



FURNACE

HORROR WRITING WORKSHEET

THIS WORKSHEET WILL HOPEFULLY TEACH YOU THE BASICS OF WRITING A **SCARY STORY** – COMING UP WITH A FRIGHTENING IDEA, MAKING YOUR CHARACTERS COME TO LIFE AND TURNING THEIR WORLD UPSIDE DOWN IN A ROLLERCOASTER PLOT! BUT ALWAYS REMEMBER THE FIRST RULE OF WRITING:

DON'T GET BOGGED DOWN BY THE RULES, JUST PLAY AROUND, HAVE FUN AND WRITE SOMETHING THAT YOU FIND SCARY AND ENTERTAINING!

PART 1: FACING YOUR NIGHTMARES!

ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT THINGS ABOUT WRITING A HORROR STORY IS FINDING SOMETHING SCARY! THERE ARE LOADS OF PLACES TO GET IDEAS, BUT IT'S ALWAYS BEST TO START BY LOOKING AT WHAT **YOU** ARE AFRAID OF. IF YOU'RE AFRAID OF SOMETHING, THEN WHEN YOU WRITE ABOUT IT, IT WILL SEEM GENUINELY TERRIFYING!

WRITE DOWN SOME OF YOUR WORST FEARS:

THINK ABOUT WHY YOU FIND THESE THINGS SCARY!

THREE GREAT PLACES TO LOOK FOR IDEAS ARE:

- **EXPERIENCE:** THINGS THAT HAVE HAPPENED TO YOU – DID ANYTHING REALLY SCARY HAPPEN WHEN YOU WERE YOUNGER, LIKE GETTING LOST IN THE WOODS, OR BEING WOKEN BY A NOISE THAT MIGHT HAVE BEEN A MONSTER?
- **MEMORY:** THINGS FROM YOUR FAVOURITE BOOKS AND SHOWS – WHAT'S THE SCARIEST THING YOU'VE EVER READ OR SEEN? IS THERE A WAY TO USE THAT IDEA BUT MAKE IT YOUR OWN?
- **WHAT IF?!:** CRAZY IDEAS – THIS IS THE MOST FUN WAY OF LOOKING FOR IDEAS. WHAT IF... YOUR REFLECTION SUDDENLY STARTED DOING THINGS DIFFERENTLY, AND BEGAN TRYING TO TAKE OVER YOUR LIFE? OR YOUR PARENTS, AND EVERYBODY ELSE'S, SUDDENLY DISAPPEAR? OR A NEIGHBOUR TURNS OUT TO BE A VAMPIRE? LEARN TO QUESTION **ABSOLUTELY EVERYTHING** – WHY IS THE SCHOOL BASEMENT LOCKED? (WHAT IF THAT'S WHERE THEY EXPERIMENT ON NAUGHTY KIDS!) WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU ARE HYPNOTISED? (MAYBE YOU ARE POSSESSED BY AN ANGRY GHOST!) THINK UP LUDICROUS AND SCARY EXPLANATIONS FOR EVERYTHING!

THE IDEA FOR FURNACE CAME FROM ALL THESE PLACES: I ONCE VISITED AN OLD PRISON BENEATH THE GROUND AND WAS TERRIFIED BY IT (**EXPERIENCE**), I WAS WATCHING LOTS OF PRISON SHOWS ON TELEVISION AT THE TIME (**MEMORY**), AND I WONDERED **WHAT IF** YOU ARE ACCUSED OF A CRIME YOU DIDN'T COMMIT AND SENT TO A TERRIFYING PRISON? AND ALL OF THE MONSTERS IN FURNACE ARE BORN FROM SOME OF MY WORST FEARS!

TRY PLAYING WITH SOME OF THESE IDEA-MAKING IDEAS AND YOU'LL HAVE A BASIS FOR A STORY IN NO TIME!

