



THE GREY LADY

The Grey Lady — Full Lesson Plan

A Fantastic Tales short story and lesson plan, courtesy of ManWrites.

Level: B2–C1 (Upper-Intermediate to Advanced)

Table of Contents

Introductory Questions	5
The Grey Lady	6
Reading Comprehension Questions	14
The Grey Lady — Story and Reading Comprehension Questions in Sections	18
Essential Vocabulary	31
True or False	34
What is the Correct Synonym?	36
What is the Correct Antonym?	37
Words and Meanings	38
Gap Fill Exercise	40
Discussion Questions	42
Role Play: The Local News Interview	45
Debate: Do Ghosts Exist?	47
Writing	50
Reading Comprehension Questions — Model Answers	52
True or False — Answers	56
What is the Correct Synonym? — Answers	57
What is the Correct Antonym? — Answers	58
Words and Meanings — Answers	59
Gap Fill Exercise — Answers	60
Credits	61

Introductory Questions

1. Are there any ghost stories in your hometown?
2. How did they start?
3. Are these stories based on true events?

The Grey Lady

I should have left Karl's house earlier.

Then I could have caught the last bus home.

But we got talking, listening to music, laughing about stupid things.

I pulled my jacket collar up against my neck as the cold air wrapped itself around me. And cursed at myself for the hundredth time for missing the bus.

Stupid, so stupid.

It had to be at least seven kilometres back to my house. The walk didn't bother me. It was The Hollow that unnerved me. Everyone at school had stories to tell about it.

The Hollow. That's where she died.

The Grey Lady. You can see her there at night.

She's waiting for someone. Waiting for revenge.

And we all rolled our eyes and laughed at those that told the tales.

There's no such thing as ghosts, I heard myself say.

But now I was just two minutes away from The Hollow. And things didn't look the same here when I was on the bus.

Things seemed too quiet. Too still.

On either side of me, trees whispered in the shifting breeze that slid between them. Their voices called out to me in hushed tones.

Not too late to go back, not too late to go back...

The road rose up ahead. I never noticed it on the bus. It always seemed flat.

But now, on foot, it was as if the road itself was trying to make me turn back.

After the crest in the road, just blackness.

No light, no sound. Nothing but all-encompassing dark.

I took a breath and increased the pace of my walking.

On the bus, The Hollow seemed less than a minute. But how could I be sure? I never timed it. I didn't pay much attention to what was outside.

Either staring in a daze at the road in front and the back of the driver's head. Or lost in a series of dumb messages from Karl and our friends.

I increased the speed of my walking as I got to the top of the small rise in the road. When I got to the top of it, I gazed down into The Hollow.

Nothing but total darkness.

I looked back over my shoulder and saw the dim cone of light that shed out from a street lamp way back in the distance. I turned to the front and squinted my eyes to try to make out the next street light.

Nothing. Only sheer blackness.

Another breath and I took the first step down into The Hollow.

The memory of another Grey Lady tale slithered into my mind. The voice of the kid at school as he told the story.

My aunt said that she killed all her children.

She killed them all one by one, then took her own life.

People said she had lost her mind.

I saw the face of the boy who spoke these words. An unpopular student at my school who everyone laughed at behind his back.

He spent too much time by himself, and usually I never gave him a second thought.

So why were his words of The Grey Lady so prominent in my head right now?

I marched ahead into the darkness.

The outline of the trees disappeared from view on either side of me. Like they no longer existed. Like they were no longer part of this world.

Once again, the breeze danced through the branches and their voices called to me.

You can't go back. You can't go back.

I shook my head, pulled the collar tighter around my neck and quickened the pace.

My breath came in sharp puffs now. I told myself because I was walking so fast, but that little gremlin of doubt whispered in my ear.

Because you're afraid.

My hands thrust so deep into the pockets of my jacket, they restricted my movements and made it difficult to walk.

I pulled my hands free and found that I could walk even faster. I broke into a half-trot. Stopped, walked again, and walked faster and faster still.

That boy's voice in my head again.

She cut their throats.

His face clear in my mind.

Then cut them into little pieces and buried them in the trees in The Hollow.

People didn't find their bodies for years.

They put The Grey Lady in a mental institute.

