

**Line of Reasoning:** The complex interplay of how the thesis guides the topic sentences, transitions interrelate the paragraphs, and how all in some way relate to a unifying idea and/or message.



A Garden of English Production  
Halloween Essays



### Introduction

It's inarguably **human nature** to **explore** the unknown. This **desire** has manifested itself as sailors set to the seas to search for new lands, and as—in more recent history—astronauts have broken through the atmosphere on quests to **explore the observable universe**. And yet, the **unknown** is not limited to concrete, physical destinations; rather, it extends to how individuals wrestle with the most enigmatic area of their lives: **death**. Throughout generations, **artists** have been at the forefront of exploring and reasoning with death, in all of its forms, and this has rapidly increased recently due to the rise in the **consumption** of **entertainment**: ominous and foreboding creations have become remarkably **profitable**, especially around Halloween. Now, some argue that the consistent bombardment of horrific images and deathly contemplations is producing a society that is either overly **anxious** or **desensitized**, while others suggest that creating and consuming such media is just one of the ways that humans **learn to deal with** life and the inevitable end that claims all.

### Assignment

Carefully read the following six sources, including the introductory information for each source.

Write an essay that synthesizes material from at least three of the sources and develops your position on how commercializing **fear** and **horror** affects the ways **individuals** respond to the unknown and macabre.

### Directions:

**Make sure that your argument is central**; use the sources to illustrate and support your reasoning. Avoid merely summarizing the sources. Indicate clearly which sources you are drawing from, whether through direct quotation, paraphrase, or summary. You may cite the sources as Source A, Source B, etc., or by using the descriptions in parentheses.

- Source A (Poster)
- Source B (Jarrett)
- Source C (“How Watching”)
- Source D (“Violence”)
- Source E (Christensen)
- Source F (Keane)

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## Generate a Thesis

Generating a Complex Thesis	Against Horror-Based Entertainment	Against Horror-Based Entertainment
<p>It's now time to generate a thesis that will guide your essay. Because your essay is meant to be sophisticated, it must present compound and/or complex thoughts about the issue(s) you are discussing; consequently, your thesis should be a compound, complex, or compound-complex sentence. Feel free to use any of the general templates below (as long as they fit the prompt), or you can make sure that you include at least one of the words in italics at the bottom of this box when you construct your own thesis.</p> <p><b>Template 1 (Closed)</b> (Claim about topic) because (list reason(s)).</p> <p><b>Template 2 (Open)</b> (Claim(s) about topic) because (list unifying idea/reason).</p> <p><b>Template 3 (Open)</b> (Concession/counterargument language) (concession/counter claim), (claim about topic you will prove).</p> <p><b>Template 4 (Closed)</b> (Concession/counterargument language) (concession/counter claim), (claim about topic you will prove) because (unifying idea/reason(s)).</p>	<p><i>What affects does horror-based entertainment have on an individual's response to the unknown and macabre?</i></p> <p><i>What are the ways individuals respond to the unknown and macabre?</i></p> <p><i>What is my position about this relationship? (This will be naturally articulated when you combine your answers to questions 1 and 2 in your initial claim and thesis)</i></p> <p><b>Template 1</b> Commercializing fear and horror negatively influences human responses to the unknown and macabre <i>because such media desensitizes individuals to troubling content and normalizes culturally inappropriate gender norms.</i></p> <p><b>Template 2</b> Individuals shouldn't engage with commercialized, fear and horror-based entertainment <b>because</b> such media negatively influences human responses to the unknown and macabre.</p> <p><b>Template 3</b> <i>Although it's natural to be intrigued by the unknown, and commercialized horror-based entertainment seems like a safe way to satisfy that intrigue, the <b>greater</b> negative psychological impacts that individuals develop from consistently consuming such entertainment should make them wary of exploring the more mysterious elements of life through genre.</i></p> <p><b>Template 4</b> <b>While</b> it's natural to be intrigued by the more mysterious elements of life, individuals shouldn't engage with commercialized, fear and horror-based entertainment <b>because such media desensitizes individuals to troubling content and normalizes culturally inappropriate gender norms.</b></p>	<p><i>What affects does horror-based entertainment have on an individual's response to the unknown and macabre?</i></p> <p><i>What are the ways individuals respond to the unknown and macabre?</i></p> <p><i>What is my position about this relationship? (This will be naturally articulated when you combine your answers to questions 1 and 2 in your initial claim and thesis)</i></p> <p><b>Template 1</b> Commercializing fear and horror is beneficial to individuals <i>because doing so provides them with safe ways to explore their natural instincts that draw them toward understanding the unknown, while simultaneously allowing people to build stronger social and individual bonds.</i></p> <p><b>Template 2</b> Individuals should enjoy commercialized, horror-based entertainment <b>because</b> it provides them with safe ways to understand the mysterious elements of life.</p> <p><b>Template 3</b> <i>Although it is documented that horror-based entertainment may have negative effects on psychological health, and therefore some suggest the genre should be avoided, commercialized fear-focused media <b>actually</b> provides individuals with safe ways to explore their natural instincts that draw them toward understanding the unknown, while simultaneously allowing them to build stronger social and individual bonds.</i></p> <p><b>Template 4</b> <i>While it is documented that horror-based entertainment may have negative effects on psychological health, commercialized fear can actually be beneficial to individuals <b>because</b> such media provides them with safe ways to explore their natural instincts that draw them toward understanding the unknown, while simultaneously allowing people to build stronger social and individual bonds.</i></p>

**Template 5 (open)**

Since (concession/counter claim), and (insert another counter claim); however, (claim about topic you will prove) because (unifying idea/reason).

**Sample Factors/Issues Prompt**

Write an essay that synthesizes material from at least three of the sources and develops your position on what issues are most important for an individual to consider when making decisions about engaging with horror-based entertainment.

**Template 6 (Synthesis Only: Factors and Issues Prompts) (Closed)**

When discussing (topic of essay), (issue/factor 1), (issue/factor 2), and (issue/factor 3) are important to consider because (unifying reason(s) based on larger implications: Efficiency, Economics, Politics, Human Nature, etc.).

*Increase complexity without using a template:*

*Although* ←Implies Concession or Counterargument

*Because*

*; however,\** ←Implies Concession or Counterargument

*While* ←Implies Concession or Counterargument

*; consequently,\**

*Though* ←Implies Concession or Counterargument

*Even though* ←Implies Concession or Counterargument

*In order to*

*Until*

*Provided that*

*Since* ←Implies Concession or Counterargument

*; thus,\**

*\*Use Mid-sentence, not at the beginning*

**Template 5**

*Since it's natural to be intrigued by the unknown, it may seem as though horror-based entertainment is an acceptable and safe way to engage with the urge to explore life's enigmas; however, individuals should be wary of examining the more mysterious elements of existence through such media because consuming commercialized fear and horror has the proven ability to normalize adverse psychological and emotional reactions.*

When discussing personal engagement with horror-based entertainment, the media's social value, intrinsically violent nature, and cognitive developmental impact are important to consider **because**, though enjoying such forms of entertainment may be emotionally invigorating, embracing the genre seems to have an overall negative influence on the human psyche.

**Template 5**

*Since it's documented that horror-based entertainment may have negative effects on psychological health, it may seem like horror media should be disregarded; however, commercialized fear is beneficial to individuals because such entertainment provides them with safe ways to understand the mysterious elements of life.*

