**Supernatural Unit Imaginative Writing S2**

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In this unit you will:

**Reading**

* Read a variety of texts
* Comment on the writer’s language and craft

**Writing**

* Use sentences of varying length
* Use words for precision: adjectives and imagery
* Use plot development and narrative devices

**Talking and Listening**

* Discuss with others

**Punctuation and spelling**

* use speech punctuation

**By the end of this unit you will:**

* Complete an imaginative piece of writing in the supernatural genre.

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**Setting and atmosphere 1**

**You are learning:**

* How to create an effective setting and atmosphere.

**Pre reading task:**

* What sort of things do people associate with ravens?
* Using metaphors/similes/alliteration describe a raven in a spooky/creepy way.

**Read this poem**

**The Raven**

**Background to the poem:***“The Raven” by Edgar Allan Poe creates an ominous atmosphere for this eerie tale of the ebony bird who visits the narrator.  The narrator has recently lost his love—Lenore. He is in a dark place in his grief.*

Once upon a midnight dreary, while I pondered weak and weary,  
Over many a quaint and curious volume of forgotten lore,  
While I nodded, nearly napping, suddenly there came a tapping,  
As of someone gently rapping, rapping at my chamber door.  
`'Tis some visitor,' I muttered, `tapping at my chamber door -  
Only this, and nothing more.'  
  
And the silken sad uncertain rustling of each purple curtain  
Thrilled me - filled me with fantastic terrors never felt before;  
So that now, to still the beating of my heart, I stood repeating  
`'Tis some visitor entreating entrance at my chamber door -  
Some late visitor entreating entrance at my chamber door; -  
This it is, and nothing more,'  
  
Presently my soul grew stronger; hesitating then no longer,  
`Sir,' said I, `or Madam, truly your forgiveness I implore;  
But the fact is I was napping, and so gently you came rapping,  
And so faintly you came tapping, tapping at my chamber door,  
That I scarce was sure I heard you' - here I opened wide the door; -  
Darkness there, and nothing more.  
  
Deep into that darkness peering, long I stood there wondering, fearing,  
Doubting, dreaming dreams no mortal ever dared to dream before;  
But the silence was unbroken, and the darkness gave no token,  
And the only word there spoken was the whispered word, `Lenore!'  
This I whispered, and an echo murmured back the word, `Lenore!'  
Merely this and nothing more.

**Task**

* Using pencil, underline the description of;
  + The weather in the poem
  + The noises described
  + Words that suggest fear
  + How the narrator feels

Copy the following into your jotter:

**ATMOSPHERE- (or mood)** refers to the feeling the reader gets about the story based on the details the author uses. Atmosphere is created by the description of backgrounds and settings, and sometimes by description of the characters and events.

**Group Discussion**

With a partner, discuss the following questions. Be prepared to feed back to the class.

1. When did you first think that something scary might happen? Each person should choose their own example.
2. How would you describe the **atmosphere** created by the setting? Which images in the beginning of the poem create this atmosphere?

**Extension task 1:** show your understanding of the atmosphere by drawing a scene described in the poem.

**The Haunted House**

**Read the following story about two children exploring a haunted house.**

1. The moon came out from behind a cloud. It shone through the bare branches of the trees, Ann and Gary crossed the bridge over a deep river. They looked at the old house in the light of the moon. People said it was haunted. They were both scared but they did not want to say so. As they crept down the drive, the gravel crunched under their feet. The noise seemed very loud because everything else was so quiet. They came to the door of the house.

2. They stopped outside. The door was old and the paint was peeling off it. Beside the door was a cracked window. Someone had stuck a piece of cardboard over it. The cardboard flapped in a sudden gust of wind. Gary jumped back. He saw what had made the noise and felt silly. Ann tried the handle of the door.

3. The door opened when she pushed it. The rusty hinges creaked. As the door swung open, something small and dark darted past her feet. It was a rat. The hallway ahead looked gloomy. She could just make out the shape of two doors and a tall mirror.

