



Did you know that a website you probably use *every single day* could be the key overcoming your [writer's block](#) and unleashing an endless supply of juicy story ideas?

Well, you probably had an inkling I'd say something like that based on the title of this post, but it's true: **Wikipedia** is a powerhouse of writing inspiration ... if you use it the right way.

One of the benefits of working in IT is that I spend all day poking around the deep dark recesses of various technologies, including common websites. This may sound boring or even scary to non-techies, but it has a *huge* carryover to other parts of life.

In the case of Wikipedia, that means taking full advantage of the supersite's features to rouse your creativity.

While the veracity of the information on Wikipedia has come under attack in some circles, I generally find it to be pretty darn accurate. I also tend to trust

the open-source, crowd-sourced nature of the fact-checking mechanisms Wikipedia has in place. Throw up some BS, and *someone* is going to call you out on it.

Besides, who cares about absolute truth when you're trolling for your next **story concept?**

What you need at that moment — when your **muse** has dropped you like a scorching Aaron Rodgers pass — are ideas.

And boy, does Wikipedia deliver on that front. *Big time.*

You just have to know how to use it the right way, like a writer.

Here's the scoop ...

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Chapter 2

Search

If you have a basic concept in your mind but need some help zeroing in on specifics, the Wikipedia search engine can help. To get started, navigate to the [Wikipedia main page](#):

WIKIPEDIA

The Free Encyclopedia

English

5 323 000+ articles

日本語

1 044 000+ 記事

Deutsch

2 016 000+ Artikel

Русский

1 363 000+ статей

Italiano

1 323 000+ voci

Português

951 000+ artigos

Español

1 306 000+ artículos

Français

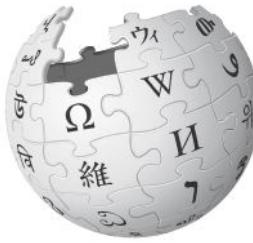
1 829 000+ articles

中文

918 000+ 條目

Polski

1 201 000+ haset

 EN ▾

Read Wikipedia in your language ▾

by the Wikimedia
nonprofit organization that also
supports other projects.



Commons

Freely usable photos & more



Wikivoyage

Free travel guide



Wiktionary

Free dictionary

Let's say I want to write a short story about ghosts, but I'm not sure what my plot should be. If I start typing "ghost" in the search box, Wikipedia will suggest some results:

WIKIPEDIA

The Free Encyclopedia

English

5 323 000+ articles

日本語

1 044 000+ 記事

Deutsch

2 016 000+ Artikel

Русский

1 363 000+ статей

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1 306 000+ artículos

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1 829 000+ articles

中文

918 000+ 條目

Português

951 000+ artigos

Polski

1 201 000+ haset

ghost

EN ▾



Ghost

soul or spirit of a dead person or animal that can appear to the living



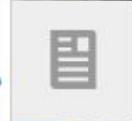
Ghostbusters (2016 film)

2016 US comedy film



Ghostbusters

1984 US comedy film



Ghost Rider



Ghost town

abandoned village, town or city, usually one which contains substantial visible remains

ia
n that also



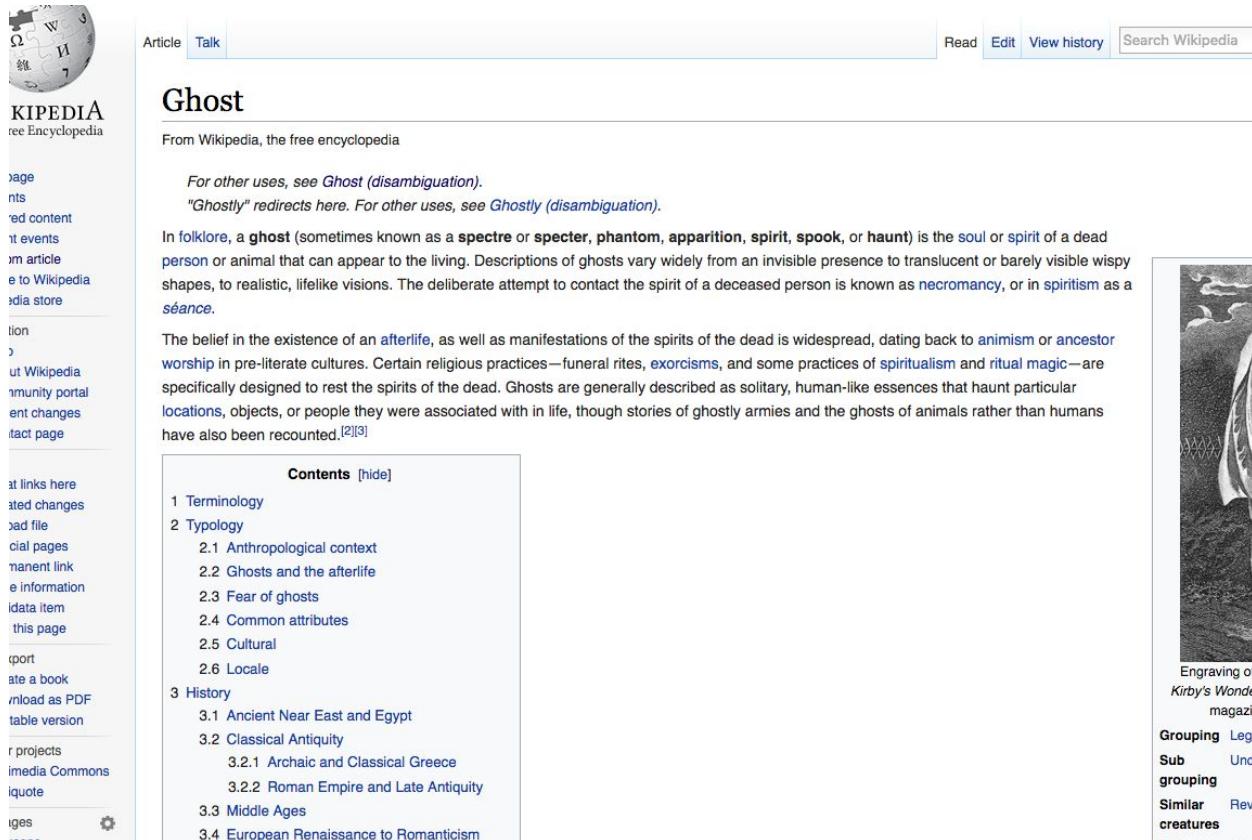
ay
apps



compendium

If none of those headings spark an idea, you can perform the full search by clicking the magnifying glass or pressing the “Enter” key.

The problem with doing this is that Wikipedia is smart and will take you directly to the page it thinks you want — usually because the phrase you typed corresponds directly with the name of an existing Wikipedia page. In this case, you get the full “Ghost” entry:



The screenshot shows the Wikipedia article for "Ghost". The page title is "Ghost" and it is from the free encyclopedia. The page content discusses the concept of a ghost in folklore, mentioning its soul or spirit of a dead person or animal that can appear to the living. It also covers the history of ghosts in various cultures, from ancient Near East and Egypt to the European Renaissance. A sidebar on the left provides navigation links like "Contents", "Terminology", "Typology", and "History". A sidebar on the right features an engraving of Kirby's Wonda magazir and links for grouping, sub-grouping, similar creatures, and more.

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

For other uses, see Ghost (disambiguation).
"Ghostly" redirects here. For other uses, see Ghostly (disambiguation).

