

The Masque of the Red Death

LESSON PLAN 1--Unmasking the truth behind the Red Death

Subject: English | Grade: 9th | Duration: 1:30-2hrs



Objectives

Students will...

- focus on planning and presenting oral presentations, either independently or in small groups.
- apply literary terms and mechanics into writing, speech, and in-class discussion.
- practice using outside media to compare and contrast fiction with non-fiction works.

Materials

Printed copy of the story, pencils/pens, paper

Prep Work

1. Have the students either read aloud or listen to a recording of “The Masque of the Red Death.” (20min)
2. Teach will discuss POV, plot, characters, vocabulary, etcetera. (10min)

Activities

Part I

The teacher will present a brief lesson touching on different people in Poe’s life. These include Elizabeth Arnold Poe, his mother; Virginia Poe, his wife and cousin; Frances Allan, his caretaker; and William Henry Leonard Poe, his brother, all of who died of Tuberculosis. (15-20min)

Part II

The students will break off into small groups and further discuss the story in-depth, all the while applying key aspects of the story, including the “Red Death” epidemic, to the different Poe-related characters previously discussed. (15-20min)

Part III

The students, divided into four groups, are then to further research one out of the four people (each group being assigned one different person) and present a 5-10 minute oral presentation regarding who their subject was, how Tuberculosis was related to and affected them, and finally how this may have influenced Poe’s writing of “The Masque of the Red Death.” This may require research outside of the classroom. (50-70min)

Target SOL

Communication: 9.1a-e, g-l Reading: 9.3e-g; 9.4a-m; 9.5a-k Writing: 9.6a-i; 9.7a, b, d-f
Research: 9.8a-h

LESSON PLAN 2--Unmasking the truth behind the Red Death

Subject: English | Grade:10th | Duration: 1:30-2hrs

Objectives

Students will...

- learn to communicate skillfully in small groups.
- continue to develop vocabulary and language mechanics, as well as practice analyzing texts.
- improve writing and research skills.
- apply the story of topic to different cultural references and eras.

Materials

Printed copy of story, pencils/pens, papers

Prep Work

1. Have the students either read aloud or listen to a recording of “The Masque of the Red Death.” (20min)
2. Each student will discuss POV, plot, characters, vocabulary, et cetera. (10min)

Activities

Part I

After having read or listened to the story, students are to break into cooperative groups and further research the Bubonic Plague or the ebola epidemic. The students will then apply this to “The Masque of the Red Death.” (30min)

Part II

Students are to then find one instance of either the Bubonic Plague showing up in another literary text, or find a literary text in which the Red Death or the ebola epidemic appears. Explain how this evokes the same message and terror as Poe used in his story. (30min)

Examples of this include:

- The Red Death in Gaston Leroux’s The Phantom of the Opera
- Several allusions are present in The Shining by Stephen King
- A re-telling of Poe’s story in webcomic format by Wendy Pini
- Terry Pratchett’s Discworld novels
- Albert Camus’ The Plague

Part III

Students are then to present a oral presentation discussing their research. This may require research outside of class. (45-60min)

Target SOL

Communication: 10.1a-k; 10.2a-d Reading: 10.3b, e-g; 10.4a-d, g-i, k, m; 10.5b, d, f-h Writing: 10.6a-g; 10.7c Research: 10.8a-f

LESSON PLAN 3--Unmasking the truth behind the Red Death

Subject: English | Grade: 11th | Duration: 1:30-2hrs

Objectives

Students will...

- analyze information and present a persuasive oral presentation, focusing on delivery and accuracy of information.
- practice identifying and applying study of American literature, drawing conclusions from text, and further develop grammar and other language skills.

Materials

Printed copy of story, pencils/pens, paper

Prep Work

-Have the students either read aloud or listen to a recording of “The Masque of the Red Death.” (20min)

-Teacher will discuss point of view, plot, characters, vocabulary, etcetera. (10min)

Activities

Part I

Students will research topics including the Cholera Epidemic of 1831, the ebola epidemic, and tuberculosis and connect this with Poe’s “The Masque of the Red Death.”

Part II

Students will then, either independently or in groups of two or three, present a persuasive oral presentation along with some form of tangible presentation device. In order to research this topic, students must familiarize themselves more in depth with background information provided at the following link: <http://www.eapoe.org/works/mabbott/tom2t051.htm>

This will aid students in their research as it contains a good wealth of information regarding Poe’s inspirational ties with the epidemic happening at that time. Students, in order to vary what topics are presented, may choose a specific location the plague occurred in(at?). This research project may require work outside of the classroom.

Target SOL

Communication: 11.1a-h Reading: 11.3b, e-g; 11.4e, g, h, j; 11.5a, d Writing: 11.6a-g; 11.7a
Research: 11.8a-j

LESSON PLAN 4--Unmasking the truth behind the Red Death

Subject: English | Grade: 12th | Duration: 1:30-2hrs

Objectives

Students will...

- use verbal and nonverbal presentation skills, as well as organizational skills to effectively deliver an oral presentation, as well as research project.

- develop advanced knowledge of grammatical skills.

Prep Work

1. Have the students either read aloud or listen to a recording of “The Masque of the Red Death.” (20min)
2. Teacher will discuss point of view, plot, characters, vocabulary, etc. (10min)

Activities

Part I

Students will choose a Poe story of their choosing; read it, and compare/contrast it to “The Masque of the Red Death”. Students will focus on analyzing both stories and comparing and contrasting Poe’s use of literary style and technique, language, historical context, and other literary devices.

Part II

Students will then write a 5-7-paged paper and then present a 3-5 minute speech regarding their research topic. The in-class research will take up the entire class period, and all other research may be done in class the following day(s) or outside of class. This paper is to present the student’s understanding of the text, skills regarding beyond the classroom research, as well as organizational application. Questions may follow the speech if time allows for it—this will exercise the student’s ability to research and render information and discuss it knowledgeably.

Target SOL

Communication: 12.1a-h; 12.2a, b Reading: 12.3d-f Writing: 12.6a-d, f-h; 12.7a-c Research: 12.8a, c-h

Vocabulary

Amplify	Dominions	Ingress	Rôle
Arabesque	Eccentric	Jest	Sable
Avatar	Egress	Lofty	Sagacious
Battlements	Emanating	Massy	Scrutiny
Bedewed	Fête	Monotonous	Sedate
Brazier	Folly	Mummer	Shrouded
Candelabrum	Gaunt	Peal	Solemn
Casements	Girdled	Peculiar	Subdued
Ceased	Grotesque	Perforce	Termination
Cerements	Habiliments	Pervaded	Throng
Cessation	Hale	Pestilence	Tremulousness
Contagion	Hearken	Piquancy	Unimpeded
Countenances	Hoarsely	Phantasm	Untenanted
Courtiers	Hue	Precincts	Vesture
Dauntless	Impeded	Prevailing	Visage
Disapprobation	Imperial	Profuse	Voluptuous
Disconcert	Impetuosity	Provisioned	Wanton
Dissolution	Improvisatory	Reverie	Writhe

Resources

With annotated bibliography.

<http://poestories.com/read/masque>

Film Adaptations

Short film by Mat Tyler Multimedia

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yv2qL-LRBag> -Part One

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GF8TSsQOKq0> -Part Two

Recording Readings

As read by Nick Gisburne

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8kkCPGvJ71c>

As read by Gabriel Byrne

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ughhMRK4PHQ>

As read by Basil Rathbone

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5S3Dmd4UeV0>