The stories

The Picture. When Mr Williams, a picture collector for the University of Oxford Museum, receives a drawing that changes before his eyes, he is astonished. The tragic story of a child’s disappearance unfolds in the most terrifying way.

After investigation, Mr Williams and his friends discover that the owner of the house in the picture, Sir Arthur, once had a dispute with a neighbour, Mr Gawdy. The two men fought, Sir Arthur was shot, and Gawdy was sentenced to hang. A little later, Sir Arthur’s only child was kidnapped. People thought that Gawdy had paid someone to do it but Mr Williams’s picture reveals that Gawdy himself was the ghostly avenger.

Rats. A university student, Mr Thomson, is on holiday at an inn in Suffolk. Finding himself alone one afternoon and curious, he explores all the other rooms including one which is locked. Inside, there appears only to be a bed but on closer inspection he sees a trembling creature under a blanket. Terrified, he locks the room again.

Determined to discover what it is he saw that afternoon, he visits the room once more. The innkeeper finds him passed out and although angry, tells him the secret of the terrifying figure. Many years ago a previous innkeeper was hanged as a robber and his ghost remains. As long as he is locked in the room, however, he will do no harm!

Casting the Runes. Mr Karswell is a writer of books on alchemy. He does not, however, take kindly to criticism. When a Mr Harrington writes a bad review of his book *History of Witchcraft*, he dies in very odd circumstances. Now that Mr Dunning has given his expert opinion on a paper Mr Karswell wishes to give, strange things begin to happen to him. Mr Harrington’s brother tells Mr Dunning he has reason to fear for his life. Clearly, Mr Karswell has cast runes on Mr Dunning in order to harm him. There is now a race against time to reverse the spell. They are successful but Mr Karswell pays a heavy penalty: the runes are turned on him and he dies mysteriously in France.

The Experiment. Squire Bowles was interested in spiritualism so has left some unusual instructions for his burial: he is to be buried in clean earth without a coffin. Although the widow and stepson, Joseph, murder the squire for his money, they cannot find it anywhere. Later, they discover a way of asking the spirit of the squire where the money is. But when the squire haunts them, they confess their crime. As punishment, the widow is burnt to death and the stepson hanged.

‘Oh, Whistle, and I’ll come to You, My Boy’. Professor Parkins goes on holiday near the coast to work and improve his golf. While there, he finds a whistle in the ruins of an old church. When he blows on it he unknowingly calls up a spirit which now pursues him. The professor, a serious man who does not believe in the supernatural, is forced to change his opinion when the spirit attacks him in his room one night. He narrowly escapes with his life.

Before reading

Here are some ways to help your students approach the story:

1. Give students the title of the book and show them the picture on the cover. Ask them to try and guess what kind of story it is.
2. Give students a copy of the text on the back cover of the book, and of the story introduction on the first page. When they have read the texts, ask them a few questions about the story, or use the Before Reading Activities in the back of each Bookworm.
3. Use the pre-reading activity in this worksheet.
4. If there is a recording of this title, play the first few pages and stop at an interesting point.
Pre-reading activity

Newspaper headlines

**Picture tells truth about mysterious disappearance**

**Innkeeper unwelcome guest at his own inn**

**Witchcraft writer takes revenge on critics**

**Local landowner punishes wife and stepson**

**Whistling in dark brings night terror**

**To the teacher**

Aim: To predict the stories

Time: 20 minutes

Organization: Divide students into groups and give each group one of the headlines. Explain that each headline is about a story in the book they are going to read. After discussing the characteristics of a sensational newspaper story, ask students to write a short newspaper article in that style based on the headline and picture they have. When students have finished they can swap articles.

Later when students have finished reading all the stories, they could read their newspaper articles again to see how well they predicted the stories. They could then rewrite their articles to make them more accurate.
The Unquiet Grave – Short Stories

While reading activity

Crossword

Crossword A

Across
3 Losing consciousness.
11 A pub or a small hotel.

Down
2 A wooden post on which criminals were killed by hanging.
5 A grave built of stone below or above the ground.
8 A very old alphabet.
9 Open wild land.

To the teacher

Where: At the end of page 43
Aim: To revise vocabulary
Time: 10–15 minutes
Organization: Divide students into pairs and give Crossword A to one student and Crossword B to the other. Tell them they must not look at each other’s crossword. Student A has the clues necessary for student B to complete the crossword so begins by reading the first clue. Student B tries to guess. The students then take turns giving clues and trying to guess the answers. Alternatively, students could be asked to make up their own clues for their words, in which case the clues on the worksheet could be cut off.
Crossword B

Across
6 Figure made out of sticks, and put in a field to frighten birds.
10 Feeling angry because someone has been unjust to you.

Down
1 To kill someone by holding them above the ground with a rope around the neck.
4 An old kind of chemistry, often used for witchcraft or magic.
7 Metal rings joined together in a long rope.

Across
6 Figure made out of sticks, and put in a field to frighten birds.
10 Feeling angry because someone has been unjust to you.