



## AUTHOR & ILLUSTRATOR

**Christopher Edge** grew up in Manchester but now lives in Gloucestershire. Before becoming a writer, he worked as an English teacher, an editor and a publisher. He is now an award-winning author whose books have been translated into more than twenty languages. Visit his website to find out more and discover a wide range of resources associated with his books – including some book soundtracks.

**Mathias Ball** was born and raised in Canada and is a trans-identified illustrator who draws inspiration from animals, emotions and bright colours. They enjoy working out in the morning before work, baking, photography and playing Minecraft.

## WEBSITE

<https://christopheredge.co.uk/>  
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## LINKS

<https://usborne.com/gb/quicklinks/quicklink/11560-write-your-own-mystery-and-ghost-stories>

Find inspiration for writing your own spooky story.



# FEAR FILES: HIDE AND SEEK

Older Readers Shortlist 2026

## INTRODUCTION

It all starts when Adam goes on a camping trip with his best friend Sol. On the first morning, they stumble across an abandoned **ghost town** where they find themselves playing a **frightening** game of **hide and seek**. 'Ready or not, here I come' is even printed on the book's page edges. Who or what is trying to find them? The boys get separated, but Adam joins up with two other children. Together they navigate their way through a variety of scenarios as they endeavour to escape from the clutches of **the Itter**. The atmosphere remains **tense** and **claustrophobic** throughout. *Hide and Seek* is the first story from 'The Darkive: A Top-Secret Database of the Unexplained'. The second story *Trick of the Light* is due in October.

## ACTIVITIES

**Read** 'The Skeleton of a Scary Story' article on Usborne's Quicklinks site (see Links). You might want to watch the first video and then discuss the techniques Christopher Edge uses to create **suspense** in *Fear Files: Hide and Seek*.

**Write and illustrate** your own **spooky story**. If you need some inspiration, use the link to 'Pictures and Prompts' on Quicklinks (see Links).

**Create** a portrait of the Itter. The Itter is never fully shown or described in the book – his appearance is only hinted at.

## NOW READ ON

*Serial Chillers: The Witch in the Woods* by Jennifer Killick (Farshore, 2025) First in a new series from the Queen of Middle-Grade Horror.  
*Seven Ghosts* by Chris Priestley ((Barrington Stoke, 2019) Dubbed the M R James of children's literature by The Times. Dyslexia-friendly.  
*Tales of Ghosts and Hauntings: a Real-life Mysteries Reader* by Susan Martineau & Vicky Barker (b small, 2025) Investigate six terrifying tales.