

# Blurb

FOR READERS OF CHILDREN'S NOVELS

OCTOBER/NOVEMBER 2023

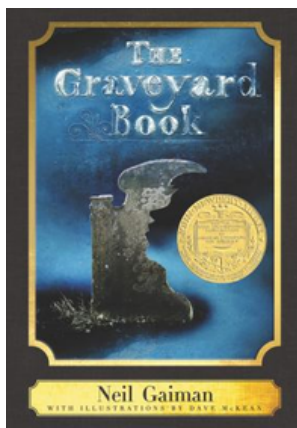
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## THE GHOST OF AN ISSUE

I don't know what it is. But as the weather gets colder and the nights get longer, noises seem to become louder. My stairs seem creakier. My walls seem thumpier. The trees seem clackier. The wind seems howlier.

The air, too, feels different. It feels colder in spots that others and quicker to the bone. The air smells of smoke and dirt. It seems to carry whispers.

Maybe it's just my imagination. But maybe not....



### THE GRAVEYARD BOOK

BY NEIL GAIMAN

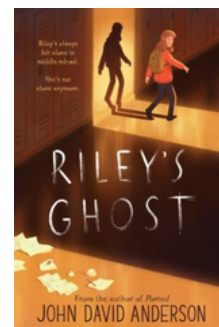
**Sometimes it takes a whole graveyard to raise a child.**

In the middle of the night, a man named Jack murders three members of the Owens family, but he fails to find the fourth member. That's because one-and-half-year-old Bod Owens has climbed out of his crib and wandered outside. He crawls up a hill and into a graveyard. When the ghosts in the graveyard find out he is orphaned, they adopt him.

Bod Owens learns a lot from his ghost family, including how to Fade, Haunt, and Dreamwalk. But the most important lessons he'll learn will be how to defeat the murderous Jack when he comes back to finish the job.

### RILEY'S GHOST

BY JOHN DAVID ANDERSON



The mean girls at Riley's school tease her mercilessly. On the day that Riley decides she can't participate in a frog dissection, her classmates decide to lock her in a closet...with all the dead frogs. When Riley finally gets out of the closet, she finds she's trapped all by herself in the dark school...by herself except for a ghost or two.

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## BIG WORD POLTERGEIST

In short, a **poltergeist** is another name for ghost. However, a **poltergeist** is a specific kind of ghost. The word is a combination of two German words -- *poltern* which means disturbance and *geist* which means ghost. So to be specific, a **poltergeist** is a ghost which causes a disturbance, like making loud noises or throwing objects around a room.



## GHOSTS AROUND THE WORLD

Ghost stories are a cultural universal. That means that just about every culture that has ever existed, no matter what time or place in the world, has a tradition of telling stories about the supernatural and the afterlife. Here's a few books that highlight ghosts from other countries and cultures.

### THE GHOST TREE BY NATASHA DEEN



The roots of this ghost story come from Guyana, a country in the northeastern tip of South America. In this book, Asim's new town is freaking him out. Not only is it full of weird noises, but there's a tree that's growing faster than it should. Could the tree be haunted by an evil spirit?

### THE GHOST AND THE GIRL BY HANNA ALKAF



The ghosts from this book come from Malaysia, a county in southeast Asia that is south of Vietnam. Suraya gets the gift of a ghost from her grandmother. The ghost has a good side, but Suraya soon learns that it has a dark side as well.

### THE GHOST OF MIDNIGHT LAKE BY LUCY STRANGE



This one takes place in England's Lake District. Agatha has been kicked out of her ancestral home and has to live in a cottage on the edge of haunted lake. Can the ghosts of the water help her come to terms with the secrets of her past?

## GHOST TRIVIA

1. What's the name of the cartoon ghost who is said to be the "Friendly Ghost"?
2. In the Peanuts cartoon, "It's the Great Pumpkin, Charlie Brown," Charlie Brown dresses as a ghost for Halloween. But something is wrong with his costume. Do you know what?
3. What classic video game features a pellet-eating character who is chased by four ghosts named Inky, Blinky, Pinky, and Clyde?
4. What famous story sees Ebenezer Scrooge being visited by ghosts on Christmas Eve?
5. What famous series features a ghost named Nearly Headless Nick?
6. What movie comedy from the 80s features a gross ghost named Slimer?
7. What ghost-themed cereal might you find on the shelf next to Count Chocula and Franken Berry?

**ANSWERS ARE ON THE BACK PAGE.**

## MR. MATT RECOMMENDS



### THE BELLWOODS GAME BY CELIA KRAPIEN

This new book is making a big splash. You might want to check it out.

It's tradition that each year the sixth graders of Fall Wood Elementary play the Bellwoods game on Halloween night. Just go to the woods and ring the bell before the ghost of Abigail Snook gets you. Sounds easy until the they discover that some ghost stories are real.



## BOO-HUMBUG CHRISTMAS GHOSTS

**Ghosts don't stop haunting just because Halloween is over. They stick around for other holidays, too.**

### A CHRISTMAS CAROL BY CHARLES DICKENS

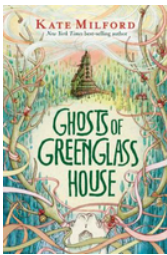


This is one of the greatest stories of all time. Ebenezer Scrooge is visited by four ghosts on Christmas Eve. He learns from them that if he doesn't change his ways, his future isn't going to be so happy. A Christmas Carol has been adapted into hundreds of different movies, TV shows, and other books.



