

Didactic Project

BACHILLERATO Y CICLOS FORMATIVOS DE GRADO MEDIO

The Canterville Ghost





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SESSION 1: Synopsis and characters

Activity 1: The Synopsis



Read the synopsis of THE CANTERVILLE GHOST

Oscar Wilde (1854-1900) was a great irish poet and playwright. During his life he experimented with different literary genres that truly put him on the map. We can highlight his playwrights "Salomé" (1894) and "The Importance of being Earnest" (1895), "The Tale of the Canterville Ghost "(1888), and the "Picture of Dorian Gray" (1891), his only novel.

"The Canterville Ghost" is one of his most famous works. Showing a great sense of humour, Oscar Wilde puts face to face the practicality and the lack os roots of an american family with the traditional and deep love for the customs of the english.

Hiram and Lucrecia Otis are an American couple that decide together (1) ______ their children Virgina of sixteen years old and the twins Junior and Washington of thirteen, (2) _____ undertake a new life (3) ____ England. (4) _____ listening (5) _____ the warnings, they decide to live (6) _____ the enchanted Canterville Castle, where it is said that the ghost of Sir Simon Canterville, the old owner, has haunted the place (7) _____ he killed his wife Eleanor three hundred years before.

(8) _____ they settle down, start to happen strange incidents that jeopardise their peace, but the Otis family, (9) _____ being frightened, decide to stand up the ghost and torment it. The sweet Virginia will be the only one that decides to help Sir Simon's ghost to be saved.



Choose between the correct **preposition** from the following options.

- 1. a. of b. with c. since d. to
- 2. a. until b. to c. into d. towards
- **3.** a. at b. on c. of d. in
- 4. a. without b. since c. on d. within
- **5.** a. at b. in c. to d. on
- 6. a. in b. at c. on d. to
- 7. a. before b. since c. after d. once
- 8. a. once b. in c. until d. beside
- **9.** a. over b. far from c. below d. over





SESSION 1: SYNOPSIS AND CHARACTERS

Activity 2: Getting to Know the Characters



Take a look! The characters from The Canterville Ghost are introducing themselves. Can you help them? Read the extracts from the plot to deduce information and make up sentences for each character.

Here are some "Introducing" words to help you....

How do you do?
Let me introduce myself...
Pleased to me you
Hello there!
Good morning/afternoon/evening

About Mrs. Umney in the play:

Hello, I am Mrs. Umney	

MRS. UMNEY: I am Mrs. Umney, the housekeeper. Welcome to the village of Canterville."

LUCRETIA: That's a very unusual outfit you're wearing, Mrs.... Eh..... Jubbley....

 $\textbf{MRS. UMNEY:} \ \textbf{The uniform of the housekeeper of Canterville Chase has remained unchanged}$

in over four hundred years.





SESSION 1: Synopsis and Characters

GHOST: Do I frighten you!?

MRS. UMNEY: Yes! Oh, Yes!

GHOST: Are you sure?

MRS. UMNEY: Quite sure.

GHOST: Why?

MRS. UMNEY: You are terrible.

VIRGINIA: I am glad he has you here, but I still don't understand why you stay here.

MRS. UMNEY: This was my mother's position. And her mother's before. The Umneys have been

housekeepers here for centuries. It is our heritage. One day the Ghost may find the pathway to his freedom. Until that day comes he is compelled to remain here

and frighten and disturb.

About the Canterville Ghost in the play:



MRS. UMNEY: Perhaps it is best if I explain properly: Sir Simon de Canterville murdered his wife and then disappeared in very mysterious circumstances. His body has never been found, but his guilty spirit still haunts the house. This is why we had such difficulty in finding occupants.

GHOST: Thank you. So why don't I frighten these stupid Yankees? This is a disaster! I am the Canterville Ghost! The most feared spirit in England! I have been attacked, battered and degraded, humiliated and mocked... More than any phantom could ever hold.

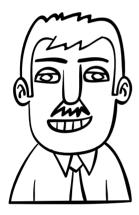
GHOST: In truth; I didn't mean to kill her at all. I loved her. But I was insanely jealous. I thought her heart was leading her to other men. Then on a dark night one winter, in the middle of a terrible fight, I struck her and she fell down the stairs to her death. Her brothers, intent on revenge, had me murdered and placed a curse on me and my spirit.





SESSION 1: SYNOPSIS AND CHARACTERS

About Mr. and Mrs. Otis in the play:





LUCRETIA: [...] I am Lucretia Otis and this is my husband, Hiram. Oh! And these are

my babies!

HIRAM: She's right. Look! A stain! All the money I paid for this place and I get a great

red stain!

LUCRETIA: It's funny, isn't it dear? You made your fortune from stain cleaners and now

you've got a big stain!

