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Opening extract from

Write Your Own Adventure Stories

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A spooky adventure

A brother and sister take a wrong turn on their way home. Suddenly they realize they're lost in a strange place. There's something unsettling about the place. Is it haunted or are they imagining things?

Sense of place

Try to make your readers feel as if they are part of the adventure. The best way to do this is to use all five of your senses to give an atmospheric description of the setting.

How would you describe an abandoned old school using the five senses?

What does it smell like? Musty and dusty?

What do the walls feel like to touch? Damp? Clammy?

Can you hear strange, distant sounds, like wailing souls? Or is it just the wind?

What did you see at the window? Eerie shadows, flickering lights?

Does the air taste cold on your tongue? And is it sour, too?

Pick a location for your spooky story and use the space below to write a list of the sensations you might feel there.

Locations

- Ruins of a castle
- Forest
- Deserted house
- Rundown hotel
- Windy beach at dusk

Smell...

Touch...

Hear...

See...

Taste...

Plan your spooky adventure here, then use the following pages to write up your story. Remember to include the senses from your list to create a creepy atmosphere.

Title ideas

Beginning

Climbing up

Climax (with a twist)

Steep slope down

End

Questions

Is your story set in one location, or will your characters move from one place to another?

If the place is haunted, are the ghosts frightening or friendly? Or a little bit of both?

Continued...

Set the scene

Use your five senses to set the scene at the start of your story, but don't forget to include lots of action, too.

Try to show not tell how the brother and sister react to their spooky surroundings. For example, rather than saying they are frightened, show them trembling with fear.

Surprising settings

If your story moves from one location to another, setting your ghost story somewhere that's not usually spooky – such as a sunny beach – might be intriguingly different.

Write your title here.



Useful words

Twilight
Crepuscular
Poltergeist
Phantom
Jinx
CURSE
Hallucination
Strange noises
Sudden death
MURDER
Shipwreck
Floating furniture
Mocking laughter
Apparition
SHADOWS
Cold chill
Unusual occurrences
Shiver
Gooseburnps

Ending questions

Do your characters get home in the end?

If they do, use the five senses to describe how they feel to be home.

Does it feel different now from before their adventure?



