

# Dracula and vampires

Halloween, when people eagerly dress up as vampires is over now, the festival of St. Andrew being a good opportunity for fortune telling and the feast of magic is approaching. And so, at our dark and dull autumn days we will stay in the mood and, today, talk about vampires. First of all let's define what the vampires actually are? According to dictionary definitions a vampire is a corpse supposed to leave its grave at night to drink the blood of the living by biting their necks with long pointed canine teeth. Of course, some of you may mention the emotional vampires as well, but it is a different story. Coming back to our subject matter though - in the distant past it was believed that people with a defect of any kind were looked at as the ones with evil and vampiric traits. Also people who had experienced a bad misfortune or even bad luck like drought, fire or even disease were considered vampiric. The vampire theory constituted an explanation why bad things had happened to good people.

Also, the vampire tales could have been created due to the misinterpretation what was going on with bodies after burials. Gases swelling the body and blood oozing from the mouth could make a dead body look as if it had recently been alive and feeding.

The suspicion that the dead ones might be responsible for the ominous events having risen from the graves made them come up with ways to secure the dead corpses in the burial places. The most widespread idea was to physically pin the body to the earth. This idea was commonly reflected in images depicting wooden stakes used to pin a vampire down to their coffin so they could no longer rise from the grave. In fact it was

not crucial to use the wood, as according to legends, vampires fear iron more, so an iron stack could have been even more effective.

Other ways to kill a vampire included decapitation (cutting off the head), stuffing the mouth with garlic, placing a sickle (in other words a grass hook) around the neck to cut the head off from the corpse while getting up. We refer to such practices as vampire burials. Such practices could have been observed especially when an epidemic or a plague spread. Infectious diseases were supposed to have been passed by vampires and so those who had died were buried with vampire funeral to prevent them from rising and spreading the disease. Illnesses such as cholera especially acted on imagination due to the horrifying look of a dying person.

Generally vampires hunt at night because sunlight weakens their powers. Some may turn into a bat or a wolf. Vampires have super strength and often have a hypnotic, sensual effect on their victims. They can't see their image in a mirror and cast no shadows.

Such a picture of a vampire was portrayed in the story of Dracula. The story written by Bram Stoker was published in 1897. Since then Dracula has become the mainstream name for a vampire and vampires as such entered the popular culture. So, let us take a closer look at this icon of a vampire. When you hear the name of Dracula you probably associate it immediately with a vampire. Dracula equals a vampire, doesn't it?

In Romania Dracula is viewed not as a blood drinking monster but as national hero who defended his empire from the Ottoman Turks. Vlad III Dracula was also known as Vlad the Impaler and ruled in the XV century in the southern part of a country that today we call Romania. He was the second son of Vlad Dracul who, as a part of his peace treaty with the Turks had agreed to send his two sons to Istanbul to be educated. One of them was Vlad later known as Vlad III Dracula the Impaler, the one whom we commonly associate as the Dracula. Dracula means the son of Dracul. After the death of his father, Vlad Dracula was sent back to his country to rule it. He was betrayed though by the

nobles and overthrown, but he took his revenge in 1457 and impaled the disloyal nobles. The Turks expected to easily conquer his territory. However, Vlad decided not to do what the sultan had wanted. He decided to fight back the Turks and defend his country. Due to the fact that he knew the Turks and some of their tactics he was able to stand back to them and effectively defend his land. He was even attacking the Turkish army in disguise dressed with his men as Turkish soldiers. At that time he became known for his cruelty and widely used impaling when a huge and thick stick was inserted into a human from the backside and thus the victim left for slow death. Dracula became known for leaving huge lands packed with so gruesomely and horrifyingly dying people who sometimes outnumbered 20,000. Thus he became known as Dracula the Impaler. Vlad was imprisoned by the Hungarians for 14 years, but after the time they released him under the condition to convert to catholicism instead of being orthodox. Anyway, Vlad is said to have been betrayed, some say that these were the Muslims who killed him. His head though was impaled and exhibited in Constantinople.

The vampire lore was a local, Eastern phenomenon until the XVIII century when Serbia was caught in fight between the Habsburg and the Ottoman Empire. Austrian soldiers observed then strange vampiric burial rituals and the news spread further all over the Western Europe. In the result an Austrian doctor published a work denying the existence of vampires. The seed had been sown though and the vampire panic spread all over Europe. The most famous work of the times regarding the subject is 1819 "the Vampyre" or later "Carmilla". The latter one had greatly influenced the Irish drama critic Bram Stoker who, in 1897 as we already know, published his novel "Dracula" depicting Count Vlad Dracula as a vampire. But in fact this historical figure was just an inspiration further supported by the publishings and beliefs of the Victorian era.