4. Ann went in. Gary stood for a moment and then went in after her. He shone his torch round the hall. Wall paper was hanging off the walls in damp strips. It brushed their heads as they went past. Ann could feel her heart beating fast but she led the way into the first room. Gary followed and shone his torch round it.

5. In the torchlight they could see old chairs with torn covers. There was a strange smell in the room. Part of it was the smell of damp but there seemed to be a smell of perfume as well. Gary tuned to Ann. He thought she had whispered something, but she was just looking at the room. The beam of the torch caught a small table with some photographs on it.

6. Ann picked up one of them. It was a picture of a woman in a long dress. She was holding a little girl by the hand. They were both smiling. Suddenly the door behind her slammed shut. Ann dropped the picture back on the table. Gary ran over and tugged the handle. The door opened easily. He laughed in relief. They thought it was just the wind.

7. Gary picked up another photos from the table. Like the first one, it showed a woman in old fashioned clothes. It was the same woman, but she was older. She was not smiling now and she was alone. She looked very sad and she was dressed in all black. Ann looked at the photo and wondered what had happened. The smell of perfume in the room seemed to get stronger. Ann looked at Gary. She was going to ask him if he could smell it, but just then she heard a strange sound.

8. It was someone crying.

9. Gary and Ann were both very scared. They ran to the door and out into the hall. Gary had dropped his torch. Ann bent down to pick it up. As she lifted her head again, she found she was in front of the tall mirror. A gleam of moonlight came the open front door and shone onto the mirror. Ann saw her own white face in the mirror and…something else.

10. Looking over her shoulder was the sad face of the woman from the photo. Tears ran down her cheeks. Ann screamed and ran out of the house. She and Gary raced down the drive. They were terrified. Their feet thudded through the gravel and then onto the stone of the bridge- the bridge that crossed the dark river where a little girl had been drowned ninety years ago.



**The structure of the story**

**Discuss the following questions.**

1. When did you first think something scary was going to happen? (Ignore the title.)
2. What were the points in the story that warned you something strange was going to happen in the last paragraph?
3. What part of the story that was the most scary?
4. Here is a list of the scary things in the story. They warn us that something is going to happen.
   * + Anna and Gary heard a woman crying
     + The door slammed when Ann picked up the picture.
     + There was a smell of perfume in the room.
     + The smell of perfume got stronger.
     + Ann saw a face in the mirror.
     + People said that the house was haunted.

**Task: in the form of a storyboard, put these in order. Draw a picture showing each of the events.**

**You should notice that the warnings become scarier as the story goes on. This is called building your story to a climax.**

**Setting and atmosphere 2:**

**You are learning:**

* How to develop atmosphere using **imagery**.

What makes a story scary?

We have seen that the sense of atmosphere makes a story scary.

**Read** the following extracts from a novel called **“Frankenstein’s Aunt”.** Hanna Frankenstein has just arrived at the old Frankenstein castle which has been empty for years. The author, **Allan Rune Petterson**, has carefully chosen his words and phrases to create a scare atmosphere.

They arrived. The cart stopped with a jerk and the squeaking stopped too, the silence afterwards almost foreboding, the stone walls of the castle rising glistening wet out of the darkness. The thorny jungle of briars climbed high up the walls like greedy claws, the rain rustling down into the undergrowth.

‘Looks as if Sleeping Beauty had slept here,’ muttered Hanna Frankenstein, trying to light her cigar.

At that moment, another streak of forked lightning flashed across the sky, lightning up the collapsed rood of the castle. For a moment it looked like the cracked ribs of a giant dead lizard, a swarm of crows flapping away like frightened vultures, their croaks blending with the crash of thunder. Yet another flash of lightning and the castle glared down at Hanna Frankenstein with empty eyes edged with silvers of broken glass.

***The inside of the castle is described in the same frightening way.***

The door into the great hall opened with a howling draught, the light form the lantern taking a feeble leap out into the damp darkness and being almost at once swallowed up by the size of the hall. The scene became even more frightening in the inadequate yellow light. Beyond the mildewed and partly fungus-covered wooden door were large shiny black puddles. In one corner was a rusted suit of armour, its perforated breastplate more like a brown skeleton than armour. In another corner, a rat was sitting staring in surprise, the yellow light reflected in its peppercorn eyes; and on both sides of the slimy green stairs leading up to the next floor, cobwebs were hanging down from the ceiling like dirty billowing draperies.