She screamed every night until she died.

I swirled around. The street light I saw before was now completely invisible. I was surrounded by the gripping darkness. Enveloped in its arms.

Panic took hold of my breathing. I swallowed and forced a lungful of air inside my chest. I turned on each foot. My eyes darted into the eternal blackness all around me and for a second, I could not remember which direction I was going.

I leaned down and saw the white lines of the road and raced along them. They could lead me out of The Hollow and into safety.

The wind hissed through the trees as I ran ahead. It was racing with me, keeping me company, or mocking me. I could not tell.

As I ran down deeper into The Hollow, my head filled with tales of The Grey Lady. Stories and fables that I paid no attention to before now all surging back into my memory. My mind showed the speaker of each story as the words unfolded in my ears.

She stays in The Hollow, waiting.

Waiting for someone.

Waiting for revenge.

I tumbled forward, but more voices filled my ears. Stories of The Grey Lady.

She was driven insane by a curse.

She was the daughter of a rich landowner, and a local witch put a curse on her.

She loved her children. Even though she took their lives.

My feet stumbled ahead and my hands clawed at the cold air in front of me. Then I found myself going uphill again.

I had done it!

I had got to the bottom of The Hollow. Now I was on my way out again.

I let out a laugh of victory. My lungs burned as I took deep breaths and lurched ahead into the dark.

Then the sheer relief of a silvery-white light ahead. The next street light!

Thank god.

I slowed and gave myself permission to walk. My heart pounded in my chest and my breathing slowed.

The light grew brighter and I could make out the trees on either side of the road again.

How stupid of me, I said out loud. I'll laugh about this tomorrow with Karl.

The light ahead grew brighter and brighter. I could make out the trees more clearly.

I bowed my head and laughed to myself again. I turned behind and looked into the blackness of The Hollow.

How small it looked now. Before it seemed like a huge chasm. Something inescapable.

I faced the front and peered into the light.

Then my breath stopped.

A figure.

All grey.

Surrounded by light.

Reading Comprehension Questions

1. Why is the narrator walking home?
2. Why did he miss the bus?
3. How far is it to his home?
4. What is the thing that worries the narrator on the walk home?
5. What is The Hollow? And why is the narrator unnerved by it?
6. What is the story of the Grey Lady?
7. Does the narrator believe these stories usually?
8. How about now he is walking home in the dark?
9. What is the difference in his perception of the Hollow when walking in the dark and being on the bus?
10. What can the narrator see?
11. What can he hear?
12. What two actions does he take to prepare for entering The Hollow?
13. How long does it take to go through The Hollow by bus?

14. Try to describe where he is. Use your imagination to talk about his surroundings.
15. Does the narrator speed up his walking or slow down?
16. As he looks down into The Hollow, what can he see?
17. What can he see behind him?
18. Can he see any street lights in front of him?
19. Who tells the stories of the Grey Lady in his school?
20. What did the Grey Lady do to her children?
21. Did she do something to herself?
22. How do most students regard the boy who tells the stories of the Grey Lady?
23. When he says the trees whisper to him, what does he mean?
24. What does the narrator notice about the trees as he walks into The Hollow?
25. Do you think the narrator is nervous? Why?
26. What makes it difficult for the narrator to walk?
27. What does he do with his hands?
28. Does he slow down or speed up?

29. What horrific or gruesome stories did the narrator hear at school about The Grey Lady?
30. How did the Grey Lady murder her children?
31. Where did the Grey Lady spend the rest of her life?
32. What does he hear?
33. What does he see?
34. Describe the narrator's emotions during this part of the walk.
35. At school, how does the narrator regard the stories of the Grey Lady?
36. How does he regard them right now?
37. What other details does he remember about the Grey Lady?
38. What was the Grey Lady's family background?
39. What unfortunate thing happened to her?
40. Did she love her children?
41. Describe the narrator's feelings when he starts to walk uphill again.
42. Then how does he feel when he sees the next street light?

43. At this part of the story, does the narrator speed up or slow down?

44. What does he say out loud?

45. How does he feel when he looks back into The Hollow?

46. What does he see at the end of the story?

The Grey Lady — Story and Reading Comprehension Questions in Sections

This is the story divided into clear sections with reading comprehension questions below each section.

