

Edgar Allan Poe, Master of the Macabre

Additional Websites and resources:



- **Knowing Poe:** An overall site on Edgar Allan Poe
 - http://knowingpoe.thinkport.org/default_flash.asp
- **Poe Stories:** short stories by Edgar Allan Poe
 - <http://www.poestories.com>
- **Poe Cryptographic Challenge:** Cryptic Message written by Poe
 - <http://www.bokler.com/eapoe.html>

Activity one

Find 3 words that you don't use often or had never heard of in the story. Research the meaning of these words. Write 3 short paragraphs using one of the new words in each. The paragraphs do not need to be connected. Make sure the words enhance your short paragraph and are used correctly. For example:

Derision – ridicule; mockery, contemptuous laughter

The kids in the yard at recess would never hit a girl, but their cruelty was far worse in her eyes. Their constant derision was wearying and at night she would fall asleep with it ringing in her ears.

Activity two

Choose a paragraph from the story and present it as a monologue. Memorize the words and pretend you are the character of the crazy man. What sort of costume will you wear? How does he stand? Who is he telling this story to when you make your presentation?



Activity three

You are the Investigating Detective assigned to this murder case. The story you have just read is the confession statement of the murderer. You need to write a concise factual report for the Judge. With the evidence you have from the confession, sort out the facts and summarize what happened in this case. Remember, the Judge is very well known and wants a short sharp report of what happened! He is quite particular about grammar and neatness too!

Critical Thinking Questions



- What special words does the author use to help you see, hear, smell, and/or taste things in the story? (imagery)
- What are your thoughts on the macabre genre? Who else uses this genre in literature? in another medium?
- Poe's death is still a mystery, what do you think happened and why?

Vocabulary

IMAGERY: Language that appeals to the senses (sight, sound, taste, touch, smell). Example: "the hinges *creaked*".

FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE: Whenever you describe something by comparing it with something else, you are using figurative language. The most common figures of speech are simile, metaphor, and alliteration.

- **Simile:** a comparison of two unlike things, typically marked by use of "like" or "as". Example: "much such a sound as a watch makes when enveloped in cotton".
- **Metaphor:** A comparison of two unlike things using the verb "to be" and not using "like" or "as", like a simile does. **Example:** "He is a pig".
- **Alliteration:** Repeated consonant sounds occurring at the beginning of words or within words. Alliteration is used to create melody, establish mood, call attention to important words, and point out similarities and contrasts. Example: "hideous hearth".



NARRATOR: who is telling the story, for example; First Person, Omniscient, Unreliable, Third Person