2. WHAT IF...

TAKE FIVE MINUTES TO THINK ABOUT YOUR WORST FEARS, POWERFUL MEMORIES AND SCARY BOOKS AND FILMS, THEN WRITE DOWN AS MANY CRAZY WHAT IF'S AS POSSIBLE!

WHAT IF YOUR BEST FRIEND DIES AND COMES BACK TO HAUNT YOU...

WHAT IF YOUR SHADOW COMES TO LIFE...

WHAT IF YOUR SCHOOL HOLIDAY ABROAD TURNED OUT TO BE IN A ZOMBIE PLAGUE AREA...

WHAT IF...

NOW PICK THE CREEPIEST IDEA AND USE THIS AS THE START OF YOUR STORY!

3. GETTING TO KNOW YOU!

BEFORE WE DO ANY MORE WITH THE PLOT, IT'S VITAL TO KNOW WHO IS GOING TO BE IN YOUR STORY. THE CHARACTERS ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT PART OF WRITING BECAUSE IF THEY DON'T SEEM REAL AND ENGAGING, THE REST OF THE STORY WON'T. FOR THIS STORY, YOUR CHARACTER WILL HAVE THE SAME WORST FEARS AS YOU – FEARS THAT HE OR SHE WILL HAVE TO CONFRONT DURING THE STORY – BUT YOU ALSO NEED TO KNOW EVERYTHING ELSE ABOUT HIM OR HER!

COMING UP WITH CHARACTERS IS GREAT FUN – IT'S LIKE MAKING BRAND NEW FRIENDS WHO YOU GET TO CONTROL! BUT IT'S REALLY IMPORTANT THAT YOU KNOW **EVERYTHING** ABOUT YOUR CHARACTERS SO THAT THEY LEAP OUT OF THE PAGE (WHAT IF A CHARACTER IN A STORY BECOMES REAL? SEE, IDEAS ARE EVERYWHERE)!

MAKE A PROFILE FOR YOUR MAIN CHARACTER AND ALWAYS KEEP IT WITH YOU. CUT PICTURES FROM MAGAZINES OF HAIRSTYLES AND CLOTHES SO THAT YOU KNOW WHAT HE OR SHE LOOKS LIKE, AND WHAT THINGS THEY LIKE OR HATE. TRY FILLING IN A PROFILE NOW:

NAME	AGE	B/G
HAIR COLOUR	EYE COLOUR	NATIONALITY

PERSONALITY (WRITE DOWN A FEW EXAMPLES OF WHAT THEY ARE LIKE AS PEOPLE – REBELLIOUS, SCARED OF EVERYTHING, FRIENDLY, EVIL, SMELLY, POPULAR, A BULLY ETC)

WORK OUT EVERY LITTLE DETAIL BEFORE YOU START WRITING:

FAVOURITE FOODS / DRINKS:

FAVOURITE FILMS / TV / MUSIC:

WHAT KIND OF HOUSE THEY LIVE IN:

WHAT THEIR PARENTS ARE LIKE:

BROTHERS OR SISTERS:

FAVOURITE HOBBY:

WORST HABIT:

PETS:

BEST FRIEND:

WORST ENEMY:

FAVOURITE / LEAST FAVOURITE SUBJECT:

WHAT DO THEY WANT TO BE WHEN THEY GROW UP:

FIVE THINGS THEY NEVER LEAVE HOME WITHOUT:

THEIR WORST EXPERIENCE:

ANYTHING ELSE?

4. DRAWING IT OUT!

ONCE YOU HAVE PICKED AN IDEA FOR A STORY, TRY AND VISUALISE THE MAIN MONSTER / BAD GUY / CREEPY CRAWLY. DESCRIPTION IN A STORY IS DIFFICULT – SOMETIMES YOU WRITE TOO LITTLE, OTHER TIMES YOU CAN WRITE TOO MUCH. IF YOU KNOW EXACTLY WHAT SOMETHING LOOKS LIKE THEN YOU KNOW WHICH BITS OF IT TO DESCRIBE!