This format might be easier for certain classes.

You can find the model answers for the questions at the end of the lesson plan.

Section 1

I should have left Karl's house earlier.

Then I could have caught the last bus home.

But we got talking, listening to music, laughing about stupid things.

I pulled my jacket collar up against my neck as the cold air wrapped itself around me. And cursed at myself for the hundredth time for missing the bus.

Stupid, so stupid.

It had to be at least seven kilometres back to my house. The walk didn't bother me. It was The Hollow that unnerved me. Everyone at school had stories to tell about it.

The Hollow. That's where she died.

Reading Comprehension Questions

1. Why is the narrator walking home?
2. Why did he miss the bus?
3. How far is it to his home?
4. What is the thing that worries the narrator on the walk home?

Section 2

The Grey Lady. You can see her there at night.

She's waiting for someone. Waiting for revenge.

And we all rolled our eyes and laughed at those that told the tales.

There's no such thing as ghosts, I heard myself say.

But now I was just two minutes away from The Hollow. And things didn't look the same here when I was on the bus.

Things seemed too quiet. Too still.

On either side of me, trees whispered in the shifting breeze that slid between them. Their voices called out to me in hushed tones.

Not too late to go back, not too late to go back...

Reading Comprehension Questions

5. What is The Hollow? And why is the narrator unnerved by it?
6. What is the story of the Grey Lady?
7. Does the narrator believe these stories usually?
8. How about now he is walking home in the dark?

Section 3

The road rose up ahead. I never noticed it on the bus. It always seemed flat.

But now, on foot, it was as if the road itself was trying to make me turn back.

After the crest in the road, just blackness.

No light, no sound. Nothing but all-encompassing dark.

I took a breath and increased the pace of my walking.

On the bus, The Hollow seemed less than a minute. But how could I be sure? I never timed it. I didn't pay much attention to what was outside.

Either staring in a daze at the road in front and the back of the driver's head. Or lost in a series of dumb messages from Karl and our friends.

Reading Comprehension Questions

9. What is the difference in his perception of the Hollow when walking in the dark and being on the bus?
10. What can the narrator see?
11. What can he hear?
12. What two actions does he take to prepare for entering The Hollow?
13. How long does it take to go through The Hollow by bus?
14. Try to describe where he is. Use your imagination to talk about his surroundings.

Section 4

I increased the speed of my walking as I got to the top of the small rise in the road. When I got to the top of it, I gazed down into The Hollow.

Nothing but total darkness.

I looked back over my shoulder and saw the dim cone of light that shed out from a street lamp way back in the distance. I turned to the front and squinted my eyes to try to make out the next street light.

Nothing. Only sheer blackness.

Another breath and I took the first step down into The Hollow.

Reading Comprehension Questions

15. Does the narrator speed up his walking or slow down?
16. As he looks down into The Hollow, what can he see?
17. What can he see behind him?
18. Can he see any street lights in front of him?

Section 5

The memory of another Grey Lady tale slithered into my mind. The voice of the kid at school as he told the story.

My aunt said that she killed all her children.

She killed them all one by one, then took her own life.

People said she had lost her mind.

I saw the face of the boy who spoke these words. An unpopular student at my school who everyone laughed at behind his back.

He spent too much time by himself, and usually I never gave him a second thought.

So why were his words of The Grey Lady so prominent in my head right now?

Reading Comprehension Questions

19. Who tells the stories of the Grey Lady in his school?

20. What did the Grey Lady do to her children?

21. Did she do something to herself?

22. How do most students regard the boy who tells the stories of the Grey Lady?

Section 6

I marched ahead into the darkness.

The outline of the trees disappeared from view on either side of me. Like they no longer existed. Like they were no longer part of this world.

Once again, the breeze danced through the branches and their voices called to me.

You can't go back. You can't go back.

I shook my head, pulled the collar tighter around my neck and quickened the pace.

My breath came in sharp puffs now. I told myself because I was walking so fast, but that little gremlin of doubt whispered in my ear.

Because you're afraid.

