

Rationale for Edgar Allan Poe Unit

Topic of Study:

In this unit students will be learning about the great American author Edgar Allan Poe and some of his most famous works. Poe wrote during the 19th century and was well known for his gothic chillers. The purpose of this unit will be to acquaint students to the author as well as his style of work while also learning to apply literary techniques to literature. During this unit students will be involved in a variety of activities that will engage them independently as well as collaboratively. They will also be examining literary and informational texts from various media formats. In addition students will also be asked to create their own texts responding to and analyzing upon the works we have studied.

Why will Students be Interested:

Students will enjoy this unit because they seem to have a fascination with death and horror. Many students like suspense thrillers because they grab their attention and pull them in with intrigue. In this way Poe's works are highly adaptable and comparable to the movies or shows students watch today. Students are also fascinated with characters that are somewhat psychotic and Poe offers a bounty of such characters. Students are also deeply interested in Poe as an author as well because not only did he write mysterious, dark literature, but, his life was lived much the same way. Students enjoy learning about him and his odd life.

In addition, students are very interested in the themes that appear in Poe's literature because even though it was written long ago the themes still apply today. Allowing revenge for retribution to consume your life is a popular theme in many of Poe's works. Students really enjoy discussing this because they all have different views that make for interesting

conversations and they also see the theme as pertinent to their lives because many of them have had feelings of revenge before. Another theme prevalent within Poe's stories is that of guilt consuming one to the point of insanity. Students are typically familiar with the feeling of guilt so they are able to relate with this theme.

Students will also enjoy this unit because it encompasses various group and individual activities that are meant to get them thinking about their opinions and values. Often students feel that they are just told what to believe and think but this unit provides students an opportunity to think about concepts and form their own opinions so that they can form their own voice. Students like knowing that their voice matters and is heard and this unit affords them those opportunities. This unit also encompasses various simulation activities that get the students up and moving around which always sparks interest from students.

Lastly, the students will also enjoy this unit because it includes activities that analyze popular culture. High school students love music and one of the ways we teach literary terms in this unit is by using some of the students' favorite songs and analyzing them. In addition, students will engage with other popular culture items such as pictures and ghost stories.

Why do Students Need to Study this Unit:

Poe is one of the great American authors that every student should be introduced to. In addition, of all the classical authors his style of writing is most engaging to students and serves as a great starter to get students use to the language and style of classical works. It is also very important that students learn how to not only define but identify literary techniques in a piece of literature and Poe's work makes it easy to spot many such characteristics. Throughout this unit students will be performing a variety of written, oral, and visual tasks in which they will be

required to establish value judgments and analyze literature. In academic terms this unit includes a variety of Common Core Curriculum standards as well as standards from NCTE.

This unit will also challenge students to think about some deep fundamental moral values. This type of thinking will help students start to think about and develop their own values and recognize that their values may not be the same as everyone else's and that is okay. In addition, many of Poe's stories deal with death, sometimes in celebration of one's death and sometimes in desperate mourning. This exposure will help students develop an understanding of death. These issues will help students in their development of their cognitive abilities. They will be challenged to think on a high cognitive functioning level. They will also be able to practice and hone their communication skills both in written and oral form.

Students are also fascinated with people who come from different backgrounds and think differently than they do. Poe's writings offer them a window into the diverse lives of other people at a different time in a different place. They also provide students a range of human emotions that can be experienced vicariously whether; be it rage, longing, madness, guilt, excitement, or despair.

Why Teach it Now:

This unit will be taught during the month of October. This is a perfect time to teach this unit because the themes and moods of the literature correlates to the festive spirit that is present during this month due to Halloween. In addition, this is early in the year when many literary terms are needed to be reviewed or taught prior to further exploration into literature and this unit supplies literature and texts that are good to use when learning to identify such elements.

