

THE CANTERVILLE GHOST

Teachers' notes



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BEFORE GOING TO THE THEATRE

Welcome to **The Canterville Ghost**! Are you ready to go to the theatre?
We are sure you will have a lot of fun!

Before going to the theatre, please answer the following questions. Good luck!

1. As you may know, *The Canterville Ghost* was written by Oscar Wilde. What do you know about Oscar Wilde? In groups of four, do some research on internet about the author. Find the correct answer to the following questions. Then share them with the whole class.

What was Oscar Wilde's full name?

Oscar Fingal O'Flahertie Wills Wilde

Can you list two famous books written by Oscar Wilde?

The Happy Prince and Other Tales and The Picture of Dorian Gray, among others.

Who was Lord Alfred Douglas?

He was a British author. He and Oscar Wilde became lovers.

What happened to Oscar Wilde in 1895?

He was persecuted and arrested because of his homosexuality.

Is there anything about Oscar Wilde's life that surprised you? Why? Write and discuss it with the whole class.

The answer is open and free. Please encourage students to discuss their ideas in English and with the whole class.



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2. Let's talk about *The Canterville Ghost* now! First of all: do you believe in ghosts? Have you ever seen a ghost? Write and discuss with the whole class.

The answer is open and free. Please encourage students to discuss their ideas in English and with the whole class.

3. How do you imagine *The Canterville Ghost*? What is he like? What are his habits? Write your description here (for example, *the ghost is tall and scary, he likes to appear in the middle of the night...*). Use your imagination!

The answer is open and free. Please encourage students to use the vocabulary they already know; also, please write new words they might use on the whiteboard.

Now work in pairs. Read your description to your classmate. He or she will have to draw your ghost following the information from your description. Only one rule: your partner will be blindfolded! Then change the roles.

Draw your partner's ghost here.

For this activity you will need blindfolds. Please set up the classroom as follows: one pair of students per table. They have to work facing each other.



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4. Canterville Chase is a haunted house. Can you imagine living in a house with a ghost? Work in groups of four. Imagine that you are working as real estate agents. Write and draw an advertisement for a house for sale. You have to say that the house comes with a terrifying ghost.



Design a first draft of your advertisement here.

For this activity you will need to show pictures of houses for sale to the students. Please set up the classroom as follows: one table per group of four students.

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Now it's your turn! Let the house-selling contest begin!
Each group has to show its advertisement to the whole class
and be persuasive!

Remember, everybody has to talk and you have to tell your imaginary
clients that there is a ghost in the house! Your classmates can ask you questions
about the house (3 questions per group).
Which is the most convincing group?

Please make sure the students do this activity in English. Please write words and expressions they
might need during the contest on the whiteboard.

5. What about the characters? Let's have a look at the main characters of *The Canterville Ghost* by Oscar Wilde. Match each name with the right description.

Lord Canterville	He killed his wife, Lady Eleanor, in 1575. He lived for nine years after that, and then he disappeared very mysteriously. His body was never discovered, but his soul still haunts Canterville Chase.
Mr. Otis	She was a nice fifteen- year-old girl. She was a good sportswoman and loved to ride horses. She didn't share the jokes about the ghost.
Miss Virginia	He is a very rich man who thinks that everything can be bought with money. He bought Canterville Chase and went there to live with his family. He doesn't believe in ghosts.
The Ghost	He belongs to a very old British family which was the owner of Canterville Chase for a long time. He sold the haunted house to Hiram Otis. He warned him about the ghost.

But guess what? The play you are going to see is a freely adapted version of the plot written by Oscar Wilde! We will talk about it later ;)

Now we are almost ready to go to the theatre. But first, let's play!

Since we are going to the theatre... Let's do some acting!

This game is called SCENES FROM THE HAT

You will need: a hat (one for the entire class) and one piece of paper (one per person).

Write a situation on the piece of paper (for example, "you won the lottery" or "the train is late") and put the piece of paper in the hat.

One of you will randomly pick a piece of paper. He or she will have to act out the situation written on the paper by using the following mysterious sentence you will hear during the play.

"When the young lady makes a prayer bloom from the sinner's lips and gives freedom to the tears, then the house shall become calm again, and peace shall return to Canterville."

Good luck, improvisers!

