

SCARING A GHOST

A. Answer in brief.

1. Why did Mrs. Otis offer medicine to the Canterville Ghost?

Ans: By offering medicine to the ghost, Mrs Otis' intention was not to express her concern about his health, but to show that the ghost did not scare her at all. The ghost's anger proved that she had achieved what she had wanted.

2. Why was the ghost upset when he returned to his room?

Ans: The rudeness of the twins and the unpleasant comment from Mrs Otis worried him a lot, but he was more upset that he had been unable to wear his suit of armour.

B. Answer in detail.

1. How did the ghost find his shriek of evil laughter useful on some occasions? Why was that not effective on the Otis family?

Ans: People are usually afraid of ghosts. It would be scarier if it made shrieking sounds and laughed horribly. Many people knew that Canterville Chase was haunted by the ghost of its original owner. The ghost had probably been successful in scaring away some visitors with his wild shriek and horrible laughter. When Mr. Otis and the twins tried to drive the ghost of Canterville away with pea-shooters and a gun, the ghost got angry and tried scaring them with his evil laughter, but to no avail. The ghost was greatly disappointed when there was no expected response from the Otis family. The family probably was prepared for this as they had already been warned and the ghost's behaviour didn't affect them much.

2. Describe the Canterville Ghost's encounter with the second ghost.

Ans: The Canterville Ghost glided out of his room like an evil shadow in the midnight, in an attempt to scare the Otis family once more. The moment he turned into the corner of the passage that led to Mr. Washington's room, he fell back with a wail of terror and hid his white face in his long bony hands, for there stood in front of him another gigantic ghost—horrible, motionless and monstrous—carrying a sword of gleaming steel in its right hand. The moment the Canterville Ghost saw this figure, he trembled with fear. He fled back to his room tripping and falling and once in his own apartment, he flung himself down on a small bed and hid his face under the clothes.

C. Read the lines and answer the questions.

1. *The ghost glared at her in anger, and began at once to make preparations for turning himself into a large black dog.*
 - a. Who is 'her' in the above line?
 - b. Why did the ghost want to turn himself into a large black dog?
 - c. What did he transform himself into later?

Ans: a. 'Her' refers to Mrs. Otis.

- b. The ghost was annoyed that Mrs. Otis was not frightened of him and instead behaved unpleasantly with him. So he wanted to frighten her in a different way.
- c. He became faintly phosphorescent and vanished as the twins came up to him.

2. *For some days after this, he was extremely ill and hardly stirred out of his room at all.*
 - a. Who is being referred to in the above line?
 - b. Why was he ill?
 - c. What was his plan after recovery?

Ans: a. The Canterville Ghost is being referred to in the above line.

- b. He had had a bad experience with the Otis family. He was also injured in the knee while trying to wear the suit of armour.
- c. After recovery he wanted to make the third attempt to frighten Mr. Otis and his family.

D. Answer in brief. (Think and answer)

1. How does the author create an atmosphere of fear and horror? Do you think it had the necessary effect?

Ans: High winds, violent storm of rain, raven croaking, moon hiding her face behind the cloud, owl hooting and darkness—all these, along with the ghost set the stage for a fearful night when doom would befall the Otis family. No, it did not create the necessary effect as the ghost was more funny than scary. [Free response]

2. The ghost's repeated attempts to frighten the Otis family went in vain. What do you understand about the family from this?

Ans: The family entered the house without paying heed to the warnings about their buying a haunted house. The ghost too failed in his two attempts to scare the family. Nothing seemed to affect them. This shows that the family was bold, courageous and was prepared to face challenges.

E. Answer in detail. (Think and answer)

1. Bring out the humour that the Canterville Ghost's antics create in the lesson.

Ans: The very word ghost would arouse a feeling of fear and horror in a person. But in the lesson, the turn of events made the ghost look like a clown. Every act of the ghost was more humorous than fearful. The ghost's intention was to frighten the family but on more than one occasion we see the ghost getting scared. The ghost aborted his attempt to turn himself to a large black dog to scare Mrs. Otis, when he heard some footsteps. The funniest moment was to visualise the ghost all dressed up to frighten the Otis family, running away in terror after seeing another ghost on the way. There are many such instances in the extract that make the reader laugh more than shudder in fear!