

Thinking about a mystery or ghost story:

Sometimes it is helpful to have a prompt to start you off when writing a mystery or ghost story. You might like to use one of the following to help you:

Use one of the following titles for your story:

- The Withered Arm
- The Engineer's Thumb
- The Signalman
- The Monkey's Paw
- Christmas Carol

Use one or all of the following in your opening lines:

- A murder
- A mysterious death
- A stormy night
- Footsteps ringing out on the pavement
- Wind howling
- Rain beating against the windows
- A steam train making its way through the countryside
- A narrator recounting their frightening experience
- Someone alone
- A car with its alarm going but nobody around
- Foggy weather
- An animal crying or whinging

Remember: ghost and mystery stories do not involve a lot of blood and/or gore. Their success lies in the way the writer builds up tension through the setting, the plot and the description of characters.