

Halloween Activity



«The Landlady» by Roald Dahl is a chilling story with a surprising twist. Perfect for Halloween and to help students understand which elements can make a short story suspenseful. Many activities are listed below, choose those that will work best with your students.

Goal: Be able to identify short story elements.

Pre-reading activities

Warm up (in pairs): what are typical characteristics of a short story? It may be helpful to point out that the students may have worked with short stories (noveller) in Norwegian class. Make a mind map as a class. Short story elements include: few characters, limited setting, hints/foreshadowing, turning point and an unexpected ending. TIP: Refer to *Basic Skills* p. 118-119.

Word power: introduce important vocabulary through running dictation or story in an envelope. Recommended key words from “The Landlady” are listed below:

- the landlady: husvertinne
- lodgings: rom til leie
- Billy Weaver: 17 år gammel gutt
- deadly cold: dødelig kulde, veldig kaldt
- walked briskly: å gå raskt
- cracked and blotchy from neglect: sprukket og skjollete pga av forsømmelse
- to peer through the glass: kikke gjennom vinduet
- red finger nails: røde negler
- preserved: bevart
- a bitter taste: en bitter smak
- peculiar: merkelig
- a tiny bit frightened: litt redd

Post-reading activities

Language Make lists of adjectives to describe a. Billy Weaver and b. the Landlady.

Digital Skills Find a program that allows you to create a digital sketch of the setting, where the story takes place. Use descriptions from the story to make your sketch as accurate as possible.

Reading to Understand At which point did you sense that something was wrong? Explain the foreshadowing or hints that Roald Dahl gives you, the reader.

Speaking Find a short video version of the short story on YouTube. After watching, compare and contrast the video and the original short story. Which version do you prefer? Explain your opinion.

Speaking Act out the scene in pairs. Stay in character.

Writing Rewrite the short story from the landlady's point of view.

Writing Write a "missing person report" about Billy Weaver. Name, age, hometown, characteristics, last seen, etc.

Writing Write your own suspenseful short story. Try to give your reader goosebumps! TIPS in Basic Skills: find inspiration for short stories on page 119 and use "Plan Your Fictional Text" on page 101.

Short Story Analysis Identify and explain the short story elements in "The Landlady."

- few characters
- limited setting
- hints/foreshadowing
- turning point
- unexpected ending

You can find the novel "The Landlady" here:

<https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/article/landlady>

