

1º & 2º SECONDARY EDUCATION STAGE

# The Canterville Ghost



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## 1. JUSTIFICATION OF THE PROPOSAL

- Theatre as a tool for stimulating and encouraging the student to discover, learn and apply the language he/she has learned.
- The plays present civic content and are also focused on an educational/student environment that will allow the students to identify with the values contained therein.
- The scripts, apart from allowing the play to be performed in the theatre thus creating the recreational and aesthetic aspect, also allow communicative functions, vocabulary and grammatical structures to be developed. These can be worked on beforehand in class using a series of worksheets to facilitate understanding of the plot and contribute to language learning. This didactic material is adjusted to the level of the students according to the objectives stipulated for the relevant level by the M.E.C.D.

## 2. OBJECTIVES:

### General:

- Listening to and understanding messages in a variety of verbal exchanges, using the information transmitted to complete specific tasks.
- Expressing oneself and interacting orally in simple and common situations, using verbal and non-verbal procedures and adopting a respectful attitude.
- Writing a variety of texts with different endings with the help of templates and models.
- Reading various texts in order to understand them, extracting general and specific information in accordance with a pre-established goal.
- Valuing a foreign language as a mean of communication and understanding among people with different places of origin, culture and languages.
- Contributing to the student's knowledge of linguistic, geographic and cultural features of the country where the foreign language is spoken.
- Understanding that theatre is a source of pleasure and personal enrichment, thus fostering his/her interest in it.

### Specific:

- Fostering interest in participating in oral exchanges about routines and situations from daily life in the relevant foreign language.
- Working on language prosody: aspects of phonetics, rhythm, accentuation and intonation.
- Familiarizing the student, from the start, with the plot and different characters in order to facilitate comprehension of the performance during the play.
- Developing two communicative functions per level, providing the student with all the syntactic, grammatical, lexical and phonetic knowledge that make up the relevant functions in order for the student to be able to grasp them.
- The four basic skills that each reader needs to control in order to communicate optimally will also be worked on: listening and reading comprehension (L.C.-R.C.) and written and oral expression (W.E.-O.E).

### 3. METHODOLOGY

#### Presentation of Material:

The didactic worksheets included with the material, available to both students and teachers, are designed to be completed over four **60 minute sessions**. The idea behind this is that the worksheets should be integrated into the class routine, reinforcing or applying previously acquired knowledge or introducing new but simple content on languages for a certain level.

#### Material Structure:

The objective of the **first, second and third sessions** is to give the students the necessary hints in order for them to be able to watch the play without any comprehension problems on the day it is performed.

The **fourth session** will be focused on expression. After having seen it, the student will be allowed to express his/her opinion on the performance (comparing the play's actual ending with the ending he/she had previously imagined; comparing the behaviour of the actors with his/her own).

## 4. ACTIVITIES

### BEFORE THE PERFORMANCE

		OBJECTIVES	COMPETENCIES
SESSION 1	Activity 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Familiarisation with the plot.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>R.C.</li> <li>W.E.</li> </ul>
	Activity 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Familiarisation with the characters.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>R.C.</li> <li>W.E.</li> </ul>
SESSION 2	Activity 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Testing your knowledge.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>L.C.</li> </ul>
	Activity 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expressing your opinion.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>L.C.</li> </ul>
	Activity 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Grammar: Past Simple Passive</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>W.E.</li> </ul>
SESSION 3	Activity 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Testing your knowledge.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>R.C.</li> </ul>
	Activity 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vocabulary.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>W.E.</li> </ul>
	Activity 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Making hypothesis</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>W.E.</li> </ul>

**AFTER THE PERFORMANCE**

		OBJECTIVES	COMPETENCIES
SESSION 4	Activity 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Verifying your hypotheses.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• O.E.</li></ul>
	Activity 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Describing the performance as a whole.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• W.E.</li></ul>
	Activity 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Role play.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• L.C.</li><li>• O.E.</li></ul>

## **APPROACH CHOSEN:**

Although our main objectives are to foster interest in theatre and to help the student to grasp two new communicative functions, our approach is intended to be fun, visual and aimed at communication. In fact, on these worksheets, we can find many activities presented as games and which also provide moments of fun in class. Finally, all sessions require the student to express him/herself, with activities focusing on situations from daily life or even acting. As such, the goal is to offer activities as an alternative to the class routine and to make learning a second language more attractive. All of this work is presented as project of the utmost interest: seeing a play in a foreign language.