Dracula is now a character of popular culture; many movies have been created but watching the 1992 version of Francis Ford Coppola is a necessity and my recommendation for the forthcoming autumn evenings.

# Vocabulary

Halloween, when people eagerly dress up as vampires is over now, the festival of St. Andrew being a good **opportunity** for fortune telling and the feast of magic is approaching. And so, at our dark and dull autumn days we will stay **in the mood** and, today, talk about vampires. First of all let's define what the vampires actually are? According to dictionary definitions a vampire is a corpse supposed to leave its grave at night to drink the blood of the living by biting their necks with long pointed **canine teeth**. Of course, some of you may mention the emotional vampires as well, but it is a different story. Coming back to our subject matter though - in the distant past it was believed that people with a defect of any kind were looked at as the ones with evil and vampiric traits. Also people who had experienced a bad misfortune or even bad luck like **drought**, fire or even disease were considered vampiric. The vampire theory constituted an explanation why bad things had happened to good people.

Also, the vampire tales could have been created due to the misinterpretation what was going on with bodies after **burials**. Gases swelling the body and blood oozing from the mouth could make a dead body look as if it had recently been alive and feeding.

The suspicion that the dead ones might be responsible for the **ominous** events having risen from the **graves** made them come up with ways to secure the dead corpses in the burial places. The most widespread idea was to physically **pin** the body to the earth. This idea was commonly reflected in images depicting wooden stakes used to pin a vampire down to their **coffin** so they could no longer rise from the grave. In fact

it was not **crucial** to use the wood, as according to legends, vampires fear iron more, so an iron stack could have been even more effective.

Other ways to kill a vampire included decapitation (cutting off the head), **stuffing** the mouth with garlic, placing a **sickle** (in other words a grass hook) around the neck to cut the head off from the corpse while getting up. We refer to such practices as vampire burials. Such practices could have been **observed** especially when an epidemic or a plague spread. Infectious diseases were supposed to have been passed by vampires and so those who had died were buried with vampire funeral to prevent them from rising and spreading the disease. Illnesses such as cholera especially acted on imagination due to the horrifying look of a dying person.

Generally vampires hunt at night because sunlight **weakens** their powers. Some may turn into a bat or a wolf. Vampires have super strength and often have a hypnotic, sensual effect on their victims. They can't see their image in a mirror and cast no shadows.

Such a picture of a vampire was portrayed in the story of Dracula. The story written by Bram Stoker was published in 1897. Since then Dracula has become the mainstream name for a vampire and vampires as such entered the popular culture. So, let us take a closer look at this icon of a vampire. When you hear the name of Dracula you probably **associate** it immediately with a vampire. Dracula equals a vampire, doesn't it?

In Romania Dracula is viewed not as a blood drinking monster but as national hero who defended his empire from the Ottoman Turks. Vlad III Dracula was also known as Vlad the Impaler and ruled in the XV century in the southern part of a country that today we call Romania. He was the second son of Vlad Dracul who, as a part of his peace treaty with the Turks had agreed to send his two sons to Istanbul to be educated. One of them was Vlad later known as Vlad III Dracula the Impaler, the one whom we commonly associate as the Dracula. Dracula means the son of Dracul. After the death of his father, Vlad Dracula was sent back to his country to rule it. He was betrayed though by the

**nobles** and overthrown, but he took his revenge in 1457 and impaled the disloyal nobles. The Turks expected to easily **conquer** his territory. However, Vlad decided not to do what the sultan had wanted. He decided to fight back the Turks and defend his country. Due to the fact that he knew the Turks and some of their tactics he was able to stand back to them and effectively **defend** his land. He was even attacking the Turkish army in disguise dressed with his men as Turkish soldiers. At that time he became known for his cruelty and widely used impaling when a huge and thick stick was inserted into a human from the backside and thus the victim left for slow death. Dracula became known for leaving huge lands packed with so **gruesomely** and horrifyingly dying people who sometimes outnumbered 20,000. Thus he became known as Dracula the Impaler. Vlad was imprisoned by the Hungarians for 14 years, but after the time they released him under the condition to convert to catholicism instead of being orthodox. Anyway, Vlad is said to have been **betrayed**, some say that these were the Muslims who killed him. His head though was impaled and exhibited in Constantinople.

