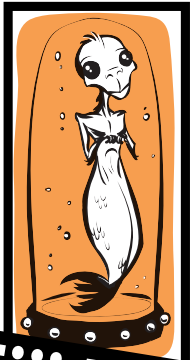


CREEPY CREATURES

3RD
Grade



Fiji Mermaid

Dear Sheriff Bottomsworth,
I know that this will
be hard to believe, but
I've seen a monster!
Attached is a picture. He
looks exactly like this!



BIGFOOT

THE FLORIDA

WHAT'S A HOAX?

A cartoon illustration of a dinosaur's head, colored orange and yellow, holding a black sign with white text that reads "DINOSAUR".

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THE BEAST OF BRAY ROAD



Sightings of large, hairy beasts that roam southern Wisconsin have been around since the 1930s. In 1936, a security guard at a hospital thought he heard something strange out back behind the building. When he went to investigate it, he found an animal digging in the dirt. “Must be a stray dog,” he thought, and turned his flashlight on it. At first, he wasn’t scared—all he saw was fur. But when he looked harder, he realized that this dog was no ordinary dog—it was a GIANT dog, almost the size of a man! The creature stopped digging and ran into the forest. He kept his secret until decades later, when other people began to see a shaggy-haired creature in the forests surrounding Bray Road.

From the 1960s through the 1980s, and even today, witnesses call the police to report strange occurrences in the area, thought to be the work of an animal called the Beast of Bray Road. The first story to come out was from a woman driving along Bray Road in 1991. She was leaving her job late at night when her headlights crossed a weird creature on the side of the road, and she reported it to local animal control. A newspaper writer happened to be investigating the creature based on something she heard from a local bus driver who claimed to have seen it. The writer found that dozens of complaints about werewolf sightings in the town had been happening for decades, and once the story was published, others began to come forward. Though they didn’t know each other at all, everyone claimed to have seen the same thing: a huge, hairy, wolf-like animal covered in brown fur, with a terrifying sneer.

Now that you’ve read about the Beast of Bray Road, write and illustrate a comic about one of the characters’ meetings with the beast.

CHESSIE, CHAMP, AND BESSIE

Ever heard of the Loch Ness Monster? Some say we've got our own creatures of the deep, right here in the United States.

In 1948, a local fisherman noticed something strange in the waters of the Chesapeake Bay. It was far off—about 75 yards from the boat—but he was captivated by the sight. All in all, it looked to be about 12 feet long. It looked like a cross between a horse and a big, huge snake. Sightings continued, and the creature came to be known as “Chessie.”

Like the Loch Ness monster, local Native American legends tell of a large monster lurking in Lake Champlain in what's now Vermont. The first person to report a Champ sighting was the French explorer Samuel de Champlain, whom the lake was named after. However, locals aren't too afraid of Champ—they've even named their local baseball team after him!

In 1817, a group of sailors saw the same thing—a huge, black snake, but this one almost 40 feet long. That same year, French settlers in Ohio came upon a 20 foot long creature writhing around on the shore of Lake Erie. Terrified, they ran away. When they came back later, the creature was gone. To this day, locals tell tales of a monster called Bessie that lives at the bottom of Lake Erie.

Monster Map

Cut out the lake monsters and glue them into the lakes they live in!



(CONTINUED)

BESSIE, CHESSIE, AND CHAMP

MONSTER MAP



BIGFOOT



Perhaps the most famous creepy creature is Bigfoot. For thousands of years, people in the Pacific Northwest (Washington, Oregon, and Northern California) have told tales of a huge, hairy animal that roams the woods and forests. Those that believe in Bigfoot think he might be related to gigantopithecus, an ancient animal that lived millions of years ago.

The first major encounter happened in the 1920s, when a camper claimed to have been captured by a hairy monster in British Columbia. Sightings of Bigfoot exploded in the 1950s, with folks claiming to have seen it, heard it, and even seen its footprints. The most famous evidence is a video that two hunters made in 1967, which shows a tall, hairy, ape-like creature walking through the woods in Northern California. However, most scientists agree that many of the sightings are hoaxes, or are just other animals, which can seem much scarier at night!

Though sightings have died down, people are still fascinated by Bigfoot. Books and TV shows are still being made about him, and there's even a museum dedicated to him!