## **ADVICE AND RECOMMENDATIONS:**

Before starting on the worksheets and the activities proposed therein, the students must have the play in order to go on to read it. Similarly, given that there are many activities requiring useful and modern resources, there must also be a CD player in the classroom for listening to the scenes and songs. All this material (play, CD, worksheets) is available on the following website: [www.recursosweb.com](http://www.recursosweb.com)

In the student section, the sessions are spread out over several worksheets. As such, it is advisable to make as many copies as there are students as soon as possible. As soon as the students have the worksheets, they will be able to complete them, following the instructions given for each exercise and with help from additional materials such as dictionaries and reference manuals in class.

In the teacher's section, you will find all the activities designed for the students as well as the answer key with all the correct answers for all the questions.

Each activity on the didactic worksheets is designed to train the four basic skills in foreign language acquisition: Listening Comprehension, Reading Comprehension, Written Expression and Oral Expression.

Through these skills, a range of vocabulary, grammatical structures and phonetic aspects are worked on in order to develop a series of communicative functions that we consider key for understanding the play as well for applying them to real situations.

In addition to the presence of the different basic skills, the sessions follow a sequential order. As such, it is important to complete each and every one of the sessions, from the introduction of the plot to the storyline and characters, culminating in the resolution of the play. Therefore, completing the didactic worksheets before going to see the play is necessary to reinforce the overall comprehension of the play and, at the same time, we create excitement and expectations that could very well be completely found upon leaving the theatre.



## SESSION 1: SYNOPSIS AND CHARACTERS

### Activity 1: The Synopsis



Read the synopsis of *THE CANTERVILLE GHOST*

**Take a look!** Here is a glossary of words to help you:

**Put somebody on the map:** To make some place famous or popular.

**Lack :** Deficiency or absence

**Couple:** Two items of the same kind; a pair.

**Undertake:** To attempt to; agree to start

**Enchanted:** Under a spell; bewitched; magical

**To haunt:** To visit (a person or place) in the form of a ghost

**To settle down:** To establish as a resident or residents

**Jeopardise:** Present a danger to

**To stand up:** To remain

**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 playrights "*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 of 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 with their children Virginia of sixteen years old and the twins Junior and Washington of thirteen, to undertake a new life in England. Without listening to the warnings, they decide to live in the enchanted Canterville Castle, where it is said that the ghost of Sir Simon Canterville, the old owner, has haunted the place since he killed his wife Eleanor three hundred years before.*

*Once they settle down, start to happen strange incidents that jeopardise their peace, but the Otis family, far from 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.*



## SESSION 1: SYNOPSIS AND CHARACTERS



Take a look!

Read Scene 1 and fill the gaps:

	TRUE	FALSE
The Otis family is American	✓	
The Otis Family consists of the parents Hiram and Otis and their twins Washington and Junior.		✓
Virginia is the adopted child of the couple.	✓	
The Canterville Castle is in Scotland.		✓
Mrs. Umney wears the latest styles.		✓
Twins Washington and Junior are bad-mannered.	✓	
The legend tells the story that the Canterville Ghost is the spirit of Sir Simon Canterville.	✓	
Sir Simon Canterville killed his wife Eleanor.	✓	
Mrs. Umney is not afraid of the Canterville Ghost.		✓
The story of the Canterville Ghost shocked Otis family and they decided to go away immediately.		✓
The spot in the floor of the castle was Eleanor's blood.	✓	



## SESSION 1: SYNOPSIS AND CHARACTERS

### Activity 2: Getting to Know the Characters



**Take a look!** The characters of *The Canterville Ghost* are introducing themselves. Can you help them? Use the information in each box to 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



**Remember...** you will need to conjugate the verbs from third person singular ‘he/she’ to agree with the first person singular ‘I’.