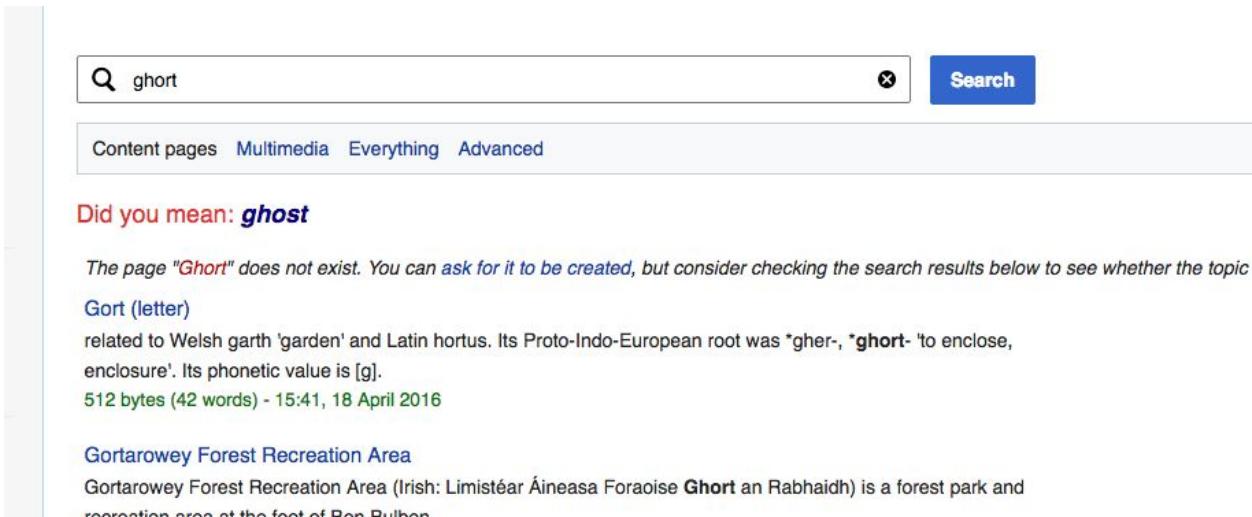
In folklore, a **ghost** (sometimes known as a **spectre** or **specter**, **phantom**, **apparition**, **spirit**, **spook**, or **haunt**) is the soul or spirit of a dead person or animal that can appear to the living. Descriptions of ghosts vary widely from an invisible presence to translucent or barely visible wispy shapes, to realistic, lifelike visions. The deliberate attempt to contact the spirit of a deceased person is known as **necromancy**, or in spiritism as a **séance**.

The belief in the existence of an **afterlife**, as well as manifestations of the spirits of the dead is widespread, dating back to **animism** or **ancestor worship** in pre-literate cultures. Certain religious practices—funeral rites, **exorcisms**, and some practices of **spiritualism** and **ritual magic**—are specifically designed to rest the spirits of the dead. Ghosts are generally described as solitary, human-like essences that haunt particular locations, objects, or people they were associated with in life, though stories of ghostly armies and the ghosts of animals rather than humans have also been recounted.^{[2][3]}

Contents [hide]

- 1 Terminology
- 2 Typology
 - 2.1 Anthropological context
 - 2.2 Ghosts and the afterlife
 - 2.3 Fear of ghosts
 - 2.4 Common attributes
 - 2.5 Cultural
 - 2.6 Locale
- 3 History
 - 3.1 Ancient Near East and Egypt
 - 3.2 Classical Antiquity
 - 3.2.1 Archaic and Classical Greece
 - 3.2.2 Roman Empire and Late Antiquity
 - 3.3 Middle Ages
 - 3.4 European Renaissance to Romanticism

This page is jammed full with information, and you can likely use the other methods I describe below to pull out a great story idea. But if you want to see the full list of search results, you can “trick” the search engine by using a misspelling of your main query. In this case, I typed “ghort.” Wikipedia gave me a list of results containing that word fragment but also presented a valuable “Did you mean”:



ghort

Search

Content pages Multimedia Everything Advanced

Did you mean: **ghost**

The page "**Ghort**" does not exist. You can [ask for it to be created](#), but consider checking the search results below to see whether the topic

[Gort \(letter\)](#)

related to Welsh garth 'garden' and Latin hortus. Its Proto-Indo-European root was *gher-, *ghort- 'to enclose, enclosure'. Its phonetic value is [g].

512 bytes (42 words) - 15:41, 18 April 2016

[Gortarowey Forest Recreation Area](#)

Gortarowey Forest Recreation Area (Irish: Limistéar Áineasa Foraoise **Ghort** an Rabhaidh) is a forest park and recreation area at the foot of Ben Bulben

Of course, I did indeed mean, “ghost,” and I clicked that heading to reveal the full set of search results:



Special page

ghost

Search results

ghost

[Content pages](#) [Multimedia](#) [Everything](#) [Advanced](#)

There is a page named "**Ghost**" on Wikipedia

Ghost

other uses, see **Ghost** (disambiguation). "Ghostly" redirects here. For other uses, see **Ghostly** (disambiguation).

In folklore, a **ghost** (sometimes known

[82 KB \(9,845 words\)](#) - 17:34, 11 February 2017

Ghost (disambiguation)

A **ghost** is a spirit of a dead person that may appear to the living. **Ghost** or **Ghosts** may also refer to: **Ghost** lineage, an inferred phylogenetic lineage

[10 KB \(1,051 words\)](#) - 16:15, 2 January 2017

Ghost Rider

For other uses, see **Ghost Rider** (disambiguation). **Ghost Rider** is the name of several fictional supernatural antiheroes appearing in American comic books

[43 KB \(5,951 words\)](#) - 10:42, 5 February 2017

List of **ghost** films

Ghost movies and shows can fall into a wide range of genres, including romance, comedy, horror, juvenile interest, and drama. Depictions of **ghosts** are

[28 KB \(971 words\)](#) - 06:10, 5 February 2017

Space Ghost

original 1960s TV series, see **Space Ghost** (TV series). For the 1990s revival series, see **Space Ghost Coast to Coast**. **Space Ghost** is a fictional character created

[13 KB \(1,396 words\)](#) - 03:54, 9 February 2017

From there, you can read through the list of ghost-related results and click on any that look interesting until you figure out what you want to write.

You can also generate a list of search results by adding more terms to your base word. For instance, “ghost sightings” yields this list of pages:



Special page

ghost sightings

Search results

ghost sightings ×

[Content pages](#) [Multimedia](#) [Everything](#) [Advanced](#)

The page "[Ghost sightings](#)" does not exist. You can ask for it to be created, but consider checking the search results below to see whether the topic is already covered.

Iron sights

Aperture sights, also known as peep sights, range from the **ghost ring sight**, whose thin ring blurs to near invisibility (hence **ghost**), to target aperture

31 KB (4,391 words) - 10:04, 29 January 2017

Ghost rockets

Investigations concluded that many **ghost rocket sightings** were probably caused by meteors. For example, the peaks of the **sightings**, on the 9 and 11 August 1946

15 KB (2,115 words) - 22:17, 1 April 2016

Sightings: Heartland Ghost

Sightings: Heartland Ghost is a 2002 film based on the TV series **Sightings** and inspired by true events. The film was written by Phil Penningroth and directed

4 KB (179 words) - 15:42, 17 February 2015

The Vermont Ghost Guide

Vermont **Ghost Guide** is a comprehensive paranormal travel guide published in 2000 that documents all of the major hauntings and **ghost-sightings** in Vermont

1 KB (133 words) - 14:55, 3 October 2016

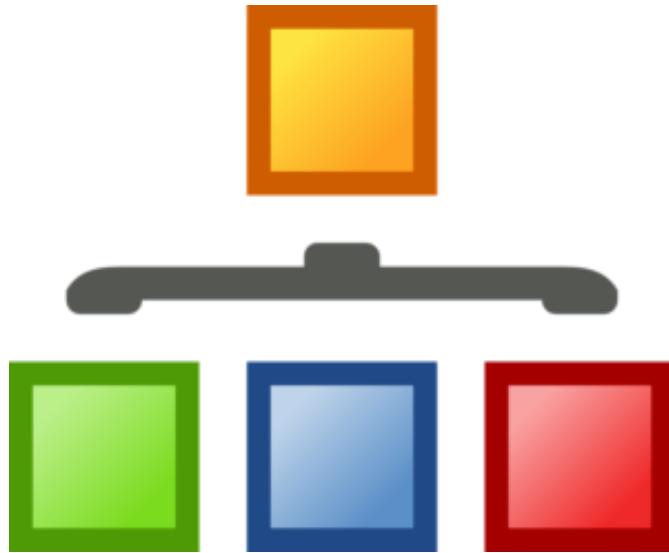
Sightings (TV series)

of **Sightings** episodes There have been three home video releases of the **Sightings** television show: **Sightings:**

The UFO Report, **Sightings: The Ghost Report**

As you can see, there is no “ghost sightings” page, which is why you get a full listing.

