

“The Elevator” by William Sleator: Discussion Questions and Writing Assignment

Discussion Questions:

Who do you think the woman in the story is—what do you think is the reason for her behavior? Why do you think Sleator chose to end the story the way he did?

How does Sleator create a mood and atmosphere of tension and suspense in the story? Consider these elements of the story and how they contribute to the mood and atmosphere:

- What point of view is it told from?
- What is the setting of the story, and why is it spooky?
- How is the story plotted?
- What is Martin like, and what is his relationship with his father like?
- What is the narration like? Consider Sleator’s use of language, his imagery and descriptions.
- What is the appearance of the woman like, and how does she behave in the story?
- What elements of mystery are there in the story?

Writing Assignment:

Write your own “chilling tale.” Try to make use of some of the elements of “The Elevator” that make it scary, tense, suspenseful, and disturbing—especially the language, imagery, and descriptions. Your story can be about any person, place, event, or thing that you think will allow you to write a scary story.