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Reflective Essay

The research process for my paper on EcoGothicism was a bit challenging, but I welcomed it. There is not a whole lot of information on this topic, so I had to do some digging. I used keywords such as *Ecohorror*, which is similar to EcoGothicism in that they both evoke the image of a dark, almost 'evil' nature.

In order to truly grasp the concept, you need to dissect EcoGothicism into different parts and combine them to make a whole. It is easiest to first investigate the lens of ecocriticism and then a separate Gothic viewpoint. One then reviews examples from literature and media to find bits and pieces that could fall into both categories, like the middle of a Venn diagram. There are also historical pieces to EcoGothicism, such as the concept of prairie madness or the process of nature taking back abandoned cities throughout the US. Picture kudzu vines creeping over a sleepy town in Georgia, slowly choking out any other life while its residents succumb to the fact that their town is no longer the bustling hub it used to be. There are many global examples of EcoGothicism such as the Aokigahara Forest, more commonly known as the suicide forest in Japan, and the Bermuda Triangle located in the Atlantic Ocean. Some ancient stories like the Greek myth of Charybdis, specifically the variations about her being a whirlpool instead of a physical 'monster,' could also be considered EcoGothic.

I don't really have a set writing process. Sometimes I just start in the middle of sentences and build from there. I find it easiest to write out the ideas you have first, and everything else just comes along afterwards. Formatting is the last thing I do because I don't want to disrupt the creative flow, no matter how much it doesn't make sense in the moment. It feels odd to be joining the scholarly conversation surrounding this topic. I have never previously been involved in a movement like this before, so this is all quite new and exciting to me. I want the conversation around this genre to grow. It's quite broad and encompasses many categories along with it. EcoGothicism can go hand in hand with sci-fi, historical, and even fantasy pieces.