(Return to [Table of Contents](#))



Chapter 3

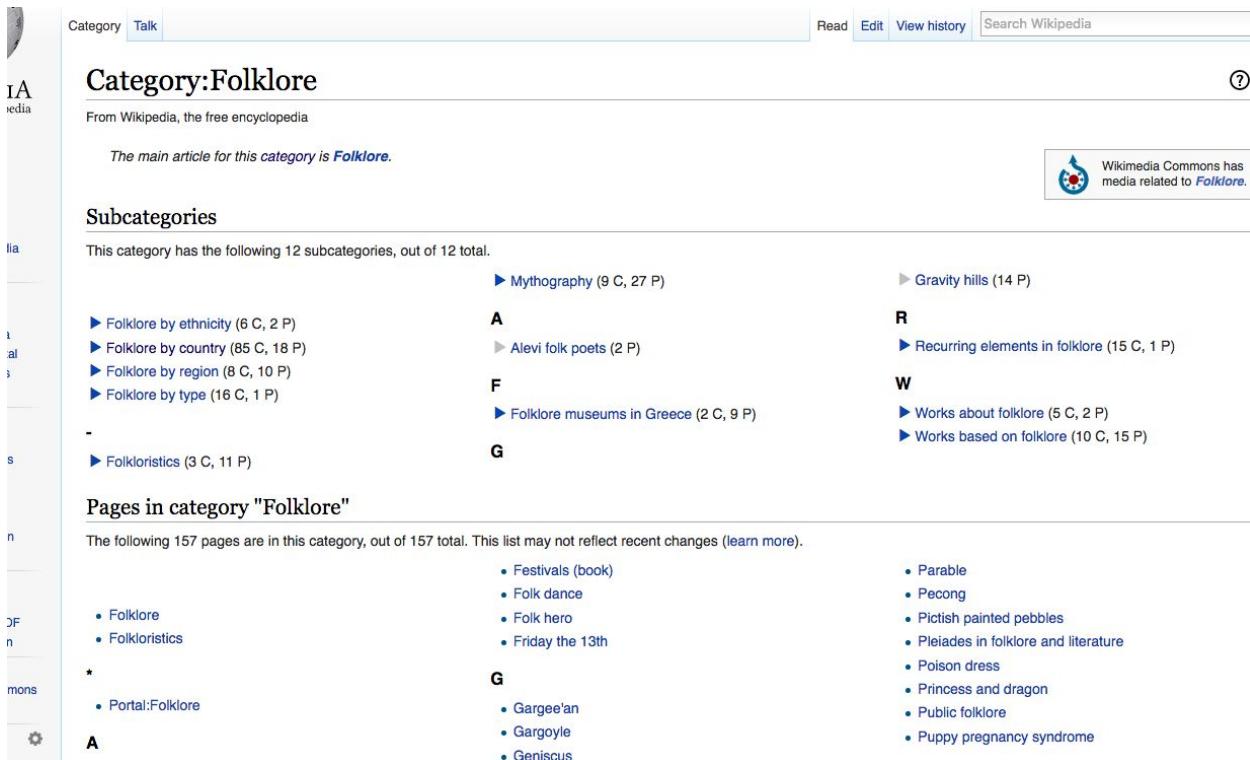
Categories and Subcategories

If you're *really* struggling to come up with a story concept and need a smorgasbord of ideas to help you brainstorm, Wikipedia is a godsend. One of the best places to start is in on the [Categories page](#):

Culture and the arts (see in all page types)		edit watch
<i>Main categories: Culture and Arts</i>		
Culture and Humanities • Classics • Critical theory • Cultural anthropology • Folklore • Food culture • Food and drink • Languages • Literature • Museology • Mythology • Philosophy • Popular culture • Science and culture • Traditions		
Arts and Entertainment • Arts and crafts • Celebrity • Censorship in the arts • Festivals • Humor • Literature • Museums • Parties • Poetry		
Performing arts • Circus • Dance • Film • Music • Opera • Storytelling • Theatre		
Visual arts • Architecture • Comics • Crafts • Design • Drawing • Film (Animation) • New media art • Painting • Photography • Sculpture		
Games and Toys • Board games • Card games • Dolls • Puppetry • Puzzles • Role-playing games • Video games		
Sports and Recreation • Air sports • American football • Association football • Auto racing • Baseball • Basketball • Boating • Boxing • Canoeing • Cricket • Cycling • Exercise • Fishing • Golf • Gymnastics • Hobbies • Horse racing • Ice hockey • Lacrosse • Olympic Games • Rugby league • Rugby union • Sailing • Skiing • Swimming • Tennis • Track and field • Walking trails • Water sports • Whitewater sports		
Mass media • Broadcasting • Film • Internet • Magazines • Newspapers • Publications • Publishing • Television • Radio		
Geography and places (see in all page types)		edit watch
<i>Main categories: Geography and Places</i>		
Earth • World • Bodies of water • Cities • Communities • Continents • Countries • Deserts • Lakes • Landforms • Mountains • Navigation • Oceans • Populated places • Protected areas • Regions • Rivers • Subterranea • Territories • Towns • Villages		
Health and fitness (see in all page types)		edit watch
<i>Main categories: Health, Self care, and Healthcare occupations</i>		
Self care • Health promotion • Life extension • Prevention • Sexual health • Sleep • Skin Care		
Nutrition • Dietary supplements • Dietetics • Nutrients (Amino acids • Minerals • Nootropics • Phytochemicals • Vitamins) • Nutritional advice pyramids		

As you might expect, this page lists all of the top-level categories on Wikipedia. From here, you can browse through the titles until one catches your eye or until a story idea pops out at you.

When I scanned down this page while writing this piece, I thought Folklore looked interesting, so I clicked into it:



The screenshot shows the Category:Folklore page on Wikipedia. At the top, there are tabs for 'Category' and 'Talk'. To the right are links for 'Read', 'Edit', 'View history', and a search bar. Below the title 'Category:Folklore' is a link to the main article 'Folklore'. A sidebar on the left lists categories like 'IA media', 'Subcategories', and 'Pages in category "Folklore"'. The main content area starts with a section titled 'Subcategories' which lists 12 subcategories: 'Folklore by ethnicity', 'Folklore by country', 'Folklore by region', 'Folklore by type', 'Mythography', 'Alevi folk poets', 'Folklore museums in Greece', 'Folkloristics', 'Gravity hills', 'Recurring elements in folklore', 'Works about folklore', and 'Works based on folklore'. Below this is a section titled 'Pages in category "Folklore"' which lists 157 pages, including 'Folklore', 'Folkloristics', 'Friday the 13th', 'Portal:Folklore', 'Gargoyles', 'Geniscus', 'Parable', 'Pecong', 'Pictish painted pebbles', 'Pleiades in folklore and literature', 'Poison dress', 'Princess and dragon', 'Public folklore', and 'Puppy pregnancy syndrome'. There are also sections for 'A', 'F', 'G', and 'R'.

This gave me a list of subcategories and pages all related to Folklore. Subcategories break down the topic further, while pages are the individual entries for the topics listed. In this case, I decided to check out the “Folklore by country” subcategory:

Category:Folklore by country

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Folklore by nationality

See also [Category:Folklore by region](#).



Subcategories

This category has the following 85 subcategories, out of 85 total.

- ▶ [Fairy tales by country](#) (40 C)
- ▶ [Legends by country](#) (40 C)

A

- ▶ [Albanian folklore](#) (2 C, 17 P)
- ▶ [American folklore](#) (21 C, 334 P)
- ▶ [Argentine folklore](#) (2 C, 12 P)
- ▶ [Armenian folklore](#) (3 C)
- ▶ [Australian folklore](#) (6 C, 50 P)
- ▶ [Austrian folklore](#) (2 C, 6 P)
- ▶ [Azerbaijani folklore](#) (2 C, 5 P)

B

- ▶ [Bangladeshi folklore](#) (1 C)

- ▶ [English folklore](#) (25 C, 158 P)
- ▶ [Estonian folklore](#) (2 C, 6 P)

F

- ▶ [Finnish folklore](#) (3 C, 7 P)
- ▶ [French folklore](#) (12 C, 52 P)
- ▶ [Fujian folklore](#) (1 P)

G

- ▶ [Georgian folklore](#) (1 C, 1 P)
- ▶ [German folklore](#) (15 C, 60 P)
- ▶ [Ghosts by country](#) (10 C)
- ▶ [Greek folklore](#) (4 C, 14 P)
- ▶ [Guatemalan folklore](#) (16 P)

H

- ▶ [Mexican folklore](#) (12 C, 48 P)

N

- ▶ [Nepalese folklore](#) (10 P)
- ▶ [New Zealand folklore](#) (1 C)

P

- ▶ [Pakistani folklore](#) (7 C, 30 P)
- ▶ [Polish folklore](#) (4 C, 21 P)
- ▶ [Portuguese folklore](#) (2 C, 8 P)
- ▶ [Puerto Rican folklore](#) (2 C, 14 P)

R

- ▶ [Romanian folklore](#) (5 C, 18 P)
- ▶ [Folklore of Russia](#) (1 C)
- ▶ [Russian folklore](#) (9 C, 40 P)

This page further explodes the topic, giving me a list of subcategories to explore. I chose to dig into [American folklore](#) since most of my stories are set in the US.