The vampire lore was a local, Eastern phenomenon until the XVIII century when Serbia was caught in fight between the Habsburg and the Ottoman Empire. Austrian soldiers observed then strange vampiric burial rituals and the news **spread** further all over the Western Europe. In the result an Austrian doctor published a work denying the existence of vampires. The seed had been sown though and the vampire panic spread all over Europe. The most famous work of the times regarding the subject is 1819 "the Vampyre" or later "Carmilla". **The latter one** had greatly influenced the Irish drama critic Bram Stoker who, in 1897 as we already know, published his novel "Dracula" depicting Count Vlad Dracula as a vampire. But in fact this historical figure was just an inspiration further supported by the publishings and beliefs of the Victorian era.

Dracula is now a character of popular culture; many movies have been created but watching the 1992 version of Francis Ford Coppola is a necessity and my recommendation for the **forthcoming** autumn evenings.

Opportunity - możliwość

In the mood - w nastroju

Canine teeth - kły

Drought - susza

Burial - pochówek

Ominous - złowieszczy

Grave - grób

Pin - przyspilić

Coffin - trumna

Crucial - niezbędne

Stuff - nadziać

Sickle - sierp

Observe - przestrzegać

Weaken - osłabić

Associate - kojarzyć

Nobles - szlachta

Conquer - podbić

Defend - obronić

Gruesomely - makabrycznie

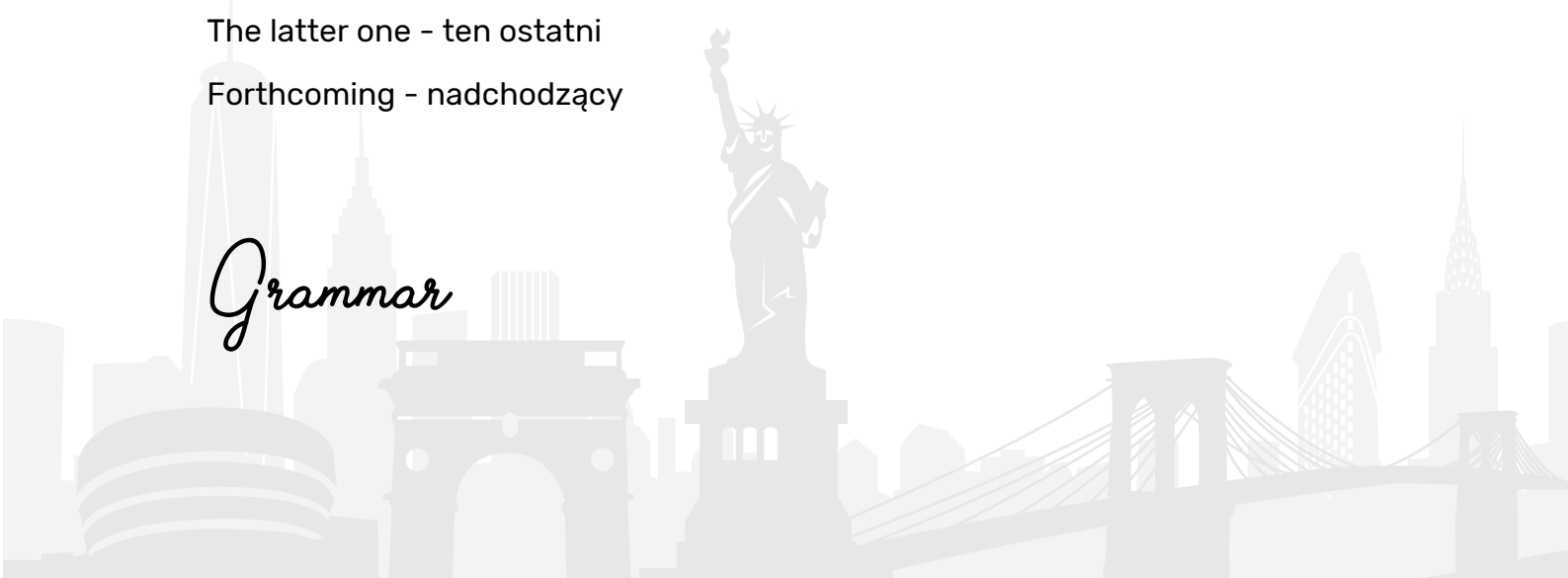
Betray - zdradzić

Spread - rozprzestrzeniać

The latter one - ten ostatni

Forthcoming - nadchodzący

*Grammar*



Halloween, when people eagerly dress up as vampires is over now, the festival of St. Andrew being a good opportunity for fortune telling and the feast of magic is approaching. And so, at our dark and dull autumn days we will stay in the mood and, today, talk about vampires. First of all let's define what the vampires actually are? According to dictionary definitions a vampire is a corpse supposed to leave its grave at night to drink the blood of the living by biting their necks with long pointed canine teeth. Of course, some of you may mention the emotional vampires as well, but it is a different story. Coming back to our subject matter though - in the distant past **it was believed** that people with a defect of any kind were looked at as the ones with evil and vampiric traits. Also people who **had experienced** a bad misfortune or even bad luck like drought, fire or even disease were considered vampiric. The vampire theory constituted an explanation why bad things had happened to good people.

Also, the vampire tales **could have been created** due to the misinterpretation what was going on with bodies after burials. Gases swelling the body and blood oozing from the mouth could make a dead body look as if it had recently been alive and feeding.

The suspicion that the dead ones might be responsible for the ominous events having risen from the graves made them come up with ways to secure the dead corpses in the burial places. The most widespread idea was to physically pin the body to the earth. This idea was commonly reflected in images depicting wooden stakes used to pin a vampire down to their coffin so they could no longer rise from the grave. In fact it was not crucial to use the wood, as according to legends, vampires fear iron more, so an iron stack could have been even more effective.

