

Scary Tales

I must admit that I am a bit of a drama queen. Anyone who has been to one of my preschool storytimes knows that I like to ham it up! There is no better time of the year for storytellers than fall because now we get to tell scaaaaaaaarrrrryyy tales.

For parents, it's often hard to imagine letting your 4 or 5 year old listen to a scary tale on purpose, but rest assured I am not speaking of the scary stories put forth by Hollywood. I am speaking of stories with imaginative monsters and children who are powerful enough to vanquish even the biggest giant or the ugliest 10-armed 3-eyed creature from the deep.

For kids, listening to a scary story can be like riding a roller coaster. They can feel the adrenaline pumping and the warm feeling at the end when everything works out, the monster is defeated, and the brave boy or girl is safe at home. Scary stories give children the chance to experience the emotional highs and lows that come with exploring the unknown without leaving the safety of home. They learn that they can control their emotions, face their fears and come out on top.

Don't worry about a story being too scary. If your child is scared, just make sure he or she knows the book can be shut at any time. If the book you're reading has to spend the night out in the garage just to make sure the giant can't get out, don't worry, you've merely succeeded in giving your child a good imaginative experience and he or she is learning how they can control their environment.

Here are a couple of things to look for when choosing a good scary tale for kids: does good win out over bad in the end? Do the kids get to save the day instead of the adults? Remember the best scary stories are the ones that leave most of the scary stuff to the imagination. Here are a few picture books that can give a little scare:

Gorilla! Gorilla! - Jeanne Willis

A great story about a mother mouse being chased by a gorilla she thinks is going to eat her up for lunch when all he really wants to do is return her baby to her. (Preschool – grade 2)

Abiyoyo – Pete Seeger

A young boy saves his village from a people eating giant. (Kindergarten – grade 3)

Wolf's Coming – Joe Kulka

A perfect scary story for the youngest preschoolers about a wolf that creeps ever closer. (ages 3-5)

Tailypo – Joanna Galdone

This is a classic ghost story that's been around for years. It's all about an old man in a cabin in the woods and a monster who just wants his tail back. (Kindergarten – grade 4)

The library is a great place for your little ones to enjoy a safe scare this Halloween. With ghost stories, Halloween parties, and a great selection of scary and not-so-scary books, October is the perfect time of year for families to come visit us and share in a few scares and a lot of fun!

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