

The Haunted House – a case for Inspector Morse?

Pumpkin Manor is haunted by a poltergeist, so the owner has hired a team of investigators to tackle the problem.



Pumpkin Manor

The investigators have discovered that the poltergeist is not just randomly knocking, but it is actually using Morse code, which is a method of transmitting text information as a series of on-off tones, lights, or clicks that can be directly understood by a listener or observer without special equipment (although they will need to know the code obviously). When Morse code is written down, it looks like a series of dots and dashes – each letter is represented by a sequence of dots and dashes.

Traditionally, when Morse code was used to send messages via telegraph (using sound signals), there was no punctuation. A full stop was the word “stop” spelled out in Morse code.

The best known Morse code is the SOS emergency signal, which in Morse code looks like this:

... --- ...

Can you help the investigators complete their translation of the poltergeist’s message?

On the next page you have the full message sent by the Poltergeist in Morse code, followed by the partial transcription by the investigators.

Task 1: Complete the rest of the transcription. Use one box per letter.

Poltergeist message:

... ---- --- .- --- .

... - --- .-... - - - - -

... - - - - - ... - - - - -

... --- - - - . - - - -

.... - - - - - - - - - - - - - - -

... - - - - - .- - - - - ... - - - - -

.... . - - - - - ... - - - - -

Translation of the message above completed so far by the investigators:

Note: the word “stop” has been written in capitals, to indicate that it is to be read as a full stop, not as a word. Morse code doesn't have capital letters.

sos ☐ ☐ alone STOP r ☐ ☐ ll ☐ ☐ c ☐ ☐ ☐ d STOP

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ i ☐

☐ ☐ u ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ STOP

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Task 2: Now that you have decoded the message, can you send the following message back:

“All is well STOP

Bringing pumpkin pie” (the quote marks do not need to be transcribed into Morse code)

Here are some extra Morse code symbols to help you:

• — —

is the letter w

— • • •

is the letter b