

Film and TV

Film / Horror movies

Teacher's notes



Age: Teenager (16+)/Adults
Level: Advanced (C1)
Time: 90 minutes (with an extra 20–60 minutes for optional project)
Activity: In this lesson, students will:

1. practise speaking about fear and mystery and incorporate useful new vocabulary relevant to these topics;
2. improve listening comprehension of real-life English from a movie trailer and a movie clip;
3. utilise new language from this lesson in order to create a mini horror movie.

Language focus: speaking, listening, vocabulary, reading
Materials: one copy of the worksheet per student, a PC or projector, an internet connection in the classroom, (the optional project could require the use of smartphones if you decide to make mini-movies)

necessary to quickly correct these parts in class. The exercises which could be done as preparatory homework are marked with a symbol.

1. Vocabulary (5 minutes)

Aims: to create interest in the topic of the lesson, to provide students with various expressions for talking about fear which they can use throughout the lesson

Procedure: Ask students to look at the image on the worksheet and suggest adjectives. Write some of the suggestions on the board. If the only suggestions are lower-level words (e.g. 'scared'), encourage students to suggest high-level alternatives. Now ask students to work in pairs to complete the words in 1b. It is possible that some of the answers will already have been mentioned in 1a. Monitor students as they complete the task and help weaker ones by suggesting letters. Elicit the answers and focus on correct pronunciation.

Key:

Synonyms for scared	Synonyms for very scared
I was ...	I was ...
A F R A I D	T E R R I F I E D
F R I G H T E N E D	P E T R I F I E D
F R E A K E D - O U T	D I S T U R B E D
U N N E R V E D	S C A R E D - S T I F F

2. Speak (10 minutes)

Aims: to personalise and develop interest in the topic of the lesson (horror movies and feeling scared), to provide spoken practice, to identify target language related to horror movies which students might already know

Procedure: Ask students to discuss the questions in pairs. Monitor their responses. If there are students who have not seen any horror movies, encourage them to talk about a scary novel or perhaps something which used to scare them as a child. At the end of the activity give some feedback, drawing attention to good language which students used. Focus particularly on language used which will be useful for the lesson (movie vocabulary, feelings).

3. Listen and speak (15 minutes)

Aims: to provide listening practice of understanding dialogue from a movie, to provide spoken practice of telling scary stories and talking about belief/disbelief

Notes:

1. **WARNING:** This lesson deals with horror movies and the paranormal which may not be a comfortable subject for all groups of students. It refers to two online videos related to horror movies which contain some mildly graphic content. The first includes a brief clip of a young girl being thrown by a poltergeist and the second includes an instance where a zombie picks some flesh from his face. These images will not be suitable for all groups so you should watch them before the lesson to judge whether they are appropriate for the particular group of students.
2. This lesson contains exercises which focus on listening, speaking, reading and vocabulary. If you wish to maximise class time for listening and speaking, you could ask students to complete the reading and vocabulary exercises as preparatory homework before the lesson. It would then only be

Film and TV

Film / Horror movies

Teacher's notes

Procedure: Play the video. Ask students in pairs to briefly compare answers to the four questions. Play it again and let students decide their final answers in pairs. Elicit the answers. Ask students to briefly discuss the final questions in pairs. Give feedback. Focus on ideas which students have mentioned which will be relevant to the following activity (related to belief, disbelief, ghosts, etc).

Key:

- The family had no idea that a horrible murder had happened there over a hundred years ago and that a lot of other bad things had happened there since then.*
- The owner told the father of the family not to turn off the lights at night.*
- The youngest girl was the most innocent member of the family so the spirits visited her more than anybody else. She had a type of regular contact with a young male ghost.*
- The events happened thirty years ago, but back then people were not open to believing the story. The family think that now people are ready to hear the story.*

4. Read and vocabulary (25 minutes)

Aims: to understand short movie synopses, to revise and expand vocabulary related to fear and strangeness

Procedure: Tell students that they are going to read short synopses about different horror movies. Their task will be to match the movie title to the synopses. For students who are not familiar with these movies, tell them that the titles themselves contain enough information to make a guess. Often movie titles are translated strangely so students might want to use their phones to search for what each movie is called in their native language. Tell the students not to worry for now about difficult vocabulary from the synopses (this is the focus of Task 4b). Give students a few minutes to match the titles. Monitor and help weaker student with difficult vocabulary. In the end, ask students to compare their answers in pairs. Then elicit the correct answers.

