

An October night

By Jim Evans

Dummerston Middle School, Grade 8

Ghouls staring at you through the trees
 Haunted places filled with evil spirits
 Out late on a fall night all by yourself
 Shivering because you feel like something is watching you
 Thoughts of horror movies stuck in your head
 Something creeping up slowly behind
 Fearing the worst

Ghosts

By Aashna Kinkhabwala

Dover Elementary School, Grade 5

Ghosts
 All clammy and cold
 slip through my bed
 Ghosts

The graveyard

By Holly Bushey

Fair Haven Grade School, Grade 8

I was walking home one brisk Friday night, heading back from a bonfire at my friend's house. The moon shone clear, illuminating the sky, yet at the time it felt darker than the deepest black. To get home, I always use the graveyard as a shortcut.

I was walking through and couldn't help but feel someone, or maybe something, following me. It didn't seem to faze me as I kept walking, but the feeling got stronger. I paused, stopping in my tracks. My face turned white as I felt a deep breathing on my neck. I could hear the inhale, the exhale. The breath wasn't warm, it was cold. Freezing. I hesitantly turned my neck to see what, or who, was behind me. Nothing. Nothing at all. Was I being paranoid? I thought just then — I must be. Just paranoid.

And so I continued on the stone path through the graveyard. The graves felt like the strongest presence. I blanched white again. It wasn't what I felt. It was what I saw. A transparent figure resembling a little girl, standing in front of me. I felt faint. This couldn't just be paranoia. The child tilted her head, looking frightened of me. A strong gust of wind came across the spot where I was standing; I was forced to turn my head away and shield my face because of the dust and rocks flying everywhere. When the wind stopped, I looked back. The figure was gone. My heart raced faster than fast.

I did get home safely that night, but I don't think I'll use that graveyard anytime soon.

Ever seen a ghost?

By Skyla Harvey | Dummerston Elementary School, Grade 7

Elizabeth and Ivy were coming home from camp when they suddenly decided to take the long way through the woods. It was getting dark and Elizabeth was getting scared. She shuddered under her fall fleece and jumped when a great horned owl hooted long and low. She stared at the trees' black shadows that seemed to reach for her and Ivy.

Ivy was scared, but didn't want to show Elizabeth that, so she laughed and watched Elizabeth stare at her with horror.

"Ivy, it's not funny any more. Lets go back and have hot cocoa at my house. Please Ivy, please!" Elizabeth begged. But Ivy wasn't going to show weakness. Not now, not ever. So she kept walking and stopped in front of her friend and turned to face her.

"Lizzie, please, let's go."

Elizabeth stopped. She had had it! "Fine! You know what? Stay here overnight! I DARE you!"

Ivy glared. "Dare" was a fighting word. "Fine! I will go home! But when you come back, I'm still going to be here!" She sat on a dry patch of grass and watched as Elizabeth ran from view.

The night grew on and Ivy was freaked out. She saw a shadow pass before her face in a flash. She screamed and hit the air. The

she got up and started to run, but something caught her ankle. She tugged and tugged but her ankle was officially stuck. She screamed as a witchlike laugh echoed through the woods. She freed her ankle and ran in any direction she could go. Ivy was being watched, she knew she was. She felt like the trees had nails and were scratching her cheeks.

Black shadows passed from every direction. She was terrified now. she couldn't do anything so she stopped and lay down, hoping the looming figures would go away. But they didn't, they stayed and called to her, whispering to her. she screamed.

Elizabeth ran to where her friend was going to be at noon. But Ivy was nowhere to be found. Ivy was gone, Elizabeth ran and ran to find her, and she did. Scratched and raw, dried blood covered her. Ivy's clothes were ripped, and her face was so severely gashed. Elizabeth screamed and ran to her mother.

DEATH NOTICE: Dead body found in Ghost Creek. Apparently ripped and died dramatically. The only witness is too traumatized to tell what happened. Ivy McFee's funeral will take place later this week. The community mourns the loss and extends its sympathies to the McFee family.

Dangerous or likable?

By Wyatt Gilman

Shrewsbury Mountain School, Grade 5

I like ghosts because they can hit you in the head. They can do pranks to you, too. They could bash you in the head and face. They jot down notes to you. A ghost sounds like wind. They could be likable or dangerous but I think they're likable.

Upcoming Prompts

Get published in the *Reformer!*

General. Submit your best non-prompt general writing. This call for general entries is repeated each month and you can use the same "general" term when submitting each time. **Alternate: Hunting.** Share your favorite hunting stories, or tell us how you feel about hunting. **Deadline Oct. 30.**

Future prompts and to submit:

youngwritersproject.org

Power goes out

By Alyssa Chapin

Shrewsbury Mountain School, Grade 6

(Excerpt: Full story at youngwritersproject.org)

Maranda was home alone while her parents were on a business trip. She was working on her homework in her bedroom. She didn't have much homework that night so it only took her thirty minutes to finish.

When she was done she turned on her stereo blaring loud. It was so loud that the floor shook in her room. Maranda danced like crazy, and all of a sudden the power went off in the house; she froze in her footsteps.

Maranda went down to the electricity box in the basement, but when she looked at the box all of the wires had been cut. She turned around to go upstairs to call her parents to see if they could help her. As she turned she felt a cold hand on her shoulder. The hand felt very dry and scratchy. ...

Maranda turned around she saw a dark figure in the dim light of the old basement light. She ran up the basement stairs as fast as she could, and down the short hallway. At the end of that hallway she ran into another dark figure. ...

Schoolyard ghost

By Nate Greene

Dummerston Middle School, Grade 7

When I first came to Dummerston School my classmates told me that a kid who had never passed kindergarten haunted the school. For the next month after soccer practice I was paranoid about remaining in the school area after dark. If I took my bike to school I would always look over my shoulder to see if the ghost was following me.

One day, when I had gotten a new lock for my bike, I was coming out of soccer practice when I realized that I did not know my combination for my bike. I tried to get it but failed. I reached for my cell phone but it was out of power. I was freaked out. Then I heard a door slam. I hid behind a bush and waited to see what it was. It turned out to be the last teacher leaving the building, but still I wanted to get out of there. That is when my mom pulled up and apologized for not telling me the combination. So we put my bike on the bike rack and went home.

But every time I am alone I still always look over my shoulder because I still believe in the kid who never got past kindergarten.



Young Writers Project is an independent nonprofit that engages students to write, helps them get better at it and connects them with authentic audiences for their best work.

YWP provides writing prompts for this newspaper series; maintains youngwritersproject.org,

a supportive online community for students; trains college mentors to provide students with feedback; and builds *Digital Writing Classrooms* for schools and after-school programs. For more go to: ywp-schools.net.

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The Bay and Paul Foundations

This New York-based foundation does considerable work in Vermont. It supports many educational initiatives and believes that effective school-based initiatives depend to a great extent on the collaborative capacity of the faculty.