

## Ghosts of Cahills Past

### Dear Book Club Host:

It is time for another meeting of The 39 Clues Book Club! If you're new to the club, don't forget to check out the **Establish Your Cahill Stronghold** introductory theme materials so that your club members can feel like they're really on the Cahill team! Or if your club has just finished reading one of The 39 Clues books, make sure to check out the book overview tab for book-specific content.

This month's theme is **Ghosts of Cahills Past**. Through these fun and spooky activities, your club members will discover chilling facts about the Catacombs of Paris, stretch their puzzle-solving smarts, and create their own Cahill-inspired ghost stories!

### Activity 1: Lost in the Catacombs

**Prepare ahead:** 1) Photocopy the **Lost in the Catacombs** handout, making one copy for each club member. 2) Gather blindfolds (made from strips of old clean T-shirts or similar material) for half of the members. 3) Clear a space that is at least twenty feet wide.

Ask your group to think back to the first book of The 39 Clues series, *The Maze of Bones*. Ask: *In what ghostly location did Amy and Dan discover Franklin's magic box number game?* (Answer: The Catacombs of Paris) Explain to your group that they are now going to take an imaginary late-night stroll through the Catacombs of Paris!

Evenly divide your group into "Explorers" and "Ghosts." Explain aloud: *These Explorers are about to journey deep into the depths of the dark and dangerous Catacombs beneath the city of Paris. The Ghosts who live in the Catacombs will help you get through safely, but they'll also try to scare you away, so be on your guard.* Ask the Explorers to leave the room so they can't hear the rest of your instructions. Distribute the **Lost in the Catacombs** handouts to the Ghosts and read the directions at the top aloud. Then, assign all the speaking parts to the Ghosts. (Students may read more than one part if necessary.) Encourage Ghosts to use spooky voices for their speaking parts and to create a background of scary sounds when not speaking.

Dim the lights and blindfold the Explorers. Then, bring them back into the room and line them up along one side of the space. Instruct the Explorers to follow the Ghosts' instructions as they move across the room to find their way out of the ghostly Catacombs of Paris! If time allows, swap parts and/or create new Ghost clues!

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## Activity 2: The Tower of London

**Prepare ahead:** 1) Photocopy **The Tower of London** handout, making enough copies for every club member. 2) If desired, provide reference materials that will allow club members to research the London attractions listed in the Answer Key. If time is limited, you can bookmark the pages they will need for clues.

Separate club members into small groups. Give all members a copy of **The Tower of London** handout and a pen or pencil. Read the directions at the top, and then encourage club members to solve the anagrams and find Ian Kobra's favorite spooky spots in London! Explain that there is reference material any group can use for clues if they need help. Then, challenge them to find a way to deliver their answers to you in secret!

**Bonus:** If there is time remaining, ask members to share spooky facts they know or discovered about each location.

**Answer Key:** 1. Jack the Ripper / London's East End; 2. Highgate Cemetery; 3. Tower of London

## Activity 3: The Mysterious Journey

**Prepare ahead:** 1) Photocopy **The Mysterious Journey** and **Travel Adventures Essay Contest**. 2) Cut out the ten story prompts from one copy of **The Mysterious Journey**. 3) Place the ten slips of paper in a container from which club members can draw one slip randomly.

Explain: *Telling the story of a crazy travel adventure can be almost as fun as the trip itself! Club members everywhere are gathering around an imaginary campfire, where we will all create an original ghost story called "The Mysterious Journey." I'm going to give each of you a slip of paper to use as the starting point for your part of the story. We'll go around the room and you'll pick up the story where the person before you left off, using the sentence on your paper for inspiration!*

Explain that club members will work together to create a wild ghost story! Lead the conversation and encourage positive feedback and fresh ideas if anyone gets shy or stuck.

If more than ten club members are present, have each one place the prompt back in the container after telling his or her story. When the story is complete, distribute the **Travel Adventures Essay Contest** handout. Explain that the storytelling was like a warm-up for members who want to enter this fun and exciting fan-fiction writing contest!

Good luck to you and your creative Cahills!

—The 39 Clues Book Club

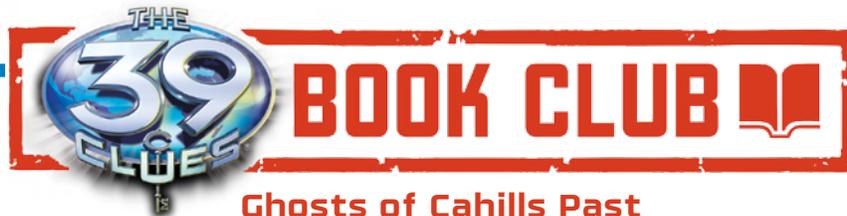
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# Lost In the Catacombs

### Directions:

The Catacombs are a world-famous graveyard deep underneath the city of Paris, containing the remains of more than six million people. Although it's a fun (and spooky!) tourist attraction, today's visitors are your other club members! Imagine you are Ghosts of the Catacombs and guide the Explorers safely through the winding passages—while trying to scare them a bit as well!

