EVEN MORE SCARY STORIES TO READ ALOUD!

If you’re hosting a scary-story hour, reading aloud is a required activity! People have been scaring each other with scary tales for hundreds of years, and reading them aloud is a great way to do it. Pick a reader or two to pass the tale around, or have an adult read to the group. Make sure to use fun voices, sound effects… the works!

After you’ve read the first two chapters of *Home Sweet Horror*, select one or two tales or poems from the list below. You can find these stories or poems for free online, as they are in the public domain.

“The Monkey’s Paw” by W. W. Jacobs (best read aloud by an adult)
“The Listeners” by Walter De La Mare
“The Cremation of Sam McGee” by Robert William Service

You can also find some wonderful books of short scary stories in your library or classroom:
The Scary Stories Treasury by Alvin Schwartz
Favorite Scary Stories of American Children by Richard and Judy Dockrey Young

Or pick one of your own favorites!

WRITE YOUR OWN SCARY STORY!

Any tale can become a scary tale: it’s all in how you tell it! Here are some simple steps to building a story that is sure to terrify.

1. Divide children into small groups of 3 to 5.
2. Pick a prompt for your scary tale from the list below.
3. Set a timer for 15 minutes.
4. The first person adds 1 sentence and passes it to the next.
5. The next person adds another sentence and passes it on.
6. Aim to get to “The End” by the time fifteen minutes is up.
7. Take turns reading each scary tale out loud and see who survives!

Prompts inspired by HOME SWEET HORROR

1. “Wake up, we’re here,” Dad whispered from the driver’s seat. “Our new home.”
2. From the first day in our new house, I heard noises.
3. We stared in the mirror. Nothing changed. I sighed with relief. Then the screaming began.
4. “I know you like to explore,” Dad said. “But stay out of the attic, and don’t go into the basement.”
5. “Are you guys the ones who moved into the old Cropsey house?” the boy asked. I nodded yes. The boy smirked. “See anything weird?”

READ MORE SCARY TALES FROM JAMES PRELLER:

[Images of book covers]

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Complete with spooky activities, craft ideas, and more scary-story fun!

JAMES PRELLER’S

SCARY-STORY HOUR GUIDE

WORD SEARCH

Basement
Bats
Cobwebs
Coffin
CreakyStairs
Flashlight
Ghosts
HauntedHouse
Mirror
Screams
Secrets
Skeleton
Spirits
Spooky
Tombstone

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Ages 7 to 10
He sensed a soundless and drifting through the basement, moving toward him. He turned and up the stairs, taking them two at a time, landing heavily with each step. Crash, a board cracked, and Liam, slamming his shin hard against the wood. He grabbed the top step, catching himself before he fell. He wheezed, felt dizzy, woozy. Liam’s leg dangled in the air, kicking at nothingness. He felt a thin grip around his ankle. Like a claw pulling, dragging him down. Liam yanked his leg free, lifted himself up, gasping for air, and to the top of the stairs. He crawled into the light. He slammed the door shut behind him, twisted the lock, heart thundering.

**FILL-IN-THE-BLANK SCARY STORY**

Fill in the blanks with the type of word listed in parentheses to create your own version of this excerpt from *Home Sweet Horror*, book one in the Scary Tales series. Read it out loud to see how different your story is from the one in the book!

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**CREepy CRAFTS**

**LOLLIPOP GHOSTS**

Make simple lollipop ghosts by draping tissues over the tops of lollipops. Secure with a rubber band under the ghost’s “head,” and fluff out the bottom. As a bonus, these delicious treats can double as fun decorations by hanging from the ceiling or walls!

Visit scarytalesbooks.com for more spooky craft activities, snack ideas, and decorating tips!

**SHADOW SHAPES**

What you’ll need:
- A flashlight
- Construction paper
- Scissors
- Scotch tape

Instructions:
- Cut the construction paper into shapes—like a spider, a bat, or a ghost—slightly larger than the face of the flashlight
- Tape the paper shape flat against the top of the flashlight
- Turn off the lights, and flip the flashlight on
- Shine the flashlight at a wall or other flat surface to see your spooky shape!

**SPOOKY BINGO**

This spooky bingo game can be played over and over again!

Instructions:
- Distribute a blank board to each child (photocopy or enlarge the below for more boards). The child can draw a ghost on one space of his or her choosing to act as a “free space.”
- Read the words from the Word Bank aloud, and have each child write one word with a pencil in each square of the board.
- Then, cut out the words from the Word Bank below and lay them facedown.
- Select one word at a time. Each time a word is called, any child that has that word on his or her board may cross it off.
- The first child to successfully cross out an entire line of words (horizontally, diagonally, or vertically) and shout “BOO!” is declared the winner.
- Erase the board and start again!

**WORD BANK:**
- bats
- RIP
- full moon
- spooky
- basement
- coffin
- spirits
- creaky stairs
- haunted house
- creepy
- ghost
- eerie
- curse
- spider
- scream
- skeleton
- spells
- mirror
- blood
- cobwebs
- mask
- flashlight
- tombstone
- secrets

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