

ENGLISH · Y4

# Suspenseful Setting Description — Year 4

WAGOLL: The Abandoned House

## The Model Text

THE ABANDONED HOUSE At the end of the long, twisting lane, the abandoned house waited. Nobody had set foot inside it for thirty years. Its windows were like dark, watchful eyes. The front door, hanging on rusty hinges, creaked softly in the wind. Tall weeds had crept up the walls, hiding the cracks in the bricks like green fingers. As I stepped closer, an icy breeze brushed past my face. Somewhere inside, a floorboard groaned. My heart began to beat faster. Through the broken windows, I could see the shadowy outlines of furniture, thick with dust and forgotten time. A grandfather clock — silent for many years — stood in the corner like a guardian. Cobwebs hung from the ceilings in long, ghostly threads. Suddenly, I heard a soft scratching sound. It came from somewhere deep inside the house. I held my breath. Was there really nothing inside, or had something been waiting all this time?

## Identified features

What makes this a strong Y4 suspenseful setting description?

- FRONTED ADVERBIALS: 'At the end of the long, twisting lane,' 'As I stepped closer,'
- PERSONIFICATION: 'the abandoned house waited,' 'windows like watchful eyes,' 'a floorboard groaned'
- SIMILES: 'like dark, watchful eyes,' 'like green fingers,' 'like a guardian'
- EXPANDED NOUN PHRASES: 'dark, watchful eyes,' 'tall, twisting lane,' 'thick, ghostly threads'
- VARIED SENTENCE STARTERS: 'At the end,' 'Its windows,' 'As I stepped,' 'Suddenly'



- SENSORY DETAILS: visual (shadows), auditory (creaks, groans, scratching), tactile (icy breeze)
- SHORT SENTENCES for tension: 'I held my breath.'
- PUNCTUATION: dashes for asides — 'A grandfather clock — silent for many years — stood...'
- SUSPENSE TECHNIQUES: building noise, unseen presence, ambiguous ending
- ENDING with a question: leaves the reader wanting more
- PAST TENSE consistent throughout

## Writing prompt

Write your own suspenseful setting description. Choose: a haunted forest at midnight, an empty school after dark, a castle dungeon, or an abandoned theme park. Include: at least three personifications (giving non-human things human qualities), two similes, three different sensory details, varied sentence openers, and an ending that leaves the reader wondering. Aim for around 150-200 words.