### Script for Ghosts:

#### Ghost 1:

*The Paris subway is taking you to the maze of bones. The train rumbles like a hungry beast as you listen for the right stop. The train stops, and it feels as though your heart stops, too. Take a long step out of the subway. Watch your step!*

#### Ghost 2:

*The train doors open, and you feel a cold breeze. The entrance to the Catacombs is a plain black door. Reach forward and open it, then take four slow steps in.*

#### Ghost 3:

*Are you ready...or not? There is a tiny ticket office. You must pay to enter, and you feel a chill as the ticket taker's fingers brush your arm.*

#### Ghost 4:

*One by one, you descend 130 steps leading downward. With each drop downward, there is less chance to turn back. Take three steps forward, bending down as you go. Watch your head.*

#### Ghost 5:

*Someone or something brushes your arm. Is someone there? Is it a guard? But this is not likely. There are few guards here in the dimly lit deep. You have to squeeze through a small door, so turn to the side and slide to the right.*

#### Ghost 6:

*You're walking through dirt tunnels that turn this way and that. Take three steps forward. Then turn and take two small steps to the left. Quick, jump to the right, over that small hole.*

#### Ghost 7:

*There is water at your feet. So you step slowly, trying to judge the size of the puddle. Perhaps you'd better get down on your belly and swim for a bit.*

#### Ghost 8:

*You're out of the water, but what's that? Drip. Drop. What is this you feel? A drip on your forehead? Drip. Drop. There is water dripping from the ceiling. It is cold to the touch!*

#### Ghost 9:

*Once upon a time, these caves were mines. Get down on your hands and knees to make it through a tiny tunnel. Be very, very quiet.*

#### Ghost 10:

*Tick. Tock. Can you hear time passing? From 1785 to 1860, the bones of nearly six million people were taken here...and sorted into piles. Stand and take three more steps forward.*

#### Ghost 11:

*You're nearly there. There are just eighty-three steps to get back to the surface. Just eighty-three steps separate you from life in the sun. Step up. Step fast! Get away! Take four small, quick steps to the right.*

#### Ghost 12:

*Oh, no! Turn to your left and look up. Then look right. You can see sunlight in the distance. Take one huge step forward.*

#### Ghost 13:

*Remove the blindfold, if you dare. You are one of 250,000 people who survive the Catacombs each year. And how many, do you think, feel a ghost on their shoulders?*

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**Ghosts of Cahills Past**

**The Tower of London**

**Directions:**

The Tower of London has been a prison since 1100, but did you know that it also houses an armory and a zoo, and is the home to the Crown Jewels of the United Kingdom? You've followed Amy, Dan, Jake, and Nellie to the Tower of London and discovered some secret papers behind a loose stone! They seem to have been dropped by accident by the Lucians. Unscramble the anagrams to find Ian Kabra's favorite spooky spots in London!

EVEN IN THE AGES DARK AND MIDDLE.  
WHEN ROMANS ROAMED WHAT NOW IS BRITAIN.  
THIS END OF LONDON HAD OPEN FIELDS  
BUT WAS ALREADY HOME TO THIEVES AND KILLERS.

PERHAPS NONE SO AWFUL AS HE WHO CAME LATER.  
AND IN 1888 BROUGHT THE "AUTUMN OF TERROR."  
WHO WAS THIS DREADFUL BEING. FOREVER CURSED?  
HE WAS NEVER CAPTURED AND THEY CALL HIM

**TRICK JEEP HARP:**

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NOW. LOOK UP THE SPOOKY SPOT WHERE HE  
COMMITTED HIS CRIMES. HINT:

\_\_\_\_ **END.**

167,000 SOULS ARE BURIED HERE, INCLUDING KARL MARX.  
A HUGE ARCH LEADS INTO THE EGYPTIAN AVENUE WHERE  
SOULS PEACEFULLY SLEEP.

WHAT AM I? (TWO WORDS)

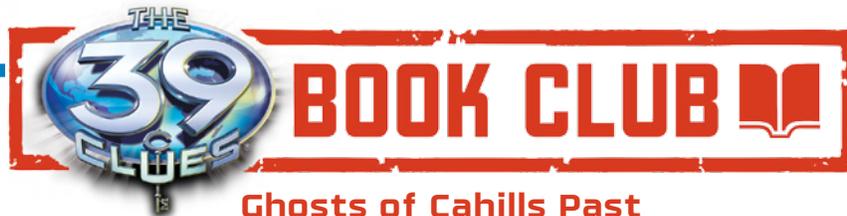
**GAG HE HIT:** \_\_\_\_\_

**MERCY TEE:** \_\_\_\_\_

*THIS PLACE HAS A TORTURED HISTORY, BUT IF YOU READ THIS PAGE CAREFULLY,  
YOU WON'T LOSE YOUR HEAD! (THREE WORDS)*

*OWN FORT HOLD ONE*

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Ghosts of Cahills Past

## The Mysterious Journey

### Host Directions:

Cut out the following writing prompts and put them in a container. Ask each student to pull one sentence and read it silently. Ask the person with Prompt #1 to begin the story and let him or her speak for up to five minutes. Then move to the person with Prompt #2, and so on until you've gone through all ten prompts.

**1. You wake up on an old-fashioned passenger train.**

Start the story. What do you hear? What do you smell? How did you get here?

**2. You run your hand across the items on the dusty dresser.**

What light, if any, is there to help you see? What do you feel first?

**3. The door has no doorknob. But wait! This may not be the only door.**

What are you thinking and feeling? How big is the room?

**4. You stand up and look into the mirror.**

Which mirror? Does it show anything behind you?

**5. At last, you have found the part of the library where the secret maps are kept.**

How did you get there? Are you alone?

**6. In the tall hallway mirror, a message seems to appear.**

Can you see what it says? Do you recognize the handwriting?

**7. The woman is wearing a flower behind her ear.**

Which way is she facing? Have you seen this kind of flower before?

**8. The longer you stare at the painting, the more real it seems.**

What are you focusing on? Do you need to move closer or farther away?

**9. The rain has never felt like this before. Luckily, your journey is almost over.**

Are you inside or outside? Are you getting wet?

**10. Finally, you notice someone taking your picture and you understand everything.**

What have you discovered? Finish the story.

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