**Research project #1  
STORYTELLING: Southern legends, hauntings, and folklore**

Chances are, if you live in the South, there is one ghost story, local legend, or country folktale that has stuck with you since you heard it. The South is rife with scary stories, antebellum anecdotes, funny folklore, and legitimate legends; these tales serve not only to entertain our itching ears but to inform our bibulous brains.

The idea of this research project is for you to get very familiar with one, specific Southern legend, and for us to get very familiar with one of your familial ones.

**Part 1 of the Assignment**

Each student will work individually or with a partner to research a legendary piece of Southern folklore and to record an instance of their family’s own peculiar history. Here are some examples of Southern legends that you can research…

* **The Bell Witch (Tennessee)**

\*Websites used for research purposes should be ones that are academically viable and reliable. In other words, do NOT use websites such as Wikipedia or About.com. Start your research on the AVL and work from there. If you would like to know if the website you are using is one that you may use, please ask me!

* **The LaLaurie House (New Orleans, LA)**
* **The Crescent Hotel (Arkansas)**
* **Carrollton Courthouse (Alabama)**
* **The Myrtles Plantation (Louisiana)**
* **University of Alabama Ghosts (Alabama)**
* **The Red Lady of Huntington College (Alabama)**
* **The Ghost of Bellamy Bridge (Marianna, Florida)**
* **Sloss Furnace (Birmingham, AL) - Dead Children’s Playground (Huntsville, AL)**
* **Huggin’ Molly (Alabama) - Dozier School for Boys (Florida)**
* **Old Cahawba Park (Alabama) - Weston State Hospital (West Virginia)**
* **McDonough Square (Georgia) - Legend of Noccalula’s Ghost (Alabama)**
* **Magnolia Plantation (Derry, Louisiana) - Ghost of Waverly Mansion (Mississippi)**
* **The Old Charleston Jail (Charleston, SC)) - Ghosts of St. Augustine (Florida)**
* **The Baker Hotel (Mineral Wells, TX) - Bryce Hospital and the Jemison Center (Alabama)**
* **Manassas National Battlefield (Virginia) - Moundville Archeological Park (Alabama)**
* **The Ghost of Julia Legare (Edisto Island, SC) - The Axeman of New Orleans (Louisiana)**
* **Drish Mansion (Tuscaloosa, AL) - The Atlanta Ripper (Georgia)**
* **The Wampus Cat (several states) - The Mulatto Axe Murders (Louisiana and Texas)**
* **Ghost of Wright Square (Savannah, GA) - Honey Island Swamp Monster (Louisiana)**
* **Marie Laveau (New Orleans, LA) - Ghosts of Ybor City (Tampa, Florida)**
* **Julia Brown and the town of Frenier (Louisiana) - Rougarou and Manchec Swamp (Louisiana)**

\*\*You can choose one of these bits of folklore, or you can choose one of your own (as long as it’s approved by me), but no one can research the same story.

You must find at least **four** academic, reliable sources of information of differing types (encyclopedias, biographies, websites\*, interviews, etc.) from which to gain your information. \*\*\*If you have trouble finding information about your topic, please let me know by Thursday, October 21. You will take notes on these sources and compile them into a presentation. Your presentation to the class must be 3-4 minutes long.

\*The information you find in this presentation is important, but how you present the information is equally as important; therefore, your grade will come from your actual presentation as much as it will from the information you find. Making eye-contact with your audience, speaking loudly and confidently, and checking your presentation for any typos or errors will all constitute a major part of your grade.

**The Research**  
We will spend time in class in the computer lab to allow students time to research the material available to them and create their presentations; however, all students are encouraged to research outside of class as well. While each presentation is only required to have four sources, you should use as many sources as possible to ensure that information is both accurate and varied. You should also be as creative as possible with the presentation, and a number of varied sources will aid groups with this creativity.

