

LESSON PLAN

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GOTHIC SHORT STORIES

- Aim:**
- to develop reading skills and expand vocabulary
 - to practice speaking skills – giving opinions
 - to predict the continuation of a story
 - to identify a literary genre
 - to encourage the pleasure of reading

Level : B2.2

Time : 50 – 60 minutes

- Materials:**
1. front page illustration of the graded reader **GOTHIC SHORT STORIES**
 2. worksheet

INTRODUCTION

This lesson plan introduces the short story *The Judge's House* by Bram Stoker. The Gothic craze in English literature was very successful in the 1800s, which featured mystery, ghosts, castles, haunted houses and other macabre things and situations. *The Judge's House* is an excellent example of this type of literature which captivates readers immediately. The short extracts will draw students into the plot, encourage them to ask questions, develop their vocabulary and predict what will happen next. All this with the aim of increasing their pleasure in reading.

BACKGROUND NOTES ON THE STORY

Malcolm Malcolmson, the protagonist, needs to find a quiet, isolated place where he can study for an important mathematics examination. He packs his suitcase and takes the train to Benchurch, a sleepy town, where he finds a rambling Jacobean house with heavy gables and decides to rent it for three months. The house agent tells him that the house has been empty for a long time because people have an absurd prejudice about it. Malcolm doesn't ask about the 'absurd prejudice' because he likes the house he rented.

DISCUSSION

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

- a. Why had the house been empty for a long time?
- b. What was wrong with it?
- c. What is the 'absurd prejudice' that the house agent mentions?
- d. Why doesn't Malcolm ask the house agent about the 'absurd prejudice'?



LESSON PLAN

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PROCEDURE

Before the lesson

- make a copy of the worksheet (one per student)
- download a photo of an old Jacobean style house with gables
- tell your students you're going to be speaking about a Gothic story called *The Judge's House*.
- ask your students if they have ever read other Gothic stories
- read the background notes on the story to the class

First Step (10 minutes)

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.
- What impression does the illustration give you?
- Who do you think the ghostly figure walking in the snow is?
- What feelings does the illustration of the Jacobean house give you?
- Would you feel comfortable sleeping there?

Second step (30 minutes)

Give the students the worksheet and explain that the text comes from Part 1 of the story.

- Ask them to do **Exercise 1**, *Before you read* [KEY: 1 c, 2 a, 3 e, 4 b, 5 f, 6 d]
- Ask them to work in pairs to check their answers.
- Read **Exercise 2**, *EXTRACT PART 1*. you could read it out loud the first to make the dialogue more dramatic.
- Ask the students to read it alone or in pairs for a more detailed understanding the second time.
- Then ask the students to comment with their opinions, predictions, feelings and observations.
- Ask students to read **Exercise 3**, *EXTRACT PART 2*.

Last step (10 minutes)

Ask students to do **Exercise 4** and **5**.

Ask the students to predict what could happen and how the story could end.

These exercises can be used as a written homework exercise if there is no time in class.

