LESSON PLAN 1 – Symbols, Legends, and Myths
Subject: English | Grade: 7th | Duration: 1hr 30min

Objectives
Students will...
- learn how to identify symbolism and personification in Poe’s work
- connect myths and legends to factual information
- learn to conduct background research using diverse sources

Materials
Access to the Internet, paper, writing and coloring pencils, printer

Prep Work
The teacher will ask students to work in pairs to conduct online research on myths, legends, and facts about black cats. Each pair then must write down two facts and three myths about them. The class will discuss their findings and how legends are born out of the most ordinary events. (15min)

Activities
Part I
Have the students remain in their pairs and read “The Black Cat” online. Ask them to focus on how the animals are personified in the story, and to take notes on examples of personification and symbolism as they read. (15min)

Part II
Students will be asked to choose an animal, (it could be a pet or an animal with which they have had constant interaction) and to create a character biography that uses personification to describe the animal’s traits. (20min)

Example:
(Drawing)
Physical characteristics:_______
Personality:_______
Likes to _______

Part III
Students will exchange character descriptions and be asked to draw the animal based on the characteristics written by their peers. Have students share their favorite drawings with the class. (20min)

Part IV
Students then need to be either allotted enough remaining class time, or out of class time, to write at least three paragraphs retelling the story from the cat’s point of view. (1-2pages)(20min)
LESSON PLAN 2 – The Plot Thickens
Subject: English | Grade: 8th | Duration: 1hr

Objectives
Students will...
- learn how to create a plot diagram
- learn how to use literary devices to build suspense
- evaluate, organize, and synthesize information for use in a visual narrative

Materials
Writing materials, loose-leaf, printout of story, sharpies, and plot diagram worksheet

Activities
Part I
Discuss how plot diagrams are helpful in extracting the keys literary elements of a story. Ask students to read the Black Cat on their own and fill-out a plot diagram based on what they read. Go over each category with the class. (35 min)

Part II
Students will work in cooperative groups to create a storyboard for the series of events that occurred in the story using what they learned from the plot diagram. They will present their final products to the class. (30 min)

Target SOL
Communication: 8.2a-h; 8.3c Reading: 8.4a,e,f; 8.5b-d, h-m Writing: 8.7a-d; 8.8f,g

Vocabulary
Allusion  Exult  Paltry
Atrocity  Felicity  Pertinacity
Bas-relief  Fidelity  Pestilence
Chimera  Folly  Phantasm
Conflagration  Gallows  Procure
Conscience  Goad  Remorse
Consign  Gossamer  Sagacious
Consume  Hogshead  Scruple
Debauch  Infamy  Sentiment
Disposition  Intemperance  Solicit
Docile  Malevolence  Succinct
Equivocal  Maltreat  Succumb
Resources
Annotated Version
http://www.eapoe.org/works/mabbott/tom3t004.htm

Printable Version
http://www.ibiblio.org/ebooks/Poe/Black_Cat.pdf

Printable Plot Diagram

“Black Cat” dramatization
http://youtu.be/GKN_l6ouswg