CAPITOLO

10

Graveyards, Ghosts and the Sublime

"No passion so effectually robs the mind of all its powers of acting and reasoning as fear." — Edmund Burke, A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful (1757), Part II, section 2

OBIETTIVI

1. I can describe the new taste of 1740–1800 — the Alps and Vesuvius, the picturesque, the cult of feeling, the Celtic revival — on a timeline.
2. I can explain what Graveyard poetry, Burke's sublime, the Ossian poems and the Gothic novel are, and why "pre-Romanticism" is a later label.
3. I can analyse stanzas of Gray's *Elegy*, the opening scene of *The Castle of Otranto* and Burns's "A Red, Red Rose", including its Scots.
4. I can use phrasal verbs by the meaning of their particles, choose between phrasal and Latinate verbs by register, and use phrasal nouns.
5. I can describe feelings and atmosphere orally and write a descriptive piece about a sublime place.
6. I can compare Gray's *Elegy* with Foscolo's *Dei Sepolcri*, explain Cesarotti's Ossian, read Pliny the Younger on AD 79 and describe a volcano.

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In the summer of 1750 a shy Cambridge scholar sent a friend a poem he had been working on for years. It was set in a village churchyard at dusk; it spoke not of kings or heroes but of the poor farmers buried under the grass, and it reminded its readers that "the paths of glory lead but to the grave". Published a few months later, Thomas Gray's *Elegy* became one of the most read, copied and translated poems in the English language. In the same years travellers began to admire mountains they had once found ugly, a young philosopher explained why terror can give pleasure, a Scottish schoolmaster published the "ancient" songs of a blind Celtic bard, and the son of a prime minister invented a new kind of story in which a giant helmet falls from the sky.

This chapter follows that new taste for graves, ghosts and wild places in the second half of the eighteenth century, the bridge between the age of reason and the Romantic age of Part IV. You read five stanzas of Gray's *Elegy*, the first terrifying scene of the first Gothic novel and a love song by Robert Burns in Scots; you learn how the particles of phrasal verbs carry meaning, and when to prefer a Latinate verb; you write a description of a sublime place; and you compare Gray with Foscolo's *Dei Sepolcri*, follow Ossian into Italian, and climb Vesuvius twice: with a British diplomat who loved volcanoes, and with a Roman of seventeen who watched it erupt in AD 79.

10.1 History and Society: Taste, Landscape and Feeling

Chapters 8 and 9 described mid-century Britain and the three revolutions that changed it after 1760. This chapter looks at something quieter but just as new: **taste**, the way educated people learnt to see landscapes, buildings, the past and their own feelings between about 1740 and 1800. Figura 10.1 places the books and events of the chapter on one time axis.

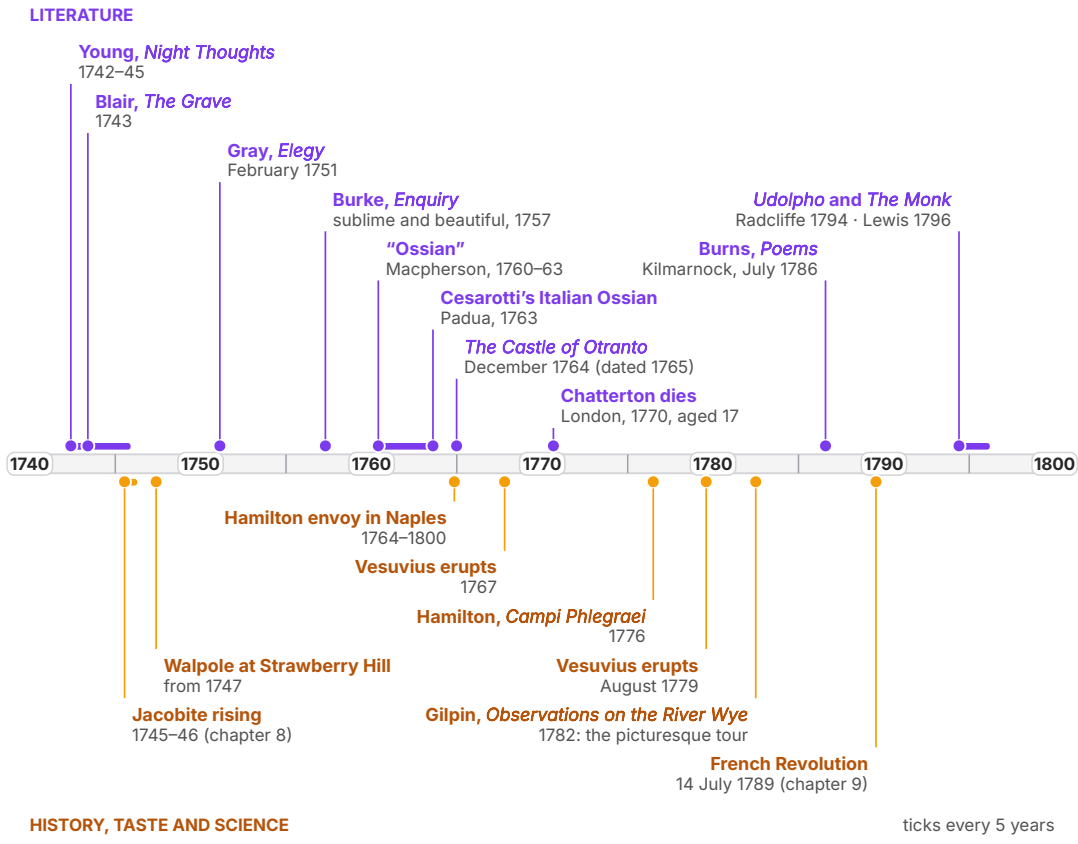


Figura 10.1 Graveyards, the sublime and the Gothic, 1740–1800, on a proportional time axis (ticks every 5 years). Above the axis, literature (violet); below it, history, taste and science (amber). Bars show works published over several years.

10.1.1 From the Grand Tour to the Alps

In English 2 (Unit 12) you met the **Grand Tour**, the long journey through France and Italy that completed the education of rich young Britons. For most of the seventeenth century the Alps were simply the obstacle on the way to Rome: travellers crossed them as fast as they could, often in a chair carried by porters, and described them as horrid, barren and frightful. In the eighteenth century the same mountains began to be admired. In 1739 two young Grand Tourists, the poet Thomas Gray and his school friend Horace Walpole, visited the monastery of the Grande Chartreuse, near Grenoble, on their way to Italy. Gray wrote to a friend on 16 November: "Not a precipice, not a torrent, not a cliff, but is pregnant with religion and poetry." The horror was still there; what had changed was that it now produced wonder.

Travellers also began to look at Italian landscapes through Italian and French painters. The calm, golden views of Claude Lorrain, full of temples and soft light, taught them what a beauti-

ful landscape was; the storms, rocks and bandits of the Neapolitan painter Salvator Rosa taught them what a wild one was. A tourist of the 1770s might carry a "Claude glass", a small, slightly convex, tinted mirror: he turned his back to the view and looked at it reflected in the glass, framed and toned like a painting.

10.1.2 Vesuvius and Sir William Hamilton

The most spectacular sight of the Grand Tour was Vesuvius, which was unusually active in the second half of the century. From 1764 to 1800 the British envoy (ambassador) to the Kingdom of Naples was **Sir William Hamilton**, a collector of Greek vases and an enthusiastic amateur scientist. He climbed the volcano again and again, watched the great eruptions of 1767 and 1779 at close range, and described them in letters to the Royal Society in London, which had elected him a Fellow in 1766. In 1776 he published *Campi Phlegraei* ("the burning fields", the volcanic area west of Naples), two large volumes of observations illustrated with hand-coloured plates by the painter Pietro Fabris; a supplement on the eruption of August 1779 followed. Hamilton argued that volcanoes build mountains as well as destroy them, and pointed to Monte Nuovo near Pozzuoli, a hill that had risen from the ground in a few days in 1538. For his visitors, Vesuvius at night was both science and spectacle: a place where they could feel terror and remain safe.

10.1.3 Gardens, ruins and the picturesque

At home, the landowners of chapter 8 rebuilt their parks. The formal French and Dutch garden, with straight avenues and clipped hedges, gave way to the English **landscape garden** (Italian *giardino all'inglese*): lawns that seemed to flow into the fields, irregular lakes, clumps of trees and carefully placed temples, bridges and ruins, designed to be seen like a series of paintings. From the 1740s the banker Henry Hoare laid out the gardens of Stourhead, in Wiltshire, around a lake, with a Pantheon and other temples along a circuit walk; Lancelot "Capability" Brown (1716–1783) designed or remodelled the parks of well over a hundred great houses. Some owners built new ruins — a broken tower, a hermitage — because a ruin made a visitor think of time, death and the past. Horace Walpole, the son of the prime minister of chapter 5, went further: he rented a small house at Strawberry Hill, near London, in 1747, bought it two years later and over the following decades turned it into a toy medieval castle, with battlements, pointed windows and chimneypieces and bookcases copied from Gothic tombs and screens. It is one of the first buildings of the **Gothic Revival** (Italian *neogotico*), the return to medieval forms that culminated in the Victorian Houses of Parliament.

By the 1780s a new word described a new kind of tourism. The **picturesque** (Italian *pittoresco*, "worthy of a picture") was the quality of a landscape that is irregular, varied and rough — a winding river, a ruined abbey, an old tree — without being frightening. The clergyman and teacher William Gilpin made it fashionable with his *Observations on the River Wye* (1782), a guide to

looking at scenery, and travellers began to explore the Wye Valley, Wales, the Lake District (chapter 12) and the Scottish Highlands with sketchbook in hand.

10.1.4 The cult of feeling

Behind all these changes was the culture of sensibility you met in chapter 8: the belief that to feel deeply was a sign of a good heart. Melancholy, which earlier ages had treated as an illness, became a fashionable mood. Readers wept over sentimental novels, visited tombs by moonlight and kept "commonplace books" of sad and solemn passages. Feeling was not only private: the same sympathy produced charity, and later, as chapter 9 showed, the campaign against the slave trade. But the cult of feeling also prepared a deep change in literature. If emotion was a source of truth, then poetry should express emotion, and the poet's own feelings could become its subject — the programme of the Romantic poets of Part IV.

10.1.5 Scotland after 1745 and the Celtic revival

After the defeat of the last Jacobite rising at Culloden in 1746 (chapter 8), the Highlands were disarmed and their way of life changed for ever. As often happens, the old culture began to be admired just as it was disappearing. Edinburgh was then one of the intellectual capitals of Europe — the city of David Hume and Adam Smith, the age of the *Scottish Enlightenment* — and its scholars were fascinated by the songs and stories of the Gaelic-speaking Highlands and by the idea of a primitive, heroic poetry older than Homer. This enthusiasm for the languages, legends and landscapes of the Celtic peoples (the Gaels of Scotland and Ireland, the Welsh) is called the **Celtic revival**. Its great success was James Macpherson's "Ossian" (1760–63, Literature); in the same years English scholars were collecting old ballads, such as those in Bishop Percy's *Reliques* (1765), which you met in English 3 (chapter 5).