What real animal is Bigfoot thought to be related to?

Scientists think Bigfoot sightings can be explained by two things. What are they?

If you met Bigfoot, what three questions would you ask him (or her)?

1.

2.

3.

SCARY STORY

FILL-IN-THE-BLANK

My friends and I were all a little afraid of the house on the corner. It's painted gray, or maybe it's just the dirt that has built up on it. Vines creep over the outside, and there's an old, rusted wagon in the front yard, barely visible among the tall grass. No one's lived there for years. At least...we don't think so. Some of the older kids say a monster lives in the attic, and that's why the family moved out.

One day we were playing hockey in the street. Sara hit the puck _____, and off it went, _____ across the late October sky. My stomach turned when I saw where it was heading: into the _____ yard of the house on the corner.

We didn't see where it landed, but we all saw where it was going. Sara was as _____ as a _____. "Well," I gulped, "Let's go get it."

"I'll bet it's in the yard," said Taylor _____.

We hopped the fence into the yard. The dry, _____ brittle grass _____ under our sneakers. I stayed near the fence, afraid to get too close to the house. "We are never going to find it," _____ Taylor, the slightest despair in his voice. "Oh, don't be such a baby," said Mariana, the daredevil.

We searched and searched, but nothing turned up. All we found was garbage that had blown in over the years. "It's going to get _____ soon," I said. "Don't you think we should go home?"

"We could," said Mariana. "Or...we could go inside."



SCARY STORY

FILL-IN-THE-BLANK

(CONTINUED)

We were shocked to find that the door wasn't locked. Half the windows were broken, and the ones that were not were guarded by thick cobwebs. We slowly shuffled inside, the bare floorboards _____ing underneath our feet.

(noise or sound)

Though it was still light outside, it was _____inside the house. After our eyes adjusted, we could make out a staircase, and a grand dining room and kitchen off to our left. A dusty sitting room, filled with dark upholstered _____, was to our right.

(adjective)

(plural noun)

"Maybe it came in through one of the open windows," said Mariana, and we all followed her. We squinted in the dark, and I felt silly looking for a black puck in a completely dark room. "Ow," said Taylor as he _____his knee on the edge of a table. Just then, we all heard a low, deep creak coming from the ceiling over us.

(past tense verb)

"Uhhh..." I said.

Then we heard it again. And again. And again, but that time followed by a muffled growl.

"The Spruce Street Monster! It's real!" hissed Sara. "Shhh!" I said, and we all held our breath as heavy footsteps lumbered down the stairs. Taylor and Mariana scrambled across the room and huddled with Sara and I in the corner, out of sight.

We could hear the footsteps getting closer and closer, until we could feel it in the room with us. It was growling, snarling, and...barking?

"Huh?" said Mariana.

Taylor took his phone out of his pocket and turned it on. He aimed the bright screen toward the sound. There stood a big dog, smiling like a puppy, with the puck in his mouth.



"You're no monster at all!" we said, and he _____into our arms. Mariana took the dog home, and her parents let her adopt him. She named him Monster.

(past tense verb)

HEY...WHAT'S A HOAX?

Not all creepy creatures are real! Many of the most famous monsters in American history have been proven to be **hoaxes** (*hokes-es*), or big practical jokes.



People have been inventing hoaxes for hundreds of years, usually to make money. Some of the most famous pranksters were the Fox Sisters, who convinced neighbors that they could speak to ghosts. They began charging people money to come see them communicate with spirits, and became famous across the country for their “talents.” Later in life, they admitted to making it all up. P.T. Barnum was a master hoaxster, creating the Fiji Mermaid: a stuffed monkey sewn onto the tail of a fish, which he claimed was a newly-discovered creature. In 1869, a huge mummified “giant” was dug up on a farm—people were sure it was real, until it was revealed to be a fake, staged to make the farm’s owner money.

Of course, some people do it for fun—In 1917, two cousins took photos of themselves playing with fairies in their backyard. When one of their mothers showed the photos to a researcher, they became famous. Many people believed the photographs of “The Cottingley Fairies” to be real, and the girls played along. It wasn’t until they



were very old that the girls admitted that they had made the fairies out of cardboard and pins.

