

# Wuthering heights – a complex novel by emily brontë

[Literature](#), [British Literature](#)



Wuthering Heights is a complex novel by Emily Brontë. The novel set up in a way that portrays two separate generations of characters and the relationships from the first generation are shown in the second generation but with specific things that help the reader increase their understanding of the novel. Wuthering Heights is a novel about despair and love. Emily Brontë uses specific literary devices to help create a complex and intriguing plot; She uses flashbacks, symbolism, and irony, to contribute to the many different themes of the novel.

First, Emily Brontë uses flashbacks in Wuthering Heights to contribute to the themes of the novel. Since the novel incorporates two separate generations, flashbacks are needed to tell the story of the first generation. The narrator Lockwood shows up at Wuthering Heights to rent a house from HeathCliff. HeathCliff happens to be the landlord and one of the characters from the first generation. Our main character is instantly curious about the landlord and his past so he invites Nelly, another character, to tell him the story of the first generation. This is where Emily Brontë incorporates the flashbacks. It is necessary for her to use flashbacks so that we can see the story of Catherine and Heathcliff. Without Emily Brontë using this literary device, the reader would not be able to hear the story in the present time. This is also very important because of the fact that the flashbacks help the reader understand specific things about Heathcliff. From the beginning of the story he is a very dark and mysterious character and the flashbacks allow us to better understand the character.

Second, Emily Brontë uses symbolism in *Wuthering Heights* to contribute to the many themes in the novel. One of the main symbols we see throughout the novel are the Moors. The moors are strips of land that are not suitable for planting or much else. In the novel we see that the moors symbolize this in-between state. The moors are not necessarily good or evil. They are this area in between where good and evil are not quite clear. *Wuthering Heights* is another symbol in the novel. *Wuthering Heights* acts as the physical manifestation of evil. While *Wuthering Heights* represents evil, *Thrushcross Grange* represents goodness. The Moors lay in between these two places which makes sense why they are neither good nor evil. Hair is also another major symbol in the novel. Blonde hair symbolizes *Thrushcross Grange* and the Linton family who are extremely privileged and thought to be good. Darker hair symbolizes the Earnshaw family who live at *Wuthering Heights*. Throughout the book the Earnshaws are represented as evil. This symbol comes full circle in the end of the novel when Catherine and Hareton's hair mixes together which symbolizes love overcoming the rigid constructs of good and evil.

Finally, Emily Brontë uses irony in *Wuthering Heights* to help with the overall theme of the novel. There are many different forms of irony in the novel but one of the main ones is dramatic irony. Dramatic irony is when the audience know something that a character does not, and the reader watches the character act out in ignorance. One of the best examples of this is when Heathcliff is listening in on Catherine's conversation with Nelly. He leaves before she can finish what she was saying. He only hears the part where

Catherine says that she's not willing to marry him because he has a lower status than her. He doesn't hear the part where she says that she loves him and that they are so much alike. Heathcliff runs away and comes back years later after he made something of himself because he wanted to be good enough for Catherine. If he would've stayed he would've realized that he didn't need to do this because Catherine was already in love with him. This case of dramatic irony has a serious effect on the novel because by Heathcliff leaving, both him and Catherine become miserable and make everyone around them extremely miserable. Another case of dramatic irony is when Isabella marries Heathcliff. Catherine warns her against marrying Heathcliff and the reader knows that she shouldn't marry Heathcliff because we know that Heathcliff is actually there because he is in love with Catherine.

Emily Brontë uses flashbacks, symbolism, and irony to help with the many themes in *Wuthering Heights*. By using these she is able to further the plot and create a complex and intricate story. She is also capable of keeping the audience intrigued by using the literary devices.