More useful words

TRACKING DEVICE

Surveillance

Darting eyes

Sweat on brow

Shaking fingers

Sudden

Mysterious

SUSPICIOUS

Watching

Disguise

HIDEOUT

Tip-off

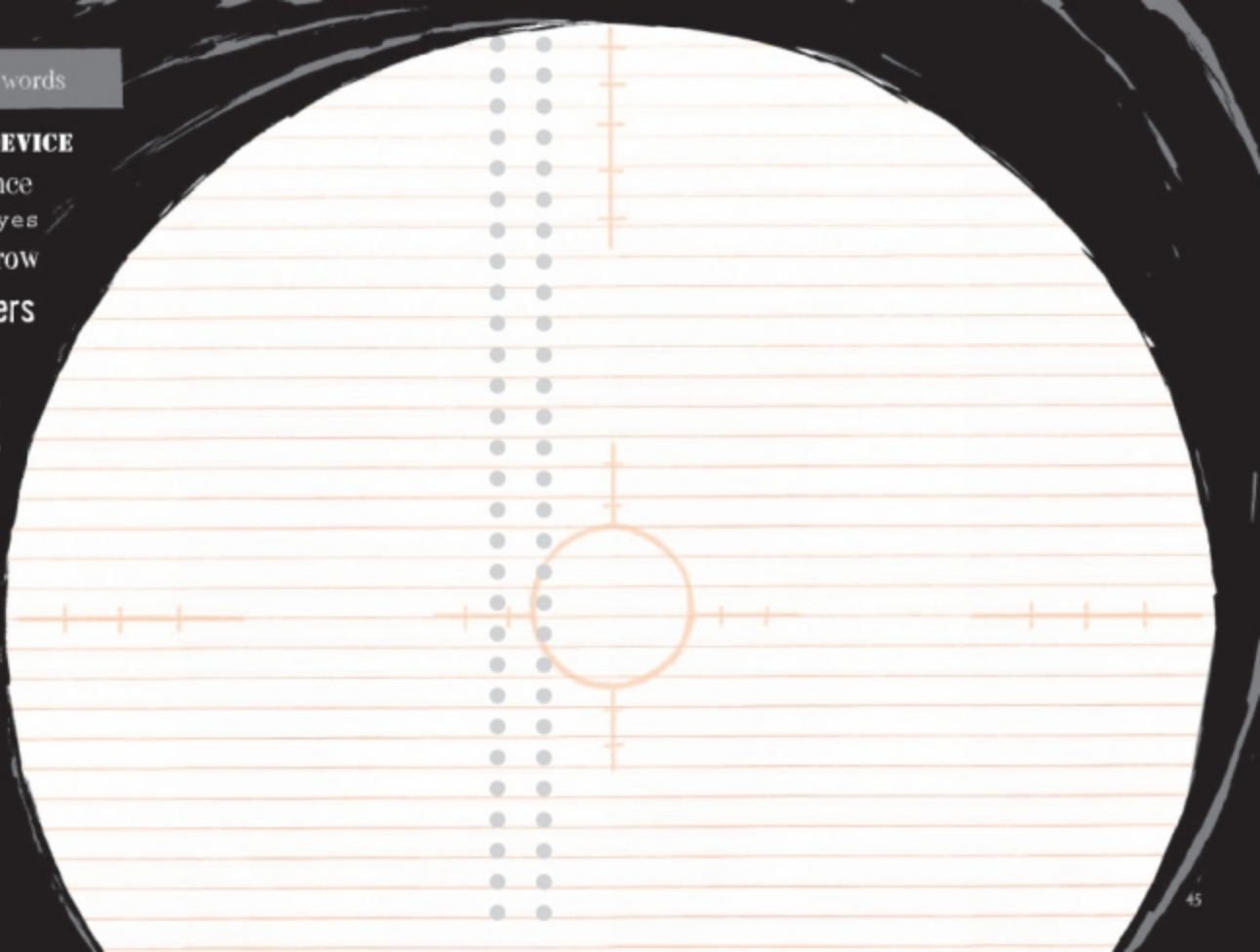
SECRET

Rendezvous

Infiltrate

ESCAPE

Tunnel



Useful words

Shifty

Unexpected

FAKE IDENTITY

Traitor

Secret transmissions

CODED MESSAGES

Cool

Anxious

Interrogation

Sabotage

Lie detector

ALIAS

Secret identity



Story idea

Enemy soldiers arrive and capture you all. How do you escape? Do you give them secret information in return for your freedom? How do they know you're telling the truth?



