

# TEEN READ MONTH • 2012

## Lesson # 1

# IT CAME FROM THE LIBRARY!



## LESSON ONE: THE THRILLS AND CHILLS OF HORROR

### WHAT ATTRACTS SO MANY READERS TO THE HORROR GENRE?

Anyone who has been thrilled and chilled while reading a scary page-turner or watching a horror film recognizes that biological/chemical reaction we first experienced as a child. Horror taps one of our most primal emotions—one that is directly tied to our survival: FEAR. In real-life situations, the feeling of fear usually leads to a fight or flight response. As a child we flee to a parent for protection. The wonderful thing about reading horror fiction is that we don't have to flee. Writer Joseph VanBuren writes, "there is a certain thrill of having our fears invoked without the threat of actual danger that has captivated horror readers for centuries."

### A HISTORY OF HORROR

Australian writers David Carroll and Kyla Ward offer a fascinating timeline of the horror genre on their website Tabula Rasa. According to the site, "this timeline shows the stepping stones along the path from the Inquisition to the Blair Witch, from Dante's Inferno to *Hellraiser*. Along the timeline you'll find links to detailed articles with more information, cross-referenced links, and a comprehensive bibliography. Have fun!

**The Dark Ages—A History of Horror:** [www.tabula-rasa.info/DarkAges](http://www.tabula-rasa.info/DarkAges)

### WHAT SCARES YOU?

Different things scare different people. The fear we experience when confronted with a growling, threatening dog is biological, and it's a fear we all recognize. Other fears may be learned, based on the experiences we had growing up, or even what we're taught to believe. So it's no surprise that there are different types of horror, and a wealth of horror sub-genres to provide almost anyone with a good fright!

***What types of stories do you find frightening? Do you have particular fears that could play a role in a horror story? Discuss different types of fear with friends. How do your fears differ from theirs?***

#### Types of Horror include:

- **Natural**, which encompasses everything from a homicidal maniac to a rabid St. Bernard. This threat is real. It could happen! (Because of this connection to reality, such works may not even be classified as horror, but they certainly horrify.)
- **Supernatural**, which focuses on the inhuman, such as ghosts, monsters and other beings outside the natural human experience.
- **Psychological**, where the horror is built through atmosphere, and the protagonist's particular fears are exploited to effect.
- **Allegorical**, where the evil entity is a metaphor or a symbol for something in the real world.

Bestselling horror master Stephen King has an interesting take on the types of fright. Here, he distinguishes between terror, horror and grossing-out: "*The Gross-out: the sight of a severed head tumbling down a flight of stairs, it's when the lights go out and something green and slimy splatters against your arm. The Horror: the unnatural, spiders the size of bears, the dead waking up and walking around, it's when the lights go out and something with claws grabs you by the arm. And the last and worse one: Terror, when you come home and notice everything you own has been taken away and replaced by an exact substitute. It's when the lights go out and you feel something behind you, you hear it, you feel its breath against your ear, but when you turn around, there's nothing there.*"

Horror sub-genres include Monster, Vampire, Zombie, Slasher, Paranormal, Ghost, Mutation, Rampant Technology, Comedic and many more. Other genres can inform a particular work of horror: Science-Fiction, Fantasy, Mystery and even Romance (from Gothic Romances to the current Twilight saga).

***Think of the last horror story you read or the last scary film you saw. How would you classify it? What type of horror was used in the work? What sub-genre would it fit?***

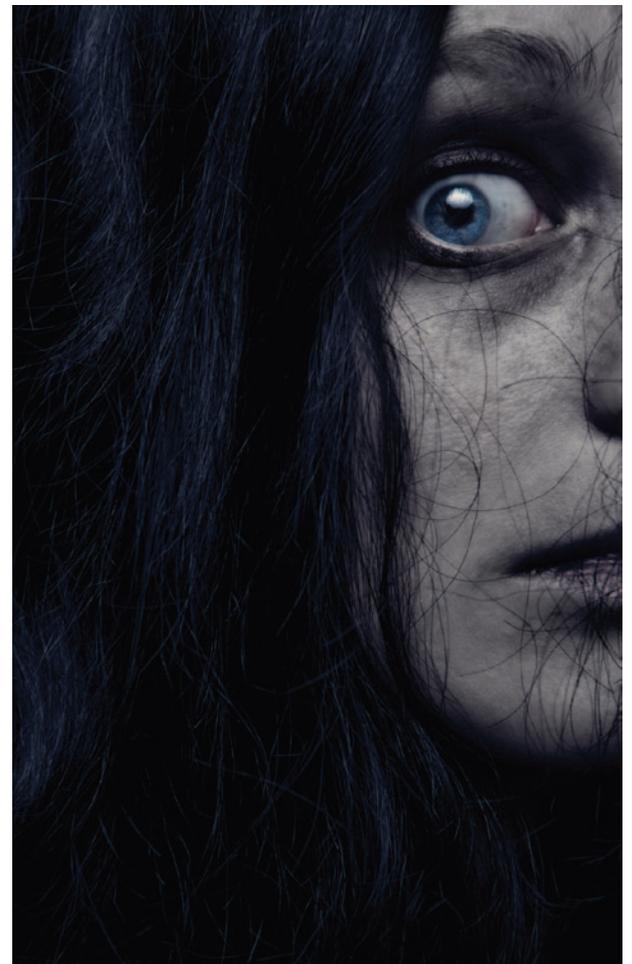
### READY! SET! READ!

**Need some good teen horror recommendations? Check out the following sites:**

Monster Librarian, Horror Fiction List YA: [www.monsterlibrarian.com/horrorfictionlistya.htm](http://www.monsterlibrarian.com/horrorfictionlistya.htm)

Multnomah County Library: [www.multcolib.org/teens/horror.html](http://www.multcolib.org/teens/horror.html)

Provo Library: [www.provolibrary.com/horror](http://www.provolibrary.com/horror)



VISIT [NIE.NEWSOK.COM](http://NIE.NEWSOK.COM) FOR MORE BOOK RECOMMENDATIONS AND INSTRUCTIONS FOR AN EYEBALL SCAVENGER HUNT! PLUS, FIND A BRIEF GUIDE TO HOSTING A TEEN READ MONTH CONTEST IN YOUR CLASSROOM, SCHOOL OR LIBRARY!

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