**Imagery** refers to similes, metaphors, personification and onomatopoeia. It is important to understand **why** an image is effective. One good way of explaining the effectiveness is to use the following formula:

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ is being compared to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

This is effective because just as ‘\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_’ suggests \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

so to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Copy the formula into your jotter.**

**Similes**

One of the ways the author creates atmosphere is by comparing the castle to frightening or unpleasant things.

e.g. *The thorny jungle of briars climbed high up the walls like greedy claws.*

**Formula**

*The thorny briars are being compared to greedy claws. This is effective because just as ‘greedy claws’ suggest something sharp and vicious, so too the briars are dangerous and brutal.*

**Similes task**

* Write down three more examples of similes like this from the extracts. For each use the formula to explain their effectiveness.

**Metaphors**

Metaphors are similar to similes except the author does not use ‘like’ or ‘as’.

e.g. *The castle glared down at Hanna Frankenstein with empty eyes edges with silvers of broken glass.*

**Formula**

*The windows of the castle are being compared to ‘empty eyes edged with silvers of broken glass.’ This is effective because just as the words ‘empty’ and ‘glaring’ suggest someone who is angry and threatening, so too is the castle.*

**Metaphors task**

* Make up metaphors to describe:
  + A giant cobweb
  + An old twisted tree

Remember to make them sound frightening and threatening.

**Onomatopoeia**

The way the author creates the sounds of the scene also adds to the atmosphere.

e.g. *The squeaking stopped.*

**Onomatopoeia task**

* Write down four more examples of onomatopoeia from the extracts.

**Pathetic Fallacy **

Pathetic fallacy is when nature or the weather mirrors people’s emotions or the mood of the story.

The weather in supernatural stories is often thunder and lightning. The author of ‘Frankenstein’s Aunt’ has used this type of weather to make this story scarier.

**Read the first paragraph again and write down two examples of weather.**

**Dialogue**

You are learning:

* How dialogue can make a story more vivid

**Dialogue** is the word for people talking to each other in a story or in a play. When characters talk to each other in a soap such as *Hollyoaks*  or *Coronation Street*, they are using dialogue. If writers simply described things and summarised for us what characters say, their stories would seem flat and dull. We want to ‘hear’ the characters speak. The *way* they speak makes them sound real and believable.

**Knowledge about language: Speech marks**



There are three rules for speech marks:

* Put them at the beginning and end of the words that a character actually speaks.
* Begin the speech with a capital letter and put a punctuation mark inside the end speech marks: a full stop (.), a comma (,), and an exclamation mark (!) or a question mark (?).
* Start a new paragraph whenever you change speaker.

Task: Write out the following dialogue, putting in the correct punctuation and paragraphing.

*I can’t see you called Fraser Are you over by the gate No Emma replied I’m nearly through the gap in the hedge Where are you*

**Knowledge about language: Varying sentence structure and length**

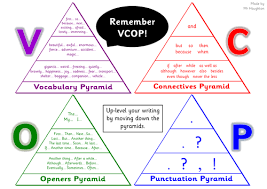
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Here is some very dull writing. How could you vary the sentences to make them more interesting to read?

*There was moonlight. The curtains were open. I saw a woman. She was lying still on the bed. She was wearning a white robe. A demon was sitting on her. I was scared.*

**Task: Rewrite these lines to make them exciting and full of tension. Don’t invent any new details, just improve the style.**

**Hint: Think of adverbs, openers, semi colons and split sentences. (You can find your VCOP in your organisers.)**

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**Developing characters**

You are learning:

* To use details to create a vivid and interesting character

**Reading Activity: **

In pairs, look at one of the character descriptions:

* List the 5 most powerful words that are used to describe this character- why are they effective?
* What details are used to create this character?
* Infer what sort of person this character is: What is their job? What type of personality do they have? Age?
* Is a positive or negative image created?

