



Activity One

The influence of the Celtic people is evident in the designs and inscriptions of the ancient gravestones in the cemetery where Bod calls home. Although the Celts were a people who made their mark in history many hundreds of years ago, their influence remains.

- These enterprising people left monuments such as the Stonehenge (see image to the right).
- People still name sports teams in their honor (Boston Celtics).
- At the height of their culture (1000–100 BC), the Celtic influence spread over the entire European continent.
- In the year 390 B.C., the Celts sacked Rome and controlled the city for over four decades.
- Vercingetorix is one of the most noted of the Celtic heroes.



Your task is to write a half-page report outlining who these mysterious people were, and some of their most important accomplishments. What is there about this civilization that we can see in our culture today?

NAME: _____



Activity Two

In ***The Graveyard Book***, we are introduced to five Jacks — villains and cut-throats one and all. Each of the Jacks have taken his name from a famous historical Jack. The chart below lists all five Jacks. Your task is to investigate each one and write a brief explanation as to each character.

Jack Frost	
Jack Tar	
Jack Ketch	
Jack Dandy	
Jack Nimble	



Activity Three

Casting Director

- **This activity can be done with students working in small groups.**

Imagine you are the casting director for a movie company planning to do a film version of this novel. You are to cast all of the major roles for the movie and must choose one of the following two scenarios. Two spaces are left for you to choose two minor characters you found interesting.

- a) For the list of characters in the box below, choose an appropriate Hollywood actor to fill each role and write a brief explanation as to why you chose this particular actor.

OR

- b) For the list of characters below, choose an appropriate person from your own school to fill each role and write a brief explanation as to why you chose this particular person. For this assignment, you might choose fellow students (including yourself), teachers, principal, custodian, etc.

Roles

- **Bod**
- **Scarlett**
- **Silas**
- **Jack Frost**
- **Miss Lupescu**
- **Mr. Owens**
- **Mrs. Owens**
- **Liza Hempstock**
- **Jack Dandy**
- **Nehemiah Trot**
- _____
- _____

NAME: _____



Activity Four

Put it on Film

- **To be done in groups of four or more**
- (For this Activity, video equipment is necessary.)

One of the fascinating things about putting book to film is in the many different interpretations of a scene which are possible. To illustrate this, you may wish to check out a number of student-made clips of scenes from novels which are posted on *YouTube*.

The task of your production team is to recreate a particular scene from this novel. Choose your scene carefully. Factors to consider:

- **length** (2–3 minutes ~ 2–3 pages is advised)
- **number of characters** (i.e. the *danse macabre* would be impractical because of the number of people involved)
- **setting** (i.e. the flight of the ghouls would be impractical because of the setting)
- **dialogue** (i.e. too much can be difficult to memorize for the actors; too little might make the scene a bit boring)

Your task is to create a short scene from the novel and present it to the class on film. A script must be written before filming; roles assigned; rehearsals scheduled. You may wish to present the film in Readers Theater format.

Be sure that when you are presenting your finished project to the class, it is your best effort. Don't be afraid to do multiple takes until most of the rough edges are removed.

Have fun!

NAME: _____



Activity Five

An Alternate Ending

- **This activity can be done individually or in small groups.**

The conclusion of *The Graveyard Book* is very memorable and quite bittersweet. Not only does it tie-up a few loose ends (i.e. Bod feels better about leaving the graveyard because he no longer feels so much at home there), but it is very moving and dramatic as well. The conclusion also leaves the reader wondering about other issues (i.e. will Bod and Scarlett ever meet again? Will Silas ever reappear in Bod's life? How will Bod cope with the world outside the graveyard?).

What, though, if Neil Gaiman had woken up on the wrong side of the bed on the day he wrote the novel's concluding chapters? What if it didn't end the way it is described in these pages, but had taken another *turn in the road*? What if Bod had not been able to defeat Jack? What if Bod decided to continue to live in the graveyard? What if...?

Although we will never know the answers to these questions, you will be given the opportunity of putting your imagination to work in coming up with what *might* have happened if the author's imagination had worked its way in an entirely different direction.

Working with a group or on your own, brainstorm possible alternative endings to the novel. Remember to consider all of the principal characters. From your list of ideas, choose one ending to present to the class. Write a detailed synopsis of your alternate conclusion, presenting as much detail as possible. After presenting it to the class, you may wish to get their input as to additional changes that might be made to further improve your alternative ending.

Have fun!



Activity Six

Real People

At least three of the characters mentioned in this novel are real people — the Duke of Westminster (Hugh Grosvenor, 3rd Marquess of Westminster), the 33rd President of the United States (Harry Truman), and the famous French writer, Victor Hugo. Interestingly, all three are portrayed as ghouls in Chapter Three.

Using resources in your school library or on the Internet, investigate the life and accomplishments of one of these characters. Who was he and what did he do to make himself so famous?

Do you think there was a specific reason that the author portrayed this character as a ghoul in the novel — or was Neil Gaiman just having a bit of fun?

As a means of contrast with the sublime, the grotesque is, in our view, the richest source that nature can offer.

—Victor Hugo

If I hadn't been President of the United States, I probably would have ended up a piano player in a bawdy house.

—Harry S. Truman

As a twist to this assignment — with your teacher's permission you may wish to tackle one of the "invented" ghouls mentioned in this story, and create a more in-depth persona for him or her.

Your report should be approximately a half-page in length.