Exploring Genre and Ghost Stories

Activity: Exploring Genre with Ghost Stories
Category: Writing Activity
Series: Scary and Spooky (12 Notorious Ghosts)

Supplies

- *12 Notorious Ghosts*
- The book's 12StoryLibrary.com page: http://www.12storylibrary.com/non-fiction/scary-and-spooky/12-notorious-ghosts/
    - The "History of Ghost Stories" web resource
- Whiteboard or chalkboard

Prep
Read through *12 Notorious Ghosts*, or assign it to the students to read on their own. Make three columns on the whiteboard: ghost's identity, location of haunting, and signs of haunting.

Directions
Read through the "History of Ghost Stories" article with the students. Based on the information in this article (and the stories in *12 Notorious Ghosts*), brainstorm a list of common elements found in ghost stories. Write the students' answers in the columns on the whiteboard.

- **Ghost's identity** might include things like "important historical figure" or "someone who died young," or "someone who died mysteriously or tragically."
- **Location of haunting** might include "place the person lived," "site of a battle or execution," or "prison or insane asylum."
- **Signs of haunting** might include "unexplained or creepy noises," "mysterious lights or shadows," "change in temperature," or "moving or missing objects."

Have the students use the ideas in these three columns to create their own ghost stories. They can browse the "Your Ghost Stories" section of the *12 Notorious Ghosts* page if they need ideas. Choose two or three volunteers to share their stories with the class.

Evaluation
Give the students up to 16 points for their stories. Give them up to 10 points for using correct spelling and grammar and two points for incorporating traits from each of the three columns the class created in their brainstorm. RL 5.9, W 5.3

Purpose
To help students compare and contrast similar texts, recognizing common elements of that genre, and to have them produce a text of their own in that genre that incorporates those elements.