

# A Cordial Invite from the Masters of Fright!

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## General Overview of Activities and Readings

### A. *Whole Class:*

- Reading by teacher followed by:
- Discussion of Listening and other Skills
- Discussing "what makes good reading?"

Create an "oral reading Evaluation Sheet"

### B. *Small Groups*

#### **Reading and Writing; Presenting**

##### **Presentation**

- 1] *Reading Aloud:* practice story...chosen by group. May be by same author or same kind of scary work
  - i] Prepare assigned story for reading aloud and dramatic presentation
  - ii] Work together to make a practice presentation
    - Eg: a story book
    - a play
    - a radio presentation
    - Other dramatic presentation

- C. **WRITING** in group- an original scary story.  
**PRESENTING** if time permits

## Whole Class ASSIGNMENT #2

Reading by teacher and oral discussion by whole class.

Teacher reads aloud: *To Build a Fire* by Jack London

Story may be found at:

[http://www.pagebypagebooks.com/Jack\\_London/To\\_Build\\_a\\_Fire/To\\_Build\\_a\\_Fire\\_p1.html](http://www.pagebypagebooks.com/Jack_London/To_Build_a_Fire/To_Build_a_Fire_p1.html)

An excellent resource on the web- for classic stories is: Page by Page Books

### 1. **Plot:**

The plot - its order of events- and the “out-loud” expression of its surprise events is very important in the writing and reading of scary tales.

With teacher at the board, list concisely the main events of the above story, or create a time line on the board - to illustrate the bare bones” of the story ; we recognize such a list as the plot.

Why do you think the plot is so crucial to the success of a scary story?

Explain.

### 2. **Setting:**

Describe the setting in terms of a) place, and b) time [ era, season, or time of day.]

Explain how is the setting in “To Build a Fire“ extremely suitable - indeed necessary for a truly scary story?

What words or sentences help to paint mind-pictures of the setting and are useful in creating the particular emotions or feelings that a scary story is meant to elicit?

### 3. **Characters:**

How many characters does the main part of this story have?

An important question here is: Is the dog a character?

How is the dog’s presence necessary for the plot to play out as effectively as it does?

How effective would the tale be if the man were simply walking over the frozen tundra alone and froze to death because of poor planning and preparation?

How does Jack London portray this [these] character[s]?

Does the portrayal stem just from the author’s description?

From what the character[s] does?

From what the man says? Other?

Do these methods work well to give you a feeling of what sort of man you are reading about?

What about the sort of dog are we reading about?

## Small Group Assignment

Your class will be divided - by your teacher, into a FIVE small groups.

Among your group's goals will be:

- i] to practice and present your assigned stories to the entire class, as dramatically and alarmingly as possible, without straying from the author's words, ideas, or purposes .  
You may add sound effects, costumes, backdrops, music, and anything else that you can sensibly bring to the classroom , that will help to scare your friends so badly that they develop goosebumps!

### All groups

Although each group will work with a different story, or stories, all groups will have the same assignments, including the above.

Your group's scary stories will be assigned by your teacher, and you are asked to present it, as dramatically [and horribly] as possible to your class.

#### 1. **Group Work:**

Students will work in their specified groups with members, stories, and/or other assignments, chosen for them by the teacher.

#### 2. **Vocabulary:**

Because these particular scary stories have been around for a long time, some of the language from a century ago, or more, may be challenging for students.

It is suggested that you research new words, and their meanings, and try to consider their usefulness in a variety of contexts

#### 3. **Presentation:**

Your group will be responsible for the presentation [reading or reciting or acting out] of your shocking piece of literature to the teacher and your entire class. The more appalled your listeners are, the higher your mark!

### The Writer's Intended Audience:

These stories were written long before television became a "staple" household item, that is now found in almost all private homes. It was expected by the writers, that whole families and diverse social groups would be reading their poems and stories aloud - and with feeling.