

Welcome to the Teachers' Instructions area for this student activity. Here you'll find directions and suggestions for using this activity along with the materials you need to evaluate your students' work.

**Title:** Mad About Poe 1 - Literal Meaning of "The Tell-Tale Heart"

**Audience:** Middle

**Duration:** 50 Minutes

**Subject Area(s):**

Language Arts - Literature

**Grade Level(s):** 6,7,8,9

### **Teacher Directions:**

This activity is designed to be used in conjunction with a second activity, Mad About Poe 2. In Mad About Poe 1, students will read the story to gain a literal understanding of *The Tell-Tale Heart*. After finishing this activity, students will complete the Mad About Poe 2 activity to learn about the interpretive meaning of *The Tell-Tale Heart*.

This activity can be completed using a variety of technology configurations. If a computer lab is available, students can access the activity, worksheets and Web pages through Thinkport. Another option is to display the activity and Web page on a classroom computer with a projection device to familiarize the students with the tools before they go to the site to use the interactive, My Tell-Tale Heart.

#### Introductory Activity

1. Ask students if they have ever placed a bookmark in a book because they wanted to read a section again or because they wanted to share the passage with someone else who could help them understand it. Discuss how even if they can write in the book they are reading or on a paper copy, there never seems to be enough room on the page to add comments.

Explain to students that they are going to read *The Tell-Tale Heart* on a Web page that will allow them to write thoughts about the characters and story as they read. They will be able to add questions during their reading that will allow them to remember confusing parts and return to these passages for help after they have finished reading the story.

**IMPORTANT** Impress upon students that once they close the interactive, all of their annotations will be lost, so it is very important that they print or e-mail a version of the story before they exit!

2. On a classroom computer with a projection device, open the My Tell-Tale Heart interactive.

Draw students' attention to the icons on the right hand side of the screen.

Ask students what they think the question mark might be used for. After students have made their predictions, roll the mouse over the icon to display the description.

Question Mark - use when you are wondering why, or if you are confused or curious about something.

Exhibit how it works by clicking on and dragging the icon into the text. After the text box opens, demonstrate how you type under the icon.

Discuss how this tool might be useful when trying to understand a new text.

Repeat the same process with the other icons.

Surprise - use when something is shocking or unusual to you about a character or the story.

Writing Style - use when you notice something about the author's wording, tone, or style that you enjoy or don't like

Golden Line - use when you find a phrase that makes you really think or is beautifully worded

Links - use when the story reminds you of something you've read, seen or done in your own life

Thoughts - use when you want to add your own wishes, opinions, predictions, or other ideas

After you have finished demonstrating all of the tools, discuss why the question and thought tools might be the most useful when trying to understand a new text.

3. Provide individual computer time for students so that they can explore the My Tell-Tale Heart interactive.

Focus for Media Interaction

The focus for viewing My Tell-Tale Heart is for students to read the story and use the tools on the site to help them determine the literal meaning of the story.

Viewing Activity

1. Tell students that they are responsible for explaining the literal meaning of *The Tell-Tale Heart* by reading and using the tools on the site.

Ask students to use each tool at least once.

After students have finished using My Tell-Tale Heart, ask students to print out their annotations.

Postviewing Activity

1. Ask students to complete the Tell-Tale Heart Discussion Guide. The purpose of the worksheet is for students to write a brief summary of the story, organize and respond to the material they wrote in My Tell-Tale Heart and to answer any questions that they posed during the reading of the story. Explain to students that they only need to address the literal meaning of *The Tell-Tale Heart* in the summary.

After students have completed the sheet, divide the class into groups of two or three students and ask them to do the following:

- Share with their group members a piece of information-at least one from each tool-that they recorded using My Tell-Tale Heart.
- Try to answer all of the questions that group members recorded using the “Question” tool.
- Discuss how and if their summaries changed after discussing the story with group members.

Provide time at the end of the class for the groups to ask any questions from the question section (#7) that they were unable to answer in their groups.

#### Extension Activity

Tell students that a publishing company is releasing an illustrated version of *The Tell-Tale Heart* and you have been asked to write a summary of the story that will appear on the inside cover of the book.

#### **Student Directions:**

Have you ever wanted to write a note to a character in a book you were reading when they did something shocking? Have you ever wanted to underline a particularly well-written phrase in a book so that you could share it with someone when you finished reading? Or maybe you have wanted to draw a big question mark around something that happened that you didn't understand. Well, you are in luck because today you will visit a Web site that allows you to add questions and comments to the text while you are reading.

#### **The Students will:**

Students will be able to explain the literal meaning of the "Tell-Tale Heart."

## Voluntary State Curriculum

### 3.0 Comprehension of Literary Text: Students will read comprehend, interpret, analyze, and evaluate literary texts.

#### Grade 6

1. Determine important ideas and messages in literary texts

a. Analyze main ideas and universal themes

Assessment Limits:

- In the text or a portion of the text
- Literal versus interpretive meanings of a text or a portion of text
- Experiences, emotions, issues, and ideas in a text that give rise to universal themes
- Message, moral, or lesson learned from the text

#### Grade 7 and 8

1. Analyze important ideas and messages in literary texts

a. Analyze main ideas and universal themes

Assessment Limits:

- Literal versus interpretive meanings of a text or a portion of text
- Experiences, emotions, issues, and ideas in a text that give rise to universal themes

**Directions:** Go to the My Tell-Tale Heart interactive on the Knowing Poe site. Take some time to explore the tools shown on the site. Your task is to understand the literal meaning of the story. Read "The Tell-Tale Heart" using the tools of My Tell-Tale Heart to assist you as you read. Try to use every tool at least once; however, you might need to use the question and thought tools more often to help clarify the literal meaning of the story. **IMPORTANT** Make sure that you print or e-mail your story before you exit My Tell-Tale Heart.

#### My Tell-Tale Heart

This Web page allows you to add questions and comments into the text as you read Poe's story, *The Tell-Tale Heart*.

<http://knowingpoe.thinkport.org/writer/telltaleheart.asp>

How do you think being able to add questions and comments as you read a story might help you understand the story?

**Directions:** Using the notes that you printed from My Tell-Tale Heart, complete the Tell-Tale Heart Discussion Guide found at the link below. This worksheet is designed to help you organize and respond to the material you collected using the My Tell-Tale Heart interactive and to address any questions that you asked during the reading of the story. After you have completed the worksheet, create a group with one or two other students and do the following: 1) Share a piece of information - at least one from each tool - that you recorded using My Tell-Tale Heart. 2) Try to answer all of the questions that group members recorded using the "Question" tool. 3) Discuss how and if your summary changed after discussing the story with group members. If you weren't able to answer all of the questions that you recorded in My Tell-Tale Heart, ask other groups or the teacher for assistance.

Tell-Tale Heart Discussion Guide ([View](#))

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Activity Signature

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