



Ghost Stories from the Haunted Mansion

Overview & Purpose

To teach students how to recognize plot elements in a short story and how to utilize these plot elements in their own writing.

Objectives

1. Students will be able to identify plot elements in a short story.
2. Students will write a short story that has all plot elements.
3. Students will share their story with the class.

Standards

- ★ Describe how a particular story's or drama's plot unfolds in a series of episodes as well as how the characters respond or change as the plot moves toward a resolution.
- ★ Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of a specific word choice on meaning and tone.

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- ★ Explain how an author develops the point of view of the narrator or speaker in a text.
 - ★ Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.
 - ★ Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

Materials Needed

1. Plot Diagram Worksheets (see “Resources” below)
2. “Tell Tale Heart” by Edgar Allan Poe (see “Resources” below)
3. Colored Pencils
4. Tombstone Printouts (see “Resources” below)
5. Haunted Mansion tombstone sayings (see “Activity” below)
6. Haunted Mansion “stretch room” portraits (optional)

Evidence

1. Students will create an original ghost story utilizing elements of plot and character development.

Activity

1. Teachers may prepare tombstones ahead of this lesson that include tombstone inscriptions from the Haunted Mansion and place on a classroom board (see inscriptions below).
2. Introduce the elements of plot, protagonist, antagonist, tone, point of view, author, and narrator.
3. Give a brief introduction to genre and Edgar Allan Poe to help familiarize the students with the Gothic genre.
4. Read as a whole class the “Tell-Tale Heart” one time through without stopping.
5. Ask the students to think about the following questions:
 - a. Who is the narrator? How is the narrator different from the author?
 - b. How does the author create tone? What is the tone of the story?

- c. How does the author's word choice create tone? Give an example.
6. Have the students take out their colored pencils and closely re-read the story in a small group (2-4 students). The students will underline the text with the following colors once they locate it in the text (Blue=Protagonist, Red=Antagonist, Yellow=Exposition, Green=Setting, Orange=Climax, Brown=Falling Action, Purple=Resolution).
 7. Have the students fill out the Plot Diagram Worksheet in their groups.
 8. Discuss as a whole class that all of these elements must be present in a story.
 9. Inform the students that they will now create their own ghost story using the elements they've learned. They will use a second plot diagram worksheet (see "Resources" below) to map out their own stories.
 10. Students will choose one of the following tombstone inscriptions from the Haunted Mansion attraction to write a short story about what happened to their dearly departed. Teachers could also use the portraits from the "stretch room" as story prompts too.

HERE RESTS - WATHEL R. BENDER - HE RODE TO - GLORY ON - A FENDER - PEACEFUL - REST

HERE LIES - GOOD OLD - FRED - A GREAT BIG ROCK - FELL ON HIS HEAD - R.I.P.

REST IN PEACE - COUSIN HUET - WE ALL KNOW - YOU DIDN'T DO IT

REQUIESCAT - FRANCIES XAVIER - NO TIME OFF - FOR GOOD - BEHAVIOR - RIP

DEAR SWEET LEOTA - BELOVED BY ALL - IN REGIONS BEYOND NOW - HAVING A BALL

DEAR DEPARTED - BROTHER - DAVE - HE CHASED A - BEAR INTO - A CAVE

HERE LIES - A MAN NAMED - MARTIN - THE LIGHTS WENT - OUT ON THIS OLD - SPARTAN

RIP - GOOD FRIEND - GORDON - NOW YOU'VE - CROSSED THE - RIVER JORDAN

IN MEMORIAM - UNCLE MYALL - HERE YOU'LL LIE - FOR QUITE A WHILE

RIP - MISTER SEWELL - THE VICTIM - OF A DIRTY - DUEL - PEACEFUL REST

IN MEMORY OF - OUR PATRIARCH - DEAR DEPARTED - GRANDPA - MARC

AT PEACEFUL - REST LIES - BROTHER - CLAUDE - PLANTED HERE - BENEATH THIS - SOD

MASTER GRACEY - LAID - TO REST - NO MOURNING - PLEASE - AT HIS - REQUEST - FAREWELL

11. Once students have a first draft, have them do a small group writing workshop for peer feedback.
12. After the final drafts are complete, let the students create a new tombstone saying and / or picture with the tombstone printout (see “Resources” below). This could be the title page of their story.

Resources

Plot Diagram Worksheet

1. <https://images.template.net/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/24120240/Plot-Diagram-Template.pdf>

“The Tell-Tale Heart” by Edgar Allan Poe

1. https://americanenglish.state.gov/files/ae/resource_files/the_tell-tale_heart_0.pdf

Tombstone Template

1. <https://patternuniverse.com/files/downloads/tombstone-pattern.pdf>