1. When it came to his turn there were only the clothes he’d been in when he arrived and his wallet and cut-throat razor. They made him sign for them, and for the postal order his father had sent, and he was put to get changed in a side room. His clothes didn’t fit him properly anymore; the trousers were an inch too short and the arms of the shirt didn’t even cover his wrists.

*The Outcast.* By Sadie Jones

1. Mariam smelled him before she saw him. Cigarette smoke and thick, sweet cologne, not faint like Jalil’s. The scent of it flooded Mariam’s nostrils. Through the veil, from the corner of her eye, Mariam saw a tall man, thick-bellied and broad- shouldered, stooping in the doorway. The size of him almost made her gasp and she had to drop her gaze, her heart hammering away. She sensed him listening in the doorway. Then his slow, heavy-footed movement across the room. The candy bowl on the table clinked in tune with his step. With a thick grunt, he dropped on a chair beside her. He breathed noisily.

*A Thousand Splendid Suns*. By Khaled Hosseini

1. On the other side was the squat shape of Rosa Hubermann, who looked like a small wardrobe with a coat thrown over it. There was a distinct waddle to her walk. Almost cute, if it hadn’t been for her face, which was like creased-up cardboard, and annoyed, as if she was merely tolerating all of it.

Saumensch du drekigs!’ Liesel’s foster mother shouted that first evening, when she refused to have a bath. ‘You filthy pig! Why won’t you get undressed?’ She was good at being furious. In fact, you could say that Rosa Hubermann had a face decorated with constant fury. That was how the creases were made in the cardboard texture of her complexion.



**How do we create a character?**

* Show don’t tell
* Build description slowly- give away details that let the reader infer
* Work on using powerful verbs, adverbs and adjectives
* Use figurative language (similes, metaphors etc)
* Use the five senses

**You can now plan your character!**

**Openings**

You are learning:

* To understand the different ways that an author can ‘hook’ the reader in their opening paragraph.

**An author needs to grab the reader with their first paragraph**

* In pairs, can you think of any ways in which an author might try and grab the reader’s attention?

Copy the following table into your jotter.

**Narrative Hooks**

The puzzling hook – this immediately makes you ask questions of the story.

The direct address hook – you are spoken to directly and feel involved from the start.

The subtle hook – this appeal to your sense of curiosity. Who is she?

The atmospheric hook – this is descriptive, and could evoke any variety of moods.