Category:American folklore

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

[Help](#)

The main article for this category is [Folklore of the United States](#).

See also: [Category:American folk dances](#).

For the traditional folklore of the Native American peoples, see [Category:Mythologies of the indigenous peoples of North America](#).



Subcategories

This category has the following 21 subcategories, out of 21 total.

- ▶ [Folklore of the United States by state](#) (16 C, 2 P)
- ▶ [Folklore of the Southern United States](#) (2 C, 25 P)
- [American folklorists](#) (180 P)

A

- ▶ [American deities](#) (2 C)
- ▶ [American fairy tales](#) (8 P)
- ▶ [American folklore legendary creatures](#) (3 C, 47 P)
- ▶ [American ghosts](#) (1 C, 41 P)
- ▶ [American legendary creatures](#) (1 C)

B

- ▶ [Bigfoot](#) (1 C, 38 P)
- ▶ [Cultural depictions of Billy the Kid](#) (1 C, 15 P)
- ▶ [Paul Bunyan](#) (12 P)

F

- ▶ [American folklore films and television series](#) (1 C, 21 P)

H

- ▶ [Fictional hillbillies](#) (1 C, 21 P)

J

- ▶ [Casey Jones](#) (8 P)

L

- ▶ [American legends](#) (2 C, 11 P)
- ▶ [Louisiana Voodoo](#) (1 C, 10 P)

M

- ▶ [Mothman](#) (6 P)

N

- ▶ [Native Americans in popular culture](#) (7 C, 46 P)

O

- ▶ [American outlaws](#) (4 C, 67 P)

S

- ▶ [Santa Claus](#) (3 C, 49 P)
- ▶ [Superstitions of the United States](#) (1 C, 3 P)

Pages in category "American folklore"

The following 200 pages are in this category, out of 334 total. This list may not reflect recent changes (learn more).

(previous page) [\(next page\)](#)

Here, we see even more subcategories — Wikipedia is incredibly deep and broad in its coverage, which is precisely why it's such a valuable resource for writers.

In this case, though, I decided to peruse the list of actual pages to see if anything grabbed me:

gesch ски з	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• African-American folktales• Agropelter• Josephine Airey• Clay Allison• Altamaha-ha• American Folklife Center• American Folklore Society• American Folkways series• American frontier• <i>American Old West</i>• Animal Fair (song)• Anvil firing• Apache tears• Johnny Appleseed• AVM Runestone	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Gregorio Cortez• Courre des bois• Courir de Mardi Gras• Cowboy• John Wallace Crawford• John C. Cremony• Crichton Leprechaun• Davy Crockett• Katherine Cross• Crybaby Bridge• Curse of Rocky Colavito• Curse of the Bambino• Curse of the Billy Goat• Curse of the Black Sox	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Thomas S. Hinde• Doc Holliday• Hoodoo (folk magic)• Hoop snake• Frank Hopkins• Tom Horn• Hot foot powder• Mose Humphrey• Sam Hide
t	B <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dorothy Baker (madam)• Ball-tailed cat• Antonine Barada• Sam Bass (outlaw)• Ann Bassett• Roy Bean• Bear Lake (Idaho–Utah)• Beast of Bray Road• Tony Beaver• James Beckwourth• Chalkley Beeson• Bell Witch• William Bernard• Big Nose Kate• Rinfurt	D <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Kit Dalton• <i>Danville's Lost Gold Ledge</i>• Virginia Dare• Dark Watchers• Davy Jones' Locker• Deadwood Dick• Deadwood, South Dakota• Devils Tower• The Dozens• Eva Emery Dye	I <ul style="list-style-type: none">• I'll Fly Away• I've Been Working on the Railroad• In the Jailhouse Now• Iron Mountain (riverboat)• Iron Mountain Baby
nglish ратски / вачки	E <ul style="list-style-type: none">• James Earp• Morgan Earp• Newton Earp	J <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Jack (hero)• Jackalope• James T. Staples• Frank James• Jesse James• Calamity Jane• <i>Janni's chimney</i>• Don Pedro Jarillo• Jarbridge Stage Robbery• Jesse James Home Museum• John Henry (musical)• John the Conqueror• John Wesley Hardin in popular culture	
Edit links			

There is a ton of potentially juicy story fodder here, and the best part is that I haven't even heard of many of these. I'll bet that clicking through to just about any page would present me with at least one great idea for my next story. I'm a sucker for witches, though, so I clicked on "Bell Witch":

Bell Witch

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

For the 2007 film, see *Bell Witch: The Movie*. For the 2013 film, see *The Bell Witch Haunting*. For the EP by Mercyful Fate, see *The Bell Witch (EP)*.

The **Bell Witch** or **Bell Witch Haunting** is a poltergeist legend from Southern folklore, centered on the 19th-century Bell family of Adams, Tennessee. John Bell Sr., who made his living as a farmer, resided with his family along the Red River in northwest Robertson County in an area currently within the town of Adams. According to legend, from 1817-1821, his family and the local area came under attack by an invisible entity subsequently described as a witch. The entity was able to speak, affect the physical environment and change forms. Some accounts record the spirit with the capability to be in more than one place at a time, cross distances with rapid speed and the power of prophecy.

In 1894, newspaper editor, Martin V. Ingram, published his *Authenticated History of the Bell Witch*. The book is widely regarded as the first full length record of the legend and a primary source for subsequent treatments. The individuals recorded in the work were known historical personalities. In modern times, some skeptics have regarded Ingram's efforts as a work of historical fiction or even fraud, rather than a nascent folklore study or accurate reflection of belief in the region during the 19th century.

While not a fundamental element of the original recorded legend, the **Bell Witch Cave** in the 20th century became a source of continuing interest, belief, and generation of lore. Contemporary artistic interpretations such as in film and music have expanded the reach of the legend well beyond the regional confines of the **Southern United States**.

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- 1 Synopsis
- 2 Early written sources
 - 2.1 *The Saturday Evening Post*
 - 2.2 Murder of James Smith, 1868
 - 2.3 Haunted House, 1880
 - 2.4 Nashville Centennial Exposition
 - 2.5 Goodspeed's *History of Tennessee*
 - 2.6 Accounts from February, 1890
- 3 Martin Van Buren Ingram
 - 3.1 Biography
 - 3.2 *An Authenticated History of the Famous Bell Witch*

The Bell Witch



William Porter Attempts to Burn the Witch
(Illus. 1894)

Grouping	Legendary creature
Sub	Spirit
grouping	
Similar	Poltergeist, Jinn, Demon, Goblin creatures
Mythology	American folklore
Other	Kate name(s)
Country	United States
Region	Middle Tennessee, Pennyroyal Plateau, Panola County, Mississippi
Habitat	Unknown, Cave

Holy crap ... just before the fold, I see references to a witch, a poltergeist, a haunted house, and time travel. And that's all before I really even consider the on-page idea generators that Wikipedia offers! (see below)

(Return to [Table of Contents](#))



Chapter 4

Page Contents

Chances are that I would have come up with a plot line before I ever had the chance to even click through to the Bell Witch page. There were just too many juicy categories and subcategories for me to have made it all the way to the article level.

But if you do land on a specific Wikipedia page, you still have ample opportunities to find story ideas. Maybe even *more* opportunities, and certainly the chance at more *specific* ideas.

Let's start where we left off above, namely on the Bell Witch page:

Bell Witch

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

For the 2007 film, see *Bell Witch: The Movie*. For the 2013 film, see *The Bell Witch Haunting*. For the EP by Mercyful Fate, see *The Bell Witch (EP)*.

