

THE MASQUE OF THE RED DEATH

By Edgar Allan Poe

Analyzing Literature Worksheet

Understanding Allegory

An **allegory** is a story that uses symbols throughout to teach a lesson. Symbols can be characters, objects or events that represent something else. Complete the following chart. Explain what you think each symbol in “The Masque of the Red Death” represents and how it helps teach the lesson of the story.

Symbol	What it represents	How it helps teach the lesson
Example: dreams	Masqueraders, fantasies	Shows us that life is fleeting; forebodes the grim ending to the story
1. the masked visitor		
2. the black chamber		
3. the music		
4. the tripods with the flames		
5. the clock		

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Using Context Clues

When you read a story, you may come across an unfamiliar word. You can use **context clues** – the words, phrases, and sentences surrounding the word – to help you determine its meaning. For example, in the statement “In spite of these things, it was a gay and magnificent revel,” you can use the words around revel to determine that it means “party or celebration.”

For each of the following sentences, use context clues to determine the meaning of the italicized words. Write the meaning of the word on the line at the right.

1. “He had directed, in great part, the movable embellishments of the seven chambers, upon occasion of this great *fete*.” 1. _____
2. “There were sharp pains, and sudden dizziness, and then *profuse* bleeding at the pores...” 2. _____
3. “But to the chamber which lies most westwardly of the seven, there are now none of the maskers who venture; for the night is waning away; and there flows a *ruddier* light through the blood-colored panes.” 3. _____
4. “When the eyes of Prince Prospero fell upon this *spectral* image (which with a slow and solemn movement, as if more fully to sustain its role, stalked to and fro among the waltzers) he was seen to be convulsed.” 4. _____
5. “There was a sharp cry – and the dagger dropped gleaming upon the sable carpet, upon which, instantly afterwards, fell *prostrate* in death the Prince Prospero.” 5. _____