More useful words

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Surveillance

Darting eyes

Sweat on brow

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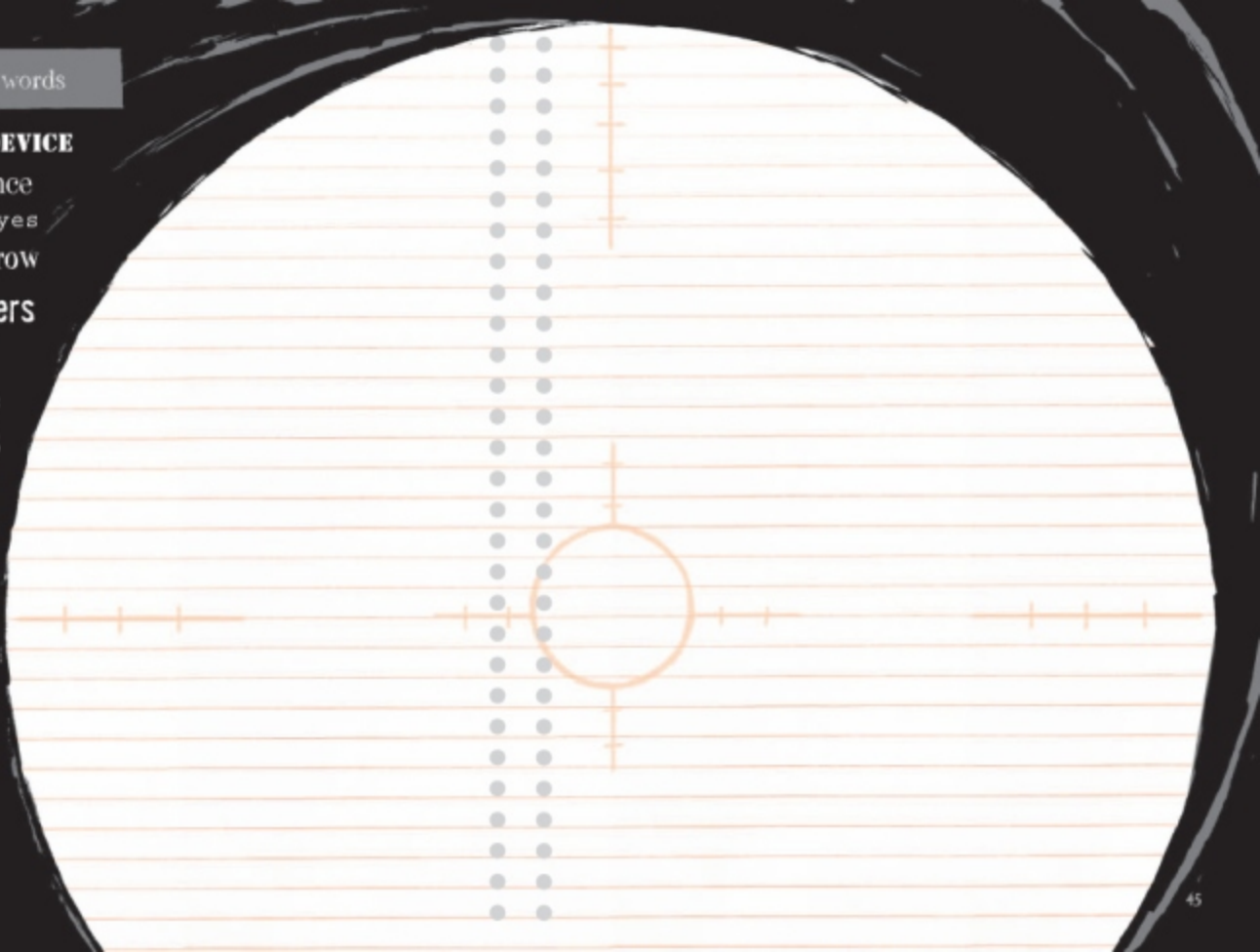
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Exciting writing

There's more to a story than great characters, lots of action and an atmospheric setting. You need to use exciting words too. But be careful – if your readers notice the writing rather than the story, then you've overdone it.

Describing things and actions

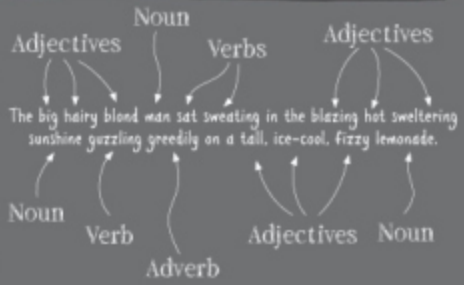
In adventure stories, choosing good verbs (action words) can help bring the action to life. Can you add any other verbs you could use in these sentences?

He sat in his armchair.	She ran to the finish line.	The rock fell towards us.
... slumped	... raced	... plummeted
... sank	... sprinted	... hurtled
...	...	...
...	...	...

Words for things (people, animals, cliffs, ice creams...) are called nouns, and the words that describe them are called adjectives.

Words that describe verbs are called adverbs.

These make your writing more vibrant, but don't put too many in. Too much description is boring and tedious and dull and dreary.



It's the spice of life

Variety is important in your writing. Using very familiar phrases can make your writing sound stale. Try to think of different ways of describing these things:

A roaring fire

A howling gale

A scary monster

A towering cliff

What is it like?

As well as using great adjectives to describe something, you could try comparing it with something else. For example, 'as cute as a kitten', 'as clear as crystal' or 'as cold as ice'. This kind of comparison is called a simile.