

## How to tell a story

### Orientation

**Context**  
In this lesson, students will focus on using the past tense to narrate a story.  
There are nine pictures, printed out of order, which illustrate the story *Nightmare Hotel*.  
The story tells the tale of a man who arrives at the *Nightmare Hotel* late one cold and windy night. He can't find a bell, receives no reply when he knocks at the door and can't see anything through the window. When he goes back to the door it's raining, he finds it open and so goes inside. Once inside, the hotel is in complete darkness and the front door closes behind him. He moves towards the stairs but then turns around to see a woman on the floor. She begins to tell him her story about when she also walked up to the *Nightmare Hotel*.

### Language

<b>Focus grammar</b>	past simple affirmative (regular verbs) stopped, walked, etc. ability in the past: could, couldn't
<b>Preview grammar</b>	
<b>Focus words</b>	verbs: arrive, ask, call, decide, push, start, turn, wait, walk, etc.
<b>Recognition vocabulary</b>	words: bell, body, dead, floor, light, nightmare, noticed, etc. past time expressions: yesterday, last night
<b>Recycled language</b>	the alphabet, spelling grammar: past tense of be, was, were, wasn't, weren't question words: what, where, why
<b>Pronunciation</b>	-ed endings: I <u>stap</u> at the door. I <u>stopped</u> at the door. 9D.3-4

### Language note

The examples in the grammar box simply show the contrast between the use of the present simple for repeated actions and the past simple for finished actions (at a definite point in time in the past). In *Nightmare Hotel*, the past tense is used for finished actions which took place at an unspecified time in the past.

### Find product

In **Put it all together**, students work in pairs to invent a story. They write notes together before telling the story to another partner. Students can base their story on *Nightmare Hotel* and the listening in exercise 14, audio script 9D.5 on so page 6. They try and tell the story from memory.

### Warmer

Begin by setting the context of horror films and nightmares. Ask: Do you like horror films? e.g. Hitchcock or more up-to-date films. Can you sleep after a horror film? Do you get bad dreams? Tell students bad dreams are called nightmares. Tell them about a current horror film or ask them to talk about horror films they know. Help with vocabulary but don't correct for accuracy. If there are current horror films, ask who's seen them and what the story is. Write *How to tell a story* on the board.

### A Read a poem

In this section, students scan a verse for specific information.  
1 Read through the instructions and tell students that they can talk about a hotel they know about. In pairs, students do the activity. Ask for volunteers to tell the class about their hotel. The class decides which hotel sounds the worst.  
2 9D.1 Put students in pairs or small groups and direct them to the pictures. Ask students where the story takes place (in an old hotel) and what time of day it is (at night). Check any vocabulary questions and tell them to think about the sounds they would hear in a horror film called *Nightmare Hotel*. Direct them to picture numbers 1 and play the audio, pausing after each sound. Do not give the answers at this point.

### Teaching tip

Students don't have to be able to describe the sounds, but they might find it fun to make them before listening.  
3 9D.2 Direct students to *Nightmare Hotel* and tell them to read and listen to check answers. Ask them if they would go and see a horror film with this story.  
Picture sequence from left to right: 7 3 9 1 6 8 4 5 2

4 Go through the instructions and the example to check understanding. Students read through items 2-8 and answer any vocabulary questions. As students continue individually, monitor and help them find the information. Students compare in pairs. Check answers.  
2 It was cold and windy. 3 It was open. 4 The door closed. 5 Who's there? 6 On the stairs. 7 On the floor. 8 No, she wasn't.

5 Go through the questions as a class, and put students into pairs or groups to talk about their answers. Ask for volunteers to tell the class their answers and the class decides on the best or most interesting answer to each question. Help students express their ideas but do not overcorrect for accuracy.

### B Grammar past simple regular -ed

6 Write the sentences from the grammar box on the board and label them A and B. Underline every day and ask How often? Underline yesterday and check when the action took place. Underline walk and walked and ask which verb is used to talk about the past. Underline -ed. Point to column B and ask Am I walking to work now to elicit that the action finished in the past. Direct students to *Nightmare Hotel* and in pairs they underline the past tense verbs. Ask When? Yesterday? In 2002? Elicit or explain that we use the past tense to talk about actions in the recent or distant past. Elicit the answer to the regular verb spelling rule. (Verbs in the past simple usually end with the letters -ed.)

Go through the notes on irregular verbs and spelling rules and ask students to find examples in *Nightmare Hotel*.

### Language note

With some verbs, three letters have to be added because the final consonant is doubled. Students can treat these as exceptions for now because the rule is difficult to explain.

