



Lesson Plan: Engaging Children with Spooky Stories

Aimee Funk Instructor Mother/Child Reading Program for Incarcerated Women with Children

<u>Objective:</u> To teach reading strategies that encourage interaction and engagement with reading using questions, games, and activities based on the “I Can Read! My Favorite Spooky Stories” box set.	<u>Duration:</u> 1 hour	<u>Materials:</u> - One or two stories from the “My Favorite Spooky Stories” box set - Colored pencils - Handouts with example questions and activity ideas - Paper for creating simple story-related activities
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Lesson Outline

1. Introduction (5 minutes)

Goal: Set the tone and discuss the importance of making reading fun for children.

- Brief Discussion: Ask participants to share how they feel about reading spooky stories to their children. Discuss how spooky stories can be fun rather than scary, and how interactive reading can turn it into an enjoyable experience.

- Importance of Interactive Reading: Explain how asking questions, playing games, and creating activities around books can help children understand stories better, improve their vocabulary, and make reading time enjoyable.

2. Interactive Read-Aloud: Spooky Storytime (15 minutes)

Goal: Demonstrate how to make spooky stories engaging for children using a short story from the box set.

- Model a Read-Aloud: Read the first few pages of one of the stories aloud to the class.
- Ask Engaging Questions: Stop at key moments to model how to ask interactive questions such as:
 - "Why do you think the witch is afraid?"
 - "What do you think will happen next?"
 - "How would you feel if you were the witch?"
- Illustrations: Point to the illustrations and ask participants to describe them, showing how they can involve their children in noticing the fun or spooky details.

- Voice Acting: Show how changing voices for characters, adding spooky sounds, or laughing together can make the story more exciting and less scary.

3. Breakout Activity: Creating Spooky Questions (15 minutes)

Goal: Encourage participants to develop their own questions to engage their children during spooky storytime.

- Group Work: Split participants into pairs or small groups. Provide each group with a different short excerpt from the book set.
- Create Questions: Ask them to come up with at least three questions they could ask their children while reading that excerpt. Focus on open-ended, imaginative questions (e.g., "What would you do if you were the witch?" or "Why do you think the ghost is hiding?").
- Share: Have each group share one or two questions they created with the rest of the class.

4. Spooky Story Activities (10 minutes)

Goal: Introduce simple, fun activities that make reading the spooky stories more interactive for children.

- Create a New Ending: (10 minutes)
 - Ask participants to imagine what would happen if the story ended differently. After reading, they can ask their children, "What if the witch wasn't afraid? What would she do next?" This activity encourages creative thinking and keeps children engaged beyond the book's conclusion.

5. Reflection and Closing (5 minutes)

Goal: Recap strategies and allow participants to reflect on what they've learned.

- Discussion: Ask participants what they found most interesting or would like to try with their children.
- Wrap-Up: Provide a brief handout summarizing the reading strategies and activities they learned, emphasizing how they can make reading fun and meaningful. Encourage participants to experiment with different activities and questions when reading spooky stories with their children.

Handout Content:

- Sample Spooky Questions: Provide a list of example questions they can use during storytime (e.g., "What do you think will happen to the ghost next?" "Why do you think the witch is scared?").
- Spooky Story Activities: Tips for easy-to-create activities, like bingo, sound effects, and alternate endings, to engage children during and after reading.