



THE HAUNTED LOCKER

Chapter 1: The New Kid

The opening chapter of **The Haunted Locker**, a Scaremoor middle grade horror novel, as a 856-word reading passage. It ends on a cliffhanger, so students finish wanting the next page.

WHAT'S INSIDE

1. The passage, with numbered paragraphs for citing evidence
2. 6 multiple-choice questions
3. Words in context and the author's similes
4. Two written responses and a prediction
5. Answer key

HOW TO USE IT

- Students read on their own or with a partner (about 10 minutes), then answer the questions.
- Every question names the paragraph to look back at.
- For grade 3, read it aloud and do the questions together.
- About 40 minutes in all. No prep.

WANT TO KEEP READING?

The Haunted Locker is book 1 of the Scaremoor series, for ages 8–12, in paperback and on Kindle. Find it at scaremoor.com or on Amazon (amazon.com/gp/product/B0DKLP6KCT). Every Scaremoor book is a standalone story, and every one is spooky but safe for school.





THE HAUNTED LOCKER

Chapter 1: The New Kid

Name: _____

Date: _____

- 1 Ben Carter stood in front of Crestwood Middle School, his stomach twisting in knots. The huge brick building loomed before him, its tall windows reflecting the pale morning light. He adjusted his backpack and swallowed hard, trying to shake off the nervous energy bubbling inside him.
- 2 *New school, new start*, he told himself, but the thought didn't bring much comfort. Ben moved more times than he could count, and each new school felt the same—like stepping into a game where everyone else already knew the rules but forgot to share them with him. His parents always said moving was for the best, but they didn't have to be the ones trying to make new friends.
- 3 Ben pushed through the front doors, his footsteps echoing in the hallway. The faint smell of floor cleaner and pencil shavings filled the air as he looked around, trying to figure out where to go. Other students shuffled past him in groups, chatting and laughing like they had known each other forever. A sharp bell rang, signaling the start of the school day, and his heart raced.
- 4 "First day?" a voice said from behind him.
- 5 Ben turned to see a tall woman with glasses perched at the end of her nose, her hair pulled back into a tight bun. She wore a name badge that read Mrs. Green—Office Manager.
- 6 "Uh, yeah. Ben Carter. I'm new," he stammered.
- 7 Mrs. Green nodded, handing him a small slip of paper and a key. "Here's your locker assignment and class schedule. You've got locker 113. It's one of the older ones, so you'll need this key instead of the usual combination lock. If you get lost, just ask someone for help."
- 8 Ben glanced at the slip of paper, his eyes zeroing in on the bold numbers: Locker 113. He frowned. Something about the number sent a strange shiver up his spine.
- 9 "Thank you," he muttered and turned toward the lockers.
- 10 The hallway stretched endlessly before him, a maze of metal doors. His sneakers squeaked on the polished floor as he walked, counting the numbers. Locker 113 was at the far end of the hall, tucked into a shadowy corner where the lights seemed dimmer than the rest of the school.
- 11 Ben stopped in front of it, shifting his weight from foot to foot. The locker door didn't look any different than the others—rusty and dull, the paint chipping at the edges—but something about it made his skin crawl. He took a deep breath and reached for the lock.