AND **DON'T BE AFRAID TO GET A BIT CLOSER TO THE THINGS THAT SCARE YOU!** IF YOU'RE WRITING ABOUT SPIDERS, LOOK AT ONE CLOSE UP, EVEN IF YOU ARE TERRIFIED OF THEM! WRITE DOWN HOW IT FEELS WHEN YOU ARE SCARED, BECAUSE IF YOU FEEL TERRIFIED THEN YOU'LL KNOW EXACTLY HOW TO DESCRIBE THE FEELING IN YOUR STORY!

WHEN YOU'RE RESEARCHING LIKE THIS **ALWAYS BE SENSIBLE AND ALWAYS BE SAFE!**

5. SIM CITY

CREATING A WORLD FOR YOUR CHARACTERS IS ALMOST AS IMPORTANT AS CREATING THE CHARACTERS THEMSELVES. THEY HAVE TO HAVE SOMEWHERE TO LIVE!

READERS DON'T JUST WANT TO SEE A LOCATION IN THEIR HEADS, THEY WANT TO SMELL IT, TOUCH IT, TASTE IT – TO FEEL LIKE THEY ARE ACTUALLY THERE. THE BEST WAY TO CREATE A REALISTIC LOCATION IS TO USE ALL FIVE SENSES TO DESCRIBE IT. THIS WAY YOU'LL BUILD A WORLD WITH REAL ATMOSPHERE – A PLACE THAT ACTUALLY EXISTS.

START BY THINKING ABOUT A LOCATION FOR PART OF YOUR STORY. THIS CAN BE SOMEWHERE FAMILIAR, LIKE YOUR BEDROOM OR YOUR SCHOOL, OR IT CAN BE SOMEWHERE STRANGE AND SCARY, LIKE A GRAVEYARD OR A BATTLEFIELD OR A HAUNTED HOUSE. DECIDE WHAT KIND OF ATMOSPHERE YOU WANT IT TO HAVE, THEN EXPLORE IT AS IF YOU WERE ACTUALLY VISITING IT FOR THE FIRST TIME.

LOCATION:

BEGIN BY THINKING ABOUT WHAT IT **LOOKS** LIKE. YOU CAN DRAW PICTURES OR MAKE A MAP IF THIS HELPS.

NEXT, THINK ABOUT WHAT IT **SOUNDS** LIKE. CAN YOU HEAR THE WIND SCREAMING? IS THERE TRAFFIC IN THE DISTANCE? ARE THERE VOICES? A TICKING CLOCK? SCRATCHING NOISES FROM BENEATH THE BED? WRITE DOWN SOME OF THE THINGS YOU CAN HEAR:

NOW THINK ABOUT THE **SMELLS**. SOMETHING COOKING? SOMETHING ROTTING? GUNPOWDER? BLOOD? WRITE DOWN WHAT YOU CAN SMELL:

HOW ABOUT **TOUCH**? WHAT IS THE TEMPERATURE LIKE? HOW DOES THE GROUND FEEL BENEATH YOUR FEET? ARE THE WALLS DAMP OR BLOODSTAINED? WHAT DOES THE RAIN FEEL LIKE AGAINST YOUR FACE?

HOPEFULLY BY NOW YOU'LL FEEL AS IF YOU HAVE REALLY VISITED YOUR LOCATION, AND YOUR READERS WILL TOO!

6. PUTTING THEM THROUGH HELL!

NOW THAT YOU HAVE YOUR BASIC STORY IDEA, YOUR MAIN CHARACTER AND YOUR BAD GUY, IT'S TIME TO THINK ABOUT WHAT TO DO WITH THEM – THE PLOT. USUALLY A PLOT INVOLVES A CHARACTER FACING A PROBLEM OR A FEAR AT THE START, THEN GOING THROUGH HELL TRYING TO SOLVE THIS PROBLEM OR OVERCOME THEIR FEAR, AND (HOPEFULLY) SOLVING / OVERCOMING IT AT THE END!