Reading Comprehension Questions

23. When he says the trees whisper to him, what does he mean?

24. What does the narrator notice about the trees as he walks into The Hollow?

25. Do you think the narrator is nervous? Why?

Section 7

My hands thrust so deep into the pockets of my jacket, they restricted my movements and made it difficult to walk.

I pulled my hands free and found that I could walk even faster. I broke into a half-trot. Stopped, walked again, and walked faster and faster still.

That boy's voice in my head again.

She cut their throats.

His face clear in my mind.

Then cut them into little pieces and buried them in the trees in The Hollow.

People didn't find their bodies for years.

They put The Grey Lady in a mental institute.

She screamed every night until she died.

Reading Comprehension Questions

26. What makes it difficult for the narrator to walk?

27. What does he do with his hands?

28. Does he slow down or speed up?

29. What horrific or gruesome stories did the narrator hear at school about The Grey Lady?

30. How did the Grey Lady murder her children?

31. Where did the Grey Lady spend the rest of her life?

Section 8

I swirled around. The street light I saw before was now completely invisible. I was surrounded by the gripping darkness. Enveloped in its arms.

Panic took hold of my breathing. I swallowed and forced a lungful of air inside my chest. I turned on each foot. My eyes darted into the eternal blackness all around me and for a second, I could not remember which direction I was going.

I leaned down and saw the white lines of the road and raced along them. They could lead me out of The Hollow and into safety.

The wind hissed through the trees as I ran ahead. It was racing with me, keeping me company, or mocking me. I could not tell.

Reading Comprehension Questions

32. What does he hear?

33. What does he see?

34. Describe the narrator's emotions during this part of the walk.

Section 9

As I ran down deeper into The Hollow, my head filled with tales of The Grey Lady. Stories and fables that I paid no attention to before now all surging back into my memory. My mind showed the speaker of each story as the words unfolded in my ears.

She stays in The Hollow, waiting.

Waiting for someone.

Waiting for revenge.

I tumbled forward, but more voices filled my ears. Stories of The Grey Lady.

She was driven insane by a curse.

Reading Comprehension Questions

35. At school, how does the narrator regard the stories of the Grey Lady?

36. How does he regard them right now?

37. What other details does he remember about the Grey Lady?

Section 10

She was the daughter of a rich landowner, and a local witch put a curse on her.

She loved her children. Even though she took their lives.

My feet stumbled ahead and my hands clawed at the cold air in front of me. Then I found myself going uphill again.

I had done it!

I had got to the bottom of The Hollow. Now I was on my way out again.

I let out a laugh of victory. My lungs burned as I took deep breaths and lurched ahead into the dark.

Then the sheer relief of a silvery-white light ahead. The next street light!

Reading Comprehension Questions

38. What was the Grey Lady's family background?

39. What unfortunate thing happened to her?

40. Did she love her children?

41. Describe the narrator's feelings when he starts to walk uphill again.

42. Then how does he feel when he sees the next street light?

Section 11

Thank god.

I slowed and gave myself permission to walk. My heart pounded in my chest and my breathing slowed.

The light grew brighter and I could make out the trees on either side of the road again.

How stupid of me, I said out loud. I'll laugh about this tomorrow with Karl.

The light ahead grew brighter and brighter. I could make out the trees more clearly.

I bowed my head and laughed to myself again. I turned behind and looked into the blackness of The Hollow.

How small it looked now. Before it seemed like a huge chasm. Something inescapable.

Reading Comprehension Questions

43. At this part of the story, does the narrator speed up or slow down?

44. What does he say out loud?

45. How does he feel when he looks back into The Hollow?

Section 12

I faced the front and peered into the light.

Then my breath stopped.

A figure.

All grey.

Surrounded by light.

Reading Comprehension Questions

46. What does he see at the end of the story?

Essential Vocabulary

collar	wrapped	cursed
unnerved	revenge	rolled our eyes
tales	whispered	shifting
breeze	hushed	blackness
all-encompassing	increased	pace
daze	gazed	darkness
dim	street lamp	distance
squinted	slithered	lost her mind
unpopular	prominent	outline
thrust	restricted	mental institute
swirled	enveloped	panic
lungful	darted	eternal
hissed	mocking	fables
surging	tumbled	insane
curse	witch	chasm

Vocabulary Practice Exercise

Follow the steps below to help you learn and remember new words and phrases more effectively:

1. Write each new word or phrase in your vocabulary notebook.
2. Look up the meaning of each word in your dictionary. Write a clear and simple definition next to the word.
3. Create your own sentence using the word or phrase correctly. Try to make the sentence meaningful and connected to your own life or experiences.