Key:

Movie 1: The Exorcist, Movie 2: The Shining, Movie 3: Psycho, Movie 4: The Ring, Movie 5: The Cabin in the Woods

Now ask students to look at Task 4b. Tell them that they have about 10 minutes to complete the crossword. Remind

them that all the answers come from the synopses in 4a. Monitor and help weaker students by providing some of the missing letters. Elicit the answers and focus on correct pronunciation.

Key:

Across

- spooked*
- eerie*
- urban legend*
- evil*
- unsettling*
- monstrous*

Down

- nightmarish*
- creepy*
- go mad*
- spell*
- spine-chilling*
- soul*
- psychic*

5. Listen and speak (20 minutes)

Aims: to provide further listening practice of understanding dialogue from a movie, to consolidate vocabulary from the previous task, to provide spoken practice of this vocabulary

Procedure: Play the film clip. Ask students in pairs to briefly compare answers to the five questions*. Play it again and let students decide their final answers in pairs. Elicit the answers. Ask students to briefly discuss the final questions in pairs. Give feedback, perhaps focusing on the correct pronunciation of new words from previous tasks.

(*Note: In the second half of the video, there is a short shot of a zombie picking off his flesh. The mood of the scene is humorous rather than sinister, but it may not be suitable for all students. If you prefer, you could ask students to answer questions a–c and then turn off the video at 2.08.)

Key:

- He has a feeling that his name started with the letter 'R'. Due to the clothes that he's wearing, he imagines that perhaps he didn't have a job.*
- One zombie was a cleaner, another was the wealthy son of a CEO and another was a trainer at the gym.*



Film and TV

Film / Horror movies

Teacher's notes

- c. He imagines that everybody loved communicating, talking about their feelings and spending time with other people.
- d. The skeleton zombies have no conscience and eat anything that they can find with a beating heart. The main zombie says that he also eats like this but it makes him feel a bit guilty.
- e. They make noises and look at one another for a long time.

6. Speak (15 minutes)

Aims: to provide spoken practice of describing scary or strange events/stories, to encourage students to incorporate new language from the worksheet tasks and the videos of this lesson

Procedure: Ask students to discuss the questions in pairs. Monitor their responses. At the end of the activity give some feedback, drawing attention to new language from this lesson which students used.

7. Optional project (20–60 minutes)

Aims: to consolidate new language from the lesson, to provide written practice of language related to horror movies, to personalise the topic and possibly create video content which will aid long-term recall of language from the lesson

Procedure: Divide students into groups of four. Tell students to follow the worksheet instructions for steps 1 and 2. Give them about five minutes to complete step 2 (read and understand the clichés). Monitor their progress and help weaker groups understand the clichés. Ask each group to write the synopsis for their movie (as outlined in step 3 and the first and last boxes of the Horror Movie Clichés sheet). Remind them that they need to elaborate each point so that their synopsis is coherent. This could be done in class. Alternatively, each student could individually write their synopsis for homework to be handed in for correction in the next class.

You will need to decide if the video activity in Step 4 is suitable for your group. As it involves some acting and preparation of props, it may be more suitable for groups with teenagers and young adults. The activity will also require at least one smartphone per group. If you wish to do this activity, it could be wise to advise students beforehand and suggest they download a free movie-making app onto their phone (e.g. Filmora Go). While an app is not entirely necessary, it does allow for a higher quality movie which students can feel proud of. To carry out the video task, tell students to follow the instructions on the student worksheet.



Film and TV

Film / Horror movies

Worksheet

1a. Vocabulary

Look at the picture. Think of adjectives to describe how the couple are feeling.



1b. Vocabulary

Work in pairs to complete the table below.

Synonyms for scared	Synonyms for very scared
I was ...	I was ...
AF __ A __	TE _____ D
FR _____ T _____ D	PET _____ IED
FREAK _____ - _____ T	DIS _____ B _ D
UNNER _____	SCARED - ST _____ F

2. Speak

Discuss the questions below with your classmate.