EVERY STORY HAS A BEGINNING, A MIDDLE AND AN END, AND BEFORE YOU START WRITING IT'S ALWAYS GOOD TO HAVE A ROUGH IDEA OF WHAT IS GOING TO HAPPEN. DON'T PLAN EVERYTHING OUT IN TOO MUCH DETAIL, AND DON'T BE AFRAID TO CHANGE THINGS IF YOU GET A BETTER IDEA, BUT MAKE A SIMPLE OUTLINE, A MAP THAT YOU CAN FOLLOW SO THAT YOU DON'T GET LOST:

THE BEGINNING: THIS IS WHERE THE CHARACTER FIRST ENCOUNTERS HIS OR HER WORST FEAR, USUALLY IN A TERRIFYING OPENING CHAPTER! MAKE THE OPENING OF YOUR BOOK AS EXCITING AND DRAMATIC (AND AS SCARY) AS POSSIBLE (START IN THE MIDDLE OF SOMETHING EXCITING)! WRITE A SENTENCE OR TWO FOR YOUR OUTLINE:

THE MIDDLE: THE BULK OF A STORY IS THE MIDDLE, WHERE A CHARACTER TRIES TO OVERCOME THEIR FEAR OR DEFEAT THEIR ENEMY. YOUR JOB AS A WRITER IS TO MAKE LIFE AS DIFFICULT AS POSSIBLE FOR YOUR CHARACTERS, SO THROW IN AS MANY CHALLENGES AND COMPLICATIONS AS YOU CAN! WHEN YOU HAVE DONE THAT, PUT YOURSELF IN YOUR CHARACTER'S SHOES AND WORK OUT HOW THEY WOULD DEFEAT THESE CHALLENGES. AGAIN, WRITE A SHORT DESCRIPTION FOR YOUR OUTLINE:

THE END: THIS IS WHERE THE CHARACTER MANAGES TO OVERCOME THEIR FEAR AND DEFEAT THEIR ENEMY (OR NOT, IT'S TOTALLY UP TO YOU)! REMEMBER, DON'T MAKE IT EASY FOR THEM, AND KEEP IT FAST-PACED AND EXCITING!:

7. LET'S GET SCARED!

AND THERE YOU HAVE IT! YOU'VE JUST COME UP WITH AN OUTLINE FOR A STORY, AND NOW ALL YOU HAVE TO DO IS WRITE IT! TO SUM IT UP:

- THINK ABOUT AN IDEA FIRST: YOUR WORST FEARS, POWERFUL MEMORIES, SCARY BOOKS AND FILMS AND **WHAT IF**S;
- GET TO KNOW YOUR CHARACTERS, YOUR HERO AND YOUR VILLAINS, AS WELL AS YOU CAN. THEY ARE YOUR NEW BEST FRIENDS!
- PLAN A ROUGH OUTLINE FOR THE BEGINNING, MIDDLE AND END OF YOUR STORY, MAKING LIFE AS DIFFICULT FOR YOUR MAIN CHARACTER AS POSSIBLE!
- ALWAYS REMEMBER TO **SHOW** NOT **TELL**: DON'T SAY 'SHE WAS SCARED', DESCRIBE EXACTLY HOW IT FEELS: 'SHE FELT CHILLS RUN UP HER SPINE, A COLD SWEAT BREAK ON HER FOREHEAD. HER HEART WAS SO FAR UP IN HER THROAT THAT SHE COULDN'T BREATHE, HER BODY LOCKED TIGHT WITH PANIC.' YOU GET THE IDEA!
- DON'T WORRY TOO MUCH ABOUT MAKING YOUR WRITING PERFECT RIGHT NOW, JUST MAKE SURE YOUR CHARACTERS ARE BELIEVABLE AND YOUR STORY FLOWS, AND YOU CAN TIDY IT ALL UP IN LATER DRAFTS!
- AND REMEMBER THE MAIN RULE: DON'T GET BOGGED DOWN BY THE RULES, JUST HAVE FUN!
- **NOW START WRITING YOUR FIRST DRAFT:**