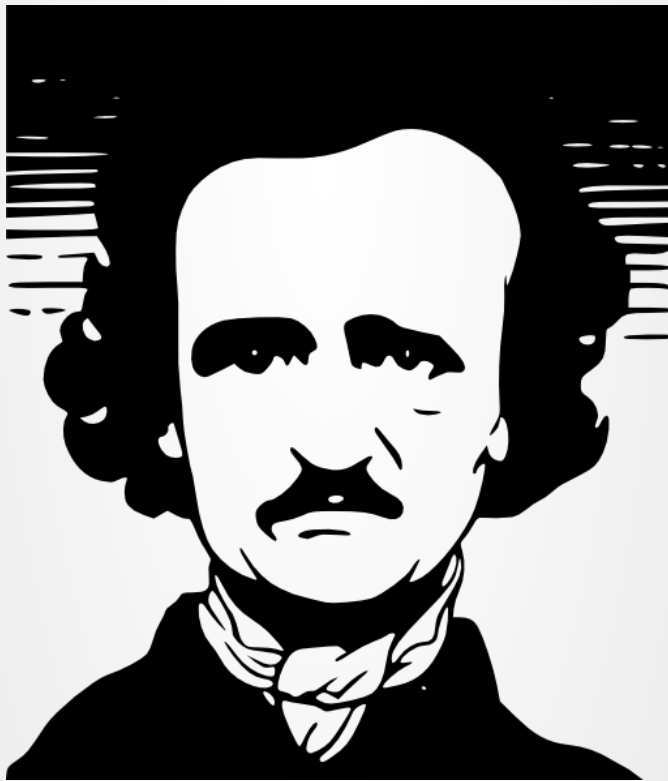


Edgar Allan Poe

WebQuest



NAME: _____

PERIOD: _____



ABOUT THE MUSEUM

1. Why is Edgar Allan Poe called “America’s Shakespeare”?

BRIEF OVERVIEW



1. When and where was Poe born? Where and when did he die?

POE'S LIFE



1. What is Edgar Allan Poe known for? (Hint: What is his reputation?)
2. What do we know about Poe's parents and siblings?
3. Who is John Allan? Describe Poe's relationship with John Allan.
4. How did Poe make the Southern Literary Messenger the "most popular magazine in the south"?
5. Who was Poe's wife? How and when did she die?

1. What was Poe's "prototype" for the detective story?
2. What were different about Poe's stories that made him the creator of the "modern science fiction story?"
3. Why did Poe think that terror was a "legitimate subject for literature"?
4. In his horror stories, what did Poe choose to focus on instead of the setting?
5. What did Poe most often criticize writers for?
6. According to Poe, what criteria did he use to review a short story?



POE'S LITERARY
CONTRIBUTIONS

- ▶ Go to <http://www.poemuseum.org/index.php>
 - ▶ Click “About the Museum”

1. Why is Edgar Allan Poe called “America’s Shakespeare”?

- ▶ Go to <http://www.poemuseum.org/index.php>
 - ▶ Click “Students”

1. Where and when was Poe born? Where and when did he die?

- ▶ Go to <http://www.poemuseum.org/index.php>
 - ▶ Click “Poe’s Life”

1. What is Edgar Allan Poe known for? (Hint: What is his reputation?)

2. What do we know about Poe’s parents and siblings

3. Who is John Allan? Describe Poe’s relationship with John Allan.

4. How did Poe make the *Southern Literary Messenger* the “most popular magazine in the south”?

5. Who was Poe’s wife? How and when did she die?

- ▶ Go to <http://www.poemuseum.org/index.php>
 - ▶ Click “Teachers”
 - ▶ Click “Poe’s Literary Contributions”
 - ▶ Read “Inventor of the Detective Story”

1. What was Poe’s “prototype” for the detective story?

- ▶ Go to <http://www.poemuseum.org/index.php>
 - ▶ Click “Teachers”
 - ▶ Click “Poe’s Literary Contributions”
 - ▶ Read “Pioneer of Science Fiction”

1. What were different about Poe’s stories that made him the creator of the “modern science fiction story?”

▶ Go to <http://www.poemuseum.org/index.php>

- ▶ Click “Teachers”
- ▶ Click “Poe’s Literary Contributions”
- ▶ Read “Master of the Psychological Horror Story”

1. Why did Poe think that terror was a “legitimate subject for literature”?

2. In his horror stories, what did Poe choose to focus on instead of the setting?

▶ Go to <http://www.poemuseum.org/index.php>

- ▶ Click “Teachers”
- ▶ Click “Poe’s Literary Contributions”
- ▶ Read “America’s First Literary Critic”

1. What did Poe most often criticize writers for?

2. According to Poe, what criteria did he use to review a short story?

Answer Key

Why is Edgar Allan Poe called “America’s Shakespeare”?

Edgar Allan Poe is called “America’s Shakespeare” because he “mastered the short story, detective fiction, lyric poetry, and horror story” which have transcended American literature for over 150 years.

Where and when was Edgar Allan Poe born? Where and when did he die?

Poe was born January 19th, 1809 in Boston and died October 17th, 1849.

What is Edgar Allan Poe known for? (Hint: What is his reputation?)

Edgar Allan Poe is known for his “tales of terror” and “haunting lyric poetry”.

What do we know about Poe’s parents and siblings?

Edgar Allan Poe was the second of three children; his parents were traveling actors. When Poe was three years old, his parents died, and Poe went to live with John Allan, a tobacco merchant, and his wife Frances Valentine in Richmond, Virginia. His parents went to live with other families.

Who is John Allan? Describe Poe’s relationship with John Allan.

John Allan was Poe’s foster father. Allan wanted Poe to follow him into the tobacco industry, but Poe dreamed of being a poet. When Poe went to attend college at the University of Virginia, despite being wealthy, Allan did not provide Poe with enough financial means to afford his expenses. Impoverished, Poe returned to Allan’s home only to later leave. When Allan died, he left Poe out of his will.

How did Poe make the *Southern Literary Messenger* the “most popular magazine in the south”?

After Allan’s death, Poe entered a story into a contest sponsored by *Saturday Visitor*. His victory sustained him an editorial position at the *Southern Literary Messenger*. Poe’s “sensational stories” and “scathing book reviews” ensured that the magazine was “the most popular magazine in the south”.

Who was Poe’s wife? How and when did she die?

Poe’s wife was Virginia Clemm; she died in 1847 of tuberculosis.

Answer Key Continued

What was Poe's "prototype" for the detective story?

Poe's detective stories would begin with a "seemingly impossible crime" and the detective character would analyze the clues to solve the mystery. To emphasize the intelligence of the detective character, the story was narrated by a secondary character, usually the detective character's less-intelligent partner.

What were different about Poe's stories that made him the creator of the "modern science fiction story?"

Poe's science fiction stories were different because he "added realistic scientific details to make his stories more believable". He also explored the "limits of technology".

Why did Poe think that terror was a "legitimate subject for literature"?

Poe believed that terror was a "legitimate subject for literature" because it is an emotion and therefore a part of the human experience.

In his horror stories, what did Poe choose to focus on instead of the setting?

Instead of the setting, Poe chose to focus on the psychology of his characters.

What did Poe most often criticize writers for?

Poe most often criticized writers for imitating British writers and plagiarizing their works.

According to Poe, what criteria did he use to review a short story?

Poe evaluated a story on its originality and its "emotional impact" on the reader.

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