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William Porter Attempts to Burn the Witch
(Illus. 1894)

Grouping	Legendary creature
Sub	Spirit
grouping	
Similar	Pottergeist, Jinn, Demon, Goblin creatures
Mythology	American folklore
Other	Kate name(s)
Country	United States
Region	Middle Tennessee, Pennyroyal Plateau, Panola County, Mississippi
Habitat	Unknown, Cave

After a couple of introductory paragraphs, you'll find the table of contents for this article:

the regional confines of the Southern United States.

Contents [hide]

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- 4 Events in the 20th Century
- 5 Skeptical Evaluation
- 6 Bell Witch in culture
 - 6.1 Film
 - 6.2 Television
 - 6.3 Music and Theater
 - 6.4 Selected Bibliography
- 7 See also
- 8 Notes
- 9 External links

These are context-rich links to the various sections of the article, and the headings are often suggestive, especially for creative author types.

For instance, we're reading an article about a witch of some sort and there among the section titles is one called, "Murder of James Smith." Jeepers! Could we write a story about a witch who kills a man using not *witchcraft* but a common implement? And what if she goes on trial, *not* as a witch but for murder? Would she use her witchcraft to avoid punishment? Or would her attempts to do so lead to something even darker — like burning at the stake?

The mind reels at the possibilities, and if it doesn't, then your next step is to actually read the Wikipedia page to see what it jars loose. And if that *still* doesn't yield the results you seek, don't fret, because the Bell Witch is not finished giving.

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Chapter 5

Notes and References

One of the really cool things about Wikipedia is how heavily referenced each article is. Administrators and the broader community alike routinely police each page and mark any that doesn't present a solid bibliography of supporting references.

This is good news for you as a writer because this list of citations is a valuable repository of potential story ideas. Don't believe me? Just scroll down to the Notes section at the bottom of the [Bell Witch](#) page:

Notes [edit]

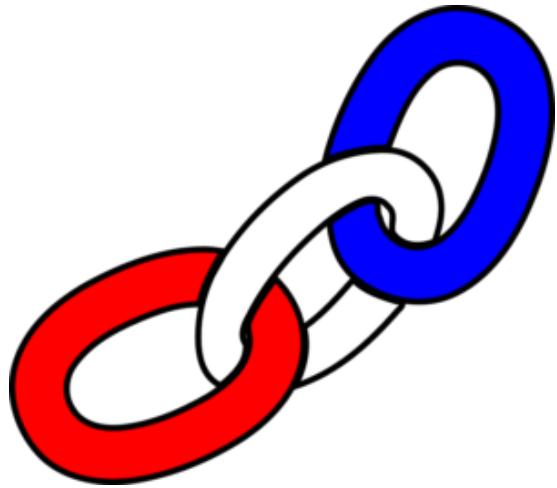
1. ^ a b Ingram, Martin (19 March 2003). "An Authenticated History of the Famous Bell Witch: Chapter 8 - Part 3". *Bell Witch Folklore Center*. Phil Norfleet. Retrieved 26 November 2016.
2. ^ Christopher R. Fee; Jeffrey B. Webb (31 August 2016). *American Myths, Legends, and Tall Tales: An Encyclopedia of American Folklore (3 Volumes)*. ABC-CLIO. pp. 99-. ISBN 978-1-61069-568-8.
3. ^ Alan Brown (26 February 2009). *Haunted Tennessee: Ghosts and Strange Phenomena of the Volunteer State*. Stackpole Books. pp. 72-. ISBN 978-0-8117-4648-9.
4. ^ Mark Moran; Mark Sceurman (1 May 2009). *Weird U.S.: Your Travel Guide to America's Local Legends and Best Kept Secrets*. Sterling Publishing Company, Inc. pp. 254-255. ISBN 978-1-4027-6688-6.
5. ^ Pat Fitzhugh (1 October 2000). *The Bell Witch: The Full Account*. The Armand Press. pp. 57, 65. ISBN 978-0-9705156-0-5.
6. ^ Charles Edwin Price (January 1994). *The Infamous Bell Witch of Tennessee*. The Overmountain Press. pp. 38-40. ISBN 978-1-57072-008-6.
7. ^ "TSLA: "Tennessee Myths and Legends"" . share.tn.gov. Retrieved 13 December 2016.
8. ^ McClure's Magazine . S.S. McClure, Limited. 1922. pp. 114-.
9. ^ McCormick, James; Macy Wyatt (2009). *Ghosts of the Bluegrass*. University Press of Kentucky. p. 94.
10. ^ Hudson, Arthur Palmer; Pete Kyle McCarter (January–March 1934). *The Bell Witch of Tennessee and Mississippi: A folk legend*. The Journal of American Folklore. pp. 45-63.
11. ^ Rosemary Ellen Guiley; Philip J. Imbrogno (8 July 2011). *The Vengeful Djinn: Unveiling the Hidden Agenda of Genies*. Llewellyn Worldwide. pp. 101-105. ISBN 978-0-7387-2881-0.
12. ^ a b Ingram, Martin (17 January 2003). "An Authenticated History of the Famous Bell Witch:Chapter 8 - Part 6". *Bell Witch Folklore Center*. Phil Norfleet. Retrieved 26 November 2016.
13. ^ "The Tennessee Ghost" . Green Mountain Freeman (Volume 13, Number 7). February 7, 1856. Retrieved 1 December 2016.
14. ^ Ingram, Martin (10 March 2003). "An Authenticated History of the Famous Bell Witch: Chapter 9". *Bell Witch Folklore Center*. Phil Norfleet. Retrieved 23 November 2016.
15. ^ "Witchcraft and Murder: Hobgoblins and Old Gray Horses the Incentive to Crime" . *The Courier-Journal*. September 21, 1868. p. 1. Retrieved November 30, 2016 – via Newspapers.com. ☰
36. ^ a b Nickell, Joe. "The 'Bell Witch' Poltergeist" . *Skeptical Inquirer*. Center for Inquiry. Retrieved September 16, 2015.
37. ^ Ingram, Martin (3 October 2002). "An Authenticated History of the Famous Bell Witch: Chapter 11". *Bell Witch Folklore Center*. Phil Norfleet. Retrieved 29 November 2016.
38. ^ a b c Radford, Benjamin (January–February 2012). "The Bell Witch Mystery". *Skeptical Inquirer Magazine*. 36 (1): 32-33.
39. ^ Cartwright, Keith (5 January 2016). "Jackson's Villes, Squares, and Frontiers of Democracy". In Fred Hobson, Barbara Ladd. *The Oxford Handbook of the Literature of the U.S. South*. Oxford University Press. pp. 91-92. ISBN 978-0-19-045511-8. Retrieved 19 December 2016.
40. ^ "Will Tennessee's Terrible 'Bell Witch' Keep It's promise". *The Cincinnati Enquirer* (Volume 9, Number 130). May 10, 1903.
41. ^ "Report from Springfield Herald". *Hopkinsville Kentuckian* (Volume 25, Number 73). September 15, 1903.
42. ^ Burns, Charles (September 29, 1935). "Farmed 'Ghost' Due Back in '35 After 107 Year Absence". *The Des Moines Register* (Volume 87, Number 100).
43. ^ Tucker, Jack (August 1, 1937). "Something Goes on at Adams; It May Be Kate, the Bell Witch". *The Tennessean* (Volume 32, Number 154).
44. ^ Tucker, Jack (August 4, 1937). "Form Lately Appears on Cliff Overlooking Bell Witch Cave". *The Tennessean* (Volume 82, Number 159).
45. ^ "Minister's Probe Reveals Rock Leaguers Mistook for Old Kate". *The Tennessean* (Volume 32, Number 163). August 6, 1937.
46. ^ Preston, Bill (November 28, 1965). "Has Bell Witch Returned Home?". *The Tennessean* (Volume 60, Number 211).
47. ^ McCampbell, Candy (October 30, 1977). "Is the Bell Witch a Mean Spirit?". *The Tennessean* (Volume 72, Number 205).
48. ^ Wick, Don (October 26, 1986). "Witch bothers, bewilders". *The Clarion-Ledger* (Volume 33, Number 109).
49. ^ Jarrard, David (October 27, 1986). "Bell Witch Cave too much 'story' for brave staffers". *The Tennessean* (Volume 81, Number 222).
50. ^ Maines, John (October 27, 1987). "Thar's gold in them thar witch's chills". *The Clarion-Ledger* (Volume 151, Number 180).
51. ^ "Investigate Bell Witch Cave With Ghost Adventures" . Travel Channel. Retrieved

How about some of these snippets as writing prompts?