Other ways to kill a vampire included decapitation (cutting off the head), stuffing the mouth with garlic, placing a sickle (in other words a grass hook) around the neck to cut the head off from the corpse while getting up. We refer to such practices as vampire burials. Such practices could have been observed especially when an epidemic or a plague spread. Infectious diseases were supposed to have been passed by vampires



and so those who had died were buried with vampire funeral to prevent them from rising and spreading the disease. Illnesses such as cholera especially acted on imagination due to the horrifying look of a dying person.

Generally vampires hunt at night because sunlight weakens their powers. Some may turn into a bat or a wolf. Vampires have super strength and often have a hypnotic, sensual effect on their victims. They can't see their image in a mirror and cast no shadows.

Such a picture of a vampire was portrayed in the story of Dracula. The story written by Bram Stoker was published in 1897. Since then Dracula **has become** the mainstream name for a vampire and vampires as such entered the popular culture. So, let us take a closer look at this icon of a vampire. When you hear the name of Dracula you probably associate it immediately with a vampire. Dracula equals a vampire, doesn't it?

In Romania Dracula is viewed not as a blood drinking monster but as national hero who defended his empire from the Ottoman Turks. Vlad III Dracula was also known as Vlad the Impaler and ruled in the XV century in the southern part of a country that today we call Romania. He was the second son of Vlad Dracul who, as a part of his peace treaty with the Turks had agreed to send his two sons to Istanbul to be educated. One of them was Vlad later known as Vlad III Dracula the Impaler, the one whom we commonly associate as the Dracula. Dracula means the son of Dracul. After the death of his father, Vlad Dracula was sent back to his country to rule it. He was betrayed though by the nobles and overthrown, but he took his revenge in 1457 and impaled the disloyal nobles. The Turks expected to easily conquer his territory. However, Vlad decided not to do what the sultan had wanted. He decided to fight back the Turks and defend his country. Due to the fact that he knew the Turks and some of their tactics he was able to stand back to them and effectively defend his land. He was even attacking the Turkish army in disguise dressed with his men as Turkish soldiers. At that time he became known for his cruelty and widely used impaling when a huge and thick stick was inserted into a

human from the backside and thus the victim left for slow death. Dracula became known for leaving huge lands packed with so gruesomely and horrifyingly dying people who sometimes outnumbered 20,000. Thus he became known as Dracula the Impaler. Vlad **was imprisoned** by the Hungarians for 14 years, but after the time they released him under the condition to convert to catholicism instead of being orthodox. Anyway, Vlad is said to have been betrayed, some say that these were the Muslims who killed him. His head though was impaled and exhibited in Constantinople.