**Class Presentation Rubric**The following rubric will be used to grade your presentation.

Makes eye contact with class / does not read from notes 0 3 5 7 10

Presenter shows obvious understanding of story’s historical 0 3 5 7 10  
significance

Presenter(s) speak with a steady voice 0 3 5 7 10

Knows topic well (and takes full amount of time) 0 10 20

Well-organized multi-media presentation 0 3 5 7 10

Presentation is creative and thought-provoking 0 3 5 7 10

All information in presentation has been checked for errors 0 3 5 7 10

Information presented is on-topic and useful 0 3 5 7 10

Sources are correctly cited on biblography 0 15 30 45 60

Comments

Overall Grade (out of 150):

Group Member Names

***The assignment should be completed by Tuesday, October 26.******This is when presentations will begin!***

**A Note on Plagiarism**IT IS WRONG!!!! And it is punishable by death!!

Well, not really punishable by death, but definitely punishable by a grade of zero and a vacation to the office.

Really though, plagiarism is a serious offense, and you need to know what it is. Simply put, plagiarism is when you present the words or ideas of another person as your own. It is not tolerated by any school or institution of higher learning and is illegal.

Obviously, the plainest form of plagiarism is directly copying someone else’s work as your own. This could be copying and pasting from a website, dictating your words from an encyclopedia article, or paying someone else to write your paper for you. A more subtle form of plagiarism, but equally immoral and improper, is paraphrasing material or using someone else’s original idea without introducing or documenting your source. (Instructions on how to document your source will be covered in class.)

Using source material (as you are for this project) will require you to pay attention to the following rules:

1. Acknowledge source material on your slide by citing the information where it is presented.

2. Enclose within quotation marks all quoted material.

3. Make sure that paraphrased material is rewritten with fidelity to the original. The simple rearrangement of sentence patterns is unacceptable.

4. Provide specific documentation for each borrowed item.

5. Provide a bibliographic entry on your bibliography for every book, article, website, picture, song, etc. that is referenced in   
 your presentation.

**Part 2 of the Assignment**

While it’s really interesting to study folklore from around the South, it’s even more interesting to learn about our own peculiar past.

The second part of this assignment is a videoed account of a familial legend or ghost story that is particular to your family. This can be funny, scary, sad, etc., as long as it is specific to your family and relates your family’s history. Again, let me reiterate, your familial folklore DOES NOT have to be a ghost story; it can be any type of story as long as it fits the bill for “oral history.”

Your video must include the following:

* An interview with a person who is an expert in the tale (parent, grandparent, other family member, etc.)
* Narration of the story itself
* Appropriate music
* Relevant pictures / footage
* Must be creative in the presentation of the material
* ***MAKE SURE TO SPEAK UP IN YOUR VIDEO!! (THIS IS THE MOST IMPORTANT PART OF YOUR VIDEO!!!!)***

**Videos must be at least three minutes long**.

You may use an actual video camera or your phone’s video camera to complete this project. Most computers come equipped with video editing software (Windows Movie Maker, iMovie, etc.), but if yours does not, you can also visit this website to download free video-editing software:

<http://www.techradar.com/us/news/software/applications/best-free-video-editing-software-9-top-programs-you-should-download-1136264>

Additionally, you can check out an iPad from the school to film and edit your video on iMovie.

Once you finish your video, upload it to YouTube (you can set the video to “Private” if you don’t want other people to see it). You may also upload it to the OneDrive and send me that link.

(Please note that in order to upload your video, you will have to sign up for a free YouTube account if you do not already have one.)

***This video has meant a great deal to students in the past, especially if they interviewed family members who are meaningful to them. Please take your time and do a good job on this project!!***

***\*\*\*Even if you worked with a partner on Part 1 of this project, you must complete this part individually!***

**This project will be due on Friday, November 12, which is the day that we will start showing the videos to the class.**

**Name:**

**The Rubric**The following rubric will be used to grade your video.

Video is at least three minutes long (with relevant information) 0 5 10

Video includes interview with relevant source 0 3 5 7 10

Video includes relevant pictures and/or video footage 0 3 5 7 10

The audio in video is clear and audible 0 10 20

Video includes music 0 3 5 7 10

Video is creative (obvious effort put into making the video) 0 3 5 7 10

Information is well-organized 0 3 5 7 10

All information in presentation has been checked for errors 0 3 5 7 10

Information presented is on-topic and useful 0 3 5 7 10

Comments

Overall Grade (out of 100):

**Time:**