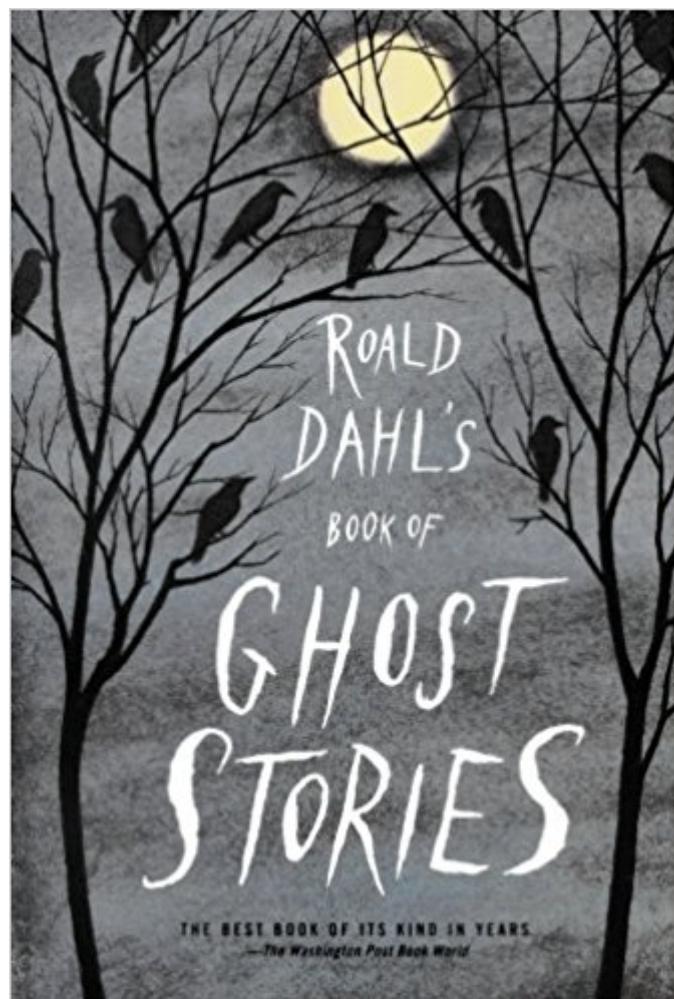


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Roald Dahl's Book Of Ghost Stories



Synopsis

Who better to investigate the literary spirit world than that supreme connoisseur of the unexpected, Roald Dahl? Of the many permutations of the macabre or bizarre, Dahl was always especially fascinated by the classic ghost story. As he relates in the erudite introduction to this volume, he read some 749 supernatural tales at the British Museum Library before selecting the 14 that comprise this anthology. "Spookiness is, after all, the real purpose of the ghost story," Dahl writes. "It should give you the creeps and disturb your thoughts." For this superbly disquieting collection, Dahl offers favorite tales by such masterful storytellers as E. F. Benson, J. Sheridan Le Fanu, Rosemary Timperley, and Edith Wharton.

Book Information

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Average Customer Review: 4.3 out of 5 starsÂ See all reviewsÂ (60 customer reviews)

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Age Range: 12 - 18 years

Grade Level: 7 and up

Customer Reviews

And I've read most ghost story anthologies in print. However, I don't agree that the recommended reading level should be young adult and I can't help but wonder if this classification was made hastily because Dahl is best known as a writer of children's books. Most of these stories may be too dense, too subtle for readers used to graphic horror. Readers who are used to so-called "told for the truth" ghost tales will see how much more chilling and "true" a literary ghost story, well-told can be. "Suddenly something dark and shapeless with its arm seeming to hold a black vesture over its head, flitted, all sharp angles like a bat down the narrow ill-lighted street, the sound of its passage audible to none." --from Robert Aickman's "Ringing the Changes," my favorite story in the collection.

For readers who like this kind of literary heft in their ghost stories, I also recommend THE GHOST STORIES OF EDITH WHARTON and VICTORIAN GHOST STORIES BY NOTED WOMEN WRITERS.

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A great collection of very interesting ghost stories to be read and then re-read again and again! It seems to me a better recommended reading age would be something like 13 yrs and above. Originally, I thought that this was a book of stories all written by Roald Dahl himself... that was the impression I got from the title. Anyway, I recommend this to you!

A ghost story should first and foremost be about atmosphere, and this collection of subtle, beautifully written ghost stories is a must-have. The stories range from the classic Victorian style to more bizarre stories such as the brilliant "Ringing the Changes." In addition, Dahl has selected works that are not usually included in the horror cannon. There is no Poe, no "Monkey's Paw." Instead, Dahl chose to emphasize more subtle and lesser-known works. And his introduction about the importance of women writers is also not to be missed. This is a brilliant anthology.

"Spookiness is, after all, the real purpose of the ghost story." This line is from the late Roald Dahl's delightful introduction to a collection of ghost stories he selected in the late 1950's for a proposed t.v. series that was never picked up by a network. Not a single one of these stories was written by Roald Dahl, although he tells us in the introduction that he tried valiantly. His conclusion is that not just everyone is capable of writing for this genre and he apparently is one of those who is not. The stories are beautifully written, every one, and present a nicely balanced variety of chills, from the eerie, oh-so-British, "Harry" by Rosemary Timperley to the primitive and gripping "Elias and the Draug" by Norwegian, Jonas Lie. Be prepared, however, for these stories to be a bit subtle for a generation raised on the likes of Stephen King. They are the faint scritch-scratching of a ghostly

hand on the chamber door -- as opposed to a bloodied corpse body-slammimg through the door and clutching the reader by the throat.I bought this book to read to my children, based on how much we adore Roald Dahl's children's books. This was not necessarily the best choice, not because the stories are too graphic or violent, but because the writing style in many of them is slightly wordy and archaic; rather slow going for an antsy eight and nine year old. Several did, however, pass our family "spooky test," which is whether or not one needs to take a flashlight to bed with one.

I don't usually seek out "scary" fiction, but I was looking for a gift for my son (a teen) and bought this one. He hasn't tried it yet, but I have been eagerly reading the stories. My favorite was also "Playmate", but all of the stories are good.It should be noted that all of these stories were written quite a while ago. This means that the language is more complex and even maybe seems a little stilted to modern ears, but on the other hand, this is very high-caliber writing, and the language is a joy. (Many readers will have their vocabulary stretched just a little) I found the writing style to be an inspiration for my own writing. This is a very good collection!

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