#### CHARACTER 1



#### Mrs. Umney

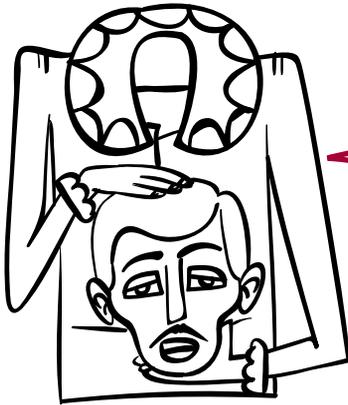
- She is a middle age woman.
- She is the housekeeper of the Canterville castle.
- Her family worked in the castle for generations
- She is afraid of the Canterville Ghost.

*Hello there! nice to meet you. I am Mrs Umney, the housekeeper of The Canterville castle. My family has been working here for generations. I have to warn you that the castle is haunted.*

## **B** Before

### SESSION 1: SYNOPSIS AND CHARACTERS

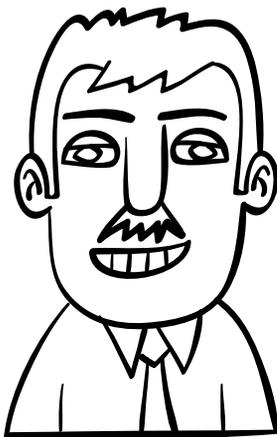
#### CHARACTER 2



#### Sir Simon Canterville.

- Is the ghost.
- Killed his wife Eleanor and since then his soul can't rest.
- He is very bad tempered.
- Since more than three hundred years the ghost is frightening the residents of the castle.

#### CHARACTER 3



#### Mr. Hiram Otis

- He is the head of the family.
- He is a cleaning products maker.
- He is practical.

#### CHARACTER 4



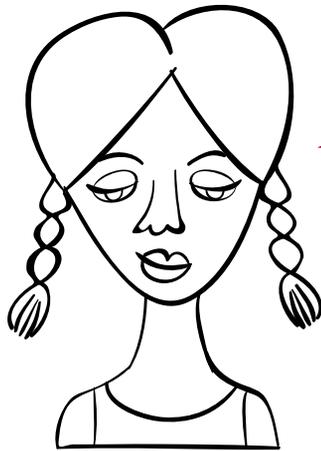
#### Mrs. Lucretia Otis.

- She is Hiram's wife and the mother of Virginia and twins Junior and Washington.
- She is superficial.
- The relationship with her daughter is difficult.

