

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 2 - Interpretive Meaning of "The Tell-Tale Heart"

Audience: Middle

Duration: 50 Minutes

Subject Area(s):

Language Arts - Literature

Grade Level(s): 6,7,8

Teacher Directions:

This activity is designed to be used after completing the activity, Mad About Poe 1 - Literal Meaning of *The Tell-Tale Heart*. Students need an understanding of the terms: irony, symbolism, figurative and literal before they begin this activity.

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. In this case, students will need a copy of each worksheet.

Introductory Activity

1. Review the definitions for the terms irony, symbolism, and literal and figurative. Explain to students that by themselves the plot, theme, characters and setting in *The Tell Tale Heart* are nothing extraordinary, that, instead, it is Poe's use of symbolism and irony that makes the story so memorable.
2. If students have not used My Tell-Tale Heart interactive before, refer to the Mad About Poe 1 activity or if students need a reminder of how to use the tool, open the Web site and use a projection device to demonstrate how to use the interactive. Discuss how each function might help them formulate their new interpretation of the story.

Examples:

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

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

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

Focus for Media Interaction

The focus for viewing My Tell-Tale Heart interactive is for students to use the interactive to help them explain the interpretive meaning of the story.

Viewing activity

1. Send students to the My Tell-Tale Heart interactive section of the Knowing Poe Web site.

Explain to students that in Part 1 of this lesson they read the story to ascertain Poe's literal meaning of *The Tell-Tale Heart*. In today's lesson they will read the story in order to unravel the figurative meaning of the story. Discuss how they will discover the ways Poe used symbolism and irony to create an extraordinary story.

Tell students to use the tools to make comments and ask questions about the use of symbolism and irony in the story that will help them interpret the meaning of the story. Ask students to use each tool at least once.

REMIND students to print or e-mail the story before they exit the Annotator. Once they exit the Annotator their work will disappear.

Postviewing Activity

1. Write the words "irony" and "symbolism" on the board. Ask students to share the examples that they found when they were reading the story and record them under the corresponding category. Discuss the examples as a class.

2. If time permits, or as a homework assignment, ask students to spend a few minutes answering the question, "How did Poe use symbolism and irony to turn an ordinary story into an extraordinary story?"

Extension Activity

Using details from the story, have students build a case for the prosecution and the defense of the main character. After students have built their case, have them present the case to a jury.

Student Directions:

"How, then, am I mad? Hearken! and observe how healthily--how calmly I can tell you the whole story." -Excerpt from *The Tell-Tale Heart*.

Does trying to interpret the meaning of a story ever drive you mad? Today you will use technology tools to help you go beyond the literal meaning of the story and delve into the deeper meaning of Poe's story, *The Tell-Tale Heart*.

The Students will:

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

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 section of the Poe site. Review the use of the tools. In the Mad About Poe 1- Literal Meaning of "The Tell-Tale Heart" lesson, you read to gain an understanding about what happened in "The Tell-Tale Heart." This time you will read the story and use the interactive to help you interpret the story. When you read the story and use the interactive this time you are looking for a deeper meaning in the story. Use each tool once and some of the tools several times to make comments and ask questions that will help you interpret the story. By themselves the plot, theme, characters and setting in "The Tell Tale Heart" are

nothing extraordinary. Instead it is Poe's use of symbolism and irony that makes the story so memorable. Use the interactive to help you point out and explain the symbolism and irony you find in the story. When you have finished your work, print a copy of your annotations. This is very important because once you close the interactive, all of your annotations will be lost. After you have finished with the interactive and printed your work, spend a few minutes answering the question, "How did Poe use symbolism and irony to turn an ordinary story into an extraordinary story?"

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 did Poe use symbolism and irony to turn an ordinary story into an extraordinary story?

Activity Signature

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