Edgar Allan Poe Unit Goals

- Students read a wide range of print and non-print texts to build an understanding of texts, of themselves, and of the cultures of the United States and the world; to acquire new information; to respond to the needs and demands of society and the workplace; and for personal fulfillment. Among these texts are fiction and nonfiction, classic and contemporary works. (NCTE Standard 1)
- Students read a wide range of literature from many periods in many genres to build an understanding of the many dimensions (e.g., philosophical, ethical, aesthetic) of human experience. (NCTE Standard 2)
- Students apply a wide range of strategies to comprehend, interpret, evaluate, and appreciate texts. They draw on their prior experience, their interactions with other readers and writers, their knowledge of word meaning and of other texts, their word identification strategies, and their understanding of textual features (e.g., sound-letter correspondence, sentence structure, context, graphics). (NCTE Standard 3)
- Students adjust their use of spoken, written, and visual language (e.g., conventions, style, vocabulary) to communicate effectively with a variety of audiences and for different purposes. (NCTE Standard 4)
- Students employ a wide range of strategies as they write and use different writing process elements appropriately to communicate with different audiences for a variety of purposes. (NCTE Standard 5)
- Students apply knowledge of language structure, language conventions (e.g., spelling and punctuation), media techniques, figurative language, and genre to create, critique, and discuss print and non-print texts. (NCTE Standard 6)

- Students use a variety of technological and information resources (e.g., libraries, databases, computer networks, video) to gather and synthesize information and to create and communicate knowledge. (NCTE Standard 8)
- Students participate as knowledgeable, reflective, creative, and critical members of a variety of literacy communities. (NCTE Standard 11)
- Students use spoken, written, and visual language to accomplish their own purposes (e.g., for learning, enjoyment, persuasion, and the exchange of information). (NCTE Standard 12)

Edgar Allan Poe Unit Standards & Objectives

○ **Specific Objectives:**

- Students will be able to speak and write using Standard English, parallel structure, and a variety of clauses.
- Students will be able to write using proper commands of the conventions of Standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling.
- Students will be able to read, write, and think in different words and styles that are appropriate for the text.
- Students will be able to write and edit their work according to MLA guidelines.
- Students will be able to participate and lead in a variety of discussions by listening and sharing knowledge from the course, texts, and designated topics.
- Students will be able to work together to set and follow guidelines for group discussions while following classroom rules for group work.
- Students will be able to respond thoughtfully to others' comments and arguments, summarizing points upon which they agree and disagree while referring to evidence from the text to support comments and ideas.
- Students will be able to present information, findings, and supporting evidence clearly, to the point and logically so that listeners can follow the line of reasoning. The organization, development, substance, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
- Students will be able to use digital media strategically in presentations to enhance the understanding and interest of the audience.

- Students will be able to speak effectively in a variety of situations; adjusting from informal to formal language depending on their audience and situation.
- Students will be able to write informational essays that contain appropriate supporting details, transitions, tone, and a conclusion that summarizes the body of the essay.
- Students will be able to write a narrative that organizes events using dialogue to develop the plot, descriptive language to create vivid images, and clearly develops a conclusion to the narrative.
- Students will be able to create clear and coherent narratives and informational essays that are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
- Students will be able to effectively plan, edit, and revise their informational essays.
- Students will be able to find evidence within an informational text to support what they think about the text while making inferences from the text and determining the main ideas of the text.
- Students will be able to determine a main idea of a text, locate specific ideas to support that main idea in the text, and produce an objective summary of an informational text.
- Students will be able to find evidence in a piece of literature to support inferences and opinions drawn from the text while analyzing the text's meaning on both a literal and abstract level.

- Students will be able to distinguish how details from a literary text help to develop the theme while summarizing those details to show, create, and finalize the author's main point.
 - Students will be able to analyze how character conflicts, changes, and motivations affect the plot or theme of a literary text.
 - Students will be able to explain the overall impact of the word choice on the meaning and tone of a literary text.
 - Students will be able to analyze how an author's choices concerning how to structure a text, order events, and manipulate time create such effects as mystery, tension, or surprise.
- **Standards**
- L.9-10.1. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.
 - a. Use parallel structure.*
 - b. Use various types of phrases (noun, verb, adjectival, adverbial, participial, prepositional, absolute) and clauses (independent, dependent; noun, relative, adverbial) to convey specific meanings and add variety and interest to writing or presentations.
 - L.9-10.2. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.
 - a. Use a semicolon (and perhaps a conjunctive adverb) to link two or more closely related independent clauses.
 - b. Use a colon to introduce a list or quotation.
 - c. Spell correctly.
 - L.9-10.3. Apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening.
 - a. Write and edit work so that it conforms to the guidelines in a style manual (e.g., MLA Handbook, Turabian's Manual for Writers) appropriate for the discipline and writing type.

- L.9-10.5. Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.
 - a. Interpret figures of speech (e.g., euphemism, oxymoron) in context and analyze their role in the text.
 - b. Analyze nuances in the meaning of words with similar denotations.