**B**  
Before

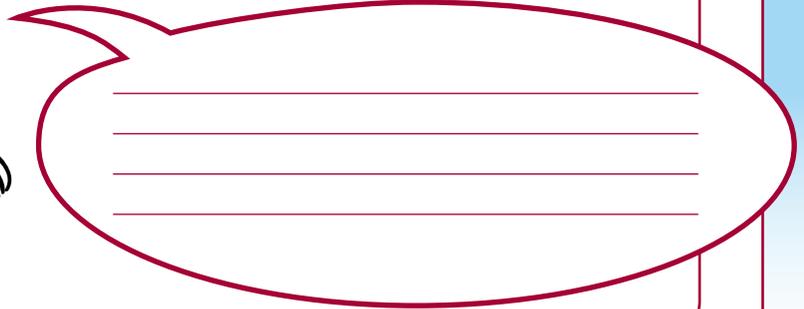
## SESSION 1: SYNOPSIS AND CHARACTERS

### CHARACTER 5

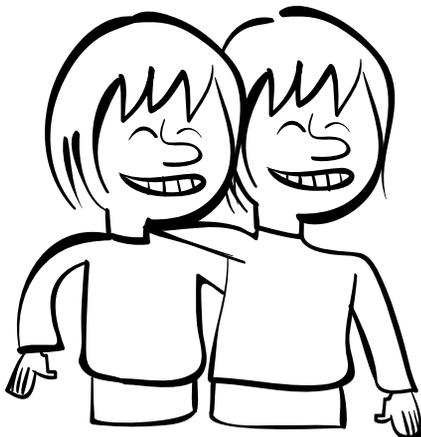


#### Virginia Otis

- She is sixteen years old.
- She is kind and sensitive.
- She loves drawing.
- She feels misunderstood by her family.

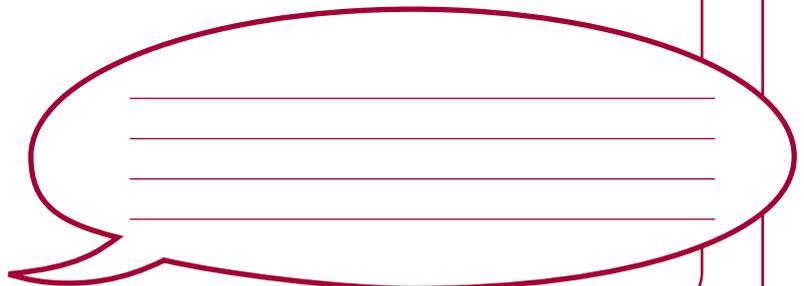


### CHARACTER 6



#### Twins Junior and Washington Otis

- They are thirteen.
- They are bad-mannered.
- They love playing bad jokes on the ghost.





## SESSION 2: UNDERSTANDING THE PLAY

### Activity 1: What can you hear?



Listen to TRACK 2 (Scene 1)

Fill the gaps:

- VIRGINIA:** *There's a very strange mark here.*
- HIRAM:** *What?*
- VIRGINIA:** *Look. Here in the corner of the room. A sort of red stain.*
- 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!*
- HIRAM:** Unbelievable!
- LUCRETIA:** *Why on earth haven't you cleaned it up, Mrs. Bumbley?*
- MRS. UMNEY:** *That's the Canterville stain, Mrs. Otis. It has been there for many centuries.*
- LUCRETIA:** *Well, don't you think it's time to clean it up Mrs. Floomfley?*
- MRS. UMNEY:** *That stain can never be cleaned, I am afraid. For it is the blood of Lady Eleanor. She was murdered by her husband, Sir Simon de Canterville, whose portrait now looks down on his dreadful crime. The bloodstain cannot be removed, we have tried everything.*
- HIRAM:** *But not.... This! (He instantly takes a bottle from his pocket and presents it with a proud smile.) This is the "Otis' Champion Stain Remover," a fine product that will clean that stain in a matter of seconds.*
- MRS. UMNEY:** *How very American...*
- HIRAM:** Let me give you a free demonstration. (He cleans the stain.)
- Mrs. Umney looks horrified.*
- VIRGINIA:** *What's the matter Mrs. Umney? Aren't you glad the stain is gone?*
- MRS. UMNEY:** *Actually I'm not. I fear this will cause us some trouble.*
- A roll of thunder is heard. Black-out. A loud evil laugh is heard.*
- LUCRETIA:** *What the heck is going on here Mrs. Poombley?*
- MRS. UMNEY:** *Oh god! He's trying to frighten me again!*
- LUCRETIA:** *Who?*
- MRS. UMNEY:** *The Ghost, madam.*
- LUCRETIA:** *Ghost? What Ghost?*
- MRS. UMNEY:** *Sir Simon de Canterville... The Canterville Ghost.*
- LUCRETIA:** Are you drunk?
- MRS. UMNEY:** *No, madam. I am quite sober and quite serious.*



## SESSION 2: UNDERSTANDING THE PLAY



Listen to TRACK 6 (Scene 3)



Answer the following questions :

What does Junior want for breakfast?

