



**HOW TO WRITE A BEST SELLER!**

# HOW TO WRITE A BEST SELLER....

This week's Super Curriculum theme is an encouragement for you to use your voices. Everyone has a voice in them but when they try to write it can get really, really complicated to say what you want to say.

With some help from some top tips and some expert instructions, we should get you going...

There are a million different resources out there to help you get started. We like this one...

<https://www.nownovel.com/blog/how-to-write-horror-story-tips/>

# THE RULE OF ONE?

Short stories are short and sweet. The more you include, the messier they get.

Stick to the rule of one:

- One main character - place most of the focus on them.
- One setting/scene – jumping around is tough to write well
- One major conflict/problem to solve
- One theme/message

# HOW DO YOU GET STARTED? BY ENDING.

Plenty of writers start a great story, not all can finish it.

Plotting your story, especially how it ends, is one of the most important parts of writing.

**DON'T START UNTIL YOU KNOW THE ENDING!**

There are plenty of online resources to help you plot out a story. Here's a few on us:

<http://www.readwritethink.org/classroom-resources/student-interactives/story-30008.html>

<https://www.plot-generator.org.uk/story/>

## WHERE DO I GET HORROR STORY INSPIRATION FROM?

- What about your own experiences? When have you felt fear or been in a situation that could be used for horror?
- What horror fiction have you read or could you read? Some short stories by Poe or M.R. James could 'inspire' you....
- Why not watch Mark Kermode's documentary on horror films on the BBC iPlayer? He wrote his PhD on horror films by the way....
- <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b0bfp4h7>

## MODERN HORROR – PSYCHOLOGICAL AND SUPERNATURAL HORROR

- Think about Stephen King's 'The Shining' where a man becomes the caretaker for the winter of a remote hotel with his wife and young son. His mind disintegrates, putting his family in grave danger.
- Think about Stephen King's 'Carrie' where a 16-year old 'girl' is bullied at school and abused at home by her religious fanatic mother. Carrie realises that she has supernatural powers and uses these to wreak havoc and get revenge at the school prom.
- Think about Robert Bloch's novel 'Psycho' where a young woman stays in an isolated motel and....

## ‘THE GOTHIC’

- There are great pieces of literary scholarship on the British Library website – it’s one of the best places to take a look at!
- <https://www.bl.uk/romantics-and-victorians/themes/the-gothic>
- Have a read of Professor John Mullan’s essay on ‘The Origins of the Gothic’ – there are lots of lavish illustrations too with all of these British Library essays; they are genuinely fun to look at and you learn a lot of fascinating knowledge.
- <https://www.bl.uk/romantics-and-victorians/articles/the-origins-of-the-gothic>
- TASK – Make some notes on Mullan’s essay.

# PREPARING TO WRITE HORROR FICTION

## Tasks

- List **vocabulary** that you think would suit horror: graveyard, mist, night, moonlight, mould....
- Practise **building suspense**. e.g. Turn this example that fails to build suspense into one that does create tension (clue: add lots of detail) – ‘Michael walked up to his friend’s house, walked inside and upstairs, and found his friend dead in the bath.’
- **Showing not telling**. ‘The ‘golden rule’? ‘She was scared’ doesn’t work in the same way as: ‘She closed the curtain quickly. She had definitely heard something....’ Show, don’t tell. Try this one – ‘The church was scary’. Now improve it and then you’re ready for your own story!



**COMPETITION TIME!**

**Prize available for 1<sup>st</sup> place!**

**Honourable mentions for 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> place**

**WRITE A BESTSELLING HORROR STORY –  
ONE THAT MIGHT GET MADE INTO A  
HORROR FILM....**

I would like to see if we have any budding HORROR writers – any budding Stephen Kings....

**Please create your own horror short story!**

You could include some of the following and/or your own individual ideas:

- A story with ONE SCENE based around a “moment of terror”.
- A single, main character who confronts a situation that is uncanny or dangerous, disturbing or irrational.
- Why not start ‘in medias res’ – by plunging straight “into the middle of things” with the story? Why not leave the story at the end on a cliff-hanger or with an “open ending”?
- Description of your scene is vital to build suspense and create atmosphere.
- You don’t need blood and gore! Where can you go from here? Horror stories are about suspense....
- One character, one setting, one conflict, one message

## HORROR STORY “BOOK OF THE CENTURY”

Use your newly acquired knowledge to create a horror short story.

Submit your story to the following email address by the closing date

Email: [Competitions@gordons.school](mailto:Competitions@gordons.school)

**When you email, please use the subject heading ‘KS5 Week 6 Writing a Bestselling Horror Short Story’**

Closing date: **15<sup>th</sup> June 2020**

Winners will be announced via weekly Schoolcomms