DA RICORDARE

Taste 1740–1800 at a glance. The Alps and Vesuvius become sights to admire (Gray at the Grande Chartreuse, 1739; Sir William Hamilton in Naples, 1764–1800; *Campi Phlegraei*, 1776). The **landscape garden** replaces the formal garden; Walpole's Strawberry Hill (from 1747) begins the **Gothic Revival**; Gilpin's *Wye* (1782) makes the **picturesque** tour fashionable. Sensibility makes melancholy fashionable. After 1746 the Highlands change; the **Celtic revival** admires their past.

10.2 Literature: Graveyards, the Sublime and the Gothic

10.2.1 A label: pre-Romanticism

Between Pope (chapter 5), who died in 1744, and the *Lyrical Ballads* of Wordsworth and Coleridge (1798, chapter 12), English poetry changed its subjects and its tone: from the town to the countryside and the wild, from society to solitude, from reason and wit to feeling, from the present to the Middle Ages and the "primitive" past. Literary historians often call the writers of these years **pre-Romantic** (Italian *preromantici*), and the period pre-Romanticism. Use the label with care. It was invented much later, and it looks at these writers only as forerunners of something else; none of them knew that Romanticism was coming. Some critics prefer the phrase "the age of sensibility", proposed by the Canadian critic Northrop Frye in 1956. What matters is the list of new interests you will meet in this section: death and the grave, night and melancholy, the sublime, the ancient bard, the medieval castle, the language of ordinary people.

10.2.2 Graveyard poetry and Thomas Gray

In the 1740s several poets wrote long meditations on death, set at night among tombs. Edward Young's *The Complaint, or Night Thoughts on Life, Death and Immortality* (1742–45), nine "Nights" of blank verse, was read all over Europe; Robert Blair's *The Grave* (1743) described the terrors of the tomb in vivid detail. Critics call these poems **Graveyard poetry** (Italian *poesia sepolcrale* or *cimiteriale*): poems that meditate on death, mortality and the afterlife in the setting of a churchyard, a tomb or a night landscape, usually with a Christian moral. The owl, the yew tree, the moon, the bell and the crumbling stone are their stage properties.

Thomas Gray (1716–1771), the son of a London scrivener, studied at Eton and Cambridge, made the Grand Tour with Walpole (they quarrelled in Italy in 1741 and were reconciled four years later) and spent most of his life in Cambridge as a scholar of Greek, of medieval Welsh and Old Norse poetry and of botany; he became Professor of Modern History in 1768. He published very little and refused the post of Poet Laureate in 1757. Gray worked on the *Elegy* for several years — it may have been begun as early as 1742, the year his closest friend, Richard West, died — and finished it in 1750. When he learnt that a magazine was going to print it without his permission, he had it published at once, anonymously, by Robert Dodsley in February 1751, as *An Elegy Wrote in a Country Church Yard*. Its success was immediate. The churchyard is traditionally identified with Stoke Poges in Buckinghamshire, where Gray's mother was buried and where Gray himself lies.

The *Elegy* is an elegy (English 3) in an unusual sense: it mourns not one dead friend but all the forgotten poor of a village. The speaker stands in the churchyard at dusk, imagines the simple lives of the farmers under the grass, warns the rich and proud that death waits for them too, and suggests that among these poor men there may have been a great poet or statesman whom

poverty kept silent. At the end the poem turns to the speaker himself, and imagines the epitaph of a young poet "to Fortune and to Fame unknown". Gray wrote it in **elegiac quatrains** (Italian *quartine elegiache*), also called heroic quatrains: stanzas of four iambic pentameters rhyming *abab*. After the *Elegy* the form was linked for ever with solemn, melancholy reflection.

10.2.3 Edmund Burke and the sublime

Why do we enjoy a storm at sea, a tragedy or a graveyard at night? In 1757 a young Irish writer in London, **Edmund Burke** (1729–1797) — later the politician of chapter 9 — gave an answer in *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful*. The word *sublime* came from the Greek treatise *On the Sublime* attributed to "Longinus", where it described the grandeur of great writing; Burke used it for an experience. The **sublime** (Italian *il sublime*) is the overwhelming emotion produced by things that are vast, powerful, dark or dangerous — mountains, the ocean, thunder, darkness, eternity — and, by extension, the quality of the objects that produce it. Burke's definition (Part I, section 7) is famous:

Tabella 10.1 Burke, *A Philosophical Enquiry…* (1757), Part I, section 7 (*Works*, vol. 1, Project Gutenberg #15043)

> "Whatever is fitted in any sort to excite the ideas of pain and danger, that is to say, whatever is in any sort terrible, or is conversant about terrible objects, or operates in a manner analogous to terror, is a source of the *sublime*; that is, it is productive of the strongest emotion which the mind is capable of feeling."

The key is distance. "When danger or pain press too nearly," Burke explains, "they are incapable of giving any delight, and are simply terrible; but at certain distances, and with certain modifications, they may be, and they are, delightful." A shipwreck is terrible for the sailors and sublime for the spectator safe on the cliff. In Part II Burke lists the sources of the sublime: *obscurity* (what we cannot see clearly frightens us more), *power*, *privation* (darkness, solitude, silence, emptiness), *vastness*, *infinity*, *magnificence*, sudden loud sounds. Its effect, in its highest degree, is astonishment, a state in which the mind is so filled with its object that it cannot reason. Against it Burke sets **the beautiful** (Italian *il bello*): small, smooth, delicate, gently curved, bright but not dazzling, founded on pleasure and producing love. Figura 10.2 compares the two.





	THE SUBLIME	THE BEAUTIFUL
size	vast in their dimensions	comparatively small
surface	rugged and negligent	smooth and polished
line	loves the right line, or a strong deviation	shuns the right line; deviates insensibly
light	dark and gloomy	should not be obscure
mass	solid, and even massive	light and delicate
founded on	pain (terror, at a safe distance)	pleasure (love)
passion	astonishment, with some degree of horror	love, or some passion similar to it

Wording from Burke, *Enquiry* (1757), Part III, section 27 and Part II, section 1 (passion); Part III, section 1 (love).

Figura 10.2 Burke's two categories compared. The qualities are given in Burke's own words (*Enquiry*, Part III, section 27, "The sublime and beautiful compared"); the passions come from Part II, section 1 and Part III, section 1. The pictograms are only reminders: a rugged mountain under a dark sky, a smooth curve in the light.

Burke's little book was read for a century. It gave writers and painters a reason to seek out storms, ruins, night and terror, and it gave the Gothic novelists a programme: frighten your reader, but keep him safe in his armchair.

10.2.4 Ossian, Chatterton and the invented past

In 1760 James Macpherson (1736–1796), a young Highland schoolmaster, published *Fragments of Ancient Poetry, Collected in the Highlands of Scotland*, prose poems that he said he had translated from Gaelic. Encouraged by Edinburgh scholars, he toured the Highlands and produced two epics, *Fingal* (1761, dated 1762) and *Temora* (1763), attributed to **Ossian**, a blind bard of the third century, son of the hero Fingal. Their misty mountains, ghosts of warriors speaking from the clouds, lonely heroes and rhythmic, solemn prose fascinated Europe: Goethe, Napoleon and countless readers admired them, and Melchiorre Cesarotti made them famous in Italy (Connections). But no ancient manuscript was ever produced. Samuel Johnson (chapter 8) called the poems an imposture, and a committee of the Highland Society reported in 1805 that Macpherson had used genuine Gaelic ballads about Fionn (Fingal) and Oisín (Ossian), but had freely combined, expanded and rewritten them. Scholars today agree: the Ossian poems are largely Macpherson's own composition, built on some real Gaelic material.

Bristol had its own invented poet. **Thomas Chatterton** (1752–1770), the son of a schoolmaster, grew up beside the church of St Mary Redcliffe, where old documents lay in a chest in the muniment room. As a boy he wrote poems in a strange, pseudo-medieval English and attributed them to "Thomas Rowley", an imaginary fifteenth-century monk of Bristol. He went to London to make a living as a writer and died there, poor and alone, at seventeen; the Rowley poems were published after his death (1777) and their authenticity was argued about for years. The Romantic poets turned him into a symbol of the neglected young genius: Wordsworth called him "the marvellous Boy".

APPROFONDIMENTO

Forgery or creation? Macpherson and Chatterton are often called forgers, and they did present their own work as ancient. But both were doing, in an extreme form, what their age wanted: inventing a national, "primitive" past. Many of the most influential works of the period were half discovery and half creation — Percy "improved" the ballads of his *Reliques*; Walpole presented *Otranto* as a translation; Burns, as you will see, rewrote old songs. Ask the historian's question (chapter 9): who wrote this, when, and why did they say it was older? Then ask the reader's question: is it still worth reading? For Ossian, generations of Europeans answered yes.

10.2.5 The Gothic novel

On Christmas Eve 1764 a short novel appeared in London with the title *The Castle of Otranto*. Its preface said that it was a translation, by one "William Marshal, Gent.", of an Italian story by "Onuphrio Muralto", found "in the library of an ancient Catholic family in the north of England" and printed at Naples "in the black letter, in the year 1529". Readers enjoyed the old tale until the second edition (1765) revealed the truth: the author was **Horace Walpole** (1717–1797), the owner of Strawberry Hill, who now added the subtitle "A Gothic Story". In a letter he said that the story had come to him from a dream about an ancient castle and a gigantic hand in armour on a staircase.

Otranto is set in medieval Apulia. Manfred, prince of Otranto, holds his castle because of an old crime; his son Conrad is crushed on his wedding day by a gigantic helmet (Texts, T2); Manfred tries to marry his son's bride, Isabella, who flees through underground passages; portraits sigh, statues bleed, and in the end the giant ghost of Alfonso, the rightful prince, destroys the castle and reveals the true heir. Walpole wanted to combine the marvels of old romance with the natural behaviour of characters in modern novels. The result was the first **Gothic novel** (Italian *romanzo gotico*): a story of terror and mystery, usually set in the past in a castle, abbey or ruin in a Catholic country of southern Europe, in which a persecuted heroine, a tyrannical villain, secrets of birth and inheritance, and real or apparent supernatural events produce suspense. "Gothic" here means medieval, and also wild and barbarous: the opposite of the classical taste of chapter 5.

The genre's greatest success came thirty years later. **Ann Radcliffe** (1764–1823) was paid an unusually large sum for *The Mysteries of Udolpho* (1794), in which the orphan Emily St Aubert is imprisoned by the villain Montoni in a castle in the Apennines. Radcliffe never travelled to Italy; her landscapes come from paintings and travel books, and they are sublime in Burke's sense. Her technique was the **explained supernatural**: every apparent ghost receives a rational explanation in the end — the terrible thing behind the black veil at Udolpho turns out to be a wax figure. In an essay published after her death she distinguished *terror*, which expands the soul and keeps the mind awake, from *horror*, which freezes and almost destroys it. Matthew Lewis's *The Monk* (1796), set in Madrid, chose horror and real devils, and caused a scandal. Jane Austen would gently mock the readers of Radcliffe in *Northanger Abbey* (chapter 14); Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* (chapter 14) would carry the Gothic into science.