LUCRETIA: The Ghost? In here? In our living room? I haven't even done my hair!

Slowly the door creaks open. Mist begins to fill the room. The Ghost

enters into the room trough the mist.

HIRAM: (Laughing hysterically) Bravo! Bravo! So, you are the dead guy, right?

Hiram and Lucretia laugh joyously at this comment. The Ghost is completely

shocked by this reaction.

GHOST: Thou darest laugh at me!





SESSION 1: Synopsis and Characters

About Virginia in the play:	

LUCRETIA: And this is Virginia, I know she is not half as pretty as I am.... She can be a little

strange. You'll get used to that. Just ignore her, like I do.

VIRGINIA: Poor Ghost... Mrs. Umney... I feel sorry for the Ghost. My family has been

very cruel to him.

MRS. UMNEY: It's very unusual to hear someone taking the Ghost's side.

VIRGINIA: (Reading the writing on the wall) "When a gentle girl gives away her tears,

peace will come to Canterville Chase" I don't understand.

GHOST: It means that to escape the curse, a young girl must cry for my sins, because

I have no tears. She must then walk into the darkness, a darkness where she would hear and see terrible things, monstrous shapes, and hideous voices. There, surrounded by the horror, she must pray for me, for my soul. And then, if she has always been sweet and gentle, the Angel of Death will have mercy

upon me. And I will at last be free.





SESSION 1: Synopsis and Characters

About the twins in the play:	

JUNIOR: We are not scared of any stupid ghost.

WASHINGTON: Yeah!!! You have no idea. **JUNIOR:** We are his worst nightmare!

WASHINGTON: This is gonna be awesome! A real live ghost to battle.

HIRAM: Oh! It's raining again. This weather is a disgrace. Any more rain and we'll

have to swim everywhere.

JUNIOR: I'm so bored with this place. It's so dull. It's so quiet. Now that the ghost is

leaving us alone, there's nothing to do.





SESSION 1: SYNOPSIS AND CHARACTERS

Activity 3: What can you hear?



Listen and answer the following questions:

Track 1

What is Mrs. Umneys job?
□ cleaner □ housekeeper □ babysitter □ igoverness
The uniform that Mrs. Umney wears has not been changed for:
☐ four hundred and fifty years ☐ three hundred years ☐ fifty years ☐ four hundred years
Lucrecia says her daughter Virginia:
 □ is as beautiful as her □ is not half beautiful as her □ is much uglier than her □ is as pretty as her brothers
The curtains are
□ Persian □ Oriental □ Indian □ made of silk





SESSION 1: Synopsis and Characters



Track 2

The blood spot belongs to:

- ☐ The Canterville Ghost
- ☐ Sir Simon
- □ Lady Eleanor
- ☐ Mrs. Umney

Mrs. Umney has not cleaned the spot:

- out of respect for Sir Simon
- because it appears again
- $\hfill\Box$ because she is frightened about the consecuences
- to remember the crime

Mr. Otis cleans the spot using the cleaning product called:

- fthe best cleaner in the world
- infallible cleaner
- □ special blood cleaner
- Otis' Champion Stain Remover



Track 3

The Canterville ghost is:

- □ the spirit of Sir Simon
- the spirit of Lady Eleanors
- ☐ Sir Simon's murderer
- ☐ The first owner of the Canterville castle

Hiram believes that ghosts in the United States are:

- bigger than in Europe
- more fearsome than in Europe
- he is not sure about ghosts existing in the United States
- more fun than in Europe

The twins want:

- □ to be the worst nightmare of the ghost
- to become the best friends of the ghost
- to hide from the ghost
- to learn from the ghost





SESSION 2: Understanding The Play

Activity 1: Synonyms and antonyms



Complete the box below:

ADJECTIVES	SYNONYMS	ANTONYMS
ORDINARY		
MISERABLE		
LOVELY		
KIND		
MARVELLOUS		
UGLY		



Complete the sentences below using the adjectives from the antonyms column:

Oh, Hiram! This house is! It's all so English!
I know she is not half as as I am.
There's a very mark here.
She was murdered by her husband, Sir Simon de Canterville, whose portrait now looks down on his crime.
This is a disaster! I am the Canterville Ghost! The spirit in England!
There you would see such things that it would make you lose your innocence.





SESSION 2: Understanding The Play

Activity 2: Two Different cultures



Listen to TRACK 7 of THE CANTERVILLE GHOST.