- Are you a fan of horror movies? Explain.
- Many people enjoy feeling scared. Apart from horror movies, what other ways do people find to enjoy feeling fear?
- What are some of the most famous horror movies of all time? Try to give a brief explanation of their plots.

3. Listen and speak

Watch this trailer for the movie *The Conjuring* which is based on a true story. The trailer alternates dramatized scenes with real interviews given by the family who experienced the events. Listen carefully and answer questions a to d.

www.youtube.com/watch?v=7_t1LyxM0y0



Film and TV

Film / Horror movies

Worksheet

- a. What didn't the family know when they moved into the house?
- b. What suggestion was made to the family by the former owner of the house?
- c. What do we hear about the youngest girl in the family?
- d. Why did the family agree to make this movie about their experiences?

Discuss with your classmate:

Do you think that the family's story could really have occurred as they say it did?

Would this trailer convince you to see the movie? Explain.

Does your country or region have any buildings which are said to be haunted?

4a. Read

Match each movie title to the short description in the five mini-texts.

Movie titles: *Psycho* / *The Shining* / *The Cabin in the Woods* / *The Ring* / *The Exorcist*

Movie 1: _____ .

A young girl begins to act strangely. Formerly sweet and polite, she becomes rude and starts using bad language. When she starts to exhibit superhuman strength and speak in a monstrous voice, people come to believe that her soul has been possessed by a demon. Her mother asks the local priest to try to chase the evil spirit out of her daughter.

Movie 2: _____ .

A man gets a job as a caretaker in a creepy hotel in the mountains. The hotel is closed in the winter months, so the only people there are the man, his wife and their young son. The son has psychic powers, meaning he can talk to spirits and see the hotel's dark history. The intense isolation makes the man start to go mad.

Movie 3: _____ .

A young woman is driving when a huge storm begins. She decides to stop and stay for the night in a small hotel by the motorway. The hotel is managed by an eerie man who seems to have an unsettling obsession with his elderly mother. The young woman checks into her room and prepares to go for the most famous shower in cinematic history.



Film and TV

Film / Horror movies

Worksheet

Movie 4: _____ .

There is an urban legend about a video which contains nightmarish images. People say that if you watch the video, you'll get a phone call, and after this you will die within seven days. A young journalist decides to investigate this story. She watches the video and, in a spine-chilling twist, her phone rings! Can she solve the mystery before her time runs out?

Movie 5: _____ .

Five college friends go for a weekend away in a small, remote house. Shortly after they arrive, they get spooked when the cellar door suddenly opens with a loud bang. What do they do? Phone the police? Of course not! They go down into the cellar and discover a collection of ancient objects. They also read a spell in Latin and awaken some flesh-eating zombies. Not your typical weekend break.

4b. Vocabulary

Now complete the crossword. All the answers are words from the five short texts that you have just read.

Across

- 5. (adjective) to feel scared because you have seen or heard something strange
- 6. (adjective) mysterious and perhaps a little scary
- 7. (adjective + noun; 5, 6) an expression which refers to a strange story or a rumour which many people believe to be true
- 8. (adjective/noun) very bad / the opposite of 'good'
- 9. (adjective) a person or situation which makes you feel uncomfortable or nervous
- 12. (adjective) horrible, similar to a monster

Down

- 1. (adjective) similar to a bad dream
- 2. (adjective) scary but in a strange way
- 3. (verb + adjective; 2, 3) an expression which means to lose your mind and become crazy
- 4. (noun) a poem or sentence which causes magic to happen if you say it
- 5. (compound adjective; 5, 8) absolutely terrifying
- 10. (noun) the spirit or essence of a person
- 11. (adjective/noun) a person with special mental abilities to predict the future and see other people's thoughts



Film and TV

Film / Horror movies

Worksheet

5. Listen and speak

Watch this scene from *Warm Bodies*, a movie which shows what the world would be like after a zombie apocalypse.

