

Spooky Adventures!

It's that creepy time of year again and we've given one of our classic playful computing activities, Accidental Adventures, a **spooky** twist... With this ingenious and fun activity, you can tell any story and at the same time, learn the programming concept of arrays!

Aim of the activity:

Create a randomised story using the programming concept of arrays.

What you need to complete the activity:

- 6-sided dice
- Printed versions of the blank story and word arrays

How to tell your story:

- Allocate words to each of the word arrays
- Roll the dice for each gap in the story and write in the word selected, e.g. the first gap is a COMMON NOUN and the number rolled is a 5 which matches with the name ghost in my common noun array so I write 'ghost' in the first gap
- Complete step two for each gap in your story:

Hello, it's time to tell a scary story... Once upon a time, a ghost called Gus roamed the halls of a creaky old mansion on top of a hill. He liked to scare its inhabitants, and would make screechy, crawly, scary noises that made them all jump. Everyday, the family that lived in the house were terrified of what lurked around the corner. One day, the little girl called Lucy said "why not be friends"? The ghost was surprised. And they all lived happily in the old mansion for the rest of their lives. THE END.

What is this activity teaching?

KS3 National Curriculum - Computing.

- Make appropriate use of data structures [for example, lists, tables or arrays]

Arrays are a common structure in programming. They are used to store a set number of items of the same data type under a single identifier or name. The items in the array can then be referenced using a sequential number. One way to conceptualise this is to think of an array as being like a shelf which can store multiple items of the same type. The items are then numbered and can be removed from the shelf by referencing the items number. In programming, elements of an array can also be directly selected by using the position number of the element required. In the

accidental adventures activity the item in the array is being selected at random by rolling the dice.

KS1 National Curriculum - English

Year 2 Writing – vocabulary, grammar and punctuation

- Use and understand the grammatical terminology in English Appendix 2 in discussing their writing

English Appendix 2

Year 2 Text

- Correct choice and consistent use of present tense and past tense throughout writing

Year 2 Terminology for pupils

- Noun
- Adjective, adverb, verb

The use of the arrays of words gives pupils a good opportunity to demonstrate their understanding of word classification by selecting appropriate words to add to their own arrays. Once these words are added pupils can then check that the story still makes grammatical sense. The text provided in the activity can easily be replaced with something more meaningful for your class e.g. a poem or class text.

Take it further.

The surprise stories workshop digitises this concept using the Python programming language, so why not take a look!

After completing the activity below, it's time for your pupils to create their own story. They can choose from our collection of creepy adventures suited for different ages below ... or create their very own stories!



The black cat.

The cat arched her back. Not because she was stretching. It was the stench in the dark room she had just entered. The hoomins were nowhere to be seen. They had left the flat earlier dressed in black with faces instead of their normal , hoomin ones. They had bags of sugar in the shape of skulls in the things they call “hands” and were all giggling. Stupid hoomins. Yet, there was a... presence. A presence the cat knew was not welcome. Was not “normal”. Even the hoomins would surely think so.

The cat adjusted her super strength feline eyes to focus on the dark shape that was moving in the corner of the room. It stank. She froze. It moved again and every follicle of fur on her body stood solid. She knew she could defend herself, but didn't want to mess up the hoomins' pale carpet. It was new.

She moved closer, . She crouched, wiggling her bum to pounce, the expert hunter she was. Then the came bounding over, slobbering, whimpering, smiling. How a dog can smile, she would never fathom. She walked out the room to find her catnip. And some peace.

Author: Dr Jo Twist OBE, CEO at Ukie



Word arrays

Below are templates for your word arrays. Use the spaces to enter your own arrays of words. Then use your dice to randomly complete the spaces in the story!