- “Hobgoblins and Old Gray Horses the Incentive to Crime”
- “A Weird Witch: More Tales of a Fishy Flavor from Adam’s Station, TN”
- “Investigate Bell Witch Cave”
- “Form Lately Appears on Cliff Overlooking Bell Witch Cave”

If none of those titles inspire you *directly*, you can click through and read the associated articles.

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Chapter 6

External Links

If by some miracle, you've made it this deep into the bowels of Wikipedia without uncovering your next story idea, you still have more options.

For example, many Wikipedia pages have a section of External Links which appear beneath the Notes area. For the Bell Witch article, we see these additional resources:

External links [edit]

- Tennessee Myths and Legends: Bell Witch [Bell Witch](#) Tennessee State Library and Archives Exhibition.
- The Bell Witch of Tennessee [A MonsterTalk episode on The Bell Witch](#).
- The Bell Witch [by researcher Pat Fitzhugh](#).
- The Historic Bell Witch Cave [Bell Witch Cave](#)
- Prairie Ghosts - The Bell Witch Cave [Bell Witch Cave](#)
- The Spirit of Red River [Bell Witch](#), research published by Jack Cook in 2008 that includes historical material regarding the Bell family.
- "A Witch As Was A Witch" [Bell Witch](#). article by Irvin S. Cobb for *McClure's*, published in 1922. Includes a family anecdote that his great grandfather witnessed the haunting and was convinced of the legitimacy.
- The Bell Witch [WSM Tall Tales](#) radio broadcast October 6, 1953.
- Bell Witch Fall Festival [Bell Witch Fall Festival](#). Destination site for the annual Robertson County theater events organized by the non-profit Community Spirit, Inc.

Wikimedia Commons has media related to [Bell Witch](#).

Categories: American folklore | Curses | Folklore of the Southern United States | American ghosts | Robertson County, Tennessee | Supernatural legends | Witchcraft

This page was last modified on 21 January 2017 at 05:27.

Plenty of supplemental fodder in those headlines but, again, you can always click through and read the full articles.

These entries are resources related to the main Wikipedia page you're reading that weren't necessarily cited in the text. They're nevertheless valuable fonts of ideas, and they take all kinds of forms — articles, books, videos, audio recordings, etc.

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Chapter 7

Wikimedia Commons Images

You might have noticed the “Wikimedia Commons” box in the upper righthand corner of the External Links screenshot in the previous section:



Click that baby and you'll land on a page full of images related to the article you're reading. In the case of Bell Witch, we see this:

CATEGORY: BELL WITCH

From Wikimedia Commons, the free media repository

Media in category "Bell Witch"

The following 8 files are in this category, out of 8 total.

Image	Name	Size
	Authenticated History of the Bell Witch, 1961 Reproduction.jpg	1.43 MB
	Bell Witch signs.JPG	583 KB
	Bell-Cabin-Adams-tn1.jpg	3.18 MB
	Bell-Witch-THC-marker-tn1.jpg	5.28 MB
	Bellhome.jpg	94 KB
	Betsy.jpg	53 KB
	Johnsdeath.jpg	70 KB
	WmPorterBurnWitch.jpg	124 KB

Those images should look familiar because they're the ones that accompany the Bell Witch Wikipedia page. In case you missed them along the way, here are those pics:

AUTHENTICATED HISTORY

—OF THE—

BELL WITCH

*And Other Stories of the World's Greatest
Unexplained Phenomenon.*

—BY—

M. V. INGRAM.

Authenticated History of the Bell Witch, Rare Book Reprints, 1961. Also known as "The Red Book."



Signs at the entrance to the Bell Witch Cave promote ghost tourism in Adams, Tennessee.



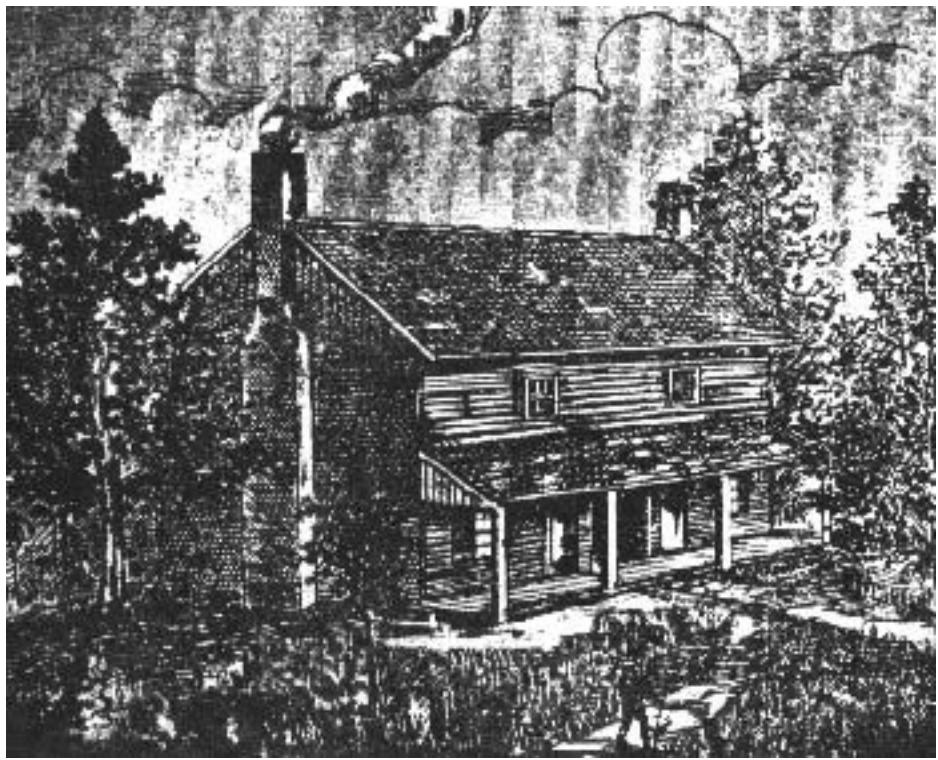
Tennessee Historical Commission marker along U.S. Route 41 in Adams, Tennessee.



The death of John Bell, December, 1820. Illustration first published in 1894.



An artist's drawing of Betsy Bell, originally published in 1894



An artist's sketching of the Bell home, originally published in 1894

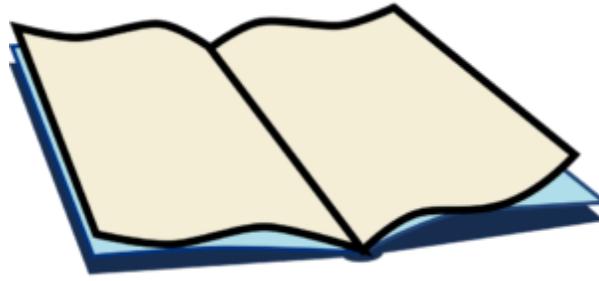


William Porter Attempts to Burn the Witch (Illus. 1894)

And if none of **these** get your juices flowing? I don't know, man ... it might be time to question your commitment to this whole "creative process" thing.

Seriously, though, Wikipedia is *still* not done giving, believe it or not.

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Chapter 8

Related Pages and Categories

The Internet is notorious for swallowing up whole swaths of time. You sit down to research how to do client-side consistency checks using JavaScript and the next thing you know, three hours have passed and your computer screen is filled with cat videos, Chuck Norris memes, and the latest TED Talk about getting more done through religious ritual.

The problem is that the Internet is sublimely **hyperlinked** — you can get from here to there to *there* with just a few clicks and sketchy semantical connections between concepts.

If you've ever spent much time on Wikipedia, you know that it's a microcosm for the Internet itself. In particular, Wikipedia is exquisitely *intraconnected*, making it easy to jump from idea to idea without ever leaving the site.