IN SINTESI

Tabella 10.2 The Gothic novel: a kit of conventions

Element	Typical form	Example
setting	a castle, abbey, convent or ruin; underground passages; a Catholic country in the past	Otranto (Apulia), Udolpho (the Apennines), Madrid
characters	a persecuted young heroine; a tyrant or corrupt monk; a lost heir	Isabella and Manfred; Emily and Montoni
plot	an old crime, a secret of birth or inheritance, imprisonment and flight	Manfred's usurped title
the supernatural	real (Walpole, Lewis) or explained at the end (Radcliffe)	the giant helmet; the black veil
effect	terror and suspense; the sublime at a safe distance	storms, darkness, sudden sounds

10.2.6 Robert Burns and the songs of Scotland

Robert Burns (1759–1796) was born at Alloway, in Ayrshire, the son of a poor tenant farmer, and worked on the land for most of his youth; his father made sure that he read widely in English, and he knew the Scots poems of Allan Ramsay and Robert Fergusson, written earlier in the century. In July 1786, when he was planning to emigrate to Jamaica, a printer in the small town of Kilmarnock published his *Poems, Chiefly in the Scottish Dialect*. The book was an instant success, Burns went to Edinburgh instead of Jamaica, and the novelist Henry Mackenzie welcomed him as a "Heaven-taught ploughman" — a flattering but misleading label, because Burns was a well-read and conscious artist. He later worked as an exciseman (a tax officer) in Dumfries, where he died at thirty-seven.

Burns wrote in English and, above all, in **Scots** (Italian *scots*), the Germanic language of Lowland Scotland, which developed from the northern English of the Middle Ages alongside English; linguists still debate whether it is a separate language or a group of dialects of English. Educated Scots of the time tried to avoid "Scotticisms" in their writing; Burns used Scots for comedy, satire, tenderness and politics, and made it a literary language again. In his last ten years he gave most of his energy to song: he collected, mended and rewrote hundreds of traditional Scottish songs for two collections, often keeping only a tune, a title or a few lines of the original. "Auld Lang Syne" and "A Red, Red Rose" (Texts, T3) were born in this way. His birthday, 25 January, is still celebrated as Burns Night wherever Scots live.

ERRORE FREQUENTE

✗ «Ossian era un bardo del III secolo e Macpherson ne tradusse fedelmente i poemi.» → ✓ I poemi di Ossian sono in gran parte opera di Macpherson, costruita liberamente su alcune ballate gaeliche autentiche.

✗ «Per Burke il sublime è il bello portato al massimo.» → ✓ Per Burke sublime e bello sono **opposti**: il sublime nasce dal terrore (a distanza di sicurezza), il bello dal piacere.

✗ «Gray fu il primo poeta romantico.» → ✓ Gray è un poeta **preromantico** (etichetta posteriore): la sua forma resta classica, quartine di pentametri giambici.

10.3 Texts: an Elegy, a Helmet and a Rose

Gray is quoted from a modern-spelling school edition of 1902 (apart from the contractions Gray used), Walpole from Henry Morley's edition and Burns from a nineteenth-century edition in Burns's own Scots; all three are on Project Gutenberg. Line numbers are those of the complete poems.

10.3.1 T1 · Thomas Gray, *Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard*

Context. The opening of the poem (stanzas 1–4) and its most famous stanza (9). The speaker is alone in a country churchyard as night falls; in stanzas 5–8, not printed here, he imagines the daily lives of the dead villagers, and then turns to the "Proud".

Tabella 10.3 T1 — Gray, *Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard* (1751), ll. 1–16 and 33–36; text of M. E. Litchfield (ed.), *Selections from Five English Poets* (Project Gutenberg #13535), notes omitted

The curfew tolls the knell of parting day,	1
The lowing herd winds slowly o'er the lea,	
The plowman homeward plods his weary way,	
And leaves the world to darkness and to me.	
Now fades the glimmering landscape on the sight,	5
And all the air a solemn stillness holds,	
Save where the beetle wheels his droning flight,	
And drowsy tinklings lull the distant folds;	
Save that from yonder ivy-mantled tow'r	
The moping owl does to the moon complain	10
Of such, as wand'ring near her secret bow'r,	
Molest her ancient solitary reign.	
Beneath those rugged elms, that yew-tree's shade,	
Where heaves the turf in many a mould'ring heap,	
Each in his narrow cell for ever laid,	15
The rude forefathers of the hamlet sleep.	
[…]	
The boast of heraldry, the pomp of pow'r,	33
And all that beauty, all that wealth e'er gave,	
Awaits alike th' inevitable hour.	35
The paths of glory lead but to the grave.	

Glosses. *curfew*: the evening bell · *tolls*: rings slowly · *knell*: the bell rung for a death · *parting*: departing, dying · *lowing*: mooing · *lea*: meadow · *plods*: walks slowly and heavily · *save where*: except where · *wheels*: flies in circles · *droning*: humming · *folds*: sheep pens (the sheep wear bells) · *yonder*: that, over there · *moping*: gloomy · *bow'r*: dwelling, hiding place · *molest*: disturb · *heaves*: rises · *cell*: here, the grave · *rude*: simple, uneducated (not "impolite") · *hamlet*: small village · *heraldry*: coats of arms, noble birth · *pomp*: splendour · *e'er*: ever · *but*: only.

Analysis

Form. Each stanza is an elegiac quatrain: four iambic pentameters rhyming *abab*. Figura 10.3 scans the first stanza. Almost every line ends with a pause, and almost every stanza is a complete sentence: the movement is slow and regular, like the tolling bell of line 1. Notice how many long vowels and heavy monosyllables slow the reading down: *tolls, knell, lea, plods, weary way*.

Stanza 1 of the *Elegy*: the elegiac (heroic) quatrain
Five iambs per line (× / × / × / × / ×), rhyme scheme abab. Violet = stressed syllable (metrical beat).



Rhymes: day / way (a) · lea / me (b). Each line has 10 syllables, grouped in 5 feet (gaps).
Natural reading: *winds* (l. 2) also takes weight; *and* (l. 4) is a light beat.

Figura 10.3 Scansion of stanza 1 of the *Elegy*. Each line has ten syllables in five iambic feet (unstressed + stressed); the rhyme words (outlined) follow the scheme *abab*. The violet boxes mark the metrical beats; in a natural reading some beats are stronger than others.

Language. The first stanza moves from sound (the bell, the cattle) to sight and then to darkness, and the world empties until only "me" is left: the speaker appears in the last word. In "The plowman homeward plods his weary way" it is the man, not the way, who is tired: the adjective has been moved from the person to something near him. This figure is a **transferred epithet** (Italian *ipallage*). Gray often inverts the normal English word order, as Milton did (chapter 3): the verb comes first in "Now fades the glimmering landscape", and last in "all the air a solemn stillness holds" and "The rude forefathers of the hamlet sleep", where it lands on the key idea. Sounds imitate sense: the drone of *droning*, the tinkling of *drowsy tinklings lull*. In stanza 9 abstract nouns become a procession — *boast, pomp, beauty, wealth, glory* — and the last line answers all of them with one word: *grave*.

Themes. The poem is about the equality of death: the poor in the churchyard and the rich in their monuments inside the church end in the same place. Read stanza 9 carefully: the verb *awaits* is singular, so its subject may be "th' inevitable hour" itself — death is the one who waits, patiently, for all the plural splendours of lines 33–34. The tone is not angry but melancholy and

compassionate, and the setting — dusk, owl, yew, crumbling turf — gives Graveyard poetry its most perfect form.

1. Which sounds and which sights does the speaker perceive in stanzas 1–2? In what order do they disappear?
2. Why does the owl "complain" in stanza 3? Who are the people who "molest" her?
3. Find three words in stanza 4 that describe the graves without using the word *grave*.
4. Who could be the subject of *awaits* in line 35? How does each reading change the meaning?
5. Line 36 is often quoted on its own. Why do you think it became a proverb?

ESEMPIO SVOLTO

A PEE paragraph on T1 (Point, Evidence, Explanation — English 3, chapter 6). Question: *How does Gray create a melancholy atmosphere in the first stanza?*

- **Point.** Gray creates melancholy by showing a world that slowly empties until the speaker is left alone with the night.
- **Evidence.** The bell "tolls the knell of parting day", and the last line reads: "And leaves the world to darkness and to me."
- **Explanation.** A *knell* is the bell rung for a death, so the end of the day becomes a small funeral. The herd and the ploughman leave one by one, and the stanza ends on the two words *darkness* and *me*: the speaker inherits the empty world. The slow iambic rhythm and the heavy monosyllables (*tolls, plods, way*) make the reader move as slowly as the tired ploughman.

Model length: about 90 words. Notice that the quotations are short and are always followed by a comment.

10.3.2 T2 · Horace Walpole, *The Castle of Otranto*, chapter 1

Context. Manfred, prince of Otranto, has arranged the marriage of his only son, the sickly Conrad, with the princess Isabella. The guests are waiting in the chapel; a servant runs in, unable to speak, and points at the courtyard, crying "Oh! the helmet! the helmet!" Manfred goes out to see.

Tabella 10.4 T2 — Walpole, *The Castle of Otranto* (1764), chapter 1 (ed. H. Morley, Project Gutenberg #696)

The first thing that struck Manfred's eyes was a group of his servants endeavouring to raise something that appeared to him a mountain of sable plumes. He gazed without believing his sight.
"What are ye doing?" cried Manfred, wrathfully; "where is my son?"
A volley of voices replied, "Oh! my Lord! the Prince! the Prince! the helmet! the helmet!"
Shocked with these lamentable sounds, and dreading he knew not what, he advanced hastily,—but what a sight for a father's eyes!—he beheld his child dashed to pieces, and almost buried under an enormous helmet, an hundred times more large than any casque ever made for human being, and shaded with a proportionable quantity of black feathers. […] He touched, he examined the fatal casque; nor could even the bleeding mangled remains of the young Prince divert the eyes of Manfred from the portent before him.

Glosses. *endeavouring*: trying · *sable plumes*: black feathers · *gazed*: looked fixedly · *wrathfully*: angrily · *a volley of*: many at the same time · *lamentable*: sorrowful · *dreading*: fearing · *beheld*: saw · *dashed to pieces*: crushed · *casque*: helmet · *proportionable*: proportionate · *divert*: turn away · *portent*: a sign of something terrible to come.

Analysis

Suspense. Walpole delays the revelation three times. First the servant can only point and repeat one word; then Manfred sees "a mountain of sable plumes" without understanding it; then the servants shout again; only in the long final sentence, interrupted by a dash and an exclamation, does he — and the reader — see the dead son. The mystery is shown before it is explained, the basic rhythm of every Gothic story.

The sublime and the absurd. The helmet is literally vast — "an hundred times more large" than a human one — and sublime in Burke's sense: dark, enormous, sudden, impossible to explain. Yet many modern readers smile at it, and Walpole himself called the book a fantasy written for amusement. The style is formal, almost theatrical (*beheld*, *casque*, *portent*, the archaic *ye*), and the characters speak in exclamations. Notice, finally, Manfred's strange reaction: he looks at the helmet, not at his son. Walpole wanted his characters to behave "naturally", but Manfred's natural feeling is already twisted by ambition: the portent matters to him more than the boy, because it threatens his title.