Say if the following sentences belong to EEUU or England

- The 4 of July is the national day commemorating the adoption of the Declaration of Independence. (England / EEUU).
- Many people say it is the land of opportunity. (England / EEUU)
- It is composed of different islands. (England / EEUU)
- The official currency is the pound. (England / EEUU)
- Alaska is the biggest state of the country. (England / EEUU)
- Its capital is London. (England / EEUU)
- It has a population of over 300.000.000 inhabitants. (England / EEUU)
- It's a constitutional monarchy. (England / EEUU)
- Saint George is the patron saint. (England / EEUU)

Do you know what a cliché is? Search for American and English culture clichés and write down some examples:

AMERICAN CULTURE CLICHÉS:		
English culture clichés:		



Do you believe in clichés? Discuss in the classroom in two groups .





SESSION 2: Understanding The Play

Activity 3: Past Simple Passive



Change these sentences in the same way from Active to Passive. Use was or were + the

)	past participe.
	Sir Simon killed Eleanor.
	Ex. Eleanor was killed by Sir Simon
	Hiram cleaned the blood spot.
	Mrs. Umney served the typical English breakfast.
	Lucretia Otis scold Virginia for being late for the dinner.
	The twins tormented the poor ghost of Sir Simon.

• The ghost frightened Mrs. Umney.





SESSION 3: THE ENDING

Activity 1: Apologising



Listen to TRACK 10 (Scene 3)

VIRGINIA: But can't someone help you?

GHOST: No. I am condemned to stay here forever.VIRGINIA: Why? Is there a curse or something?GHOST: A curse that will never be broken.

VIRGINIA: I'm someone who wants to help. I want to help.

GHOST: I am beyond help.

VIRGINIA: Won't you just explain the curse to me? Does it have something to do with you

murdering your wife?

GHOST: That is purely a family matter and concerns no one else. **VIRGINIA:** It concerns many people. It's very bad to kill anyone!

GHOST: In fact I did not kill her, how was I gonna kill her? I loved her so much... One day,

after going hunting, I found her dead body on the stairs. Apparently she fell off an there was no one around to help here... I was not there for her... something I'll never forgive myself. As I was crying and cursing myself beside her body, her brothers arrived, whom knew I once had been a violent and cruel man... They assumed that I killed her and never listened to my explanations. Her brothers, interest on revenue had me mystered and pleased a curse on my expirit

intenet on revenge, had me murdered and placed a curse on my spririt.

VIRGINIA: How did they murder you? **GHOST:** They starved me to death.

VIRGINIA: Really? Geee... Are you hungry? I could get you a hot dog!

Imagine you are the Canterville ghost. Write some sentences to Eleanor, showing deep regret from the damage caused. Here are some clues to help you:

<u>Formal</u>	<u>Informal</u>
there's no excuse forto beg for mercyto beg pardon	- to be sorry - to forgive - to apologise

Dear Ele	anor,			





SESSION 3: THE ENDING

Activity 2: The Curse



Take a look!

« When a gentle girl gives away her tears, peace will come to Canterville Ghost. »

Complete the box bellow using the same structure as above to express cause-effect :

as soon as	As soon as we know anything, we will phone you.
as long as	
whenever	
while	
now that	
after	
once	
when	





SESSION 3: THE ENDING

Activity 3: Towards The End



Listen to TRACK 14.

Write a few lines about what you think is going to happen.





SESSION 4: Express Yourself!

Activity 1: The End of the Play And Your Impressions



Now you have seen *THE CANTERVILLE GHOST* Was it how you imagined it to be? Compare the real thing with what you imagined the play to be.

Look back at Activity 3 in Session 3 when you acted out scenes from the play in groups. Which version did you prefer - your performance or the actors' performance in the play?

I prefer my ending / the real ending / my interpretation of the characters / the actor's interpretation because.......

..more (+)...

- original
- entertaining
- boring
 - interesting
- dynamic
- emotive
- creative
- realistic

..it was...





SESSION 4: Express Yourself!

Activity 2: Value the Play

Did you enjoy THE CANTERVILLE GHOST? What did you think?

Theatrical criticism. To be able to analyze a show you should think about several things:

- General evaluation of the show.
- Plot.
- Topic.
- Message.
- Acting.
- Adaptation.
- Scenography.
- Dressing.
- Atmosphere.
- Music.

	Write a sentence for each:
9	Use verbs such as "to like";" to love", "to enjoy".
	Use verbs such as "to hate"; to prefer to».
-	
-	
-	
-	
-	
-	





SESSION 4: Express Yourself!

Activity 3: Role Plays



Here are three extracts from the play. Choose one to act out in groups.

Extract One (Track 4):

Lucretia: I hope this place will keep the kids busy.

HIRAM: Maybe they'll love it. We could end up buying the house.

LUCRETIA: We could buy the whole country if we wanted to.

HIRAM: It will be good for Virginia too. A chance to really find herself.

Lucretia: Find herself?! You would need a road map and Indiana Jones!

(After a few moments we hear a strange noise coming from outside the door.)

