



Writing Scary Stories

Scary stories often involve fear and tragedy.

Suspense and tension are key components of scary stories.

People often fear what they don't understand or things they can't control. What are your greatest fears? What terrifies you? What grosses you out? Try to work some of your fears into the setting of the story.

Create a eerie, ominous atmosphere... one that will tap into the reader's fears. What setting will you use?

Where/when might you experience your fears? How might you react there?

Think about different "what if" scenarios. How can the character get out of the situation?

Describe your main character. (Are they believable & likeable yet vulnerable?) Describe your protagonist: What flaws does your main character have?

What does your character have to lose? What will happen if the character doesn't get what they want?

Have your main character make mistakes... big mistakes that put their life in danger. Write a list of mistakes they might make (that add to the tension/suspense of your

story:



Make your reader feel what the main character feels... terror!





Writing Scary Stories p. 2

Who is the villain in your story? Make your villain strange or not quite normal. How will he/she/it provoke fear in the story?

Build suspense and tension. What are some ways you can do this?

*Sometimes it helps to have your main character make mistakes... or to make choices you hate!

*Alternate between tense moments and quiet moments when the character calms down, breathes and feels safe again. Then re-engage the character in the conflict, this time making it even more serious or threatening.

*Sometimes it helps to restrict the character's movement (think of being stuck, trapped, unable to run)

*People fear things they don't understand (a cold touch on your shoulder when no one is there!)

* Think of things that revolt you. Can that be woven into the story?

Put ideas into your reader's head and be descriptive, but **do not tell the audience they should be scared!!**

Avoid words like

- scared, scary
- terrified, terrifying
- horrified, horror
- afraid
- frightened

Find other ways to make your reader understand how your character feels!



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Hope your students have fun!

~Liesl, homeschoolden.com