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# Write Fright

## A Guide to Writing Scary Stories

**Mark Pierce**  
**Karen Jennings**

 GOOD YEAR BOOKS

## **Dedication**

To cousin Richard, a huge fan of horror; to Andy, Diane, and Harold; to Betty and Tom; to Bobbie Dempsey for inspiring the book; to Suzanne Beason, our wonderful editor; and to Alfred Hitchcock, Stephen King, and George Romero, our Write Fright role models.

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## CHAPTER ONE

# AN INTRODUCTION TO HORROR: WRITING TO SCARE

### Objectives

- To introduce students to ideas and vocabulary relating to horror.
- To provide introductory information about horror and horror writing.
- To encourage students to brainstorm their own personal perspectives on frights and fears.
- To urge students to begin a horror journal.
- To help students use book reports to focus on horror story elements.

### Strategies for Success

Engage the class in a discussion about the nature of horror writing and fear. Discuss themes and ideas. What do they, as readers, enjoy about horror stories?

Encourage students to examine their fears in a way that is comfortable for them. We have put the emphasis on what gives students “the creeps”, so that the tone is more fantastical and humorous than violent and disturbing. This is not meant as a means of censoring ideas, but as a way of expanding the concept of horror.

When they write book reports about scary books, encourage students to show their understanding of basic plot developments and of devices that are common to most horror stories (suspense, clearly defined conflict, protagonist vs. antagonist, a positive resolution and so on).

### Enrichment Ideas

Have students read scary traditional folk tales, such as *The Robber Bridegroom*, *Bluebeard*, *The Juniper Tree*, *Hansel and Gretel*, *Baba Yaga*, and *La Llorena*. Students can compare these tales to modern horror stories and examine levels of scariness.

# HEY, DR. JEKYLL, NO NEED TO HIDE: FACING YOUR FEARS

Most horror authors write about things they find scary—things like ghosts, snakes, monsters, aliens, weird transformations or sudden surprises. As you begin your journey into the land of horror, look at what frightens you. Then you can use these basic fears in your writing.

1. List five things that give you the creeps.

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2. Of these top five, which one scares you the most? Describe your feelings about this fear.

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# MY FAVORITE SCARES: STARTING A HORROR JOURNAL

It's a great idea to begin a horror journal. You can record all of your frightening thoughts and ideas. Your journal can be a place for you to write stories, collect or draw pictures, and describe your research into what people find frightening. That is what this next exercise is for. Write about what scares other people. You'll discover more about universal fears—fears that are held by most people.

## 1. What scares your parents and teachers?

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## 2. What scares your friends?

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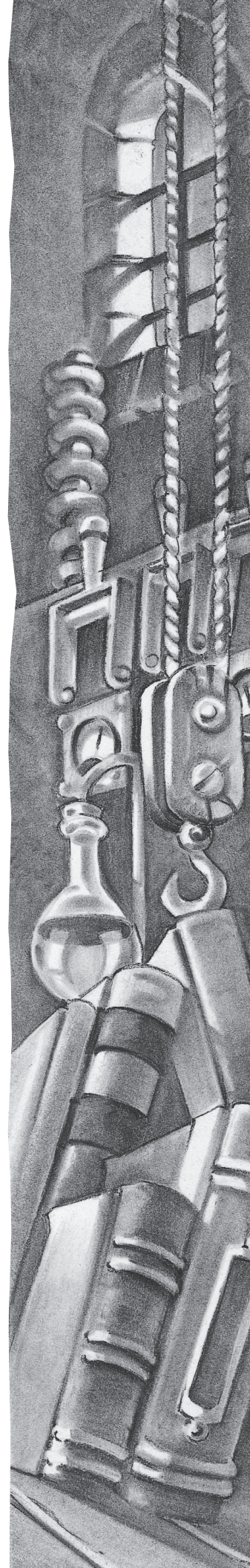
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# WORDS TO LEARN: A GHASTLY VOCABULARY

Below is a list of some eerie and descriptive vocabulary words. You will find them useful in your writing. Use each word in a sentence. Look up the words you don't know.

1. terrified \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. ominous \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. unearthly \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

4. suspense \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

5. dreadful \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

6. dreary \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

7. mysterious \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

8. ghastly \_\_\_\_\_

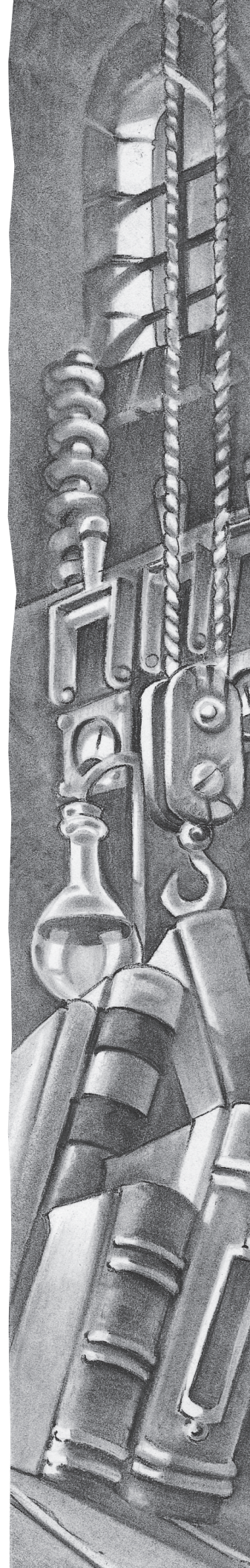
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9. terror \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

10. horrendous \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_





Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

11. apprehensive \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

12. writhing \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

13. aberrant \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

14. ooze \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

15. misty \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

16. wretched \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

17. shock \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

18. horror \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

19. suspicious \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

20. baleful \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_