One way it does this is with the block of links to related Wikipedia resources that accompanies many pages, down near the bottom under External Links. You can see this in action with [Ghost page](#) we ran into earlier:

• 14 Degrees - A Paranormal Documentary - FULL LENGTH! on YouTube		 Wiktionary, the free dictionary.
V*T*E	Oscar Wilde's "The Canterville Ghost"	[show]
V*T*E	Ghosts	[hide]
	List of ghosts	
Manifestations	Haunted locations · Haunted highways · Haunted house · Haunted trains · Haunted ships · Hungry ghost · Phantom vehicle · Poltergeist · Residual haunting · Vengeful ghost	
By culture	Ghosts in Bengali culture · Ghosts in English-speaking cultures · Ghosts in Spanish-speaking cultures · Western: Canada · Caribbean · Colombia (La Candelaria) · France · Mexican (locations · Day of the Dead) · Slavic folklore · Romania · United Kingdom (Scotland) · United States (Washington, D.C.)	
Asian	South Asian · Bengali · Burmese · Chinese (locations · Ghost Festival) · Filipino (locations) · India · Japanese (Onryo) · Korean · Malay · Thai · Tibetan · Vietnamese · North America: Navajo (Ghost sickness) · Ghost Dance · Oceania: Maori · Polynesian	
History	Mesopotamian · Ancient Egyptian culture · Classical Antiquity	
Parapsychology	Apparitional experience · Electronic voice phenomenon (kaidan) · Ghost hunting · Séance (Mediumship) · Spirit photography	
Popular culture	Films about ghosts (India) · Stories about ghosts · Halloween · Samhain · Paranormal television	
Court cases	Booby v Barnaby	
Related	Fear of ghosts · Spectrophilia · Spiritualism (Spiritism) · The Ghost Club	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Category	
V*T*E	Theology	[show]

There are tons of additional, related links in that block, and many of the names themselves are evocative enough to get your creative juices dripping — haunted highways, vengeful ghost, spirit photography, phantom vehicle, and on and on. But if those titles don't do it for you, just click on one to be transported to the corresponding Wikipedia page.

And just below this block of “relateds”? A list of categories (our old friends) to which the page belongs:

Categories: [Ghosts](#) | [Supernatural legends](#) | [Undead](#)

Click one and the process — and flow of ideas — starts all over again.

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Chapter 9

Random Articles

If you don't have an idea for your next story and you don't want to take the time to comb through a list of categories, you can use one of my favorite features of Wikipedia: the "Random article" link.

To access this functionality, just look in the upper left-hand corner of any Wikipedia page. Here's what it looks like on the Bell Witch page:

WIKIPEDIA

The Free Encyclopedia

Main page
Contents
Featured content
Current events
[Random article](#)
Donate to Wikipedia
Wikipedia store

Interaction
Help
About Wikipedia
Community portal
Recent changes
Contact page

Tools

Bell Wit

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

For the 2007

The **Bell Witch** (also known as the Bell Witch) is a legendary entity reported along the Red River in Tennessee. It is described as a woman who moves with great speed and the power of suggestion.

In 1894, newspaper reports of the entity's activities were published. The individuals reporting the sightings were not accurate reflectors of reality.

While not a fundamental belief, the legend has been depicted in film and music.

Once you locate the link, just click it, and Wikipedia will whisk you away to a — you guessed it — *random* page on the site. Here's what I got when I randomized off of Bell Witch:



Article Talk

Read Edit View history Search Wikipedia

Dimer W. Reaves

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Dimer W. Reaves (also known as Denmore Rives)^[1] was a soldier in the Texas Army during the Texas Revolution, noted for a daring action during the Battle of San Jacinto that helped seal the decisive Texian victory.

Contents [hide]
1 Biography
2 See also
3 References
4 Sources

Biography [edit]

Dimer W. Reaves arrived in Texas in June 1835. He enlisted in the Texas army and served in Captain Henry Wax Karnes' Company of Cavalry and was a member of the party that destroyed Vince's Bridge. The others who were with him on that mission were Deaf Smith, Young Perry Alsbury, John Coker, John T. Garner, Moses Lapham and Edwin R. Rainwater. For his service in the war he received one-third of a league of land in Nacogdoches County, Texas. On November 4, 1839, he married Elizabeth Jordan, the daughter of Alexander and Nancy Jordan. Alexander Jordan was a prominent land owner with a plantation of over one thousand acres (4 km²) in the southern part of Rusk County, Texas, where he also operated a twenty-saw cotton gin. After his father-in-law died on December 3, 1839, Dimer Reaves lived with his wife on the Jordan plantation and looked after the management of the farm until he died there in July 1847.^[2]

See also [edit]

- John Coker
- Young Perry Alsbury
- John T. Garner
- Moses Lapham
- Edwin R. Rainwater
- Vince's Bridge



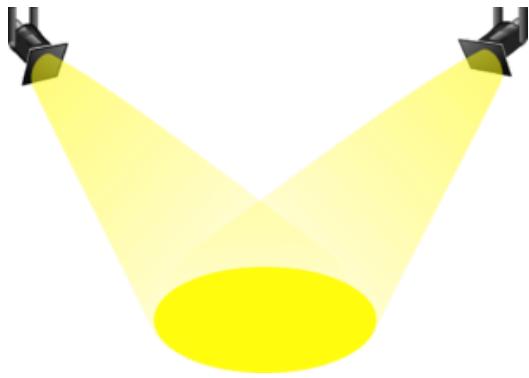
Hmmmm a Texas war hero whose heroics helped decide the Texas Revolution? I think I can do something with that.

But even if a plot doesn't immediately spring from the page on which you land, you can use all the drill-down methods we discussed above to further stoke your fires.

And you can always just jump to *another* random page.

If you don't want to actually visit Wikipedia first in order to access the dandy random link, you can just [go there directly](#). Of course, where "there" is will be up to the discretion of the Wikipedia robots.

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Chapter 10

Featured Content

If you look back at the block of links in the upper left-hand corner of the Bell Witch page — or any Wikipedia page — you'll see a couple others that are worth noting when you're looking for story ideas.

First up is “Featured content”:

A screenshot of a sidebar from a Wikipedia page. The sidebar contains several links: Main page, Contents, Featured content, Current events, Random article, Donate to Wikipedia, and Wikipedia store. Below this is a horizontal line, followed by Interaction and Help. The 'Featured content' link is underlined and appears to be the active or selected link.

Click [that link](#) and you'll see a page of content curated by Wikipedia and considered to be among the best the site has to offer:



Portal Talk

Read View source View history

Search Wikipedia

Portal:Featured content

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

28
I content
events
article
o Wikipedia
a store

n

Wikimedia
entity portal
it changes
ct page

Info here
of changes
d file
8 pages
Recent links
Information
ita item

art
r a book
oad as PDF
site version
es

Featured content in Wikipedia

Featured content represents the best of Wikipedia, including articles, pictures, and other contributions that showcase excellent results of the collaborative efforts of Wikipedia.

All featured content undergoes a thorough review process to ensure that it meets the highest standards in order to serve as the best example of our end goals.

A small bronze star (★) in the top right corner of a page indicates that the content is featured.

This page gives links to all of Wikipedia's featured content.

Featured content: —

- Featured articles
- Featured lists
- Featured pictures
- Featured portals
- Featured topics

Shortcuts:

- P:FC
WP:FX
WP:FC
WP:FEAT
WP:FEATURE

This week's *Signpost* report

FEATURED CONTENT

Three weeks dominated by articles

By Armbrust

Contribute — Share this [s]



Scroll down from there and you'll get *lots* of meat to sink your creative teeth into:

Featured articles

Twenty-eight featured articles were promoted.