Listen carefully and answer the questions. www.youtube.com/watch?v=49VKrteeJAs

- What does the zombie remember or imagine about his past life?
- What past lives does he imagine for the other three zombies who he sees?
- How does he imagine people lived before the zombie apocalypse?
- What is the difference between the main zombie and the 'skeleton' zombies?
- In what two ways does he communicate with his friend?

Discuss with your classmate:

What comment does the movie make about society nowadays?

Why do you think the zombie is such a popular character in fiction?

Describe any other zombie movies which you know about.

6. Speak

Talk to your partner to answer these questions about strange happenings.

Do you know any ghost stories or urban legends? If appropriate, tell your partner.

Describe what you know about these commonly-reported mysteries:

- The Bermuda Triangle (in the west Atlantic Ocean)
- Corn circles (in many countries)
- The Loch Ness monster (in Scotland)
- Area 51 (in the USA)
- The Nazca Lines (in Peru)

Does your country have any famous mysteries or myths?

Talk about a time when you experienced a coincidence. (Typical examples include meeting people by chance, hearing something on the radio, common birthdays or death days, etc.)

Many countries celebrate holidays related to death and spirits (e.g. Halloween, the Day of the Dead, etc). Does your country have any holidays like these?

Have you (or a person you know) ever been hypnotised? Describe the experience.

Do you believe that some people can predict the future from their dreams or visions? Explain.



Film and TV

Film / Horror movies

Worksheet

7. Optional project: Create your own horror movie

Work in groups of four. You are going to create your own horror movie using various clichés from this genre.

Step 1

In each group, randomly choose a letter (a, b, c, d) for each of the numbers in the table. These letters will correspond to certain clichés.

Number	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Letter (a, b, c, d)							

Step 2

Now look at the table at the end of this worksheet and see which clichés correspond to your group.

Step 3

Write the synopsis for your movie in approximately 150 words.

Step 4

If you wish, make a one-minute movie using the video camera on your phone. Act out the scenes and record them. You might want to include some props (e.g. if your trailer requires a cat, you could draw one on the whiteboard before you start filming). There are also many free apps (e.g. Filmora Go) which allow you to add special effects and music to your video.

When you have created your video, show it to the rest of the class. If you wish, you could upload your video to social media. Make sure to tag it #onestophorrmovies so that students around the world can compare it with their own.



Film and TV

Film / Horror movies

Worksheet

Horror movie clichés

<p>Before you begin:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Think of your protagonist (male/female, age, alone or with friends, etc). • Think of your villain (zombie, psycho, ghost, etc). 	<p>1. Setting the scene</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Everybody is impossibly calm, beautiful and happy. It's based on a 'true' story. There's always a fog. There's a creepy kid: maybe a boy with the top button fastened on his shirt; maybe a girl in a flowing white dress. 	<p>2. People ignore things</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> People don't notice weird things about their friend even though his eyes have turned yellow. People hear a noise but say that it was just the wind. Nobody imagines that something bad is going to happen even though it's so obvious! There's a noise in the trees! Oh wait, it's just a cute cat.
<p>3. Things start to go wrong</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> A person decides to go for a walk alone in an eerie forest. Something or somebody appears in the bathroom mirror. There are a million reasons for the protagonist not to open the door ... but then they open the door! The protagonist answers the phone, only to hear ... nothing. 	<p>4. The action begins</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The villain grabs somebody's ankle. The protagonist trips and falls while running away from the villain. The protagonist is running very fast but still can't escape the villain who seems to be walking slowly but constantly. Some high-pitched violin music starts to play. 	<p>5. ... but there's a problem</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The car won't start. There's no phone reception. The protagonist needs to get out but the door won't open. The protagonist desperately looks for their keys but ... where are the keys?!
<p>6. There's a battle</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Just when you think the monster is dead - he comes back! They shoot the monster fifty times but he still won't die! The protagonist climbs up a tree or a building to escape but the villain follows them. After all this time, the police finally arrive! 	<p>7. The movie comes to an end</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Everybody returns to being impossibly calm, beautiful and happy. The villain has a sad backstory. There's a twist in the story. Something lets us know that there's going to be a Part 2. 	<p>Now write a short synopsis of the story of your movie.</p> <p>Your synopsis should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Briefly describe the protagonist and villain. • Include the seven clichés, elaborating on them slightly and linking them.