What is a hoax?

What was the Fiji Mermaid really made out of?

How were the Cottingley Fairies made?

THE JERSEY DEVIL

For more than 200 years, New Jersey residents have told tales of The Jersey Devil, a weird monster that lives in the rural pine forests in the southern part of the state.



There are lots of different legends about The Jersey Devil. One of the most famous ones says it was a woman named Deborah Leeds' 13th baby. Though it was born a healthy baby boy, as it grew it began to take a strange shape, growing horns like a goat, wings like a bat, and hooves like a horse. One day, it flew off into the woods.

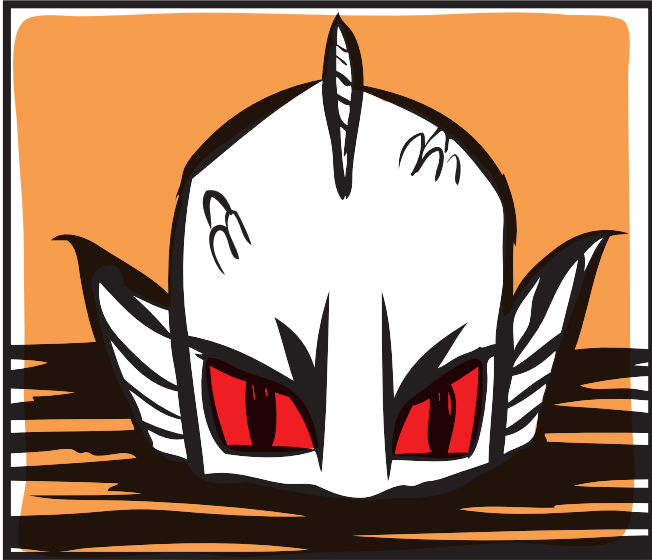
In the 1700s and 1800s, people often claimed to see it and hear it. Scary wailing sounds were heard coming from deep within the pines late at night, and when livestock went missing, townsfolk would blame it on The Jersey Devil. The most famous sighting happened in 1909, when people all over town began seeing strange tracks in the snow. They were scared! Workers refused to go to their jobs, for fear of coming face to face with the Devil on the way to work. Gangs of brave men and women got together and tried to find the thing that made the tracks, but their dogs refused to follow them. Then, eyewitnesses began to come forward—people claimed a weird, winged animal attacked their pets, a trolley car full of folks, and a group of friends leaving a club.

While there haven't been as many sightings since, sightings continue to this day, and whenever weird things happen in South Jersey, people will say it was The Jersey Devil.

The Jersey Devil has a very specific appearance: Wings, horns, red glowing eyes, feathers, and hooves. Draw a picture of it below.

A large, empty rectangular box with a black border, intended for a student to draw a picture of the Jersey Devil based on the provided description.

THE LIZARD MAN OF SCAPE ORE SWAMP



In the swamps of Bishopville, South Carolina, there's said to live a lizard man. Though many towns across the United States claim to have weird animals that live in their swamps, one incident in 1988 brought made Bishopville famous.

One summer evening, a teenager was on his way home from his night job at a fast food restaurant when his tire blew out. It was the early hours of the morning, and he was very tired. Annoyed, he stopped the car. As he was about to get out, he heard a loud thump from the fields that flanked

the dark road he was on. He looked over to see a strange figure with red, glowing eyes running across the field. It was around seven feet tall, with long black talons and green scales. Suddenly, the animal jumped onto his car. Terrified, he turned his car back on and sped away, swerving to throw the creature off. When he got home, he told his parents, who came out to look at the damage. The driver's-side mirror was hanging off his door, and the roof was scratched.