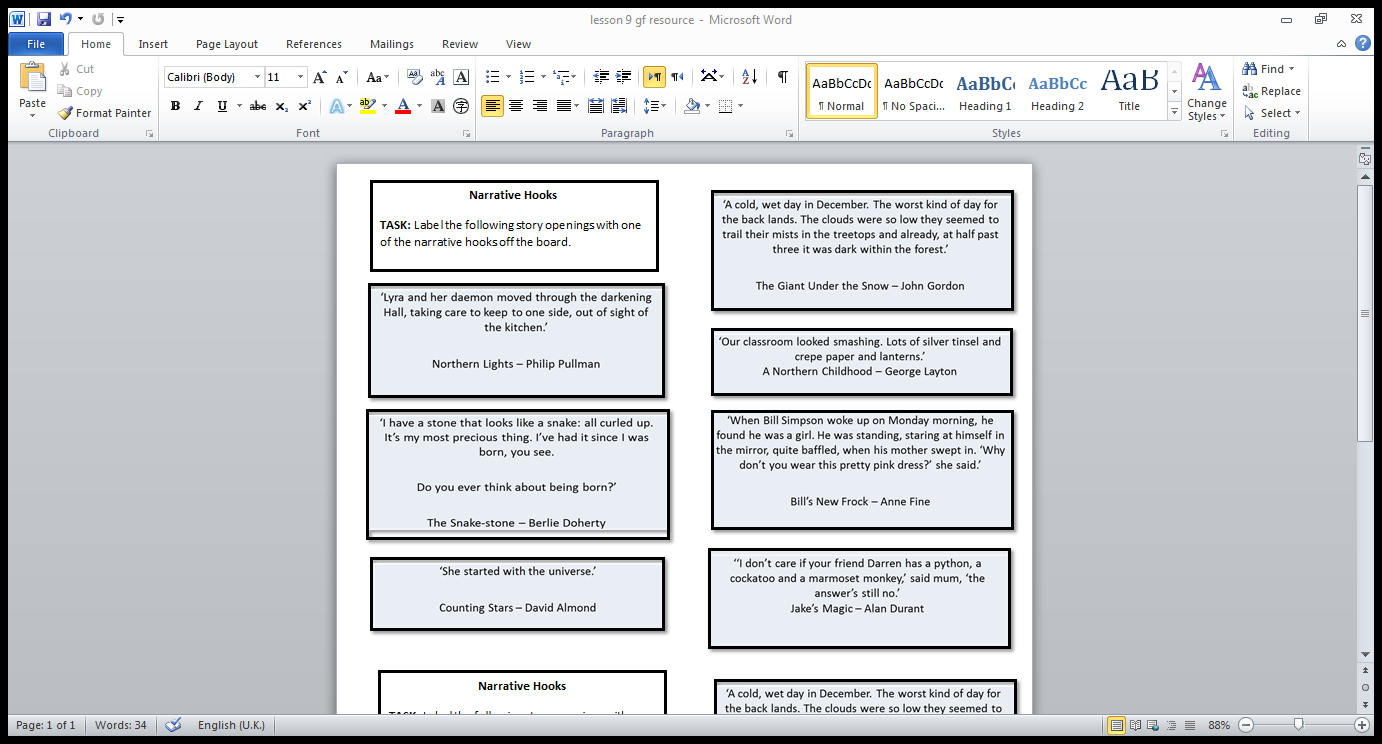
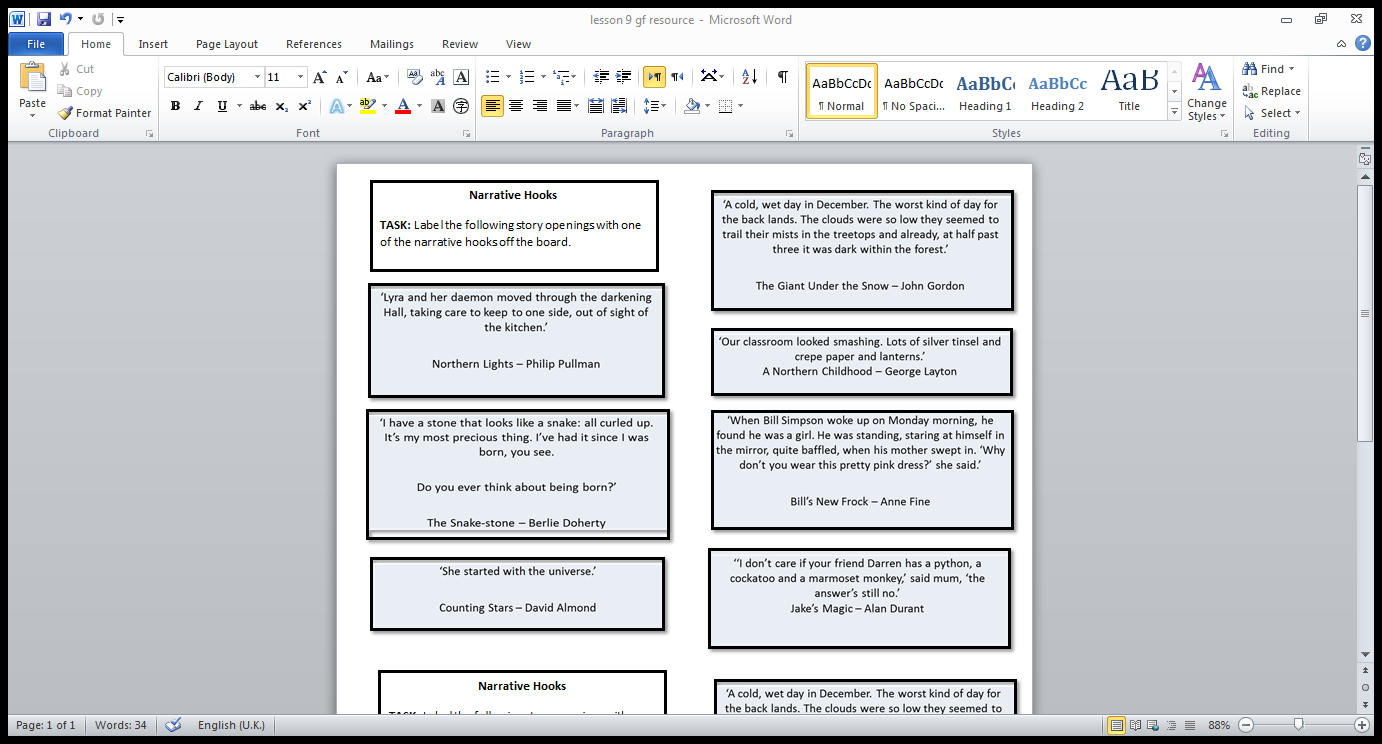
The visual hook – appeals to our sense of sight.