The vampire lore was a local, Eastern phenomenon until the XVIII century when Serbia was caught in fight between the Habsburg and the Ottoman Empire. Austrian soldiers observed then strange vampiric burial rituals and the news spread further all over the Western Europe. In the result an Austrian doctor published a work denying the existence of vampires. The seed had been sown though and the vampire panic spread all over Europe. The most famous work of the times regarding the subject is 1819 "the Vampyre" or later "Carmilla". The latter one had greatly influenced the Irish drama critic Bram Stoker who, in 1897 as we already know, published his novel "Dracula" depicting Count Vlad Dracula as a vampire. But in fact this historical figure was just an inspiration further supported by the publishings and beliefs of the Victorian era.

Dracula is now a character of popular culture; many movies **have been created** but watching the 1992 version of Francis Ford Coppola is a necessity and my recommendation for the forthcoming autumn evenings.

It was believed - wierzono; strona bierna w czasie past simple

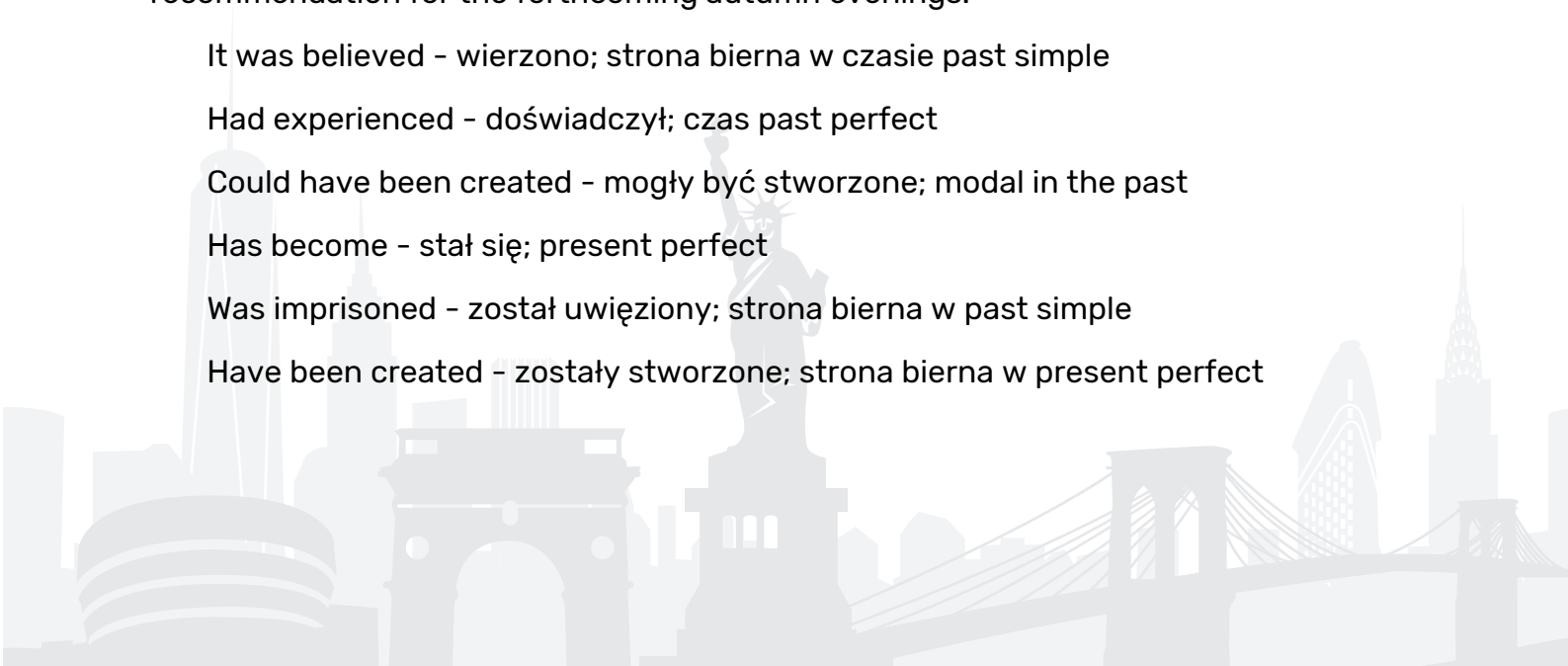
Had experienced - doświadczył; czas past perfect

Could have been created - mogły być stworzone; modal in the past

Has become - stał się; present perfect

Was imprisoned - został uwięziony; strona bierna w past simple

Have been created - zostały stworzone; strona bierna w present perfect



## *Comprehension questions:*

1. Who are vampires?
2. What kind of people were considered vampiric in the old times?
3. Why were the dead corpses secured in the burial places?
4. Why do vampires hunt at night?
5. What was Vlad III Dracula famous for?
6. When did the vampire panic spread in Europe?
7. What is the most famous book about Dracula?