- 12** As soon as he touched the cold metal, a faint sound filled the air. Ben froze, his fingers resting on the handle. Was that... whispering? He glanced over his shoulder, but the hallway was empty. Maybe it was the wind or the distant murmur of students in their classrooms. He shook his head and twisted the key in the lock.
- 13** The door creaked open with a slow, rusty groan. Inside, the locker was clean, even though it smelled faintly like old paper and something damp and earthy. He quickly stuffed his books inside, eager to close the door and shake off the uneasy feeling creeping up his spine.
- 14** "Hey," a voice said from behind him.
- 15** Ben jumped and spun around, his heart leaping into his throat. A girl stood there, her dark hair falling over her shoulder as she leaned against the locker next to his. She wore a black hoodie and jeans, her expression calm but curious.
- 16** "I'm Mia," she said, sticking out her hand.
- 17** Ben hesitated before shaking it. "Ben. I'm new here."
- 18** "Yeah, I could tell. You looked lost." Mia's eyes flicked to his locker, and a slight smirk tugged at the corner of her mouth. "You got 113, huh?"
- 19** Ben raised an eyebrow. "Is that bad?"
- 20** Mia shrugged, but the playful glint in her eyes was gone. "Some people say it's... cursed. Danny, the kid who used it last year, disappeared. No one ever found out what happened to him."
- 21** Just as Mia spoke, the janitor shuffled past, his eyes lingering on locker 113. He muttered something under his breath, almost too soft to hear. "Some doors are better left locked." Ben thought he saw a flicker of recognition in the old man's eyes.
- 22** Ben chuckled nervously. "Disappeared? Like, he ran away?"
- 23** Mia leaned in a little closer, her voice dropping to a whisper. "That's what the teachers say. But the students... they think the locker had something to do with it."
- 24** Ben swallowed hard, the worry creeping back into his chest. "You're messing with me, right?"
- 25** Mia straightened up and shrugged again, the smirk returning. "Maybe. Maybe not. Just be careful, okay?"
- 26** Before Ben could respond, the bell rang again, and Mia waved casually before walking down the hall, her footsteps echoing in the silence. Ben stood frozen in front of his locker, the strange whispers still lingering in his mind. He quickly slammed the locker shut and hurried to class, but the eerie feeling clung to him like a shadow.
- 27** As he walked away, he couldn't help but glance back at locker 113.
- 28** *Some secrets should stay locked away,* he thought.



THE HAUNTED LOCKER

Look back at the passage. Each question tells you which paragraph to check.

Name: _____

Date: _____

PART A: WHAT HAPPENED?

Circle the best answer.

1. Why is Ben nervous at the start of the chapter? (paragraph 2)

- | | |
|---|---|
| A. He forgot to do his homework. | B. He is starting at a new school and has to make new friends again. |
| C. He is late for his first class. | D. He lost the key to his locker. |

2. Why does Ben need a key for locker 113? (paragraph 7)

- | | |
|--|---|
| A. Mrs. Green forgot the combination. | B. It is a teacher's locker. |
| C. It is one of the older lockers. | D. Every locker at Crestwood uses a key. |

3. Where is locker 113? (paragraph 10)

- | | |
|--|---|
| A. Right next to the front office | B. Across from Ben's first class |
| C. In a hallway near the gym | D. At the far end of the hall, in a shadowy corner |

4. What does Ben hear when he touches the cold metal of the locker? (paragraph 12)

- | | |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| A. A faint whispering sound | B. The school bell |
| C. Someone calling his name | D. A door slamming |

5. According to Mia, what happened to Danny? (paragraph 20)

- | | |
|--|--|
| A. He moved to a new school. | B. He disappeared, and no one found out what happened to him. |
| C. He switched to a different locker. | D. He got lost in the hallway on his first day. |

6. What does the janitor mutter as he walks past locker 113? (paragraph 21)

- | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| A. "Welcome to Crestwood." | B. "That locker is broken." |
| C. "Some doors are better left locked." | D. "Hurry up, you'll be late." |





THE HAUNTED LOCKER

PART B: WORDS IN CONTEXT

Find each word in its paragraph. Use the words around it to figure out what it means.

7. **loomed** (paragraph 1) means:

8. **stammered** (paragraph 6) means:

9. **lingering** (paragraph 21) means:

PART C: THE AUTHOR'S SIMILES

A simile compares two things using *like* or *as*. Explain what each one means.

10. *"Each new school felt the same—like stepping into a game where everyone else already knew the rules but forgot to share them with him."* (paragraph 2)

11. *"The eerie feeling clung to him like a shadow."* (paragraph 26)





THE HAUNTED LOCKER

PART D: THINK IT THROUGH

Answer in complete sentences. Name the paragraph your evidence comes from.