- S.L.9-10.1. Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 9–10 topics, texts, and issues, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.
 - a. Come to discussions prepared, having read and researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence from texts and other research on the topic or issue to stimulate a thoughtful, well-reasoned exchange of ideas.
 - b. Work with peers to set rules for collegial discussions and decision-making (e.g., informal consensus, taking votes on key issues, presentation of alternate views), clear goals and deadlines, and individual roles as needed.
 - c. Propel conversations by posing and responding to questions that relate the current discussion to broader themes or larger ideas; actively incorporate others into the discussion; and clarify, verify, or challenge ideas and conclusions.
 - d. Respond thoughtfully to diverse perspectives, summarize points of agreement and disagreement, and, when warranted, qualify or justify their own views and understanding and make new connections in light of the evidence and reasoning presented

- S.L.9-10.4. Present information, findings, and supporting evidence clearly, concisely, and logically such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization, development, substance, and style are appropriate to purpose, audience, and task.

- S.L.9-10.5. Make strategic use of digital media (e.g., textual, graphical, audio, visual, and interactive elements) in presentations to enhance understanding of findings, reasoning, and evidence and to add interest.

- W.9-10.2. Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.
 - a. Introduce a topic; organize complex ideas, concepts, and information to make important connections and distinctions; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., figures, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.

- b. Develop the topic with well-chosen, relevant, and sufficient facts, extended definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples appropriate to the audience’s knowledge of the topic.
 - c. Use appropriate and varied transitions to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships among complex ideas and concepts.
 - d. Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to manage the complexity of the topic.
 - e. Establish and maintain a formal style and objective tone while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing.
 - f. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the information or explanation presented (e.g., articulating implications or the significance of the topic).
- W.9-10.3. Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.
 - a. Engage and orient the reader by setting out a problem, situation, or observation, establishing one or multiple point(s) of view, and introducing a narrator and/or characters; create a smooth progression of experiences or events.
 - b. Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, description, reflection, and multiple plot lines, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters.
 - c. Use a variety of techniques to sequence events so that they build on one another to create a coherent whole.
 - d. Use precise words and phrases, telling details, and sensory language to convey a vivid picture of the experiences, events, setting, and/or characters.
 - e. Provide a conclusion that follows from and reflects on what is experienced, observed, or resolved over the course of the narrative.
- W.9-10.4. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.)
- W.9-10.5. Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on addressing what is most significant for a specific purpose and audience. (Editing for conventions should demonstrate command of Language standards 1–3 up to and including grades 9–10 on page 55.)
- W.9-10.9. Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.
 - a. Apply grades 9–10 Reading standards to literature (e.g., “Analyze how an author draws on and transforms source material in a specific work [e.g.,

how Shakespeare treats a theme or topic from Ovid or the Bible or how a later author draws on a play by Shakespeare]”).

- b. Apply grades 9–10 Reading standards to literary nonfiction (e.g., “Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is valid and the evidence is relevant and sufficient; identify false statements and fallacious reasoning”).
- W.9-10.10. Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences.
- R.I.9-10.1. Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
- R.I.9-10.2. Determine a central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details; provide an objective summary of the text.
- RI.9-10.3. Analyze how the author unfolds an analysis or series of ideas or events, including the order in which the points are made, how they are introduced and developed, and the connections that are drawn between them.
- R.L.9-10.1. Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
- R.L.9-10.2. Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze in detail its development over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details; provide an objective summary of the text.
- R.L.9-10.3. Analyze how complex characters (e.g., those with multiple or conflicting motivations) develop over the course of a text, interact with other characters, and advance the plot or develop the theme.
- R.L.9-10.4. Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the cumulative impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone (e.g., how the language evokes a sense of time and place; how it sets a formal or informal tone).
- R.L.9-10.5. Analyze how an author’s choices concerning how to structure a text, order events within it (e.g., parallel plots), and manipulate time (e.g., pacing, flashbacks) create such effects as mystery, tension, or surprise.
- RL.9-10.7. Analyze the representation of a subject or a key scene in two different artistic mediums, including what is emphasized or absent in each treatment (e.g.,

Auden's "Musée des Beaux Arts" and Breughel's Landscape with the Fall of Icarus).

- RL.9-10.9. Analyze how an author draws on and transforms source material in a specific work (e.g., how Shakespeare treats a theme or topic from Ovid or the Bible or how a later author draws on a play by Shakespeare).
- R.L.9-10.10. By the end of grade 9, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, in the grades 9–10 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.