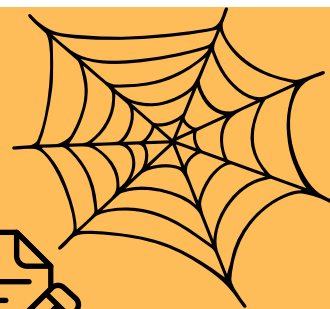




Spooky Stories

B1 Preliminary: Writing Part 2



Exam Tip!

In B1 Preliminary for Schools Writing Part 2, you can choose to write an article or a short story. You should write **100 words**. It's a good idea to plan and write short stories regularly, both at home and in class

1. Vocabulary Pre-teach — Match the Word to Its Meaning

	Word	Meaning
	1. footprint	a) completely dark, with no light
	2. knock	b) the sound of someone walking
	3. shadow	c) to hit a door with your hand to get attention
	4. disappear	d) a dark shape made when something blocks the light
	5. pitch-black	e) to suddenly not be there anymore
	6. empty	f) with nothing or no one inside

Extension task: Write a sentence using each new word.

1. footsteps *I heard the vampire's footsteps coming slowly towards me.*

2. knock _____

3. shadow _____

4. disappear _____

5. pitch-black _____

6. empty _____

2. Predict the Story

Read the opening sentence below.

Emma was walking home from school when she saw an old house at the end of her street. She knew it was empty because nobody had lived there for years



What do you think happens next?

3. Read the Story

Now read the story. Were any of your ideas correct?

The Empty House

Emma was walking home from school when she saw an old house at the end of her street. She knew it was empty because nobody had lived there for years. She walked up to the door and knocked. Nobody answered, but the door slowly opened by itself. She was scared, but she stepped inside. Everything was pitch-black. She heard footsteps on the stairs, but she couldn't see anyone. A tall shadow moved across the wall, and her heart started beating fast. "Who's there?" she shouted, but nobody answered. She turned on her phone light, but the shadow had disappeared. Emma ran outside as fast as she could. She never walked past that empty house again.

(108 words)



Quick Response: What do YOU think the shadow was??

Comprehension Check:

Understanding the story:

- 1. Why did Emma think the house was empty? _____
- 2. What did Emma do before the door opened? _____
- 3. What did Emma hear on the stairs? _____
- 4. What happened when Emma turned on her phone light? _____
- 5. What did Emma do at the end of the story? _____

Now identify some of the elements in the story.

Example Plan — "The Empty House"

Setting (Place, Time) 	Plot 	Characters 	Ending 

4. Get Ready to Write



Top Tip! Use the P.O.W.E.R. process to write your story:

- **P = Prepare** – look at your chosen opening sentence and brainstorm ideas.
- **O = Organise** – choose your best ideas and plan the beginning, middle, and end.
- **W = Write** it!
- **E = Edit** your work – check carefully using the checklist below.
- **R = Review and Reflect** – give your story to someone else to read. Ask for feedback.



P = Prepare

Brainstorm some ideas for these two sentences:

Starter 1:

"Sam was home alone one evening when the lights suddenly went out."



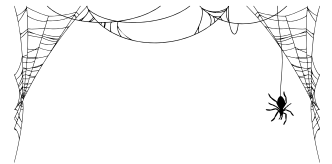
Starter 2:

"Lucy was walking through the park when she heard someone calling her name, but there was nobody there."



O = Organise

Pick ONE of the short story endings and organise your story ideas:



Setting	Plot	Characters	Ending

W = Write

Based on your notes and ideas, write your short story of about 100 words:



E = Edit



Read your story and revise all the items on the Checklist

- ☐ Circle all the pronouns (he, she, I...). Are they the same person all the way through?
- ☐ Is your whole story in the past tense? Check every verb.
- ☐ Check the spelling of: footstep, knock, shadow, disappear, pitch-black, empty
- ☐ Read your story again. Does it make sense from beginning to end?

R = Review

Peer Review — Give Your Story to a Classmate!

Read your partner's story, then answer these questions.



Reviewer's name: _____

1. Can you clearly identify the beginning, middle, and end? ☐ Yes ☐ No
2. Are the pronouns (he/she/I) used correctly and consistently? ☐ Yes ☐ No
3. Is the whole story written in the past tense? ☐ Yes ☐ No
4. Underline one sentence you really liked.
5. What did you like best about the story? _____
6. Is there anything that was confusing or unclear? If yes, what? _____
7. One suggestion to make the story even better: _____

TEACHER'S GUIDE & ANSWER KEY

Spooky Stories — B1 Preliminary: Writing Part 2

Suggested Lesson Pacing (approx. 50–55 minutes)