Lucretia: Hiram? Hiram! What's that noise?

HIRAM: I don't know it sounds like it might be the ghost...

The Ghost? In here? In our living room? I haven't even done my hair!

(Slowly the door creaks open. Mist begins to fill the room. The Ghost enters into the room trough the mist.)

HIRAM: (Laughing hysterically.) Bravo! Bravo! So, you are the dead guy, right?

(Hiram and Lucretia laugh joyously at this comment. The Ghost is completely shocked by this reaction.)

GHOST: Thou darest laugh at me! (There is no reaction from Hiram apart from a wide smile.)

GHOST: I'm sorry, I don't speak French. Anyway I'm Hiram Otis, the new resident of Canterville

HIRAM: Chase. And this is my wife, Lucretia.

LUCRETIA: Hi there!

HIRAM: (Pushing the ghost out of the room.) Listen, I know it's the first time we've met and all

that, I mean we are on holiday here, right? We need to sleep and relax, ok? So I've gotta

insist you do something about those annoying chain noises.

Gноsт: My what?

HIRAM: The chains. Too loud.

Lucretia: They are so uncool.

HIRAM: But we've got the solution: This is the "Otis' Champion Chain Lubricator," a fine product

that will lubricate your chains in a matter of seconds!: Jingle Otis Champion Chain

Lubricator





SESSION 4: Express Yourself!



Mrs. Umney: (Opens the door.) Hello! Mr Otis and family?

Lucretia: Oh, Hiram! This house is gorgeous! It's all so.... English!

HIRAM: Yep. Are you Umney?

Mrs. Umney: I am Mrs. Umney, the housekeeper. Welcome to the village of Canterville.

Lucretia: That's a very unusual outfit you're wearing, Mrs.... Eh..... Jubbley....

MRS. UMNEY: The uniform of the housekeeper of Canterville Chase has remained unchanged in over

four hundred years.

Lucretia: Really? Well, I hope you've had it cleaned! (She laughs) I am Lucretia Otis and this is my

husband, Hiram.

Mrs. Umney: A pleasure to meet you.

Lucretia: Oh! And these are my babies. (Looking around)! For God's sake! Where are they?

Twins (off): We are coming now, we are playing in the garden. Yeah just playing...

LUCRETIA: And this is Virginia, I know she is not half as pretty as I am.... She can be a little strange.

You'll get used to that. Just ignore her, like I do.





SESSION 4: Express Yourself!



Extract Three (Track 12):

(The living room. A Sunny afternoon. Lucretia is reading a British magazine.)

Lucretia: (Reading a magazine.) Oh my God! Look at these people! They are so pale! The Royal

Family should travel to California at least once a year...The Queen of England looks like a

ghost.

MRS. UMNEY: Please, show a little respect for the Queen of England! God Save the Queen!

Lucretia: I didn't mean to offend you, but who dresses this lady?

Mrs. Umney: Fortunately, not the same designer that dresses you.

Lucretia: This magazine is ridiculous! (Talking to Hiram.) Hiram! I want to read People magazine! I

wonder what's happened to Justin Bieber this week?

HIRAM: Honey! I can go to the city and get it for you after my cricket match.

Lucretia: You call that a city? Three squalid little houses and a greasy pub? My God! I need to go to

the mall. I want to go to my beauty therapist! I mean, look at my nails... Hiram! Hiram! Are

you listening to me? I'm talking to you!

HIRAM: Just a second, pumpkin! I'm learning how to play cricket.

Lucretia: What? Croquet? What is all that croquet nonsense?

MRS. UMNEY: Cricket, Mrs. Otis, Cricket! Cricket is an English sport for gentlemen that consists of a ball

and a bat. It is played by two teams of eleven players each on a grass field, somewhat ovalshaped, smaller in size to that of a football field. In the middle of the field there is a flat rectangular area called the pitch... (We hear the sound of broken glass.) And no

windows should be broken in the process.

LUCRETIA: Do you play cricket Mrs. Umney?

Mrs. Umney: Not any more, madam, not at my age.

LUCRETIA: Why? Do they make you retire at 90?

Mrs. Umney: I'll be inside.

OTHER SHOWS

Bachillerato & Ciclos Formativos de Grado Medio

Be Cool (In English)
Les misérables (En Français)
Entremeses
Tres sombreros de copa

The Canterville Ghost

Didactic Project elaborated by Amalia Guerreiro Iglesias





Only our American family would buy an old English mansion with its very own ghost included, and what's more, a ghost who cannot bear being made a fool of. The most ingenious of Oscar Wilde's satires, adapted to your students' level. The perfect comedy for bringing a paranormal touch to your English classes. You will love the adaptation we have prepared of this universal literary classic.

