



## 11+ Creative Writing — A Spooky House

### **Student assignment — Describe a journey through an old, spooky house. Describe your characters' emotions and what they see and hear.**

Hollow Manor stood slightly apart from the village of Little Herring. There were tales of strange happenings some decades ago... it had been a stormy night, when the Hollows had mysteriously disappeared. But I didn't believe in ghosts. I mean, come on, mystical undead? Not for me... That didn't stop me from wondering though — I'd often glanced up at the house with the spine-tingling sensation I was being watched.

One night — the 30th of October to be precise — I decided to investigate for myself, as I drugged towards the increasingly dark porch, I could've sworn a curtain swirling closed at the window. In earnest to me. Rain hammered unsparingly at the structure, wind threatening to knock it down, as the forces of nature secured to **unleach** the worst. Practically swimming towards a "haunted" house at 11:49 during the night wasn't very high on my 'to do' list.

#### **Notes for student**

- This is an **amazing** opening to your story Stefan, well done!
- Great use of description here. You have used lots of excellent adjectives and lots of complex punctuation. Great work.
- Well done for answering the question right from the start of your story. The question asks you to describe a spooky house and you do just that from the first paragraph.
- To improve, remember to reread your writing at the end to double-check for small spelling and grammar mistakes. For example, in this paragraph you have misspelt the word **unleash**.

Rain-sodden and uncomfortably cold, I made into the porch, my very teeth dripping with water. The moment I stopped foot into the house, it was as if a sack had been draped over my head; I was in pitch darkness and could only hear one sound. Tick. Tick, Tick. Hundreds of clocks ticking in unison. As if expecting something to happen, my eyes adjusting to the absence of light, I crept forward, each footfall dulled by layers of dust and insect corpses. Something stopped me in my tracks. A muffled wheezing a few rooms away, slowly, approaching. I had to leave and quickly. Only then, it occurred to me that there was no more ticking.

### Notes for student

- This is a good middle for your story Stefan, Well done!
- Brilliant use of onomatopoeia to describe the sound of the clocks. You have used this sense well to describe and create tension.
- To improve, think about other writer's tricks you could have included her. For example "I stood frozen, still as a statue"

Adrenalin seeping into my bloodstream, rapidly inducing my fight or flight response. The wheezing was terrifyingly close now, barely a door away but my legs refused to move. Suddenly, the hinges clattered to the floor and the door cracked against the wall. The barbed silhouette of a stooped figure glided into the room. A wave of manic cackling resonated inside my skull. A jagged, blood-spattered butcher blade flashed in front of my eyes.

### Notes for student

- This is a good dramatic paragraph Stefan. Well done!
- Brilliant description of Felix's fear, You have done a brilliant job of showing rather than telling the reader of how scared he is.
- To improve, you could have included onomatopoeia here: "Suddenly, the hinges clattered to the floor and the door cracked against the wall. **CRASH!**"

- You could have included ellipsis (...) here to help create suspense. For example, "A jagged, blood-spattered butcher blade flashed in front of my eyes..."

Without warning the lights flickered on, illuminated a man in black cloak, clutching a plastic knife.

"Caught you there son, didn't I!" he grinned

"D-Dad?" I asked, somewhat uncertainly.

"Happy Halloween Felix!"

Hooking an arm around my shoulders, he led me out of the room.

"Let's go home, I'll treat you to a hot chocolate."

When my brain finally figured out what had taken place, I chuckled to myself. It stands to this day as the best Halloween of my life.

### Notes for student

- This is a good ending to your ghost story Stefan! Well done you!
- To improve, remember to end all your sentences with a full stop. For example "he grinned" needs a full stop after it to end the sentence.
- This is a great reveal and a very original story! I'm impressed Stefan.
- This is a conclusive, happy ending!

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### Progress Plan

- Overall, this is a brilliantly scary story! You should be proud of yourself Stefan.
- You have included a few writer's tricks in this story. To improve, remember to try and include all of them. Examiners are looking for you to use these in your writing. Remember MAPSO and SEW.



- As an extension task, look back over your story and write down **one** example of a simile, alliteration, personification and metaphor that you could have included in your story.
  - Practise writing longer piece of writing like this by hand. Your handwriting is mostly brilliant and legible but in places it took me a while to work out what you had written. If the examiner cannot read your writing, they will just skip that part and not give you the full marks that you deserve.
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**Your work was marked by Ellie.**

**Qualifications:** 1st class English and History degree

**University:** University of Southampton

**Lives in:** Surrey

**A bit about me:** I studied creative writing and children's literature while at University, as well as the Tudors and Cleopatra. In my free time I swim, read and play Pokémon. I love to write and I hope to become a published author one day.

**This work was reviewed and approved by James Davey, The Exam Coach.**