Section	Time	Teacher tip
Vocabulary Pre-teach	8 min	Do the matching task together first, then let students write their extension sentences individually or in pairs
Predict the Story	4 min	Elicit 2–3 predictions aloud before moving on — this builds anticipation for the reading
Read the Story + Comprehension	10 min	Read aloud once yourself, then have students read silently and answer Qs 1–5 alone
Example Plan (identify elements)	5 min	Do this as a whole-class discussion, filling in the table on the board as students identify each element from the text
Get Ready to Write: Prepare & Organise	8 min	Let students choose their starter individually; give 3–4 minutes brainstorming before they fill in their own planning table
Step 3: Write	20–25 min	Time this section like the real exam — 100 words in ~20 minutes including checking
Step 4: Edit	5 min	Have students edit their own work first using the checklist before swapping with a partner
Step 5: Review (Peer Review)	8 min	Pair students up; remind them feedback should be kind and specific

1. Vocabulary Pre-teach: Answer Key

1-b, 2-c, 3-d, 4-e, 5-a, 6-f

Extension task — sample sentences (accept any grammatically correct sentence using the word correctly):

2. knock — *I heard a knock at the door late at night.*

3. shadow — *A dark shadow moved across the room.*

4. disappear — *The cat seemed to disappear into thin air.*
5. pitch-black — *The basement was pitch-black, and I couldn't see a thing.*
6. empty — *The old house next door has been empty for ten years.*

2. Predict the Story

No fixed answers — accept any reasonable, logical prediction. Use this as a quick speaking warm-up; don't over-correct grammar here, since the goal is fluency and engagement before reading.

3. Read the Story — Comprehension Check: Answer Key

1. Because nobody had lived there for years.
2. She walked up to the door and knocked.
3. She heard footsteps.
4. The shadow had disappeared.
5. She ran outside and never walked past the house again.

Example Plan — "The Empty House": Suggested Completed Table

Setting (Place, Time)	Plot	Characters	Ending
An old, empty house at the end of Emma's street; evening, on the way home from school	Emma knocks on the door out of curiosity; the door opens by itself; she goes inside and hears footsteps and sees a shadow; she calls out but nobody answers	Emma — a schoolgirl walking home	The shadow disappears when she uses her phone light; Emma runs outside and never returns to the house

Teacher tip: if students struggle to separate "plot" from "ending," clarify that plot = what happens in the beginning and middle, ending = how the story is resolved.

4. Get Ready to Write

Prepare — Starter Discussion

No fixed answers. If time allows, have a quick class vote on which starter students find more intriguing before they begin — it often helps quieter students commit to an idea faster.

Organise — Planning Table

No fixed answers; this is personalised to each student's chosen starter. Circulate to check:

- The setting is specific (not just "a house" — where, when?)
- The plot has a clear beginning, middle, and end shape

- There's at least one named or clearly described character
- The ending resolves the story (even if mysteriously, like the model)

Step 3 — Writing: Suggested Rubric

Step 3 — Writing: Cambridge-Style Assessment Rubric

(Adapted from the official B1 Preliminary Writing Part 2 assessment scale for classroom use)

Criteria	Strong (5)	Good (3)	Needs Improvement (1)
Content	Story is fully relevant to the chosen opening sentence; the reader understands everything that happens	Story is mostly relevant; one or two parts could be clearer	Story doesn't clearly follow the opening sentence, or key events are missing
Communicative Achievement	Story reads like a real short story — holds the reader's interest, uses storytelling language (e.g. "suddenly," "without warning")	Story is understandable and reasonably engaging, but feels a little flat or simple	Hard to follow as a story; feels more like a list of events
Organisation	Clear beginning, middle, and end; ideas connect smoothly with linking words (e.g. "then," "after that," "suddenly")	Beginning, middle, and end are present but the connections between them are basic	No clear structure; events are jumbled or hard to separate into beginning/middle/end
Language	Good range of vocabulary (including new words from Section 1); mostly correct grammar; tense and pronouns are consistent	Simple vocabulary and grammar, generally correct; occasional tense or pronoun slips that don't block understanding	Frequent errors in tense/pronouns that make the story hard to understand; very limited vocabulary

Step 4 — Edit: Notes for Teacher

Before peer review, quickly scan for the two most common B1 story-writing errors:

- Tense-switching (e.g., "She opened the door and screams") — refer students back to the checklist

- Pronoun inconsistency (starting with "she" and switching to "I" partway through)

Step 5 — Peer Review: Teacher Notes

Model giving one piece of kind, specific feedback yourself before students start (e.g., "I liked how your story used a spooky shadow, just like the model story!"). Remind students that Question 6 (confusing parts) should be phrased as a helpful question, not a criticism — e.g., "I wasn't sure who was talking here — was it you or the shadow?"