12. How does the author make locker 113 seem creepy? Use two details from two different paragraphs.

13. Is Mia trying to scare Ben, warn him, or both? Explain, using evidence from the chapter.

14. WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

The chapter ends with Ben thinking, "Some secrets should stay locked away." What do you think happens next? Use two clues from the chapter.





THE HAUNTED LOCKER

Look back at the passage. Each question tells you which paragraph to check.

PART A: WHAT HAPPENED?

Circle the best answer.

1. Why is Ben nervous at the start of the chapter? (paragraph 2)

- A. He forgot to do his homework.
- B. *He is starting at a new school and has to make new friends again. ✓*
- C. He is late for his first class.
- D. He lost the key to his locker.

2. Why does Ben need a key for locker 113? (paragraph 7)

- A. Mrs. Green forgot the combination.
- B. It is a teacher's locker.
- C. *It is one of the older lockers. ✓*
- D. Every locker at Crestwood uses a key.

3. Where is locker 113? (paragraph 10)

- A. Right next to the front office
- B. Across from Ben's first class
- C. In a hallway near the gym
- D. *At the far end of the hall, in a shadowy corner ✓*

4. What does Ben hear when he touches the cold metal of the locker? (paragraph 12)

- A. *A faint whispering sound ✓*
- B. The school bell
- C. Someone calling his name
- D. A door slamming

5. According to Mia, what happened to Danny? (paragraph 20)

- A. He moved to a new school.
- B. *He disappeared, and no one found out what happened to him. ✓*
- C. He switched to a different locker.
- D. He got lost in the hallway on his first day.

6. What does the janitor mutter as he walks past locker 113? (paragraph 21)

- A. "Welcome to Crestwood."
- B. "That locker is broken."
- C. *"Some doors are better left locked." ✓*
- D. "Hurry up, you'll be late."





THE HAUNTED LOCKER

PART B: WORDS IN CONTEXT

Find each word in its paragraph. Use the words around it to figure out what it means.

7. **loomed** (paragraph 1) means:

appeared big and a little scary, like it was towering over him

8. **stammered** (paragraph 6) means:

spoke with pauses or stumbles because he was nervous

9. **lingering** (paragraph 21) means:

staying on something longer than usual

PART C: THE AUTHOR'S SIMILES

A simile compares two things using *like* or *as*. Explain what each one means.

10. "Each new school felt the same—like stepping into a game where everyone else already knew the rules but forgot to share them with him." (paragraph 2)

Being the new kid feels confusing and lonely, because everyone else already knows how things work.

11. "The eerie feeling clung to him like a shadow." (paragraph 26)

Ben can't shake the creepy feeling. It follows him wherever he goes.





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PART D: THINK IT THROUGH

Answer in complete sentences. Name the paragraph your evidence comes from.

12. How does the author make locker 113 seem creepy? Use two details from two different paragraphs.

Any two: it sits in a shadowy corner where the lights seem dimmer (10); it makes Ben's skin crawl (11); he hears whispering when he touches it (12); it smells damp and earthy (13); the last kid who used it disappeared (20); the janitor says some doors are better left locked (21).

13. Is Mia trying to scare Ben, warn him, or both? Explain, using evidence from the chapter.

Both is the strongest answer. She teases him with a smirk and says "Maybe. Maybe not" (18, 25), but her playful glint is gone when she talks about Danny (20), and she tells him, "Just be careful, okay?" (25).

14. WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

The chapter ends with Ben thinking, "Some secrets should stay locked away." What do you think happens next? Use two clues from the chapter.

Answers will vary. Strong predictions use clues such as the whispering (12), Danny's disappearance (20), or the janitor's warning (21), for example: Ben finds out what happened to Danny, or the voices in the locker get stronger.

