



AAAAWWOOOOOOOOOOOLLLLL!

WHAT'S THAT COMING OVER THE HILL? IS IT A MONSTER?

CHILLING DOGGY GHOST STORIES...

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Writing to entertain
- Inventing characters and situations
- Using sentence structures and language devices

2 HOURS

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION ONLY

DIFFICULTY: ★★★★★

YOUR MISSION

No one loves a spooky story as much as we do here at AQUILA HQ, but Lockdown has exhausted our stash and it's upsetting our equilibrium. **We need you to write a short, chilling story about a terrifying ghost dog encounter.**

GET STARTED

PHASE 1:

Find out what scares your family members the most. Is it ghosts that can move objects around the room? How about flickering eyes in the dark? Note down some of these fears. They will help you to structure your story. Once you have done this, **come up with a spooky setting** to place your characters in. Traditional ghost stories take place in abandoned houses or old mansions, but what about an empty kennels, or dog racing track? Remember, your setting needs to link to your ghost dog...

PHASE 2:

You've got your setting, now think about your characters. Will you base them on your family, or are they an elite group of ghost hunters, sent to rescue a village from the jaws of a haunting hound? List these characters under your notes about people's fears. Decide which of the characters is the protagonist (main character). Who is the hero and who might get themselves into trouble and need rescuing... What are the qualities of your ghost dog? What rumours have the townspeople heard?

PHASE 3:

Who you gonna call? Ghostbusters! Think now about the narrative. A short story is designed to be **succinct**, that means it has a beginning, middle and end, but not too many plot twists or cliff-hangers. The plot should be exciting and have mysteries that need solving, but without too much action. Bullet point your story, making sure that you have space to keep your audience waiting and build tension, and moments where spooky deeds take place. Use your research to help you think of some spook-tacular events that could unfold...

YOU WILL NEED

- Pencil
- Plain paper
- Coloured pencils, felt tips or paints
- Scrap paper for sketching ideas
- Real maps to look at (optional)
- Google Earth

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PHASE 4:

Draft your story. Include plenty of **adjectives** to describe what the **protagonist** is seeing, smelling, feeling and experiencing. Does your ghostly doggo have terrible bad breath? Are the hairs on the back of our hero's neck standing to attention? Cram lots of **metaphors, similes** and **onomatopoeia** into your story to help paint a picture with words. Read your masterpiece when you have finished, checking your spelling and grammar as you go. If you need to, redraft some of your story to help it flow and to create a truly chilling picture.

PHASE 5:

Gather your family (best hold off on the bowl of popcorn – just in case grandad throws it all over the sofa in fright), and turn out the lights. Hold a torch under your chin for the ultimate spook-fest. Tell your story, being sure to take your time and build to the scary bits to make everyone jump.

We want to read your terrifying tales. Don't forget to send your short story to the address on the readers' page of the AQUILA website, and we'll share as many as we can.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

- * How many characters will you have? If you have lots, it creates a feeling of safety as the reader feels like they are in a big group and won't be harmed by the ghost. A character investigating on their own creates a sense of isolation... now that's spooky.
- * When writing your story, vary the lengths of your sentences to help build tension. Short sentences speed up the pace and make the story move faster. Longer sentences slow the story down and help to give lots of detail.
- * The key to scary stories is the detail and imagery you use: similes and metaphors help create interesting description that will help the reader picture what is happening.
- * **Challenge:** can you create an unexpected ending to your story? Something the reader isn't expecting?