The funny hook – this is a tricky hook and only works if it appeals to your sense of humour.

The direct speech hook – this implies lots of action and a fast pace.

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**Task: Can you match up the openings with the correct narrative hook?**



**Now it’s your turn!**

* Choose three of the narrative hooks and write three openings that use them.
* Can your partner guess which hooks you have used?

**Writing activity**

You are now at the end of your supernatural unit.

Self evaluation:

* Look back through everything you have done in this unit. Make a list of the most important things you have learned about the supernatural genre.
* Write down three things that you will need to do to make your own piece of writing the best you have written.

Checklist of features:

Use the list below to check you have included some of the relevant features that your story is going to be assessed on.

Carefully chosen words and phrases to create a:

* Spooky setting
* Mysterious supernatural element
* Sense of tension
* Opening that will ‘hook’ the reader

Make writing more interesting by using:

* Metaphors
* Similes
* Onomatopoeia
* Pathetic Fallacy
* Alliteration
* Personification

A variety of sentences:

* Short sentences and minor sentences to increase tension
* Longer sentences elsewhere
* Start sentences in different ways
* Use a variety of connectives.

A range of punctuation:

* Capital letters, question marks and full stops
* Commas
* Punctuation of speech

**Imaginative Writing Supernatural**

Things to remember:

* Use descriptive words like ADJECTIVES and ADVERBS.
* Use lots of short sentences.
* Make your character’s thoughts and feelings really clear.
* Write in the 3rd person – so put “he” or “she”.
* Write in the past tense – walked, found, said, noticed, screamed…

Include:

* WHO? Describe your character – what they’re like, how they feel etc.
* WHAT? – what happens to your character? What is so scary?
* WHEN? What time of day/night is it? What time of year?
* WHERE? Think about locations – a school? a castle? a house?
* WHY? Is someone/thing out to get your character? Why? Why does your character get scared (so easily?)
* HOW? How does your character feel? How do they cope with what happens? How does it end?

Starting sentences (or do your own)

Option 1: “It was 24th December and a very snowy Christmas Eve. Sarah had gone with her mum and dad to stay with her granny for Christmas. She lived in a cold, old mansion and Sarah had to sleep in the attic…”

Option 2: “Paul was walking home from football practice. It was only half 4 but very dark already because it was January 7th. Behind him he heard footsteps and turned round to see a woman in a pointy hat. She was carrying a broomstick…”

Option 3: “It was a hot and dusty day. Jenni was in the back of a 4x4. Her dad was driving and her mum was leaning out of the passenger window, taking photos. Being in Africa was good but this safari was pretty boring so far. All of a sudden, he slowed down and pointed. “Look!” he said. “Can you see the…”

**Imaginative Writing Supernatural**

**The Haunted House**



I was out walking in the woods when I saw a dark, old house on top of a hill. It looked really scary but I went closer and knocked on the door. The heavy door opened so I stepped inside and…

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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**Appendix:**