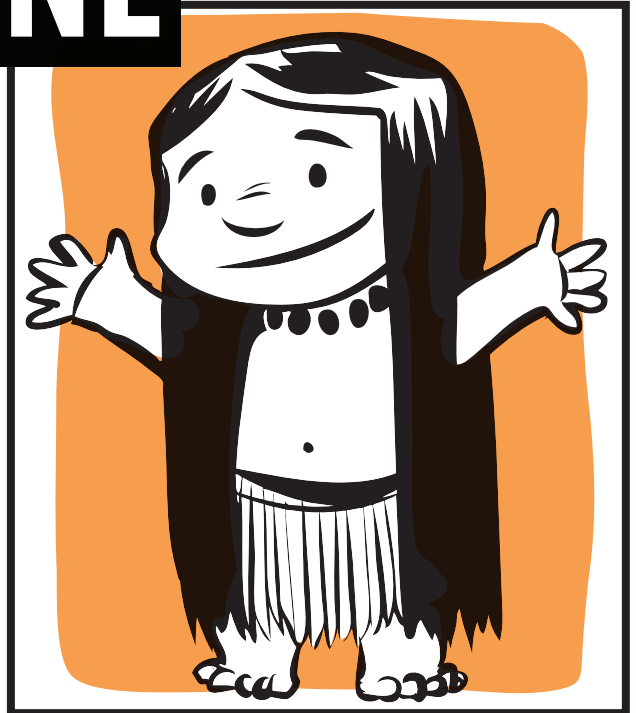
In the months that followed, hundreds of people claimed to have come in contact with the very same lizard man. But by the next year, reports of sightings had all but disappeared. Was it all a joke, or does the lizard man really exist?

What do you think—does this story sound real to you? Write a paragraph explaining why you think the Lizard Man is real or fake. Make sure to clearly state your reasons.

THE MENEHUNE

In Hawaiian mythology, the menehune aren't creepy at all! They're small, fairy-like beings that live in the green forests of the Hawaiian islands. At night, they wander out of the woods and sneak around the village and towns—however, they're not mean. They just play tricks, or, if they like you, will bring you good luck.

Before the first Polynesians arrived, the menehune lived in freedom. They played in the sun, they swam in the warm waters, and they feasted on their favorite foods: bananas and fish. But once settlers came, they hid in the rich nature on the Hawaiian islands. Hawaiian myths say that the menehune are responsible for Hawaii's landscape: the sparkling ponds, smooth roads, and towering temples were all built by the menehune, who live in the caves on the island. Every project would be completed in one night.



Menehune are said to be about two feet tall, with long, straight hair that goes down to their knees. The only thing that will scare them away are owls: If they get too crafty with their pranks, the owl god will send a bird to chase them away.

What are the menehune?

Where do they live?

What are a menehune's favorite foods?

Are the menehune good or bad?

What is the one thing that scares them?

CUT AND PASTE STORY

A lot of these scary stories sound very similar! Cut out these sentences and arrange them to make a story.

Next, a thin, slimy arm reached out from behind the leaves. Then, a scaly, green leg.

I thought it was an animal that needed help, so I stopped to see what it was. I sat with the headlights on, waiting for it to reappear.

I was driving along a dark road late at night. I don't visit this side of town often, and I was having a hard time figuring out where I was.

It was a dark and stormy night.

As I crept along the road, I got an eerie feeling. Something didn't feel right.

As it crossed in front of my headlights, it saw me in the driver's seat. I froze.

Soon, I saw glowing red eyes peering out at me from the forest.

As it came out from behind the trees, I saw that it was a huge beast!

It must have been about six feet tall, with sharp fangs, black claws, and a huge yellow fin down its back.

Suddenly, it let out a piercing shriek. I screamed.

Then, I saw something move in the bushes as my headlights passed. My heart jumped into my throat!

I sat there, stunned, for a few minutes. Once I caught my breath, I put the car in drive and raced into town, and didn't stop until I got to the police station.

It walked closer on its webbed feet, leaving wet tracks on the road.

It peered into the windshield. I was so scared I almost cried!

She didn't believe me, but as I left I saw her put my statement in a big box, filled with papers, labeled "GIANT REPTILE SIGHTINGS."

"Oh, please. That sounds ridiculous. You must have just been tired," she said as she took my statement.

Then, just as soon as it appeared, it lumbered off into the forest on the other side of the road.

I ran inside, covered in sweat, and told my story to an officer.

THE MOTHMAN



In West Virginia, you might hear tales of a huge, winged creature that likes to roam the roads late at night. He's known as the Mothman, and he's West Virginia's most famous monster.