Examples

Collar – *the part of a piece of clothing that fits around the neck.*

Example sentence: *The wind was blowing, so I pulled up the collar of my jacket.*

Unnerved – *made to feel worried, nervous, or unsettled.*

Example sentence: *The strange noise from the attic unnerved everyone in the house.*

Why do this?

Doing this regularly will help you improve all areas of your English — reading, writing, speaking, and listening. By writing

definitions and making your own examples, you are actively using the language, which helps it stick in your memory.

True or False

Read the statements below and decide if they are True or False.

You can find all the correct answers at the end of the lesson plan.

1. The narrator missed the last bus because he was busy studying.
2. It is about seven kilometres from Karl's house to the narrator's home.
3. The narrator is worried about the walk itself, not The Hollow.
4. According to school stories, the Grey Lady died in The Hollow.
5. The narrator has always fully believed the ghost stories about the Grey Lady.

6. The boy who tells the scariest stories about the Grey Lady is often alone and mocked by classmates.
7. As the narrator walks into The Hollow, he begins to walk faster.
8. The narrator's hands in his pockets make it easier for him to walk quickly.
9. The Grey Lady is said to have killed her children and then taken her own life.
10. At the end of the story, the narrator reaches home safely without seeing anything unusual.

What is the Correct Synonym?

Look at the table below.

Match the word on the left with the correct synonym on the right.

A synonym is a word of similar meaning.

Words	Synonyms
unnerved	limited
blackness	everlasting
increased	frightened
panic	teasing
insane	hex
curse	gloom
eternal	noticeable
mocking	crazy
prominent	terror
restricted	quicken

What is the Correct Antonym?

Look at the table below.

Match the word on the left with the correct antonym on the right.

An antonym is a word of opposite meaning.

Words	Antonyms
blackness	loud
increased	sane
panic	unrestricted
insane	brightness
eternal	popular
prominent	calmed
restricted	decreased
unpopular	inconspicuous
unnerved	temporary
hushed	calm

Words and Meanings

Look at the words below.

Match each word with the correct meaning underneath.

You can find all the correct answers at the end of the lesson plan.

Word Bank

collar • tales • shifting • gazed • dim • street lamp • squinted
• slithered • lungful • chasm

Meanings

- a) the amount of air taken into the lungs in one breath
- b) not brightly lit; faint or weak in light
- c) the part of a piece of clothing that fits around the neck
- d) moved smoothly with a twisting, sliding motion, like a snake
- e) moving slightly or gradually from one position to another
- f) a deep, wide crack or gap in the ground
- g) stories, often traditional or imaginative, told to entertain

h) looked with eyes partly closed, often to see more clearly or due to bright light

i) looked steadily and intently at something for a long time

j) a light fixed to a post beside a road, used to light the street at night

Gap Fill Exercise

Look at the word bank below.

Use each word from the word bank to complete the sentences below.

You can find all the correct answers at the end of the lesson plan.

Word Bank

cursed • revenge • whispered • breeze • enveloped • swirled
• fables • surging • tumbled • thrust

Sentences

a) After losing the championship, the team vowed _____ in next year's final.

b) The thick fog completely _____ the small fishing village by early morning.

c) The toddler _____ down the stairs but was luckily unhurt.

d) Grandfather used to tell us old _____ about talking animals before bed.

- e) The old sailor believed the shipwreck was _____ and refused to sail past that part of the coast.
- f) He _____ the heavy door open with all his strength.
- g) The dancers _____ gracefully across the stage during the final performance.
- h) She _____ the secret to her best friend during class so the teacher wouldn't hear.
- i) The crowd's excitement kept _____ as the concert reached its final song.
- j) A cool _____ drifted through the open window on the summer evening.

