Morland: The main character of the novel, young woman.
- Mrs. Morland (Catherine and John's mother): A nice, hardworking women.
- Mr. Morland "Richard" (Catherine's and John's father): A respectable clergyman.
- Sarah (Sally) Morland: Catherine's youngest sister.
- George Morland: Younger sibling of Catherine.

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- Harriet Morland: Younger sibling of Catherine.
- Mr. Allen/ Mrs. Allen: Chaperones Catherine to Bath.
- Isabella Thorpe: A young woman who becomes Catherine's friend.
- Henry Tilney: Kind, young gentleman that Catherine has eyes for.
- John Thorpe: Isabella's brother, has interest in Catherine. Overbearing character.
- Eleanor Tilney: Henry and Frederick's sister. She is very polite and honest.
- Captain Frederick Tilney: The general's oldest son, good-looking young man. The "bad guy".
- Anne and Maria Thorpe: Younger sisters of Isabella.
- General Tilney: Overbearing and nitpicky about time and punctuality.

STAGE 2: Changes to major characters in middle of story

- Catherine Morland: Seventeen years old, described in the beginning of the novel that she isn't so much of a heroine and that she is not a lot of things that your common heroine is, but she is kind and sweet. Mistakes fiction for reality because her mind lives within the novels that she loves to read. She has a large imagination that sometimes causes her problems.
- Mr. Morland: Who was described as "never handsome". Unlike the General, he wants his children to be happy and to be a good father with a relationship with them. I think that he is supportive and fair in his son's request to marry Isabella.
- George: Waited for Catherine at the door when she returned to Fullerton after being gone to Bath and Northanger Abbey. Not mentioned much within the novel.
- Harriet: Waited for Catherine at the door when she returned to Fullerton after being gone to Bath and Northanger Abbey. Not mentioned much within the novel.
- Mr. Allen: He does a better job of chaperoning Catherine while in Bath than his wife and tries to make decisions for the group.
- Mrs. Allen: Agrees with everything that Catherine says and essentially lets her do whatever she wants, so she probably isn't the best person when it comes to a "chaperone".
- Henry: Shows Catherine that they have similar interests, for example he has read the Gothic book that Catherine has been reading throughout the novel.
- John: Manipulates others, like his sister Isabella. He is loud and rude and is not fitting to be with Catherine. He states that he doesn't enjoy novels unlike Catherine.

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- Eleanor: She perfectly fits the criteria for a heroine that Jane Austen outlines at the beginning of the novel in chapter one. At the end of the novel, she is able to get married to the man she had been wanting to be with but couldn't because of her father.
- Captain: Has a scandal with Isabella and according to his brother, it isn't his first indiscretion.

STAGE 3: Your impression of major characters when faced with a dilemma or choice

- Catherine Morland: She fails to realize the crowd that she is with and the trouble that they bring her (The Thorpe's). She is rather naïve and thinks all people are good.
- Sarah: Is a failure as portrayed by the author. She doesn't care much that Catherine left for Bath. She makes Henry's visit to their home awkward by being oblivious to his wanting to be alone with Catherine.
- Isabella: We see that Isabella is quite the scandal. She leaves her engagement with Catherine's brother to be with the Captain of the Tilney family.
- Henry: He displays a lot of humorous arrogance and very ironic humor towards Eleanor and Catherine, and women in general throughout the novel.
- John: I do not like this character for Catherine. He is nothing but trouble. At one point throughout the novel, he won't let Catherine out of the carriage. He also lied about seeing the Tilneys so that he could get Catherine into going out with him.
- General: He is too concerned with money and wealth and he treats those who aren't as wealthy with rudeness. We come to find out that he only married Mrs. Tilney for the wealth that she had to offer.

STAGE 4: Your impression of major characters when doing their most important action in the story

- Catherine Morland: The way that the author portrays her within the novel makes the novel comedic and makes this character funny by how oblivious she can be. We can also see her grow up throughout the novel. She also decides that she doesn't want to be friends with Isabella anymore after what she did to her brother.
- Mrs. Moreland: She is raising 10 children described to have a good temper. "did not insist on her daughters being accomplished in spite of incapacity or distaste, allowed her to leave off." When Henry shows up to her house after Catherine's unexpected trip back home, she welcomes Henry in and is very loving and caring towards him.
- Henry: It often seems that he prides himself in his intelligence and enjoys teasing others. He is sometimes hard to read and figure out what he actually means versus a joke here and there and says the opposite of what he means in order to be funny. He is good influence on Catherine and encourages her to use common sense.

STAGE 5: at end/who were they major characters? Describe in one sentence or less how each major character is changed by the story? WHY?

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- Catherine is the main character of the story and we see her growth throughout the entire novel. She starts to see people for who they really are and draws herself closer to Eleanor as a friend and an engagement then marriage with Henry. I think that all the drama she faces, like with Isabella, opens her eyes to people's true actions and to get her head out of novels to see it.
- Henry: Henry builds his relationship with Catherine throughout the novel, although he is fairly hard to read and where his emotions stand sometimes, we do know that he has a strong love for her and a good relationship with his sister Eleanor and even chooses his love with Catherine over the relationship with his father because he did not approve due to her lack of wealth.
- Eleanor: She is one of the quieter characters within the novel, but ultimately in the end she gets to be with the man she loves also allowing Henry and Catherine to be together as well. She is a good friend towards Catherine and gives her good advice throughout the novel and when they spend time together at Northanger Abbey.