The legend of the Mothman started in 1966, when a group of friends were out for a drive late at night. As they drove past an old factory, they noticed two glowing red lights in the shadows. Curious, they got out of the car to see what it was. When they got closer, they found they weren't lights...they were the glowing red eyes of a towering monster. He looked like a big bug, with giant wings, brown skin, and two human legs. Terrified, they ran back to the car and sped away. But just down the road, the monster reappeared, and chased their car until they got to town. The four ran to the nearest police station and gave their story.

That very same night, a man in a nearby town was watching TV in his home when the picture suddenly changed to a strange pattern. Outside, his dog began barking. When he went outside to see what was the matter, he noticed that the dog was staring at the barn at the back of his property. As he shined his flashlight into the barn, he saw what he thought were red reflectors on the back of a bike, but were actually the red eyes of a huge creature with wings on his back.

For weeks, months, and years after, people continued to claim sightings of the Mothman. Even today, people still sometimes say they witness eerie events in the forests around the factory at night.

PUT THESE EVENTS IN ORDER:

- They drive past a factory. _____
- They see two strange red lights. _____
- A group of friends are driving down the road. 1 _____
- They tell the police what happened. _____
- They realize the lights are the eyes of a monster. _____
- They drive into town as fast as they can. _____



THE LOVELAND FROG

Way back in 1972, two policemen saw a spooky sight in the middle of the night. In March, Officer Ray Shockey was driving toward Loveland, Ohio, when he saw what he thought was a dog on the side of the road. The animal ran in front of the car, and he saw it was no dog, but something he'd never seen before. It was 3 or 4 feet tall, with leathery skin and a lizard-like face.

Days later, on St. Patrick's Day of that year, Officer Mark Matthews was driving around the same neighborhood. When he saw what looked like a hurt animal lying in the road, he got out of his car to help it. His door squeaked loudly as he opened it, and the animal stirred. As it rose into a crouched position, Officer Matthews saw that this wasn't your ordinary cat or dog—it was a weird creature; half-frog and half-human. Matthews stayed quiet as the being walked, almost like a person, over to the guard rail and raised one leg over, staring at Matthews the whole time.



Though the two officers saw the creature on two different nights, their descriptions matched perfectly: a monster about the size of a child, with wrinkled, rough skin and a slimy face, with big, black eyes, and thin arms and legs.

What did both of the policemen think the Loveland Frog was at first?

Based on the text, what do you think the word stirred means?

- A. Moved.
- B. Danced.
- C. Slept.

What did the two men say the Loveland Frog looked like?

THE WAMPUS CAT



If you go wandering in the Appalachian region late at night, beware the Wampus Cat. Like a cougar, but a whole lot bigger, this catlike creature is said to stalk folks in rural Tennessee.

Appalachia is the part of the U.S. that surrounds the Appalachian Mountains, which run from Canada all the way to the Southern United States. In Tennessee, many folks believe in the Wampus Cat, a catlike creature that lives in the hills and forests of the mountains. Most say it has the body of a woman but the face and fur of a mountain lion, and a strong smell that warns folks of its approach.

A local Native American legend says that a woman once disguised herself as a mountain lion to spy on the elders of the tribe, and when her spying was discovered, she was cursed to stay that way forever. Many people think the Wampus Cat is actually her lonely spirit, wandering Appalachia forever. She's most often seen in the dark of night or just before sunrise.

People who say they have seen a Wampus Cat claim they will hiss, howl, and scream. However, the Wampus Cat has never hurt anyone—just given them a good scare!

Write a longer version of the Wampus Cat myth. What happened in between the beginning and the end? Make sure to include dialogue between the characters in the story.