7 Put students into pairs to make the past tense form of the regular verbs. Remind them to look at the spelling rule and *Nightmare Hotel* for help. Go through one or two examples on the board.

closed	knocked	noticed	turned
ended	looked	started	walked
	moved	stopped	

### Extra plus

Students cover the spelling rule and write the past tense forms, then check their answers against the rule.

8 Students either tell the story directly or give them time to put the verbs in exercise 7 in the order they appear in *Nightmare Hotel*. Monitor and make a note of any pronunciation difficulties but do not correct at this stage.

### C Pronunciation -ed endings

9 9D.3 Go through the instructions and ask *Nightmare Hotel*, Which column? (B) Check students understand the activity. Play the audio, pausing after each item for students to say A or B. Make a note of any mistakes and play the audio again or repeat the sentences if necessary.

### Teaching tip

In the past tense forms on the audio for exercise 9, the vowel in -ed is not pronounced. In these cases, the past tense ending may be pronounced either /v/ or /d/. The important distinction is between cases where the -ed is pronounced as an extra syllable and cases where it isn't. This is the focus of exercise 13.

10 In pairs, students test each other. Remind them that they can ask their partner to repeat, if necessary. Monitor and ask individual students to repeat if their pronunciation is unclear.

### Teaching tip

Some students might find it difficult to pronounce the consonant cluster at the end of some past tense verbs, e.g. walked /k/. If students find this difficult, put a word with a vowel after the verb, e.g. walked into so that the /t/ at the end of walked is at the start of into, so they say walk into.

11 9D.4 Go through the instructions and check understanding. Go through the sentences in the pronunciation box and model the two sentences to show the difference in the number of syllables. Play the audio while students read the sentences. Pause after each one and ask One syllable or two? Give the answer before students write the sentences in the appropriate column. Read the rule and elicit the answer from the class.

1-syllable verb: Nick knocked. Luke looked.  
2-syllable verb: Stacy started. Wendy ended.  
Rule: If the verb ends with the letters t or d, ...

12 Play the audio a second time for students to repeat. Monitor and give extra practice as necessary.

13 Students underline the verbs in *Nightmare Hotel* which have an extra syllable before they do the activity. They read the verse as a class first, tapping the rhythm on the desk. Students then read the whole of *Nightmare Hotel* one by one or alternate verses. Monitor and help with pronunciation.

### D Listen for key words

In this section, students listen for gist and specific information.

14 9D.5 Tell students they will listen to another story. Ask them to look at the titles and to guess what the story is about. Students compare in pairs or small groups. Elicit ideas around the class and write some on the board. Play the audio and ask students if they still agree. Elicit why two titles aren't appropriate.

The *Wrong House* (*My Aunt's House* isn't a good title because, although the speaker was going there, the woman made a mistake. The *Old House* isn't a good title because the story doesn't tell us if the house the woman went to is old or new.)

15 Go through the instructions and tell students to read the verbs before listening. Play the audio. Students compare answers in pairs. Play the audio again if necessary. Do not give answers at this point.

### Extra plus

Students tick the words from memory and listen and check.

### Extra activity

Play the audio again. Pause at the following points and ask students to guess the next word: ... stopped the car, knocked on the door, walked inside, complete stranger's house.

16 After students have read audio script 9D.5 and checked their answers, ask why the verb lives is in the present tense (because she still lives in a new house). Point out how the speaker repeats words and pauses when she is telling the story.  
noticed stopped walked waited

### ABCD Put it all together

17 Go through the instructions and elicit some ideas for the end of the story and write them on the board. In pairs, students complete the story. Direct them to the audio scripts on so page 6 to help with ideas. Students rehearse telling the story to their partner, looking up from their notes as much as possible.

18 Put students into different pairs, and tell them to think of a title for their partner's story as they listen.

### Student performance

Students should be able to tell a short, detailed narrative. You can use this checklist to monitor and give feedback or to assess students' performance.

<b>Content</b>	Do students include interesting detail? exercise 4
<b>Vocabulary</b>	Do students use four or more different past tense verbs? exercise 7
<b>Pronunciation</b>	Do students usually pronounce past tense verbs correctly? exercise 13

### I can understand and tell a story.

Students tick on *my own* if they need to look at their notes once or twice. They tick with *some help* if they need to look at their notes more than twice for help.

### Early finishers

Students use dictionaries to make notes about another horror story they have heard. They tell their stories in small groups and vote for the most exciting story.

### Additional material

[www.asp.com/elt/longfile/result](http://www.asp.com/elt/longfile/result) for extra practice material  
[www.asp.com/elt/teach/result](http://www.asp.com/elt/teach/result) for extra teacher resources

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