- **Musidora: The Bather At the Doubtful Breeze Alarmed** (nominated by Indescent) is a name given to four nearly identical oil paintings on canvas by English artist William Etty. The paintings illustrate a scene from James Thomson's 1727 poem *Summer* in which a young man accidentally sees a young woman bathing naked, and is torn between his desire to look and his knowledge that he ought to look away. The scene was popular with English artists as it was one of the few legitimate pretenses to paint nudes at a time when the display and distribution of nude imagery was suppressed. *Musidora* was extremely well received when first exhibited, and considered one of the finest works by an English artist.
- The **2012 Tour de France** (nominated by BaldBoris) was the 99th edition of the race, one of cycling's Grand Tours. It started in the Belgian city of Liège and finished on the Champs-Élysées in Paris. The Tour consisted of 21 race stages, including an opening prologue, and covered a total distance of 3,496.9 km (2,173 mi). In addition to the prologue, the first two stages took place in Belgium, and one stage finished in Switzerland. Bradley Wiggins won the overall general classification, and became the first British rider to win the Tour.
- **Dubrovnik** (nominated by Peacemaker67) was a flotilla leader built for the Royal Yugoslav Navy by Yarrow Shipbuilders in Glasgow in 1930 and 1931. She was one of the largest destroyers of her time. Resembling contemporary British designs, *Dubrovnik* was a fast ship with a main armament of four Czechoslovak-built Škoda 140 mm (5.5 in) guns in single mounts. She was intended to be the first of three flotilla leaders built for Yugoslavia, but was the only one completed. During her service with the Royal Yugoslav Navy, *Dubrovnik* undertook several peacetime cruises through the Mediterranean, the Turkish Straits and the Black Sea. During the Axis invasion of Yugoslavia in 1941, *Dubrovnik* was captured by the Italians. After a refit, which included the replacement of some of her weapons and the shortening of her mainmast and funnels, she was commissioned into the Royal Italian Navy as *Premuda*. In Italian service she was mainly used as an escort and troop transport. In 1942, she was part of the Italian force that attacked the Allied Operation Harpoon convoy attempting to relieve the island of Malta. In 1943, she broke down and put in to Genoa for repair and a refit. In 1944, following the replacement of her armament, she was commissioned into the German Navy as a *Torpedoboot Ausland* with the designation T432. The ship saw action shelling Allied positions on the Italian coast and laying naval mines. In 1945, she took part in the Battle of the Ligurian Sea against two Royal Navy destroyers, during which she was lightly damaged. She was scuttled the following month as the Germans retreated from Genoa.
- The **2003 Cricket World Cup Final** (nominated by Venasy) was a One Day International match played between Australia and India at the Wanderers Stadium in Johannesburg, South Africa. It marked the culmination of the 2003 Cricket World Cup, the eighth edition of the tournament. It was the first time that these two teams had met at this stage of a World Cup. For defending champions Australia it was their fifth World Cup final, while for India it was the second after their 1983 victory. Australia won the match by 125 runs to claim the title for the third time.
- **SMS Schwaben** (nominated by Paraceboy) was the fourth ship of the *Wittelsbach* class of pre-dreadnought battleships of the German Imperial Navy. *Schwaben* was built at the Imperial Dockyard in Wilhelmshaven. *Schwaben* was armed with a main battery of four 24 cm (9.4 in) guns and had a top speed of 18 kn (33 kmh; 21 mph). She spent most of her career as a gunnery training ship from 1904 to 1914. After the start of World War I, the ship was mobilized with her sisters as the IV Battle Squadron. She saw limited duty in the North Sea as a guard ship and in the Baltic Sea against Russian forces. The threat from British submarines forced the ship to withdraw from the Baltic in 1916. For the remainder of the war, *Schwaben* served as an engineering training ship for navy cadets. She was retained by the Reichsmarine after the war and reactivated from 1919 until 1920, serving as a depot ship for F-type minesweepers in the Baltic. The ship was stricken from the navy list in 1921 and sold for scrapping in that year.
- **Jennifer Lawrence** (nominated by P/B TG, SNUGUMS and Krimz2.0) (born 1990) is an American actress. As of 2016, Lawrence is the highest-paid actress in the world, and her films have grossed over \$5 billion worldwide. She appeared in *Time's* 100 most influential people in the world in 2013 and *Forbes* Celebrity 100 the following year and in 2016. Lawrence is known in the media for being a vocal advocate of feminism and gender equality, and is the founder of the Jennifer Lawrence Foundation through which she supports various charitable organizations.
- **Sabre Wulf** (nominated by Czar) is an action-adventure game by Ultimate Play the Game, initially released for the ZX Spectrum home computer in 1984. The player navigates the pith-helmeted Sabreman through a 2D jungle maze while collecting amulet pieces to bypass the guardian at its exit. The player does not receive explicit guidance on how to play and is left to



Tate version of *Musidora: The Bather At the Doubtful Breeze Alarmed*



This page alone could give you enough “prompts” to fuel a year’s worth of writing, provided you’re adept at connecting *this* to *that*.

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Chapter 11

Current Events

If you like your prompting to be a bit more topical, then Wikipedia gives you a “Current events” link, also in the upper left-hand corner of each page.

Main page
Contents
Featured content
[Current events](#)
Random article
Donate to Wikipedia
Wikipedia store

Interaction
Help

Click *that* link and you'll see news stories that Wikipedia thinks you should know about:



Portal Talk

Read View source View history Search Wikipedia

Portal:Current events

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia



Worldwide current events · Sports events

Topics in the news

- Mohamed Abdullahi Mohamed (pictured) is elected President of Somalia.
- In association football, the Africa Cup of Nations concludes with Cameroon defeating Egypt in the final.
- Protests in Romania grow over the Romanian government's proposals to decriminalize certain corruption cases.
- In American football, the New England Patriots defeat the Atlanta Falcons to win Super Bowl LI, the first to go into overtime.
- The United Nations releases a report stating that the Myanmar Army has committed serious human rights violations against the Rohingya people.

Ongoing U.S. immigration suspension · Battle of Mosul

Recent deaths André Salvat · Tom Raworth · Alan Simpson · Tara Palmer-Tomkinson

February 12, 2017 (Sunday)

edit history watch

Time: 15:45

Disasters and accidents

- The New South Wales Rural Fire Service issues an emergency warning for a bush fire located to the east of Dunedoo in New South Wales, Australia. The warning comes amidst "unprecedented" fire conditions across the region, deemed to be worse than the conditions precipitating the 2009 Black Saturday bushfires in Victoria. (The Daily Telegraph) (NSW Rural Fire Service)

International relations

- North Korea and weapons of mass destruction
 - North Korea test fires a ballistic missile over the Sea of Japan. (BBC)

Politics and elections

<<	Feb
S	M
5	6
12	13
19	20
26	27

Again, scroll down to get to the meatiest part of the thing:

Disasters and accidents

- The New South Wales Rural Fire Service issues an emergency warning for a bush fire located to the east of Dunedoo in New South Wales, Australia. The warning comes amidst "unprecedented" fire conditions across the region, deemed to be worse than the conditions precipitating the 2009 Black Saturday bushfires in Victoria. (The Daily Telegraph) (NSW Rural Fire Service)

International relations

- North Korea and weapons of mass destruction
 - North Korea test fires a ballistic missile over the Sea of Japan. (BBC)

Politics and elections

- Swiss referendums, 2017
 - Voters in Switzerland go to the polls to vote on a referendum to relax citizenship rules. (BBC)
- Turkmenistani presidential election, 2017
 - Voters in Turkmenistan go to the polls for an election, with current president Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedow expected to win another term. (Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty)

edit history

February 11, 2017 (Saturday)

Armed conflicts and attacks

- War in Afghanistan (2015–present)
 - A suicide bomber kills at least seven people outside a bank in Lashkargah. (Reuters)
- Syrian Civil War, Battle of al-Bab
 - Syrian rebels and Turkish troops enter al-Bab, with Syrian troops also approaching the town, prompting heavy clashes with ISIL militants. (Al Jazeera)
- 2017 Istanbul nightclub shooting
 - Abdulkadir Masharipov is charged with murder in relation to the shootings in Istanbul that killed 39 people and is remanded in custody. Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant has claimed responsibility for the shooting. (ABC)

Disasters and accidents

- Severe flooding following five days of incessant rain causes landslides that have killed 13 people in Indonesia's West Nusa Tenggara Province. (AP)
- Over 70,000 people are evacuated from Thessaloniki, Greece, as authorities attempt to defuse a World War II-era unexploded ordnance, which was discovered last week. (The Guardian)

Politics and elections

- 2017 elections in India
 - Uttar Pradesh Legislative Assembly election

— Votes in Uttar Pradesh cast ballot in Phase 4 of the state's 2017 elections, with Phase 7, the final poll, to be held on 8 March. This will be an important test of India's民主选举系统.

As you might expect from any sort of news feed, there is lots of dark stuff here, but that doesn't mean it won't inspire you to write. Just don't blame me — or Wikipedia — if your story winds up reading like a political backlash or natural disaster recovery mission.

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Chapter 12

Conclusion

If you've never thought of Wikipedia as a source of writing ideas, you're sure to be surprised when you dig in to the methods and features discussed here. They're not perfect, and they require some work on your part, but they're very effective when it comes to courting your muse out of her hidey-hole.

This is also not an exhaustive list. Dig around the interface awhile and you're sure to discover other helpful features of Wikipedia. There are also more tech-based options we can explore, like APIs, and maybe we'll take a look at those in the future.

For now, though, these 10 nuggets should be enough to rev up your inspiration to new levels and get you writing your next great story.

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