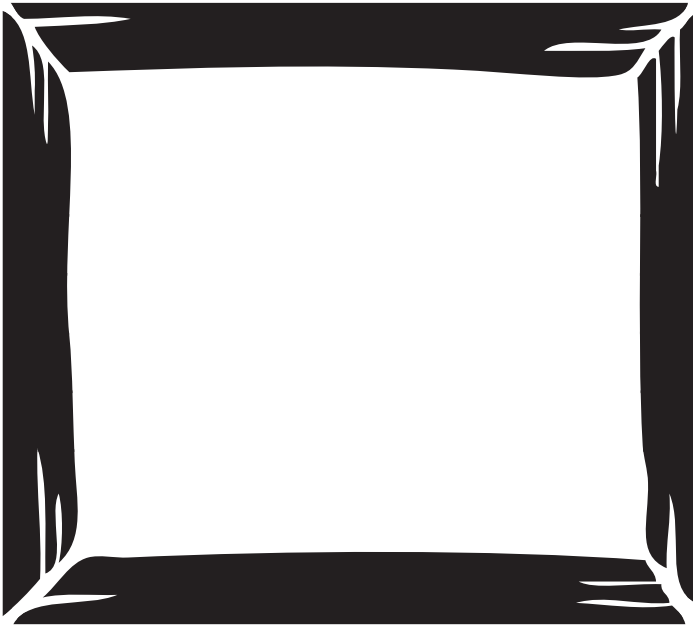
"Long ago, there was a woman who lived in the Appalachian mountains.

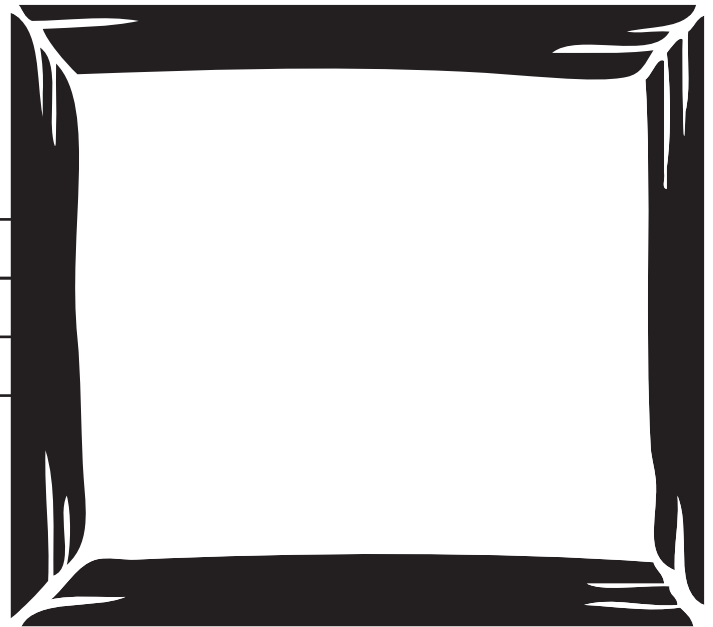
She wanted to know what the tribal elders were planning, so one night, she snuck off into the woods to listen in on their meeting.

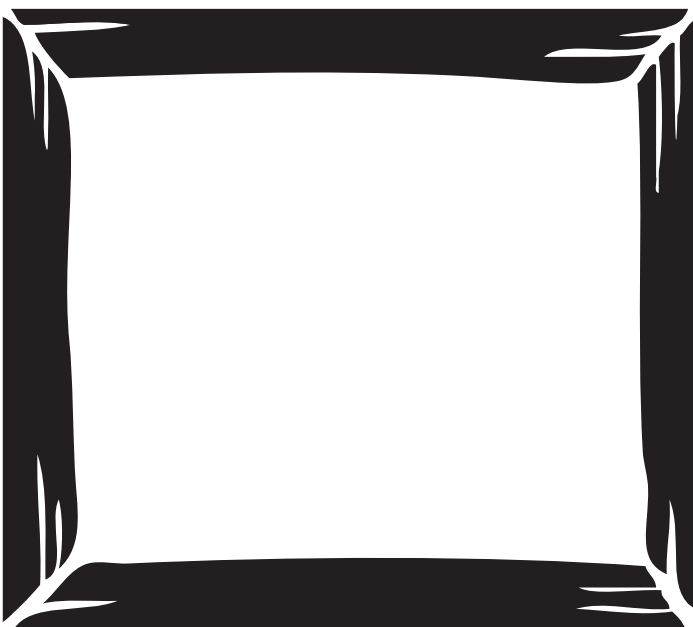
To this day, her spirit wanders the woods, scaring anyone who trespasses in her home after dark!"

GHOUL GALLERY

Pick your three favorite monsters from this book and draw a picture of each one, based on the descriptions in the book. Write down three characteristics next to each picture.







Great job!

is an Education.com reading superstar