Discussion Questions

1. What do you think of this story?
2. If you were the narrator in the story, would you walk home alone?
3. How important is the setting of The Hollow to the story? What effect does this have on the reader?
4. Does the narrator believe in ghosts at the beginning of the story? How does his belief change through the story? Why does this happen, do you think?
5. Why do the stories from the unpopular kid become so important to the narrator in the story?
6. What kind of person is the unpopular kid? Why does he have so many stories about The Grey Lady?
7. Find parts of the story — sentences, phrases or words — that create a feeling of isolation in the story. Why do these words, sentences or phrases have this effect?
8. Why is the story of The Grey Lady so significant? How have the stories of her evolved over time?

9. What do you think the narrator saw at the end of the story? If you saw this, what would you do?
10. What is an urban legend? Why are these stories so popular today? Is the story of The Grey Lady an urban legend?
11. Do you believe in ghosts? Why/why not?
12. Do you know of any ghost stories in your neighbourhood?
How did this story start?
13. Are there any areas of your hometown that are scary at night? Why? Describe these areas to the class.
14. What is it about the dark that makes people imagine things?
15. Do some cultures believe in ghosts more than other cultures? Why/why not?
16. Why did people believe in ghosts in the past?
17. Do you know anyone who has said they have seen a ghost? What do you think about this?
18. Do you think it is good for us to tell ghost stories to each other? Why/why not?

19. Can ghosts harm us? Is there a scientific explanation for ghosts?

20. How has social media influenced the telling of modern-day ghost stories?

21. Are modern-day ghost stories more or less believable than old ghost stories? Why/why not?

22. Why do we like to hear ghost stories? Why are people so interested in these kinds of stories?

Role Play: The Local News Interview

This is a role play activity.

There are two characters in the role play.

1. The narrator
2. A local journalist

The Situation

News of strange sightings in The Hollow has started to spread around town. A local journalist has heard that the narrator saw something unusual there and wants to interview them for a story.

The narrator must decide how much of the truth to share — will they admit what they saw, or will they downplay it out of fear of being disbelieved or mocked, the way the unpopular boy at school was?

The journalist is sceptical but curious, and will ask probing questions to get to the truth.

In pairs, create a conversation that you can present to the class.

Take some time to prepare your role play.

When you are ready, show the class.

Debate: Do Ghosts Exist?

The Motion

“This house believes that ghosts are real.”

Option A — Full Two-Team Debate

Divide the class into two teams.

Team A — For the Motion

You must argue that ghosts are real, using examples such as personal accounts, unexplained phenomena, or cultural traditions that have persisted for centuries.

Team B — Against the Motion

You must argue that ghosts are not real, and that stories like **The Grey Lady** can be explained by fear, imagination, darkness, and the power of suggestion.

Preparation (10 minutes)

Each team should prepare their arguments. Think about:

- Why do so many different cultures have their own ghost stories?
- Could fear and darkness make someone imagine they have seen something that isn't there?
- Is it possible for something to be true even without scientific proof?
- What did the narrator in **The Grey Lady** really see at the end of the story?

The Debate

1. Team A gives an opening statement (2 minutes).
2. Team B gives an opening statement (2 minutes).
3. Rebuttal round — each team responds to the other's points (2 minutes each).
4. Closing statements — each team sums up their strongest argument (1 minute each).

The Vote

After the debate, the rest of the class votes on which side made the more convincing argument. The teacher can act as moderator and timekeeper throughout.

Option B — Simplified Class Discussion

If a full debate doesn't suit the class, the teacher can instead run this as an open discussion: pose the motion to the whole class, and go around asking individual students whether they agree or disagree and why.

The teacher moderates, encourages disagreement, and draws out different opinions rather than assigning fixed sides.

Writing

This is a creative writing exercise.

You are going to write a ghost story. The title of the story is

The Grey Lady

Take a look at the things that some of the students in the story said about **The Grey Lady**. Now try to write your own story about her life and what happened to her.

Think about these questions when writing your story.

- Who was The Grey Lady?
- What was her real name and where was she from?
- What kind of family did she have?
- Did she have children? What happened to them?
- Did some terrible event happen that changed her life?
What was it?
- Or did she live a long and happy life?

- Was she a bad person? Or maybe she was good?

Remember — this is your story. You can say whatever you want in your story.

