

The Mystery of Moaning Manor

The house stood alone on the top of the hill. Its door was green, once upon a time, but you could hardly tell that now. Its windows were cracked and its roof was sagging. Its bricks were covered in ivy. But it wasn't how it looked that gave it its name. It was called Moaning Manor because of how it sounded.

Moaning Manor was the site of dares. Only the bravest souls were willing to climb the hill on moonlit nights and listen for the moaning. It always came. "Ooo-ooo! Oooo-oooo!" The sounds sent shivers down spines. How long could you stay and listen? The record was 10 minutes.

Amir and Justin were determined to break that record. They planned to do it on Halloween. They bet each other that they could stay at least 15 minutes before running down the hill in terror. Better yet, they could solve the mystery of the manor. They could figure out what was causing the moaning. No one knew.

Halloween night came. The moon from behind the edge of the clouds lit the path below as Amir and Justin climbed the hill. "Sacred?" asked Amir.

"Nah," said Justin. "You?"

"Of course not," said Amir. But they both were.

As they got closer to the house, the moaning began. It started faint and low. "Ooo-ooo!"

“Do you think it’s a ghost?” whispered Justin.

Amir shook his head no. “I bet it has a simple explanation,” he said. “If we can figure it out, maybe it won’t be so creepy. Not that I’m scared of course.” But he was.

The moaning got louder. “Oooo-oooo!” Amir and Justin both felt the shivers down their spine. They checked the timer. Only three minutes so far.

“Let’s look for clues,” said Amir.

“Aaaah!” yelled Justin. “I didn’t find a clue, but I found a mouse!”

“Ick,” said Amir. “I found a mouse over here too, but it’s just the bones. Or at least I think it’s bones.” He moved the leaves with his foot to expose a bullet looking object with some bones sticking out. Ugh.

The moaning and the shivers felt even bigger now. Five minutes.

“Do you smell something?” asked Justin. “Kinda moldy?”

Just then, the moaning got even louder. Amir and Justin took off down the hill. Not even 10 minutes. Their feet pounded almost as loudly as their hearts as they ran, trampling over fallen leaves and feathers. Lots of big feathers.

At the bottom of the hill they caught their breath. “So much for 15 minutes,” said Amir.

“So much for solving the mystery,” said Justin. “We still don’t know what’s making the moaning noise.”



Amir and Justin might not know, but maybe you do. Have you solved the mystery of Moaning Manor?



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NAME: _____ DATE: _____

1. What color was the door of Moaning Mansion? (Literal)
 - a. Red
 - b. Blue
 - c. Green
 - d. Black

2. How many minutes did Amir and Justin hope to stay near the manor?
(Literal)
 - a. 3
 - b. 15
 - c. 5
 - d. 10

3. What do you think was making the noise at Moaning Manor?
(Inferential)
 - a. An owl
 - b. A ghost
 - c. The wind
 - d. A mouse

4. Which clues helped you figure out the mystery? (Inferential)
 - a. The mice, the smell, the feathers
 - b. The leaves, the bones, the shivers
 - c. The leaves, the smell, the timer
 - d. The ivy, the timer, the mice

Instructions for teachers:

These questions can be used to assess understanding of the reading passage.

The item in bold is the correct answer for each question.

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