VI. Important character names/impression of those characters? Any names have symbolic value (Names like Faith, Angel, Evergreen, Mann may often have symbolic values)

There were not any symbolic values to any of the character names to my knowledge. Throughout this time period the women say "Sir" to the men.

VII. Any other characters (not major) that stick in your mind? Why?

I think James was a pretty major character for the most part, but it makes me sad that he got hurt in the end after having really strong feelings for someone who didn't really care for him.

I also wish we could have gotten more detail into Mrs. Tilney's life before her tragic death.

V. POST-READING ANALYSIS:

1) What do you think the story is about, beyond the narrative (What is its message or reason considered important)?

I think overall, the story is about a young woman within her time period who is so different and lost in her love for books and wants to find love in real life, and in the end ultimately does. The message within this novel could be a variety of things, such as standing out and being different, or following your heart, but I lean towards the theme of the novel which lies in loyalty and love. Henry remained loyal to Catherine throughout the novel, even after he was angry with her and chose her over his own father. The love that they share is strong and creates a beautiful story.

2) Describe the solution (if any) of the story's ending, the problem or conflict resolved?

The novels ending was a true love story, couples that weren't able or allowed to be together ended up together regardless of what anyone thought or felt towards their relationships, so I would say that yes conflicts were resolved overall.

3) Describe your feeling as a reader at end of story. Are you satisfied with ending and why?

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Like most of Jane Austen's novels, the ending was to be expected. It seemed to be cut short, like I was left wanting more and needed more information. I was satisfied that Catherine ended up growing throughout the novel and got her happily ever after, as well as Eleanor who got to be with her love as well. I would have liked to have heard about some success with James as he ended up getting heartbroken and I wanted some revenge on John and the Thorpe family, because they are all trouble. I wish that the General would've been accepting, but he was not a man who would budge. Overall, satisfied with the entire novel and ending. Fits the author's style to a T.

4) Now, why do you feel the story is/isn't worthy of being considered literature?

In the beginning of the novel it is clear to the reader that Catherine Morland is not the usual heroine. In most novels of the 18th and 19th century, heroines were common, and Catherine did not fall within the guidelines of your average heroine in this novel. This novel was written during a time period where novels were huge and young women were obsessed with reading them, which is portrayed by Catherine and the novel she reads throughout the entirety of Northanger Abbey. The most popular works of the

18th century were Gothic novels that portrayed the difficulties faced by a heroine and finding love. I think that because Catherine did not fall within the norm of these typical characters, it adds a sort of comedy to the novel. This book is definitely a classic and is upheld gloriously and worthy within literature.

5) "E RATT TIC" questions for **GROUP DISCUSSION**

1) **"E"** What issue (or story topic or character) is universal or makes a statement about people and life in general?

The main character, Catherine, makes a statement in how she is quite different than other "heroines" within novels of this time period. The statement overall within the novel can be seen as Henry chooses to be with Catherine regardless if her family had the wealth or not (a common theme in this time period, required of couples) and didn't follow his father's wishes because he wanted to follow true love.

2) **"R"** Anything that sticks in your mind as ways the author is trying to trick, control, persuade, give only one side, convince or manipulate the reader with word choice, scene choice, cast of characters, style, point of view, commentary?

I think that the characters as well as dialogue within the novel give it a sense of comedy and "making fun" of other Gothic genres within the same time period.

3) **"A"** Any possible way the biography of author might have played a part in the story's development or topic?

Jane Austen's books are usually similar in a few aspects, for example I expected the ending to be quite abrupt as her novels usually are. The time period also falls in relation to the time it was written.

4) **"T"** What category would you put the story/poem into (ghost story, love poem, character study, etc.)

The category that this novel would fall within is Gothic genre, or comedic, but I definitely think it's a love story.

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5) **“T”** How would/was the story important for when and where it was written (U.S., 1950, during segregation)?

This specific novel was the first of Austen’s novels to be completed for publication in 1817, after her death. This is a gothic novel, which was very popular at the turn of the 19th century. The author’s setting, Bath, as it is mentioned within the novel, was also a place she had been.

6) **“T”** What literary quality (topic, literary terms such as symbols, controversy, etc.) stands out as most interesting? Why?

The most interesting is how the book is defined as a Gothic genre but makes fun of it in a way while the main character, Catherine, reads a gothic novel herself throughout the book. It’s also comedic in that, because she’s reading a book within a book, a book you’re reading.

7) **“T”** Why do you think the writer made his/her message the way he/she did (w/shock, absurd situation, elegant words, etc.)?

The author, Jane Austen, uses words that fall within the timeline of the book and it almost puts you within that time and allows you to feel like you are a part of the scenes with the characters and how they speak to each other and the dialect used, such as the women saying “sir”.

8) **“I”** What other writers, stories, movies, etc. does this remind you of? Why?

Jane Austen is a well-known author across the entire world, and I think she is one in her own. Austen's works are highly recommended everywhere and each one displays a different emotion towards the reader. There aren't many books that she wrote that became published during her lifetime, and some not even completed. Austen's ability to surprise her readers makes her novels so popular.

9) **“C”** Who would like this story, think it’s important, and why?

This novel follows the timeline in which it was written so I find it to be a vintage classic. It connects with many different audiences, but probably more towards younger women, or someone who has an interest reading about romance and young love. This novel is said to be her funniest, so also anyone who'd enjoy a good laugh.