**The next few pages will help you to improve vocabulary and also contains some useful phrases.**

**Said is dead**

**…but *how* did they say it?**

**Normally?**

Stated Spoke Remarked Reported Added

**As a question?**

Asked Inquired Requested Begged

**As an answer?**

Answered Replied Responded Acknowledged Explained

**Happily?**

Rejoiced Laughed Joked Giggled Sang Cheered Smirked Marvelled Chimed Beamed

**Loudly?**

Shouted Belted Yelled Screamed Exclaimed Boomed Called

**Full of worry?**

Quaked Trembled Stammered Stuttered Gulped

**Angrily?**

Demanded Hissed Fumed Thundered Snapped Sneered Barked Ranted Grunted Roared Bellowed

**Bossily?**

Commanded Ordered Dictated Insisted

**Sadly?**

Cried Sobbed Groaned Bawled Whined

**Quietly?**

Mumbled Muttered Whispered

**Silently?**

Thought Wondered Pondered

**Words for ‘Walk’**

**Walk**

Meander Hike Saunter Trudge Stroll Amble Dawdle Toddle Shuffle Troop March Plod

**Run**

Scamper Rush Jog Gallop Whiz Dash Bolt Race Speed Sprint Hasten Scurry

**Rich describing words to build up atmosphere:**

* The wind was swirling and screeching.
* The rotten floorboards creaked.
* The rain trickled down the windows.
* The fog sat thick and heavy around them.
* Dark, black clouds loomed over them.
* The spiky branches of the trees reached out to get them like a witch’s pointed hand.

**Rich describing words related to the five senses:**

* The trees groaned in the storm.
* There was a strange smell; it was like a burnt dinner and rotten eggs mixed together.
* It tasted like sour lemons.
* He could see a dark red footprint on the floor.
* The animal felt thick and hairy.

**Short sentences weaving into the narrative; for dramatic effect and tension:**

* The man was right behind him.
* The ghost was gone.
* The room was empty.
* It was quiet; deathly quiet.
* She felt a jet of cold air on her neck.

**Characters reacting with worry and fear:**

* The sweat dripped down his back.
* He whispered urgently to his friend.
* She stammered nervously.
* His heart beat quickly.
* His eyes bulged like a frogs.
* He stared as if he was in a trance.
* She took a deep breath and walked towards it.
* Carefully, she crept away from the shadow.

**Metaphors:**

* The cloak of dust wrapped around them.
* A cloud of fear hovered over them.

**Personification:**

* The dust danced in the breeze.
* The floorboards groaned when the children stood on them.

**Similes:**

* He howled like a hungry wolf.
* She screeched like an eagle diving for its prey.
* Her face was thin and pointed like a rat.
* The smell was as putrid as an old bin of rotten eggs.

**Characters:**

* Ghost skeleton vampire witch zombie monster puppet

**Feelings/reactions:**

* Twitchy grin sweating trembling fluttered tense froze pounded gasped flickered fearful struggling slouched thrashed shivered hobbled cried clutched shaking

**Buildings/Rooms**

* Manor Cottage Haunted house farmhouse derelict building broken glass gate knocker pathway attic basement

**Atmosphere:**

* Sinister eerie creepy wispy crumpled dark heavy ghostly swollen gloomy inky moonlit shimmered glowed shadows
* **Adjectives for SIGHT:**
* Grey black dark light
* Old wooden ramshackle dirty broken fiery towering gloomy shadowy thorny spiky twisted bent misty menacing.
* **Adjectives for SOUND:**
* Hissing whispering howling groaning pounding thudding rattle shrieking echoes scratching
* Cackle squawk barking loud soft
* **Adjectives for TASTE:**
* Sour salty rancid sweet sickly raw spicy tangy
* **Adjectives for SMELL:**
* Burning musty stale rotten rich sweet
* **Adjectives for TOUCH:**
* Bumpy grainy hairy scaly slimy wet woolly leathery bony spiky
* **Movement**

Creeping snatching growing drooping flopping Twitching shaking crawling flying floating darting hobbling meandering jogging scampering falling tumbling toppling pushing bursting flowing