Take some time to write your story.

When you have finished, you can read it out loud in front of your class.

Or give it to your teacher for review.

Reading Comprehension Questions — Model Answers

Please bear in mind that there could be two or three ways of answering some questions.

1. Because he stayed too late at Karl's house and missed the last bus.
2. He and Karl were talking, listening to music, and laughing.
3. About seven kilometres.
4. The Hollow, which is known for ghost stories and makes him feel uneasy.
5. It's a place where the Grey Lady supposedly died. It's surrounded by ghost stories that make him feel uncomfortable.
6. She appears at night, waiting for revenge.
7. No, he used to laugh at them.
8. He starts to feel unsure and scared by the stories.

9. On the bus it seems quick and harmless; on foot it's long, dark, and frightening.

10. Only darkness and a distant street light behind him.

11. The quiet night and the wind in the trees.

12. He increases his pace and takes a deep breath.

13. Less than a minute, though he never timed it.

14. He is on a lonely, rural road flanked by trees and descending into total darkness.

15. He speeds up.

16. Total darkness.

17. A dim cone of light from a distant street lamp.

18. No, just sheer blackness.

19. An unpopular boy who often kept to himself.

20. She killed them one by one.

21. Yes, she took her own life.

22. They laugh at him behind his back.

23. He imagines the wind through the trees sounding like voices urging him to turn back.

24. They seem to vanish from sight, as if no longer part of the world.

25. Yes, his increased pace and inner dialogue reveal growing fear.

26. His hands are deep in his jacket pockets.

27. He pulls them out to move more freely.

28. He speeds up, eventually breaking into a trot.

29. That she cut her children's throats, chopped them up, and buried them.

30. She cut their throats and dismembered them.

31. In a mental institute where she screamed every night.

32. The wind hissing through the trees.

33. The white lines on the road; otherwise just blackness.

34. He feels panic, fear, and confusion.

35. He didn't take them seriously and ignored them.

36. He is haunted by them and begins to believe they might be true.

37. She was cursed, and she waits in The Hollow for revenge.

38. She was the daughter of a wealthy landowner.

39. A witch put a curse on her.

40. Yes, even though she killed them.

41. He feels victorious and relieved.

42. He feels an overwhelming sense of relief and safety.

43. He slows down.

44. He says it was stupid and that he'll laugh about it tomorrow.

45. It looks small and harmless now, and he feels relieved.

46. A grey figure surrounded by light — presumably the Grey Lady.

True or False — Answers

1. False. He missed the bus because he was talking, listening to music, and laughing with Karl.
2. True.
3. False. In fact, it is The Hollow itself, not the walk in general, that unnerves him.
4. True.
5. False. In fact, he and his friends usually rolled their eyes and laughed at the stories.
6. True.
7. True.
8. False. In fact, his hands in his pockets restrict his movement, so he pulls them free to walk faster.
9. True.
10. False. In fact, he sees a grey figure surrounded by light just as he thinks he is safe.

What is the Correct Synonym? — Answers

Words	Synonyms
unnerved	frightened
blackness	gloom
increased	quicken
panic	terror
insane	crazy
curse	hex
eternal	everlasting
mocking	teasing
prominent	noticeable
restricted	limited

What is the Correct Antonym? — Answers

Words	Antonyms
blackness	brightness
increased	decreased
panic	calm
insane	sane
eternal	temporary
prominent	inconspicuous
restricted	unrestricted
unpopular	popular
unnerved	calmed
hushed	loud

Words and Meanings — Answers

Words	Meaning
collar	c
tales	g
shifting	e
gazed	i
dim	b
street lamp	j
squinted	h
slithered	d
lungful	a
chasm	f

Gap Fill Exercise — Answers

Words	Sentence
cursed	e
revenge	a
whispered	h
breeze	j
enveloped	b
swirled	g
fables	d
surging	i
tumbled	c
thrust	f

Credits

This lesson plan is courtesy of **ManWrites**.

This content is copyright © 2026 **ManWrites**

— © 2026 *ManWrites*

For more information, visit:

www.manwrites.com

Or join my mailing list below — I'll send you more ESL teaching ideas straight to your inbox.

[ManWrites Mailing List](#)