1. How many times does somebody say "the helmet"? What is the effect of the repetition?
2. Find four words or phrases that make the helmet sublime (size, colour, mystery).
3. Why do you think even the remains of his son cannot "divert the eyes of Manfred from the portent"?
4. Is this scene frightening, comic, or both? Give one reason for each answer.

10.3.3 T3 · Robert Burns, "A Red, Red Rose"

Context. A song rather than a poem: Burns wrote these words for a traditional tune in the mid-1790s, reworking lines from older popular songs, and they were first printed in two collections of Scottish songs. The speaker is about to leave his "bonie lass" for a long journey.

Tabella 10.5 T3 — Burns, "A Red, Red Rose" (mid-1790s), complete (*Poems and Songs of Robert Burns*, Project Gutenberg #1279)

O my Luve's like a red, red rose,	1
That's newly sprung in June:	
O my Luve's like the melodie,	
That's sweetly play'd in tune.	
As fair art thou, my bonie lass,	5
So deep in luve am I;	
And I will luve thee still, my dear,	
Till a' the seas gang dry.	
Till a' the seas gang dry, my dear,	
And the rocks melt wi' the sun;	10
And I will luve thee still, my dear,	
While the sands o' life shall run.	
And fare-thee-weel, my only Luve!	
And fare-thee-weel, a while!	
And I will come again, my Luve,	15
Tho' 'twere ten thousand mile!	

Glosses (Scots → English). *luve*: love (here also "my love", the girl) · *melodie*: melody · *bonie*: pretty · *lass*: girl · *a'*: all · *gang*: go (*gang dry* = dry up) · *wi'*: with · *o'*: of · *fare-thee-weel*: farewell · *tho' 'twere*: though it were (a subjunctive, chapter 7) · *mile*: miles (Scots uses the singular after a number).

Analysis

Form. Four quatrains in the rhythm of a ballad (English 3): lines of four and three beats alternate, and only the second and fourth lines rhyme (*June / tune*, *I / dry*, *sun / run*, *while / mile*). The

Scots spellings are not decoration: *luve*, *a'*, *gang* give the song its voice and its sounds, and they rhyme and scan in Scots.

Language. The song is built on simple devices taken to an extreme. Two similes open it (my love is *like* a rose, *like* a melody); then come hyperboles that grow from stanza to stanza — until the seas dry up, until the rocks melt, as long as the "sands of life" run in the hourglass, even across ten thousand miles. The last line of stanza 2 is repeated at the start of stanza 3, linking them like a chain, and "And I will luve thee still, my dear" returns as a refrain. The vocabulary is almost all monosyllables: anyone can sing it after one hearing.

Themes. Where Gray meditates on death and Walpole stages terror, Burns sings love, time and parting. Yet the song shares the pre-Romantic interests of the chapter: the voice of ordinary people, the language of a region, old popular songs taken seriously as poetry, and the vast forces of nature — seas, rocks, sun — measured against one human feeling.

1. Which two senses do the two similes of stanza 1 appeal to?
2. List the hyperboles in stanzas 2–4. Why does each one go further than the one before?
3. Read lines 8 and 9 aloud. What does the repetition add?
4. Rewrite lines 13–16 in standard modern English. What is lost?

10.4 Language: Phrasal Verbs and Phrasal Nouns

You already know what a phrasal verb is, and the grammar of separable, inseparable and three-part phrasal verbs (English 1, Unit 6, and English 2, Unit 12). At B2 the challenge is different: there are thousands of phrasal verbs, and you cannot learn them one by one as unrelated words. The good news is that the particles are not random. Each has a small set of meanings that it adds to many verbs, and if you know them you can often guess a new phrasal verb in context. This section looks at six particles, at register, and at the nouns formed from phrasal verbs.

10.4.1 What the particle means

Tabella 10.6 and Figura 10.4 show the most useful meanings of six particles. Many phrasal verbs also have a literal meaning (*The servants lifted up the helmet*) and an idiomatic one (*Gray never gave up his studies*); the meanings below are those that extend to many verbs.

Tabella 10.6 Particles and their meanings at B2

Particle	Meaning	Examples (many from this chapter)
up	completion: until nothing is left; increase	*The fire burnt up the old manuscripts. · The travellers used up all their money in Naples. · Suspense builds up slowly in a Gothic novel. · Till a' the seas* dry up *(Burns)*
out	to the end, until it disappears; finding, solving	*The Gaelic songs were dying out. · The bell fades out. · Emily never figures out the secret until the end. · Readers found out that Walpole was the author.*
off	departure; separation, interruption	*Gray and Walpole set off for Italy in 1739. · They broke off their friendship in 1741. · The lava cut off the road to the village.*
on	continuation	*The poets carried on writing about death for decades. · Read on to discover what Manfred does. · The bell went on tolling.*
over	considering from start to end; taking control	*Gray thought the poem over for years. · Look over your essay before you hand it in. · In the 1790s the Gothic took over the circulating libraries.*
through	from the beginning to the end of an experience	*The people of Naples lived through the eruption of 1779. · I read through the whole of* Udolpho *in a week.*

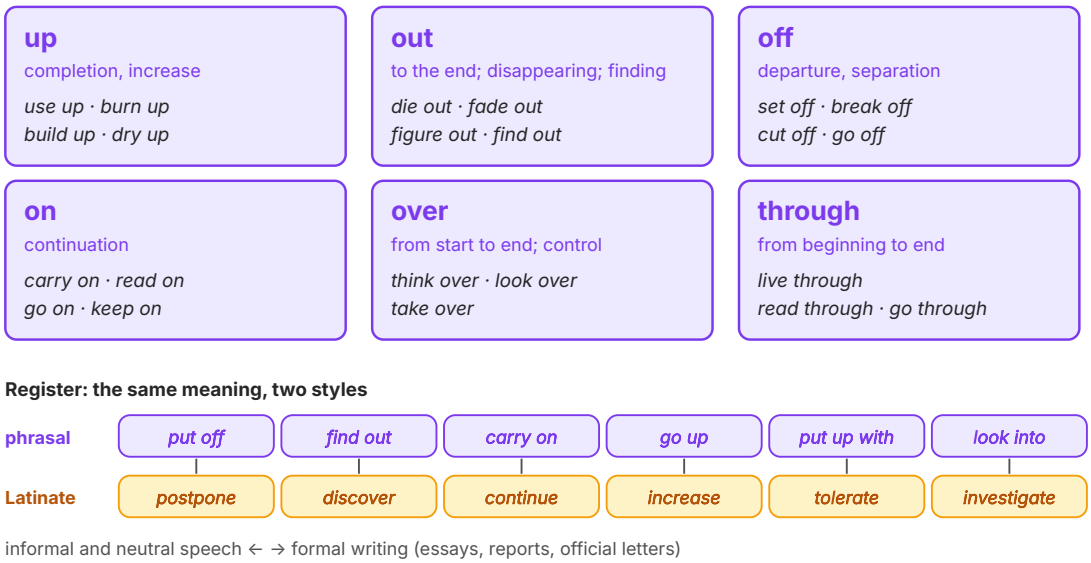


Figura 10.4 Six particles and their most common meanings in phrasal verbs (violet), with example verbs. Below: phrasal verbs and their Latinate equivalents (amber) — same meaning, different register.

Two tips. First, the particle can change the whole meaning of the same verb: *break off* (interrupt), *break out* (start suddenly: a war, a fire, an eruption), *break down* (stop working; lose con-

trol of your emotions), *break up* (end a relationship). Second, the same particle can add the same idea to very different verbs: in *die out, fade out, wear out, run out* something comes to an end.

GRAMMAR IN ITALIANO

Il significato delle particelle. Nei *phrasal verbs* la particella (avverbio o preposizione) non è casuale: *up* indica spesso completamento o aumento (*use up* = consumare tutto, *build up* = accumularsi), *out* la fine o la scomparsa (*die out* = estinguersi) ma anche la scoperta (*find out, figure out*), *off* la partenza o la separazione (*set off, break off*), *on* la continuità (*carry on* = continuare), *over* la riflessione completa o il controllo (*think over, take over*), *through* un'esperienza vissuta dall'inizio alla fine (*live through*). **Confronto con l'italiano:** anche l'italiano ha i suoi **verbi sintagmatici** — *andare avanti, tirare fuori, buttare giù, mettere su, portare via* —, frequenti soprattutto nel parlato; in inglese però sono molto più numerosi e compaiono in tutti i registri, tranne il più formale.

10.4.2 Phrasal or Latinate? Register

Most phrasal verbs have a one-word equivalent of Latin origin, often borrowed through French: a **Latinate verb** (Italian *verbo di origine latina*). In chapter 5 you saw that formal English prefers them. A phrasal verb is not "wrong" in an essay, and many have no exact equivalent (*give up*, *bring up a child*); but in formal writing — an essay, a report, a formal letter — a Latinate verb is usually more precise and more appropriate. In conversation, the Latinate verb can sound stiff.

Tabella 10.7 Phrasal verbs and Latinate equivalents

Phrasal (neutral / informal)	Latinate (formal)	Formal example
put off	*postpone*	*Gray postponed publication for several years.*
find out	*discover*	*Readers discovered that the translation was a hoax.*
carry on	*continue*	*Burns continued to collect songs until his death.*
go up	*increase*	*The number of tourists in the Alps increased.*
put up with	*tolerate*	*Johnson refused to tolerate the Ossian poems.*
look into	*investigate*	*A committee investigated their origin in 1805.*
set up	*establish*	*Walpole established a private press at Strawberry Hill.*
blow up	*explode*	*Part of the summit exploded.*

10.4.3 Phrasal nouns

Many phrasal verbs have a related noun, written as one word (sometimes with a hyphen): a **phrasal noun** (Italian *sostantivo frasale*). There are two patterns. In some the verb comes first, as in the phrasal verb: *break down* → *a breakdown*, *set back* → *a setback*, *take off* → *a take-off*. In others the particle comes first: *break out* → *an outbreak*, *come out* → *the outcome*, *bring up* → *an upbringing*, *look out* → *an outlook*. Phrasal nouns are very common in journalism and academic English, because they pack a whole event into one noun (nominalisation, chapter 5).

- *The **outbreak** of the Jacobite rising surprised London.* (= the moment it broke out)
- *The failure of a first book can be a **setback**, not a defeat.* (= a problem that delays progress)
- *The **outcome** of the 1805 inquiry was a compromise.* (= the result)
- *Burns's **upbringing** on a poor farm shaped his poetry.* (= the way a child is brought up)
- *After the eruption there was a **breakdown** of communications.* (= a failure)

Pronunciation. The phrasal verb is stressed on the particle; the phrasal noun on its first part: *break **DOWN*** but *a **BREAK**down*; *set **BACK*** but *a **SET**back*.

GRAMMAR IN ITALIANO

Registro e sostantivi frasali. Ogni *phrasal verb* ha spesso un sinonimo latino più formale: *put off* → *postpone* (rimandare), *find out* → *discover* (scoprire), *look into* → *investigate* (indagare). Per un italiano il verbo latino è più facile da capire, ma nel parlato suona rigido: usate il *phrasal verb* quando parlate, il verbo latino in un saggio o in una lettera formale. Da molti *phrasal verbs* nascono **sostantivi** scritti in una parola: *outbreak* (scoppio), *setback* (battuta d'arresto), *breakdown* (guasto, crollo), *outcome* (esito), *upbringing* (educazione ricevuta da bambini). L'italiano usa invece un nome derivato dal verbo (*scoppiare* → *scoppio*), senza particella.