Proper noun arrays.

| | |
|---|--|
| 1 | |
| 2 | |
| 3 | |
| 4 | |
| 5 | |
| 6 | |

Common noun arrays.

| | |
|---|--|
| 1 | |
| 2 | |
| 3 | |
| 4 | |
| 5 | |
| 6 | |

Verb arrays.

| | |
|---|--|
| 1 | |
| 2 | |
| 3 | |
| 4 | |
| 5 | |
| 6 | |

Adverb arrays.

| | |
|---|--|
| 1 | |
| 2 | |
| 3 | |
| 4 | |
| 5 | |
| 6 | |

Adjective arrays.

| | |
|---|--|
| 1 | |
| 2 | |
| 3 | |
| 4 | |
| 5 | |
| 6 | |

The rat, the spider and the hat.



There once was a rat called Nibbles. Nibbles had one tooth, a pair of fluffy ears and an intolerable love for cheese.

One cold night, as the wind howled and the rain lashed down, Nibbles sought refuge in a creaky old barn and there in the corner he saw... a piece of cheese! As Nibbles licked his lips and exclaimed “What luck!”, he was startled by a very loud noise:

It started with “ATCH”, followed with “CHOO!”, and then “WEEEEEEEE!”

Suddenly, a silver piece of thread came whizzing by his nose. He looked down and on the floor in front of him, sprawled a button-sized spider:

“Hello, my name is Button and I’m looking for my hat, but there’s a slight problem - I’m running from the Cat!” and with that, he pointed 6 of his 8 legs to the rafters.

He looked up and saw a pair of dusty whiskers wiggling in the shadows.

Nibbles replied. “We’ll find your hat! What does it look like?”

“It’s small and it’s cosy and a bright sunshine yellow, and I lost it down here, on my way to the meadow.”

Nibbles blinked. He’d seen something yellow, but where? He thought for a moment and then he remembered:

“Oh no! Is it that over there?”

Nibbles pointed to what he thought was a small piece of cheese in the corner of the barn.

It was the hat indeed, and Button scuttled over to retrieve his prize. Nibbles felt sad and set off to continue his quest for more cheese, when out of the darkness he heard Cat say:

“So, you like cheese? I’ll show you the human’s kitchen, follow me this way!”

Author: Laura Martin, comms and programme manager at Digital Schoolhouse

The lighthouse.

Once upon a time in a big old light house on a bleak cliff above a little fishing village. cut off from the rest of the world lived a lighthouse keeper. She was getting old herself and lived all on her own, keeping a vigil over the waves crashing against the rocks down below.

One day a storm blew in and a fishing boat was in danger of being dashed against the rocks. The reassuring beam of the lighthouse shining brightly against the steel grey sky meant the fisherman was safe from harm though and he navigated his way to the harbour.

When the storm had died down and all was quiet, he decided to walk up to the lighthouse to thank the lighthouse keeper for saving his life. As he neared the gate though he found the track leading up to it overgrown and blocked. The gate was shut and secured by a huge chain and padlock that didn't look like it had been touched for years.

On reaching the lighthouse he found the door was open and hanging off its hinges. Once inside the lighthouse he felt a chill to the air despite it being a warm day. The whole place looked like it had been long abandoned. He reached the top only to find all the workings removed and the lighthouse keeper was nowhere to be seen. All that was left was an old newspaper from 20 years earlier which carried the headline:

LIGHTHOUSE KEEPER DIES IN TRAGIC ACCIDENT

Author: Tim Scott, head of policy & public affairs at Ukie



The skeletons.



There had always been something strange about the old farm at the end of Hanover road. No one knew quite how or when it had become so abandoned. Whispers of ghosts and ghouls, witches and evil hosts circled among the village folk in the small town half a mile away.

In the decaying barn, nestled upon the hill, creaking in the autumnal wind... Strange noises could be heard, shivers ran up your spine, and a chilling fear crept into the minds of those who dared go near.

Yet what no one could guess is that in the creepy old farm, a family of skeletons await. They've cooked up a storm, of worms, dirt and frogs' hearts - always making enough for a visitor. Mama skeleton checks the clock at midnight, as papa skeleton puts the broth on the table, placemats served for 12. Baby skeleton is ready to share all her toys, because tonight we might have company! They silently wait by the door, anticipating a knock, as their dinner slowly goes cold...

But no one ever comes near that old abandoned farm, and as the night goes on, the skeletons cry and sigh and say: "maybe tomorrow?" All they ever wanted was some company...

