

The Windows Project

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Horror /Horrible

Horror is a "peg to hang the poem on" game - players collect three words to plot incident: scene, sound, object or action. Various unpleasant versions have been unearthed - in one lumps of bone were rolled along an open coffin divided into squares each marked with a different ghastly word; in another 'ghost-shaped' skittles were bowled over. The poems were usually written out with red ink and nib-pens onto white shapes of spooks or skeletons, which were then hung to brush against future players.

A version of this board game is provided but for work with groups the worksheet **Horrible, Horrible** will provide a better framework for ideas to build towards a revolting poem. For group work it is helpful to keep players to a common order as they fill in the boxes, to assist and stimulate.

Once players have built a stock of words and a rough plot they can move onto a clean sheet to draft the poem. The aim is to produce gothic gruesome giggles, rather than terror, and the emphasis should be on choice of language. The poems will work best through atmosphere and suggestion rather than crude gore.

Ramsey Campbell, a fine writer of horror stories, once suggested, as we played the board game at a youth club, that a limitation on the game is that it leads to melodramatic, possibly stereotypic, ideas of horror. This is true, but high gothic horror and ghost stories provide creepy amusement to most children, and for these the game works well.

Ramsey suggested that horror is individually felt and lies within the known and everyday - this is also true, but requires a different game. A version of What do you think you're doing? can be used. I have found simple discussion enough, but this takes time. The main question is not only "What are you afraid of, what do you fear most?" but also, taking Ramsey's point, "Which of your small fears or misgivings could, if magnified, become really frightening?"

It is often helpful to suggest that the writer places the poem at the moment before the worst happens. Writing impersonally (she, he) often helps the writer to be honest ...

PDF version notes

The **Horrible, Horrible** worksheet on the following page can be filled in using Adobe reader and saved or printed. An additional page is provided which can be used to write on but for more flexibility in drafting the poem it may be easier to use a separate word processor or text editor program.

A printable A4 version of the **Horror** board game is on the last page - ghouls may wish to colour it in ghoulishly before use.

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Windows Workshops

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HORRIBLE, HORRIBLE !!

FIVE FOULEST THINGS ..

WHICH IS WORST?

SOME SICKENING DESCRIBING WORDS ..

PICK A PLACE WHERE THE WORST COULD BE ..

EIGHT APPALLING ACTION WORDS ..

**WHAT HAPPENED? ...
FIRST?**

AND THEN?

AND IN THE END?