### THE 12 SCREAMS OF CHRISTMAS BY R.L. STINE

Kate and Courtney need a place to rehearse for their school's special holiday play, so their teacher suggests they rehearse at a creepy, old historic house...a house that just might be haunted. Why would a teacher do that?



### GHOSTS OF GREENGLASS HOUSE BY KATE MILFORD

Milo is stuck at Greenglass House for winter break with some guests of the ghostly kind. This cozy mystery involves a treasure map and a smuggler's lost haul.

## GHOSTS AT CHRISTMAS?

Charles Dickens may have popularized the Christmas ghost story, but the tradition of telling scary stories at Christmas goes back at least five centuries. Why do you think this is so? Ghosts and Christmas don't seem to fit.

It all has to do with fire. Winter has the shortest, coldest days of the year, and back before there was electricity, families had to huddle together around a single fire at night to see and keep warm, especially on holidays. To keep entertained, they'd tell stories. Of course, a flickering fire and a dark, howling night lend themselves to the telling of ghost stories, even at Christmas.

## HAUNTED MAGIC TREE HOUSE

BY MARY POPE OSBORNE

Magic Tree House books are all about giving a little history lesson as well as providing an exciting adventure. Of course, history is about people who died long ago, so it stands to reason that lots of ghosts appear in the series

### A GOOD NIGHT FOR GHOSTS



Jack and Annie travel back to 1915 New Orleans where they meet a teenaged Louis Armstrong. They encounter a few ghosts all while discovering the fascinating world of jazz music.

### HAUNTED CASTLE ON HALLOWS EVE



Jack and Annie head to medieval England to the time of King Arthur where they have to deal with invisible beings and giant ravens.

### GHOST TALE FOR CHRISTMAS



This time Jack and Annie travel to Victorian England where famous writer Charles Dickens has been thrown in jail. Can they get him out in time to write his famous ghost story?

### THE GHOST TOWN AT SUNDOWN



Jack and Annie travel to the Wild West for an adventure that includes horse thieves, a lost colt, rattlesnakes, and a cowboy named Slim. Oh, and the whole town might be haunted. The whole town!!!



## HELLO, DOLLY ...AHHH!

In stories, the most common areas a ghost haunts are places where they either lived or died: a house, hotel, hospital, or graveyard. But sometimes they take possession of other objects, perhaps an object that had some sort of significance to the owner.

Sometimes a ghost will attach themselves to a piece of jewelry or an item of furniture. But perhaps the most creepy is the haunted doll.

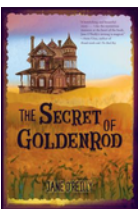
What do you think makes a haunted doll scarier than a haunted necklace?

### HUSH-A-BYE BY JODY LEE MOTT



Sisters Lucy and Antonia find a muddy doll in the woods. They soon learn that the doll has a sinister mind of its own.

### THE SECRET OF GOLDENROD BY JANE O'REILLY



Trina and her father move into a wreck of a mansion. Trina finds a tiny porcelain doll that's been boarded up for over a century. Then the doll starts to talk to her.

### NIGHT OF THE LIVING TED BY BARRY HUTCHINSON



Lisa Marie and her big brother visit a Create-a-Ted store. But all the teddy bears come to life, possessed by ghosts, zombies, and aliens!

## WHY DO GHOSTS WEAR SHEETS?



We've all seen images of the classic ghost costume that is made up of a white sheet with two eyeholes cut in it.

Such a costume is certainly easy to put together. Maybe it seems sort of ghost-like because it's flowy and shapeless. A costume like that would seem quaint now...maybe even cute.

But there was a time when seeing a figure coming down the street in a sheet might have been absolutely terrifying. That's because until about 200 years ago, it was still fairly common to bury the dead in a shroud rather than a coffin. Coffins were more expensive than most people could afford, so they would wrap the body in special piece of cloth called a shroud and bury the body like that. Among the especially poor who couldn't afford a special burial shroud they would simply wrap the body in the sheet from the bed in which they died.


So, of course, if a body was going to come back and do some haunting, it would still be wearing its sheet. In fact, early drawings and paintings of ghosts were depictions of skeletons that still had their shrouds and sheets wrapped around them.

## YOU DO THE WRITING

So we've all heard of haunted houses and haunted dolls. But what if something weird got taken over by a ghost: a bike, a spatula, a piano, a shirt, a banana, a chihuahua, whatever?

Create some characters and write a story about what happens to them when something strange gets haunted.

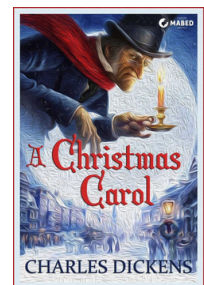
## GHOST TRIVIA ANSWERS

1. Casper 
2. He cut too many eye holes (12 to be exact).

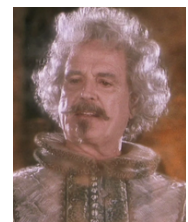


3. Pac - Man 

4. A Christmas Carol



5. Harry Potter



6. GhostBusters



7. Boo Berry