ERRORE FREQUENTE

✗ *We must put off it until Friday.* → ✓ *We must put **it** off until Friday.* (il pronome va tra verbo e particella nei verbi separabili)

✗ *Please carry on to read.* → ✓ *Please carry on **reading**.* (*carry on / go on / keep on* + *-ing* per continuare un'azione)

✗ *The out break of the eruption was sudden.* / ✗ *the break down of the car* → ✓ *the **outbreak**, the **breakdown*** (il sostantivo si scrive in una parola sola)

✗ *The custom died off out.* → ✓ *The custom **died out**.* (una sola particella; *die off* = morire uno dopo l'altro, per animali o piante)

✗ In un saggio: *Scholars found out that Macpherson had made up most of the poems.* → ✓ *Scholars **discovered** that Macpherson had **invented** most of the poems.* (registro formale)

ESEMPIO SVOLTO

From a conversation to an essay. Sam's notes for his coursework: *"People found out that Ossian was fake, but they carried on reading it. The fashion for it went up after 1760 and didn't die out until the 1800s."* Rewrite them in formal register.

- *found out* → *discovered*; *fake* (informal) → *largely Macpherson's own composition* (more precise).
- *carried on reading it* → *continued to read it*.
- *The fashion for it went up* → a noun phrase: *Its popularity increased*.
- *didn't die out* → *did not decline* (no contraction in formal writing).

Result: *Although readers discovered that the Ossian poems were largely Macpherson's own composition, they continued to read them: their popularity increased after 1760 and did not decline until the early nineteenth century.*

10.5 Skills: Describing Feelings and Atmosphere

10.5.1 Vocabulary: fear, awe and landscape

Writers of the sublime and the Gothic needed a rich vocabulary of fear and wonder. Many of these words are still the words of horror films, travel writing and weather reports.

Tabella 10.8 Fear, awe and landscape

Word	Italian	Meaning and example
awe (n.)	*timore reverenziale, stupore*	wonder mixed with fear and respect: *They stood in awe before the volcano.*
dread (n., v.)	*terrore, temere*	fear of something that will happen: *She dreaded the night.*
terror vs **horror**	*terrore / orrore*	terror: intense fear, often before the danger; horror: shock and disgust at something seen
gloomy (adj.)	*cupo, tetro*	dark and sad: *a gloomy November afternoon*
eerie (adj.)	*inquietante, spettrale*	strange and frightening: *an eerie silence in the chapel*
vast (adj.)	*vasto, immenso*	extremely large: *the vast plain of the sea*
overwhelming (adj.)	*travolgente*	so strong that you cannot resist it: *an overwhelming sense of fear*
crag (n.)	*rupe, picco roccioso*	a high, steep, rough rock: *a castle on a crag*
abyss (n.)	*abisso*	a hole so deep that it seems to have no bottom
ruins (n. pl.)	*rovine*	what remains of a destroyed building: *the ruins of an abbey*

Collocations of intensity

Strong feelings are often expressed with fixed combinations of words. Learn them as chunks: *utterly terrified*, *deeply moved*, *bitterly cold*, *perfectly still*, *completely silent* (adverb + adjective); *sheer terror*, *pitch darkness*, *dead silence*, *a thick mist*, *a heavy silence* (adjective + noun); *a shiver ran down my spine*, *my heart was pounding*, *it took my breath away* (whole phrases). Other combinations sound wrong to a native speaker even when they are grammatical: we say *deeply moved*, not ✗ *strongly moved*; *pitch darkness*, not ✗ *total-black darkness*.

10.5.2 Reading: A Lantern Walk

Before you read. Have you ever visited a cemetery, a castle or a ruin at night? Is it possible to be frightened and to enjoy it at the same time? **Read** Sam's post for the Link Reading Club blog and answer the questions after it.

Tabella 10.9 Reading text — "A Lantern Walk", by Sam Taylor (Link Reading Club blog)

A Lantern Walk
Mrs Hill told us that if we wanted to understand Gray's *Elegy* we should read it in a graveyard at dusk. I thought she was joking. Then Callum found out that the old cemetery on the hill above our part of Bristol was holding a heritage open evening — a lantern walk with a volunteer guide — and suddenly there was no excuse.
We set off at half past five on a bitterly cold evening in late November. By the time we reached the gates the light was fading out of the sky and a thick mist was coming up from the river. The guide, a retired history teacher called Pat, gave each of us a lantern and warned us to keep to the paths. "Some of the stones have moved over the years," she said cheerfully. "And so have some of the visitors." Nobody laughed.
The cemetery is not old by Gray's standards — it was opened in the nineteenth century, when the churchyards in the city centre were full — but it has been half abandoned for decades, and nature has taken over. Ivy covers the angels; tree roots have pushed whole monuments sideways; the paths wind up the hill between yews and holly bushes so dark that our lanterns lit only a few metres ahead. Somewhere above us an owl called, twice. I had read the line about the "moping owl" a dozen times. I had never heard one.
What struck me most was the silence. The city was just below us — buses, traffic, a siren once — but inside the walls the noise seemed to die out completely, as if the mist were swallowing it. We stopped at a row of tiny stones with no names at all. Pat explained that they marked the graves of people whose families could not afford a proper monument: workers, servants, babies. "The short and simple annals of the poor," Callum said quietly, and for once he wasn't joking.
Then came the part I had been dreading. At the top of the hill there is a ruined chapel, its roof gone, its windows empty. Pat asked us to switch off our lanterns and stand inside for one minute in complete darkness. It was utterly black and perfectly still. I could hear my own heart pounding and the drip of water from the arches, and I was aware of the vast, cold sky above the missing roof. A shiver ran down my spine. I was not exactly afraid; I knew exactly where I was and that the bus home left at seven. But I understood Burke for the first time: the feeling was terrible and delightful at once, because I was safe.
When the lanterns came back on, everyone started talking at the same time, too loudly, the way you do after a horror film. On the way down Pat told us about the people we had passed — a sea captain, a famous preacher, a girl of nineteen who had written poems that nobody ever published. I thought of Gray's "mute inglorious Milton" and of Chatterton, the boy poet from Redcliffe, who has no grave at all that anyone can find.
So, Mrs Hill, you were right. The *Elegy* is not a poem about death. It is a poem about being remembered. I'm going to read it again — in daylight this time.

After reading. 1 Why did Sam and Callum go to the cemetery? 2 Find three details that show that nature has "taken over". 3 What did the tiny stones mark, and which line of Gray did Callum quote? 4 Why was Sam "not exactly afraid" in the chapel? Which idea of Burke does he understand? 5 Find six phrasal verbs in the text and say what their particles mean. 6 Find four collocations of intensity. 7 What does Sam mean by his last sentences?

10.5.3 Speaking: describing feelings and atmosphere

To describe an atmosphere you work through the senses, build up the details in a logical order (from far to near, from outside to inside, from calm to climax) and then say how the place made

you feel. Intensifiers and collocations make the description precise; similes make it vivid.

Tabella 10.10 Useful language — describing feelings and atmosphere

Function	Phrases
setting the scene	*It was late afternoon / pitch dark / bitterly cold… · The first thing you notice is… · In the distance…*
the senses	*You could hear… · There was a faint smell of… · It felt as if… · The only sound was…*
building up	*At first… then… until finally… · The closer we got, the more… · Suddenly…*
strong feelings	*I was utterly terrified / deeply moved / completely overwhelmed · A shiver ran down my spine · It took my breath away*
mixed feelings	*It was frightening and wonderful at the same time · I was half afraid, half fascinated · I felt tiny, but in a good way*
comparing	*It looked like… · It was as if the mist were… · It reminded me of…*

1. **Task 1 (pairs, 1 minute each).** Student A describes a stormy beach in winter, Student B an empty church at night, as if they were there now. Use at least three senses, two collocations of intensity and one simile. Your partner listens and then says which detail created the strongest atmosphere.
2. **Task 2 (groups of three, 2 minutes each).** Tell your group about a time you felt awe in front of nature or a building (a mountain, the sea, a cathedral, a storm). Where were you? What did you see and hear? How did you feel, and why? The others ask one follow-up question each.

10.5.4 Writing: a descriptive piece

A **descriptive piece** (Italian *testo descrittivo*) is a short text that makes the reader see and feel a place, a person or a moment. At B2 it is not a list of details: it has a structure, a point of view and a controlled build-up towards a moment of intensity. Read Giulia's model, written for the Link Reading Club's "Sublime Places" competition.

Tabella 10.11 Model text — a descriptive piece (218 words, title excluded)

Above the Clouds
The road up to the Sacra di San Michele climbs out of the Susa valley in tight bends, and on the morning we went, in early January, it climbed straight into the fog. Within minutes the valley had disappeared. There was nothing outside the windows but grey: no trees, no houses, no sky.
We walked the last part. The path was steep and slippery, the air bitterly cold, and the only sounds were our footsteps and, somewhere below, a dog barking as if from another world. Then the walls appeared — not gradually, but all at once, a vast dark mass of stone rising out of the mist, so high that I had to lean back to see the top. It seemed to grow out of the rock itself.
Inside, a long stone staircase led upwards into the shadows. My heart was pounding, partly from the climb and partly from something I could not name. And then, at the top, we stepped out onto a terrace and the fog was below us. A white sea stretched to the horizon, and out of it rose the mountains, sharp and blue in the sunlight.
Nobody spoke. I was utterly, almost painfully happy, and also, for a moment, afraid of how small I was. I think that is what Burke meant.

Analysis of the model. *Opening*: a journey into the unknown that removes the ordinary world (the fog). *Build-up*: the senses (cold, silence, a distant sound), then a sudden appearance described with size and darkness — the sublime. *Climax*: the change from darkness to light and the view above the clouds, in a short, rhythmic paragraph. *Close*: one or two sentences of reflection that name the feeling and link it to an idea. Notice the collocations (*bitterly cold*, *my heart was pounding*, *utterly happy*), the similes (*as if from another world*, *a white sea*) and the variety of sentence length.

Checklist. ✓ a title · ✓ a clear moment and point of view (first or third person, consistent tense) · ✓ at least three senses · ✓ a build-up towards a climax · ✓ precise words and collocations rather than *very* + adjective · ✓ one or two figures of speech, not ten · ✓ a closing reflection · ✓ 200–250 words.

Task. Write a descriptive piece (200–250 words) entitled “A Sublime Place”: a mountain, a storm at sea, a cave, a ruin, a volcano, a city at night or a place of your choice that made you feel both small and amazed. If you want to describe a real place you have not visited, research it first on reliable sites (the official site of the place, a national park, a museum) and check every fact in two sources.