Maybe at the beginning it will be difficult to involve the students in the game. Please be the first in playing, they will follow your example, for sure ;)



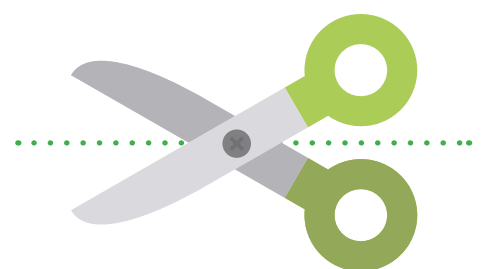
After the play

6. Here we are again! Did you like the play? Why? Was there anything in the play that surprised you? Give us your personal opinion about it. Then share your answer with your classmates.

The answer is open and free. Please encourage students to discuss their ideas in English and with the whole class.

7. Now work in groups. Cut out the following sequences of scenes. Put them in order. Then share your answer with the whole class.

Please set up the classroom as follows: one table per group of four students or more. Even if each student has his or her own copy of these guidelines, each group can only cut up one copy of the sequence of scenes below. Once each group has made its own order of scenes, please correct it with the whole class involving all the groups in the correction.



Virginia and Otis talk about the story of the Bloody Heart.	6
Cecil finds out that the bloodstain is back.	8
Virginia, Otis and Cecil have a very scary contact with Sir Simon.	7
Virginia says: "Simon's finally leaving. He's gone now."	17
A session of spiritism begins.	14
Virginia meets the Ghost for the first time.	4
Everybody turns out to be treasure hunters.	12
Lady Eleanor and Sir Simon have a tragic fight.	1

There is a fight for the Bloody Heart.	16
Lord Canterville, Otis and Virginia talk about the Ghost for the first time.	2
Cecil discovers a strange interference, the chain noise.	5
There are now three things lost in this house: the Bloody Heart, Sir Simon's body, and Virginia.	13
Virginia comes back to her world.	15
Otis and Cecil try to clean up an ancient bloodstain.	3
Otis notices that Lord Canterville has a particular cufflink.	9
Virginia talks to Sir Simon in the library and he takes her.	11
Virginia, Cecil, and Otis find out that their conversations have been recorded.	10

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8. What about the characters? Fill in the table below with a complete description of them. Once you finish, work in couples. Compare your descriptions with the ones you read in question 5. Are they similar? Are they different? Why?

Please set up the classroom as follows: one pair of students per table. They have to work facing each other. The answer is open and free. Please encourage students to discuss their ideas in English and with the whole class. The main aim of the activity is to make the student think about how characters and stories can be adapted to the present time. You can ask the students how they imagined the play before going to the theatre. It might be also useful for them if you show them pictures of the original characters from *The Canterville Ghost*. You can find plenty of them on internet.

Sir Simon	
Virginia	
Mr. Otis	
Lord Canterville	

9. As we said before, the version of *The Canterville Ghost* that you saw was a freely adapted one of the plot written by Oscar Wilde. Now in groups of four, do some research on internet about the original version. Represent it as a comic.

Please set up the classroom as follows: one table per group of four students. For this activity each group will need a laptop with an internet connection and a piece of white cardboard where they can draw the final version of their comic.

Internet is full of different versions of *The Canterville Ghost*. The main aim of the activity is for the students to properly select reliable information from the internet. They can work independently. Still, if you go table by table to supervise their research, it might be helpful for them. Once they find the information they need (about the seven chapters that shape the book) they can design the first draft of their comic. If they cannot organize themselves, assign roles to each one of them (one can write the script, another can draw the character, etc).

Design a first draft of your comic here. Each group will have to show it to the whole class.

Once they have their draft, you can give them the piece of cardboard. Please encourage students to talk about their work in English and with the whole class.



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What do you think about changing famous stories and adapting them to another time? Can you think of a famous example of that? Now work in four groups. Two groups will think about the pros of adapting famous stories to the present time. The other two groups will think about the cons.

And now... let's debate! Each group will have to support their thesis (*for* and *against* adaptations)

Please set up the classroom as follows: one table per group of four students or more. Please draw the following sample list on the whiteboard and assign the pros list to two groups and the cons list to the other two. Please encourage them to fill in the list and give examples for them.

Pros (group 1 and 2)	Cons (group 3 and 4)
The play is less boring	The play doesn't reflect the reality of the time in which they wrote it

Then each group can choose a spokesperson to participate in the debate. Please encourage everyone to be the spokesperson at least once. Please act as a moderator of the debate and fill in a group list of pros and cons on the whiteboard.

Did you like the Canterville Ghost experience? Fill in the acrostic poem below with words that express how you feel now.

The answer is open and free. Please encourage students to express their feeling in English and with the whole class.

G.....

H.....

O.....

S.....

T.....

Thanks for your great work!





THE CANTERVILLE GHOST

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