Author: Sophia Aker, programme coordinator at Digital Schoolhouse

A ghost story.

Have you ever wondered why you only see ghosts at night? I mean, if you think about it, once the lights go out, people mostly just go to sleep, so why does being woken from the dead mean you can only haunt a house when no-one's awake to experience it?

And why are ghosts always some horrifying headless horseman, ambling along some ancient arterial avenue for his erstwhile head, or a lovelorn Victorian lady, forever flouncing around creaking corridors, longing for the lover that left her at the altar? Well nowadays, that horseman's highway is probably ten feet beneath a motorway and the bride's abode has become a KFC, so if they're still there, you'll probably never get to see them.

The truth is that these days you see ghosts all the time, only now rather than sepia-toned shimmering spectres, they're all around us in full colour, 4K HD resolution and unless you know how to stop them, they look just like you and me.

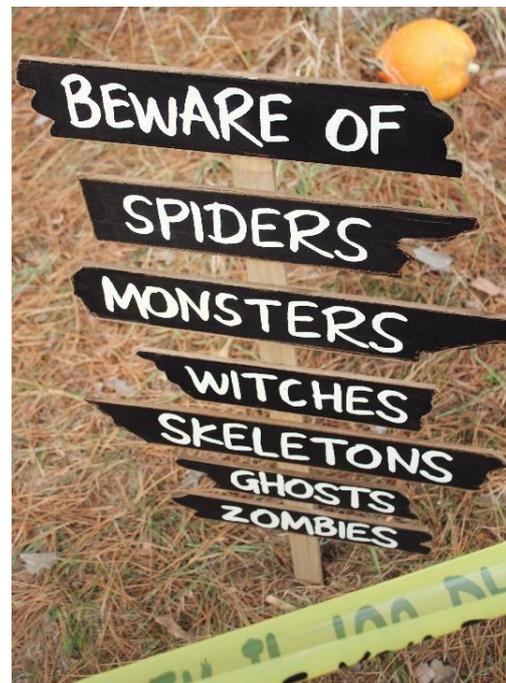
In these macabre modern times, instead of gruesome ghouls, it's the sorrowful souls of everyday people who haunt us - trapped by lives lived on repeat, always doing the same thing every day, tethered to this world by their own boredom. Now they remain here, unable to escape their humdrum routine, always going through the same motions, endlessly stuck in an everlasting loop of loneliness.

You know that grey-faced grandma on the bus, who stares of the window and never seems to get off? Or maybe it's a dusty, dilapidated teacher silently shuffling between classes, but never giving any lessons? Do they always do the same thing? Are they really there?

Or maybe you've picked up the phone to a robotic recording, asking the same questions about car insurance even if you don't reply? Or watched a YouTube Let's Play that was so tediously repetitive, you wondered how the person making it could stay awake long enough to upload it? Well perhaps instead they're a stranded call-centre spectre, doomed to dial the same calls forever, or a vampire vlogger, maybe not much older than you, who torments the timelines of content-hungry kids to suck the fun out social media.

So, if you don't want to be trapped forever in eternal boredom, the only way to save yourself is to always be striving for new experiences, uncovering the next bit of excitement around the corner and making the most out of all the time you've got. And if you don't, well who knows, maybe you'll be burdened by your boredom, for much, much longer than you thought.

Author: Luke Hebblethwaite, insights and innovations manager at Ukie



Nightmare on Downing Street.

The stage was set, the media were prepared and millions of people at home were ready to tune in to the Prime Minister's big speech. What was he about to announce and what would it mean for the future of the country? He slowly stumbled to the lectern and cleared his throat.

“Wrrraaaaaaaaaah!”

Journalists stared at him in disbelief. Was this an attempt at a joke? It became clear though that the Prime Minister's announcement should have been taken with deadly seriousness as he leaned over and began biting the security aides next to him.

The PM and his security were now in the crowd biting the journalists and photographers. “The Prime Minister is a Zombie!” shrieked one journalist but by then, it was too late.



Author: David Thompson, insights and innovations intern at Ukie