LEARNING TO LEARN

Reading poetry in a dialect or an old form. Burns's Scots, Chaucer's Middle English, Dante's Italian or a Latin ode all look difficult on the page. Work in three steps. (1) **Gloss first**: write the modern word above every unfamiliar one (*gang* → go, *a'* → all), using the notes and a dictionary; do not try to understand the poem yet. (2) **Read aloud**, slowly, more than once: in Scots, many "strange" words become familiar when you hear them (*luve*, *weel*), and the rhythm shows you how the line is built. (3) **Paraphrase** each stanza in one sentence of your own. The same method works for the *Commedia*, for Latin verse and for Greek written in a dialect other than Attic — Sappho's Aeolic, the Doric of a tragic chorus, Homer's Ionic with its Aeolic forms: gloss, then voice, then meaning. Burns's Scots stands to standard English somewhat as those dialects stand to the Attic of your grammar: not mistakes, but another regional form of the same language.

10.6 Connections: Graves, Bards and Volcanoes

10.6.1 Gray's *Elegy* and Foscolo's *Dei Sepolcri*

In 1806 Napoleon's edict of Saint-Cloud (1804), which required burials outside towns and regulated tombstones, was extended to the Kingdom of Italy. The question of graves became a public debate, and Ugo Foscolo answered it with a poem of 295 unrhymed hendecasyllables (*endecasillabi sciolti*) addressed to his friend Ippolito Pindemonte: *Dei Sepolcri* (1807). It opens with a question:

Tabella 10.12 Foscolo, *Dei Sepolcri* (1807), ll. 1–3, with a translation by the editors

Italian	English
All'ombra de' cipressi e dentro l'urne Confortate di pianto è forse il sonno Della morte men duro?	In the shade of cypresses, inside urns comforted by tears, is the sleep of death perhaps less hard?

The two poems are often compared, and the comparison shows how much changed between 1751 and 1807. Both begin among tombs and trees — Gray's yews, Foscolo's cypresses — and both ask what a grave can do for the dead. Gray's answer is humble and Christian: the poor are remembered by God even if no monument records them, and every human being deserves at least "the passing tribute of a sigh". Foscolo, who did not believe in an afterlife, says that the grave cannot comfort the dead, but it matters immensely to the living: it keeps alive a "correspondence of loving feelings" between them and the dead, and the tombs of great men inspire great deeds. Gray looks at the forgotten poor of a village; Foscolo at the famous dead of a nation — Machiavelli, Michelangelo and Galileo in Santa Croce in Florence. Gray's poem is private and

meditative; Foscolo's is civic and passionate. Both, in different ways, belong to the culture of sensibility and to the road towards Romanticism.

10.6.2 Ossian in Italian

The Ossian poems reached Italy very quickly. In 1763, only three years after the *Fragments*, the Paduan scholar **Melchiorre Cesarotti** (1730–1808) published *Poesie di Ossian*, translated not into prose, as in Macpherson, but into Italian blank verse, with a long critical apparatus; an enlarged edition followed in 1772. Cesarotti's Ossian was one of the most widely read books in Italy for fifty years. Its misty landscapes, its ghosts, its melancholy heroes and its free, musical *endecasillabi sciolti* showed Italian poets a style far from Arcadian elegance (chapter 5), and critics have traced its influence in Alfieri, Monti and the young Foscolo. Napoleon was among its admirers: in 1813 the French painter Ingres painted *The Dream of Ossian* for the emperor's bedroom in the Quirinal palace in Rome.

10.6.3 Gothic Italy

Look again at the settings of the first Gothic novels: Otranto, the Apennines of *Udolpho*, the Naples of Walpole's invented printer of 1529; Radcliffe's next novel was even called *The Italian* (1797). For a Protestant English reader of the 1790s Italy was the perfect Gothic country: Catholic and therefore, in his prejudice, full of convents and the Inquisition; full of castles and ruins; and far enough away to be imagined freely. Most of these writers knew Italy only from books and paintings, and their Italians are stereotypes — passionate, jealous, dangerous. Reading them today is a lesson in how one culture invents another.

COLLEGAMENTI

Earth science: volcanoes and the sublime. A **volcano** is an opening in the Earth's crust through which molten rock (*magma*), gas and fragments of rock reach the surface. The magma collects in a **magma chamber** (Italian *camera magmatica*) several kilometres underground and rises through a conduit when the pressure of its dissolved gases becomes high enough. Vesuvius is a **stratovolcano** (Italian *stratovulcano*): a steep cone built up by many eruptions, with alternating layers of solidified lava and of ash and other fragments, as in Figura 10.5. Its magma is viscous and rich in gas, so its eruptions can be explosive: in AD 79 a towering column of gas and ash rained pumice on Pompeii, and avalanches of hot gas and ash (*pyroclastic flows*) then buried both Pompeii and Herculaneum. Its last eruption took place in 1944.

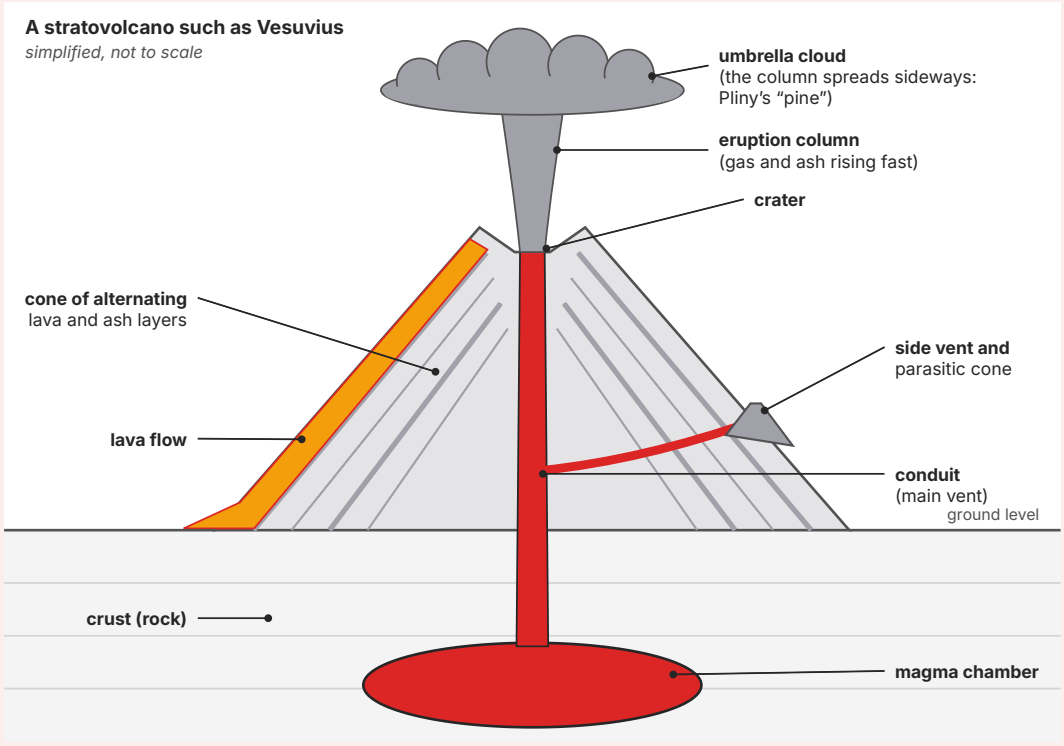


Figura 10.5 A simplified cross-section of a stratovolcano such as Vesuvius (not to scale): magma rises from the magma chamber through the conduit to the crater; in an explosive eruption a column of gas and ash rises fast and then spreads sideways into an umbrella cloud; a side vent can feed a small parasitic cone; the cone is made of alternating layers of lava and ash.

Hamilton's plates are both scientific records and images of the sublime. **Research task (TIC).** Find out on the website of the Osservatorio Vesuviano (INGV), the oldest volcano observatory in the world, how Vesuvius is monitored today. Note two methods and check them in a second source.

10.6.4 Pliny at Vesuvius

Hamilton's volcano had an ancient witness whom you can read in Latin. In AD 79 Pliny the Elder, the author of the *Naturalis historia*, commanded the Roman fleet at Misenum, across the Bay of Naples from Vesuvius. His nephew, **Pliny the Younger**, was with him; he was seventeen — *agebam enim duodevicensimum annum*, "for I was in my eighteenth year" (*Epistulae* VI.20.5) — and while the earth shook he asked for a volume of Livy and went on making extracts. About a quarter of a century later the historian Tacitus asked him how his uncle had died, and Pliny answered in two letters (VI.16 and VI.20). The first tells what the household saw from Misenum on the afternoon the eruption began:

Tabella 10.13 Pliny the Younger, *Epistulae* VI.16.5 (Latin text of The Latin Library, checked against the Perseus edition), with a translation by the editors

Latin	English (translation by the editors)
Nubes — incertum procul intuentibus ex quo monte; Vesuvium fuisse postea cognitum est — oriebatur, cuius similitudinem et formam non alia magis arbor quam pinus expresserit.	A cloud was rising — those who watched from far away could not tell from which mountain; it was later known to be Vesuvius — and no other tree could have rendered its likeness and shape better than a pine.

The comparison is exact. The stone pine of the Bay of Naples has a tall, bare trunk and a flat, spreading crown, just like a column of gas and ash that rises fast and then spreads sideways when it can rise no further (Figura 10.5). Pliny goes on to describe the cloud as "sometimes white, sometimes dirty and spotted" (*candida interdum, interdum sordida et maculosa*), according to the earth or ash it had carried up. His uncle sailed towards the mountain, first to observe it and then to rescue friends on the coast, and died on the shore at Stabiae. The letter is an act of piety and also a piece of careful observation: volcanologists still call an explosive eruption with a tall column of this kind *Plinian*. The manuscripts date it to the ninth day before the Kalends of September, 24 August; an inscription found at Pompeii in 2018 has led some scholars to prefer October — a reminder that ancient dates, too, are evidence to be weighed.

For the travellers of this chapter Vesuvius was therefore a classical place as well as a sublime one. Excavations began at **Herculaneum** in 1738 and at **Pompeii** in 1748, under Charles of Bourbon, king of Naples, and the finds — wall paintings, bronzes, the objects of daily life, whole streets under the ash — became a high point of the Grand Tour (English 2, Unit 12) and fed the neoclassical taste you met in chapter 5. A visitor to Naples could climb the burning mountain at night and walk through the buried towns by day: terror and antiquity, the sublime and the classical, in one landscape — and Pliny's letter was the guidebook to both.