- toasts
- scrambled eggs
- a typical English breakfast
- donuts and a hot brownie

What is the ghost trying to do by appearing suddenly?

- Kill Lucretia and the twins
- Beg for pardon because of his behaviour
- frighten Lucretia and the twins
- ask for some oil to grease the chains

What weapon does he ghost use to frighten Lucretia?

- dagger
- An axe
- A hammer
- A gun

What does Lucretia exclaim when the ghost runs away?

- Excellent!
- Bravo!
- Fabulous!
- That's a pity!

Who thinks that the ghost is unhappy?

- Virginia
- Mrs. Umney
- Junior and Washington
- Mrs. Otis



## SESSION 2: UNDERSTANDING THE PLAY

### Activity 2: Two Different Cultures



Listen to TRACK 7 (Scene 3) 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:

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---

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 participle.

- Sir Simon didn't murder Eleanor.

**Ex. Eleanor wasn't murdered by Sir Simon.**

---

- Hiram cleaned the blood spot.

The blood spot was cleaned by Hiram.

---

- Mrs. Umney served the typical English breakfast.

The typical English breakfast was served by Mrs. Umney.

---

- Lucretia Otis scold Virginia for being late for the dinner.

Virginia was scolded for being late for the dinner.

---

- The twins tormented the poor ghost of Sir Simon.

The poor ghost of Sir Simon was tormented by the twins.

---

- The ghost frightened Mrs. Umney.

Mrs. Umney was frightened by the ghost.

---



## SESSION 3: THE ENDING

### Activity 1: What's Happening



Answer the following questions :

1. How does the ghost feel ? Why ?

---

---

---

2. How did Eleanor died?

---

---

---

3. What is the curse on Sir Simon?

---

---

---

4. Why does Virginia want to help Sir Simon's ghost?

---

---

---



## SESSION 3: THE ENDING



### Activity 2: The Curse

**Take a look!** Each number represents a letter of the alphabet. If you can find the words in the gaps below, you will be able to know how the curse will be broken.

W H E N A G E N T L E G I R L G I V E S  
10 13 1 15 2 22 1 15 9 6 1 22 3 19 6 22 3 21 1 20

A W A Y H E R T E A R S , P E A C E W I L L C O M E  
2 10 2 13 1 19 9 1 2 19 20 7 1 2 14 1 10 3 6 6 14 5 8 1

I O C A N T E R V I L L E G H O S T .  
9 5 14 2 15 9 1 19 21 3 6 6 1 22 13 5 20 9

- A meal eaten in the morning, the first of the day: **B R E A K F A S T**  
19 1 2 2 20 9
- A stubborn discoloured patch or dirty mark: **S T A I N**  
20 9 2 3 15
- A solemn appeal to a supernatural power to inflict harm on someone or something: **C U R S E**  
14 19 20 1
- A large building, typically of the medieval period, which is (or was formerly) fortified as a stronghold: **C A S T L E**  
14 2 20 9 6 1
- One of two children or animals born at the same birth: **T W I N S**  
9 10 3 15 20
- A feeling of expectation and desire: **H O P E**  
13 5 7 1
- A traditional story popularly regarded as historical but which is not authenticated: **L E G E N D**  
6 1 22 1 15 24
- The main female characters of Canterville Ghost: **V I R G I N I A**  
21 3 19 22 3 15 3 2
- The unlawful premeditated killing of one person by another: **M U R D E R**  
8 19 1 19





## 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.....

..it was...

..more (+)...

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





## 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 through 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 Chase. And this is my wife, Lucretia.  
**HIRAM:** Hi there!  
**LUCRETIA:** *(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.  
**GHOST:** 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!



Extract Two (Track 1):

**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..... Jubbly....

**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 oval-shaped, 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

1º & 2º COURSE SECONDARY EDUCATION STAGE

**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.

  
**recursos**  