## *Comprehension questions with answers:*

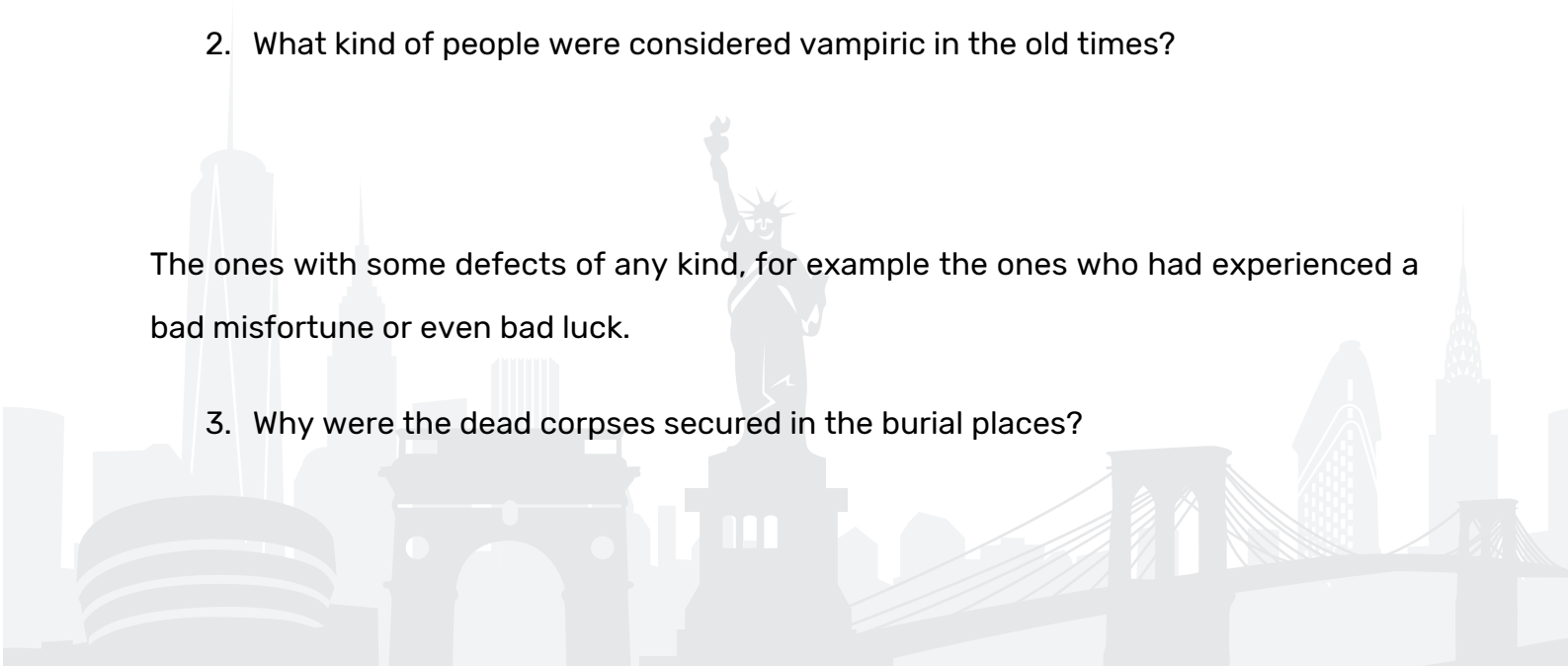
1. Who are vampires?

They are corpses with long canine teeth that leave their graves at night to drink the blood of the living.

2. What kind of people were considered vampiric in the old times?

The ones with some defects of any kind, for example the ones who had experienced a bad misfortune or even bad luck.

3. Why were the dead corpses secured in the burial places?



Due to the suspicion that the dead ones might be responsible for the ominous events having risen from the graves.

4. Why do vampires hunt at night?

Because sunlight weakens their powers.

5. What was Vlad III Dracula famous for?

He was famous for his cruelty and widely used impaling.

6. When did the vampire panic spread in Europe?

When Serbia was caught in the fight between the Habsburg and the Ottoman Empire and Austrian soldiers observed strange vampiric burial rituals and the news spread all over Europe.

7. What is the most famous book about Dracula?

The novel written in 1897 by Bram Stoker entitled „Dracula”.

