

LESSON PLAN

1/4



STORIES OF GHOSTS AND MYSTERY

- Topic:** Fear
- Aim:**
- to develop reading skills and expand vocabulary
 - to predict the continuation of a story
 - to identify a literary genre
 - to encourage the pleasure of reading
- Level:** Teenagers and young adults – **B1.1**
- Time:** 50-60 minutes
- Materials:**
1. front cover illustration of the graded reader **STORIES OF GHOSTS AND MYSTERY**
 2. worksheet

INTRODUCTION

This lesson plan introduces **STORIES OF GHOSTS AND MYSTERY**, a short collection of three stories based on fear, terror and horror, written by masters of this genre: Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu, Rudyard Kipling and Nathaniel Hawthorne. The chosen story, **The Minister's Black Veil**, creates suspense, fright, fear and mystery. The 19-century author, Nathaniel Hawthorne, was fascinated by curses, ghosts, witches, sins and the unknown. Also Hawthorne's literary masterpiece, *The Scarlet Letter*, incorporates all of these elements (and is based on a true story). The short extracts chosen will draw students into the plot, encourage them to ask questions, develop their vocabulary, delve into the macabre events of the story and predict what will happen next. All of this with the aim of increasing pleasure in reading.

Background notes on the story

The story is set late 17th-century New England in the Puritan town of Milford. The Puritans were a strict Protestant religion in the first American colonies, and their lives were centered on hard work, personal discipline and religion. The idea of sin was prevalent every minute of their lives. The young Reverend Hooper is the minister of the Milford Church congregation. The story starts when the sexton rings the church bell on Sunday and waits for Reverend Hooper to open his door and walk to church. But when the reverend opens his door, the sexton is amazed and shocked. Everyone else turns around and looks at the young reverend.

At this point there are some questions that must be answered:

- A. Why is the sexton amazed and shocked?
- B. What can possibly be wrong with Reverend Hooper?
- C. Why do the other people turn around and look at the Reverend Hooper?

PROCEDURE

- Before the lesson:
- make a copy of the worksheet (one per student)
 - download a picture/painting of 17th-century New England Puritans
 - tell your students you're going to be speaking about a story called **The Minister's Black Veil**



LESSON PLAN

2/4



First Step (10 minutes)

- read the background notes on the story to the class
 - write the title of the story on the board
- Ask the students to comment on their first impressions and ask them these questions.

- What genre do you think it is? Why?

Show the students the cover illustration and ask them these questions.

- What impression does the man on the cover give you?
- What is the man wearing and why do you think he is wearing it?

Second Step (30 minutes)

Give the students the worksheet and explain that the text comes from Part One of the story.

Ask them to do **EXERCISE 1**, Before you read.

[KEY: 1c, 2b, 3e, 4a, 5d, 6f]

Ask them to work in pairs to check their answers.

- Read **EXTRACT PART 1** – You could read it out loud to make the dialogue more dramatic.
- Then ask the students to read it alone or in pairs for a more detailed understanding the second time.
- Ask students to comment with their opinions, feelings, predictions and observations.
- As students to read **EXTRACT PART 2**.

Last Step (5 minutes)

- **EXERCISES 4 and 5**.

These exercises can be done in pairs or in small groups. If there is no time in class, these exercises could be written homework.