SINTESI

- Between about 1740 and 1800 educated Britons learnt a new taste: the Alps and Vesuvius became sights to admire; Gray found the Grande Chartreuse "pregnant with religion and poetry" (1739).
- Sir William Hamilton, envoy in Naples 1764–1800, studied Vesuvius's eruptions (1767, 1779) for the Royal Society and published *Campi Phlegraei* (1776).
- The **landscape garden** replaced the formal garden; Walpole's Strawberry Hill began the **Gothic Revival**; Gilpin made the **picturesque** tour fashionable (1782). Sensibility made melancholy fashionable.
- After Culloden the **Celtic revival** admired the Highland past; Percy's *Reliques* (1765) collected old ballads.
- **Pre-Romanticism** is a later label for poets between Pope and the *Lyrical Ballads*: night, death, melancholy, the sublime, the bard, the Middle Ages, popular song.
- **Graveyard poetry**: Young's *Night Thoughts* (1742–45), Blair's *The Grave* (1743), Gray's *Elegy* (1751), in **elegiac quatrains** (iambic pentameter, *abab*): the equality of death and the forgotten poor.
- Burke's *Enquiry* (1757): the **sublime** comes from terror at a safe distance (vast, dark, rugged, powerful); the **beautiful** from pleasure (small, smooth, light).
- Macpherson's **Ossian** (1760–63) is largely his own composition built on some Gaelic ballads; Chatterton invented the medieval monk Rowley.
- Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto* (1764, dated 1765), presented as a translation of an Italian text of 1529, is the first **Gothic novel**; Radcliffe's *Udolpho* (1794) uses the **explained supernatural**; Lewis's *The Monk* (1796) chooses horror.
- Robert Burns (1759–1796), *Poems, Chiefly in the Scottish Dialect* (Kilmarnock, 1786), made **Scots** a literary language and rewrote hundreds of traditional songs ("A Red, Red Rose").
- Particles carry meaning: *up* completion/increase, *out* disappearing/finding, *off* departure, *on* continuation, *over* consideration/control, *through* from start to end. Formal writing prefers **Latinate verbs** (*postpone, discover*); **phrasal nouns**: *outbreak, setback, breakdown, outcome, upbringing*.
- Gray's churchyard and Foscolo's *Dei Sepolcri* (1807): Christian humility vs civic memory; Cesarotti's Ossian (1763) shaped Italian verse; the Gothic imagined Italy.
- Pliny the Younger (*Epistulae* VI.16, VI.20) described the eruption of AD 79 and its pine-shaped cloud; the excavations of Herculaneum (1738) and Pompeii (1748) made Vesuvius classical as well as sublime. Vesuvius is a stratovolcano.

ESERCIZI

History and Literature

1. ● According to Burke's *Enquiry* (1757), the sublime is founded on…
   A. pleasure and love
   B. pain and terror, felt at a safe distance
   C. small, smooth and delicate objects
   D. order, proportion and clarity

2. ● When it first appeared, *The Castle of Otranto* was presented as…
   A. a true story that happened in Yorkshire
   B. a collection of Gaelic ballads
   C. a translation of an Italian text printed at Naples in 1529
   D. the diary of a young Italian princess

3. ● The Ossian poems are today considered…
   A. a faithful translation of a third-century epic
   B. a parody of Homer by Samuel Johnson
   C. genuine poems written by Chatterton
   D. largely Macpherson's own composition, built on some real Gaelic ballads

4. ● Burns's first book, *Poems, Chiefly in the Scottish Dialect* (1786), was printed in…
   A. Kilmarnock
   B. Edinburgh
   C. Dumfries
   D. London

5. ● True or false? Correct the false statements. a In the seventeenth century most travellers admired the Alps. b Hamilton reported on Vesuvius to the Royal Society. c Strawberry Hill is a classical villa in the style of Palladio. d Gray accepted the post of Poet Laureate. e Radcliffe explains the ghosts of *Udolpho* at the end. f Scots developed from the northern English of the Middle Ages. g Pliny the Younger watched the beginning of the eruption of AD 79 from Pompeii. h Excavations at Herculaneum began before those at Pompeii.

6. ●● Complete the timeline with the correct work or event. 1742–45 · 1751 · 1757 · 1760–63 · 1764 · 1765 · 1786 · 1794. Choose from: Percy's *Reliques* · Burns's Kilmarnock *Poems* · Young's *Night Thoughts* · *The Mysteries of Udolpho* · Gray's *Elegy* · the Ossian poems · Burke's *Enquiry* · *The Castle of Otranto*.

7. ●● Explain these terms in your own words, with an example from the chapter: a pre-Romanticism · b Graveyard poetry · c picturesque · d Gothic novel · e explained supernatural · f Celtic revival.

8. ●●● Short answer (50–70 words). Why did mountains, volcanoes and ruins become attractive to eighteenth-century travellers and readers? Refer to at least one person and one idea from the chapter.

Text Analysis

9. ● In T1, “The rude forefathers of the hamlet” are…
   - **A.** the impolite old men of the village
   - **B.** the simple, uneducated villagers buried in the churchyard
   - **C.** the speaker’s own ancestors
   - **D.** the noblemen buried inside the church

10. ● T1, stanzas 1–4. a What time of day is it? b Who or what leaves the scene in stanza 1? Give three answers. c Which two sounds remain in stanza 2? d Where is the owl? e What is the “narrow cell” of line 15?

11. ●● Copy line 36 of T1 and write the stressed syllables in CAPITALS. Then write the rhyme scheme of stanza 9 and the two pairs of rhyme words.

12. ●● Paraphrase stanza 9 of T1 into modern English. Explain the meaning of *but* in line 36, and the two possible subjects of *awaits*.

13. ●● T2. a Why does the servant point at the courtyard instead of explaining? b What does Manfred see first, and what does he think it is? c Find three words that belong to an old-fashioned, formal style. d Find two ways in which Walpole delays the revelation.

14. ●● T3. a Rewrite lines 5–8 in standard English. b Find two similes, three hyperboles and one repeated line. c Which Scots word at the end of a line would spoil the rhyme if it were changed into standard English? Why does Scots use this form?

15. ●● Pliny, *Epistulae* VI.16.5 (Connections). a Find in the Latin the words for “cloud”, “mountain” and “pine”. b What does the clause between dashes tell us about the observers? c Why is a pine a good image for the cloud? Use Figura 10.5. d In what way are Pliny’s cloud and Hamilton’s plates both “science and spectacle”?

16. ●●● Write a PEE paragraph (about 90 words): How does Walpole make the helmet a sublime object in T2? Use one short quotation and refer to Burke.

Language

17. ● After 1746 many Highland customs slowly died ___ .
   - **A.** up
   - **B.** off
   - **C.** out
   - **D.** over

18. ● “I need time to think it ___ before I decide,” said Gray.

    A. over

    B. off

    C. on

    D. up

19. ● Which sentence is in the most formal register?

    A. They put off the trip because of the eruption.

    B. They put the trip off because of the eruption.

    C. The trip got put off because of the eruption.

    D. The trip was postponed because of the eruption.

20. ● Complete with *up, out, off, on, over* or *through*. a The candle burnt ___ and the room went dark. b We set ___ at dawn to climb the volcano. c Despite the rain, the guide carried ___ talking. d Nobody could figure ___ who had written the poems. e My grandparents lived ___ the war. f The Gothic took ___ the circulating libraries in the 1790s.

21. ●● Rewrite each sentence in formal register, replacing the phrasal verb with a Latinate verb. a They looked into the origin of the poems. b Walpole set up a press at his house. c The number of visitors to Vesuvius went up. d Gray put off publication for years. e Johnson would not put up with the Ossian poems. f Readers found out who the author was.

22. ●● Complete with a phrasal noun: *outbreak, setback, breakdown, outcome, upbringing*. a His strict religious ___ made him serious. b The ___ of the eruption took the villagers by surprise. c Losing the manuscript was a serious ___, but she rewrote it. d Nobody could predict the ___ of the debate. e After weeks without sleep she suffered a nervous ___.

23. ●● Error correction. Each sentence has one mistake (✗). Correct it. a ✗ I can’t remember her address — I’ll look up it. b ✗ They went on to climb although it was dark. (they continued the same action) c ✗ The out come of the vote was clear. d ✗ The fire burnt off the whole village. e ✗ In my essay: “Burke figured out a new theory of the sublime.” f ✗ The tradition died off out in the nineteenth century.

24. ●● Explain the difference in meaning between the two phrasal verbs in each pair, with an example: a break off / break out · b carry on / carry out · c set off / set up · d look over / look into.

25. ●●● Translate into English, using a phrasal verb or a phrasal noun where possible. a Lo scoppio della rivolta colse tutti di sorpresa. b Continuarono a leggere finché la candela non si spense. c Scoprirono presto che il manoscritto “antico” era stato inventato.

Vocabulary

26. ● Match the words to the definitions: awe · dread · eerie · crag · abyss · vast. a strange and frightening · b a hole that seems to have no bottom · c wonder mixed with fear and respect · d extremely large · e fear of something that is going to happen · f a high, steep, rough rock.

27. ●● Choose the better word. a The film was full of blood and corpses: pure (terror / horror). b The (gloomy / eerie) weather made everybody tired and sad. c We waited in (dread / awe) for the results of the exam. d The view from the summit was (overwhelming / overwhelmed).

28. ●● Complete each collocation with one word: *utterly, deeply, bitterly, pitch, dead, sheer*. a ___ cold · b ___ darkness · c ___ moved · d ___ terror · e ___ silence · f ___ terrified.

Writing and Speaking

29. ●●● Writing. Write a descriptive piece (200–250 words) entitled "A Sublime Place". Follow the structure of Giulia's model (opening, build-up through the senses, climax, reflection) and use at least three collocations of intensity and two phrasal verbs.

30. ●● Speaking. Describe for two minutes a place that frightened or amazed you (a cave, a storm, an abandoned building, a mountain). Use the Useful language of the Speaking section and end by saying why you remember it.

Towards B2

31. ●● Multiple-choice cloze. Choose the word (A–D) that best fits each gap. In the eighteenth century, travellers who had once (1) ___ the Alps as ugly began to admire them. Writers (2) ___ out in search of storms and ruins, and Burke explained why terror could be (3) ___ when it was felt at a distance. Soon the Gothic novel (4) ___ over the circulating libraries. (1) A watched B regarded C thought D looked · (2) A put B set C took D got · (3) A delightful B delighted C delight D delighting · (4) A came B made C took D held

32. ●● Open cloze. Write ONE word in each gap. Gray worked on the *Elegy* (1) ___ several years before he published it. When he learnt that a magazine was going (2) ___ print it without his permission, he sent it to Dodsley at (3) ___. The poem became so popular (4) ___ it was soon translated into many languages. Even today, line 36 is one of the (5) ___ often quoted lines in English poetry, and visitors still come to the churchyard (6) ___ he is buried.

33. ●● Word formation. Use the word in capitals to form a word that fits the gap. a The ___ of the volcano lasted for weeks. (ERUPT) b The poems were full of ___ landscapes and ghosts. (MIST) c Many readers doubted the ___ of Ossian. (AUTHENTIC) d Burns had a poor but loving ___. (BRING) e The silence in the chapel was almost ___. (BEAR) f Radcliffe's heroines are often ___ by tyrants. (PERSECUTE)

34. ●●● Key-word transformation. Complete the second sentence so that it means the same as the first, using the word in capitals. Use two to five words. a They discovered the truth in 1765. FOUND — The truth ___ in 1765. b The guide continued talking in the dark. CARRIED — The guide ___ in the dark. c The poet postponed publication for years. PUT — The poet ___ for years. d The war started suddenly in 1793. OUTBREAK — There was ___ war in 1793.

PER APPROFONDIRE

- [NOR] S. Greenblatt (ed.), *The Norton Anthology of English Literature*, vol. C: the sections on Gray, Burns, Macpherson and the Gothic, and the topic "The Sublime and the Picturesque".
- [SAN] A. Sanders, *The Short Oxford History of English Literature*: the chapter on the literature of the later eighteenth century.
- [BUT] M. Butler, *Romantics, Rebels and Reactionaries*: the chapters on the 1760s–1790s and the invention of a national past.
- [POR] R. Porter, *Enlightenment: Britain and the Creation of the Modern World*: the chapters on sensibility and on nature and taste.
- [ABR] M. H. Abrams, G. G. Harpham, *A Glossary of Literary Terms*: the entries "Gothic novel", "Graveyard poets", "sublime" and "preromanticism".
- [SWA] M. Swan, *Practical English Usage* and [HEW] M. Hewings, *Advanced Grammar in Use*: the entries on phrasal verbs and their particles.
- The texts of this chapter online: Gray in *Selections from Five English Poets* (Project Gutenberg #13535) and in the 1751 first edition (#15409); Walpole, *The Castle of Otranto* (#696); Burke, *Works*, vol. 1 (#15043); *Poems and Songs of Robert Burns* (#1279); Pliny the Younger, *Epistulae* VI.16 and VI.20, Latin text on The Latin Library and the Perseus Digital Library.

Glossario del capitolo

Awe
timore reverenziale, stupore — wonder mixed with fear and respect, felt before something vast or powerful.

Celtic revival
revival celtico — the eighteenth-century enthusiasm for the languages, legends and landscapes of the Gaels and the Welsh.

Descriptive piece
testo descrittivo — a short text that makes the reader see and feel a place, a person or a moment, with a build-up and a reflection.

Dread
terrore, angoscia — fear of something that is going to happen.

Eerie
inquietante, spettrale — strange and frightening, as if something supernatural were present.

Elegiac quatrain
quartina elegiaca — a stanza of four iambic pentameters rhyming *abab*, the form of Gray's *Elegy*.

Explained supernatural
soprannaturale spiegato — Ann Radcliffe's technique: apparently supernatural events receive a rational explanation at the end.

Gothic novel
romanzo gotico — a novel of terror and mystery set in the past in a castle or abbey, with a persecuted heroine and a villain.

Gothic Revival
neogotico — the revival of medieval architectural forms, from Walpole's Strawberry Hill to the Victorian age.

Graveyard poetry
poesia sepolcrale — eighteenth-century poems meditating on death and mortality among tombs or at night.

Landscape garden
giardino all'inglese — an irregular park of lawns, lakes, trees and buildings, designed to look natural and picturesque.

Latinate verb
verbo di origine latina — a verb from Latin, often through French, preferred in formal English (*postpone, discover*).

Magma chamber
camera magmatica — an underground reservoir of molten rock beneath a volcano.

Phrasal noun
sostantivo frasale — a noun formed from a phrasal verb and written as one word (*outbreak, setback, upbringing*).

Picturesque
pittoresco — the quality of a landscape that is irregular and varied, worthy of a picture, without being frightening.

Pre-Romanticism
preromanticismo — a later label for the literature between about 1740 and 1798 that anticipated Romantic interests.

Scots
scots — the Germanic language of Lowland Scotland, closely related to English; Burns's language.

Stratovolcano
stratovulcano — a steep volcano built of alternating layers of lava and ash, such as Vesuvius.

Sublime
sublime — for Burke, the overwhelming emotion caused by vast, dark, powerful or dangerous things seen from a safe distance.

Transferred epithet
ipallage — an adjective moved from the person it describes to something near it ("his weary way").

Soluzioni

1. B ("at certain distances, and with certain modifications" pain and danger are delightful).

2. C (the first-edition preface of 1764 presented it as a translation; the second edition, 1765, revealed Walpole as the author).

3. D (the Highland Society's report of 1805 found that Macpherson had freely combined and rewritten genuine Gaelic ballads).

4. A (Kilmarnock, July 1786; the Edinburgh edition followed in 1787).

5. a False: most found them horrid and crossed them quickly; admiration grew in the eighteenth century. b True. c False: it is a Gothic Revival "castle". d False: he refused it in 1757. e True (the explained supernatural). f True. g False: he watched it from Misenum, across the bay; his uncle died at Stabiae. h True: Herculaneum from 1738, Pompeii from 1748.

6. 1742–45 Young's *Night Thoughts* · 1751 Gray's *Elegy* · 1757 Burke's *Enquiry* · 1760–63 the Ossian poems · 1764 *The Castle of Otranto* (dated 1765) · 1765 Percy's *Reliques* · 1786 Burns's Kilmarnock *Poems* · 1794 *The Mysteries of Udolpho*.

7. Model answers: a a later label for the writers between Pope and the *Lyrical Ballads* who anticipated Romantic interests (night, feeling, the sublime, the past) — e.g. Gray. b poems meditating on death in a churchyard or at night, with a moral — Young, Blair, Gray. c the quality of a landscape that is irregular and varied, worthy of a picture, without being frightening — Gilpin's Wye. d a novel of terror and mystery set in a castle or abbey in the past, with a persecuted heroine and a villain — *Otranto*. e apparently supernatural events that receive a rational explanation at the end — the wax figure behind the black veil in *Udolpho*. f enthusiasm for the languages, legends and landscapes of the Celtic peoples — Ossian.

8. Traccia: the culture of sensibility valued strong feeling; Burke (1757) explained that terror at a safe distance produces the sublime, the strongest emotion; travellers such as Gray (the Grande Chartreuse, 1739) and Hamilton (Vesuvius) found wonder and science in wild places; ruins made people think of time and the past (landscape gardens, the Gothic Revival). About 60 words.

9. B (*rude* = simple, uneducated; they are buried "beneath those rugged elms").

10. a dusk, the end of the day ("parting day"). b the herd (the cattle), the ploughman — and the day itself; the world is left "to darkness and to me". c the beetle's droning flight and the tinkling bells of the sheep in the folds. d in the ivy-covered tower (of the church). e the grave.

11. The PATHS of GLOry LEAD but TO the GRAVE (stresses on *paths, glo-, lead, to, grave*; *to* is a light metrical beat). Stanza 9 rhymes *abab*: *pow'r / hour* (a), *gave / grave* (b).

12. Model paraphrase: "Noble birth, the splendour of power and everything that beauty and wealth have ever given — all of it waits in the same way for the hour of death, which nobody can escape. The roads to glory lead only to the grave." *But* = only. Subject of *awaits*: either the list of ll. 33–34 (treated as one idea, hence the singular) awaits the hour, or "th' inevitable hour" awaits all those things; the singular verb makes the second reading possible: death waits for them.

13. a He is too shocked to speak ("foaming at the mouth", in the lines before T2); the scene starts with silence and gesture. b A "mountain of sable plumes"; he does not know what it is and cannot believe his eyes. c Any three: *ye, wrathfully, beheld, casque, portent, endeavouring, an hundred times more large*. d The servants' repeated cries, the incomprehensible "mountain" of feathers, the dash and ex-

clamation that interrupt the last sentence before "he beheld his child".

14. a "You are as beautiful, my pretty girl, as I am deeply in love; and I will love you still, my dear, until all the seas go dry." b Similes: like a red, red rose; like the melody. Hyperboles: till all the seas go dry; the rocks melt with the sun; while the sands of life run; I will come again though it were ten thousand miles. Repeated line: "Till a' the seas gang dry" (ll. 8–9; also "And I will luve thee still, my dear", ll. 7, 11). c *mile* (l. 16): standard English *miles* would no longer rhyme with *while* (l. 14); Scots, like older English, uses the singular after a number (*ten thousand mile*).

15. a *nubes* (cloud), *monte* (mountain; ablative of *mons*), *pinus* (pine). b They were far away and could not tell which mountain the cloud came from; only later did they learn it was Vesuvius — the letter separates what was seen at the time from what was known afterwards. c Like a stone pine, the eruption column has a tall, narrow "trunk" (gas and ash rising fast) and a wide, flat "crown" where it spreads sideways when it can rise no further. d Both record an eruption accurately (what the cloud looked like, how it behaved) and both convey its terrifying grandeur: Pliny's letter is a witness's report and a moving narrative; Hamilton's plates are scientific records and images of the sublime.

16. Model PEE: "Walpole makes the helmet sublime by its impossible size and its darkness. Manfred first sees 'a mountain of sable plumes', and then a helmet 'an hundred times more large than any casque ever made for human being'. The metaphor of the mountain and the black colour match Burke's sources of the sublime, vastness and obscurity, and the reader, like Manfred, cannot explain what he sees. Because the explanation is withheld, terror grows, but the reader, safe outside the story, can enjoy it." (about 90 words)

17. C (*die out* = disappear gradually, become extinct).

18. A (*think something over* = consider it carefully).

19. D (a Latinate verb and a formal passive; A–C are neutral or informal; C uses the informal *get* passive).

20. a out b off c on d out e through f over.

21. a They investigated the origin of the poems. b Walpole established a press at his house. c The number of visitors to Vesuvius increased. d Gray postponed publication for years. e Johnson would not tolerate the Ossian poems. f Readers discovered who the author was.

22. a upbringing b outbreak c setback d outcome e breakdown.

23. a I'll look it up. b They went on climbing (*go on to do* = do something next). c The outcome of the vote was clear. d The fire burnt down the whole village (or burnt up / destroyed; *off* does not express destruction). e Burke developed / formulated a new theory of the sublime (formal register; *figure out* also means "solve", not "create"). f The tradition died out in the nineteenth century.

24. Model answers: a *break off* = interrupt or end suddenly (*They broke off the conversation*); *break out* = start suddenly (*A fire broke out*). b *carry on* = continue (*Carry on reading*); *carry out* = perform, do (*carry out an experiment*). c *set off* = start a journey (*We set off at dawn*); *set up* = establish (*She set up a club*). d *look over* = examine quickly from start to end (*Look over your answers*); *look into* = investigate (*The police are looking into it*).

25. a The outbreak of the revolt took everyone by surprise. b They carried on / went on reading until the candle went out. c They soon found out (formal: discovered) that the "ancient" manuscript had been made up (formal: invented).

26. a eerie b abyss c awe d vast e dread f crag.

27. a horror b gloomy c dread d overwhelming.

28. a bitterly b pitch c deeply d sheer e dead f utterly.

29. Assessment criteria: content and task (a sublime place, feelings) · organisation (opening, build-up, climax, reflection) · language (sensory vocabulary, at least three collocations of intensity, two phrasal verbs, varied sentences) · accuracy and register · 200–250 words. Compare with the model in the Writing section.

30. Model answer (opening): “Two years ago I went into the Grotta Gigante, near Trieste, with my class. At first it just felt cold and damp; then the cave opened up, and it was as if we were inside a cathedral made of rock. The guide switched off the lights for a moment, and the darkness was total…” Evaluate: three senses, a clear build-up, collocations (*pitch dark, utterly silent*), a final reason (“I felt tiny but safe”).

31. (1) B *regarded* (regard something as) (2) B *set* (set out = start a journey) (3) A *delightful* (4) C *took* (took over).

32. (1) for (2) to (3) once (4) that (5) most (6) where.

33. a eruption b misty c authenticity d upbringing e unbearable f persecuted.

34. a was found out (also accepted: was found) b carried on talking c put off publication / put publication off d an outbreak of.