

**Table 1: Needs Analysis (Results)**

<b>STUDENT</b>	<b>READING COMPREHENSION</b>	<b>LITERACY RESPONSE</b>	<b>WRITING STRATEGY</b>	<b>WRITTEN CONVENTION</b>	<b>TOTAL SCORES</b>
A	0	3	1	1	5
B	0	4	2	2	8
C	2	3	4	3	12
D	0	2	1	0	3
E	1	4	3	0	8
F	0	2	2	5	9
G	0	1	2	0	3
H	0	0	2	2	4
I	1	5	2	2	10
J	0	5	1	2	3
K	1	2	3	2	8
L	1	4	3	2	10
M	1	1	3	4	9
N	2	1	2	1	6
O	0	2	1	3	6
P	0	3	1	0	4
Q	0	3	1	0	4
R	0	5	3	2	10
S	1	4	4	1	10
T	1	5	3	0	9
U	0	5	2	0	7
V	1	3	1	2	7
W	0	3	2	0	5
X	0	0	2	2	4
Y	0	3	0	0	3

**Table 1: Needs Analysis (Results)**

## NEEDS ANALYSIS

### DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

**School:** Telabastagan Integrated school

**Grade Level:** Eight

**Quarter:** 2<sup>nd</sup>

**Section:** Euclid

**Number of students:** Thirty Eight

**Subject:** English 8

**Age Range:** 11-17 years old

### PROCEDURE

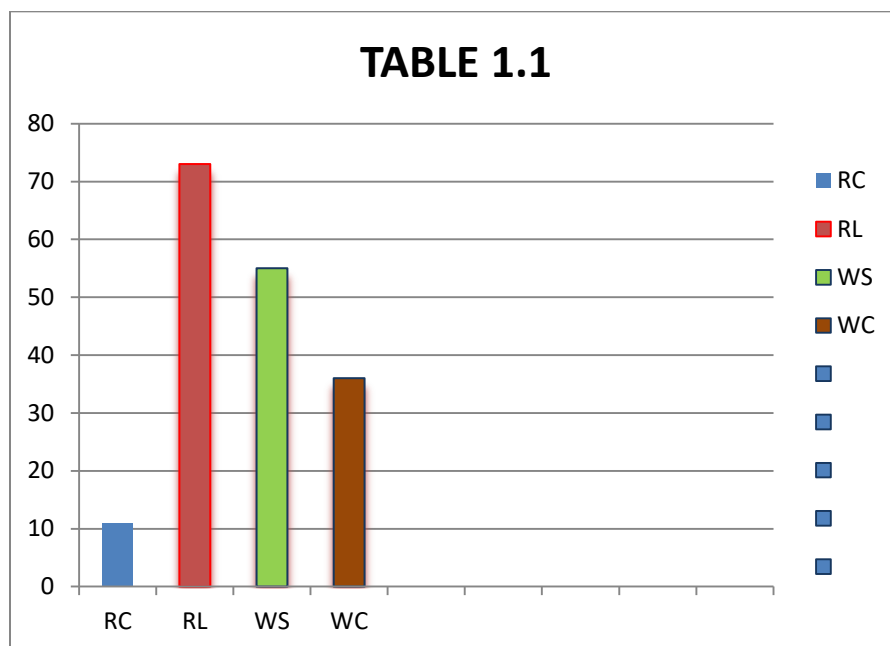
- Smaller scale
- Find a standardize test the ask permission through email
- Initial questionnaire
- Follow up individual and group interview
- Meeting with the teacher (English Teacher)
- Meeting with the student
- Test

### METHOD

**Questionnaire:** California Standards Test

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## DATA ANALYSIS



### Legend:

**RC-** Reading comprehension

**RL-** Literacy Response

**WS-** Writing Strategy

**WC-** Writing Convention

The table 1 shows the results of the needs analysis that was administered to the students in Grade Eight section Euclid at Telebastagan Integrated school only 25 students took the exam 12 of them were not able to make it due to some reasons some of them were absent, some of them were attending some extracurricular activity. The table shows that most of the student in Telebastagan Integrated school Grade Eight section Euclid are having difficulty in Reading comprehension.

In table 1.1 shows that most of the students are good in Literary response analysis while the others are good in writing strategy. We can see in this graph that 70 for literary response, 55 for writing strategy, 35 for writing conventions, and 10 for reading comprehension.

## **RATIONALE**

This ESP module is designed and created to help the Grade Eight students in increasing their reading comprehension. The Reading selections and activities will help both parents and students to have a better understanding what reading is all about and how reading affects the lives of every students.

## **OBJECTIVES**

### **A. Reading with understanding and fluency**

Apply word analysis and vocabulary skills to comprehend solutions

- Analyze the meaning of words and phrases in their context
- Determine the meaning of words and phrases in their context
- Summarize and make generalization form context and relate the selection in real life situations

### **B. Read understand literature of various ideas**

- Describe how the development of the theme, character, plot, and setting contribute to overall impact of a piece of literature.
- Respond to literary material from personal creative and critical points of view
- Discuss reaction to and ideas/information gained form reading experiences with adults, peers, in both formal and informal situation

## **MODULE DESCRIPTION**

This module provides the key skills in improving reading comprehension, by providing essential reading selection in the matter of reading literary text. One of the central theme of this module is comprehension or understanding the text, it introduces literary as a key theme in the reading and understanding the text, the reading selection with related questions to reflect and relate to once situation or experience.

The aim of this is to improve reading skills that will complement the skills in reading the essence of this module is the understanding of reading which literature in English communicates meaning to reader.

Lastly, this module is to develop student abilities and confidence as critical readers, by promoting an analytical awareness of different literary text.

## **TO THE TEACHER**

### **Who is this module for?**

This module is for Grade Eight students who are having difficulty in Reading comprehension

### **Suggested Teaching Approaches**

View the module introduction as a class ask students if they have any questions about what is reading. Have the students in this module to read the reading selections and answer the activities, the reading selections and activities may be explored in any order, you may wish to select a reading selection or activity based on the topics covered.

### **Assessment**

With this module students are given the opportunity to write their opinion for each reading selection/activity after having considered possible outcome and having discussed the selection within the class the opinion is presented inside the class to consider views and can be written and submitted to teacher for assessment purposes. The extra activities are optional can also be used for assessment purpose.

## **COMPLETING THE ACTIVITIES**

Decide how you would like your students to complete the activities in the module there are three options available

- Allow the students to individually read the text or selection and complete the activity using the module
- Print out activity sheets and make enough copies for each students
- Refer to the module and activity sheets and guide the students through constructing and completing the activities in their activity sheets.

## **TO THE STUDENTS**

### **READING STANDARDS**

Student varies their verbal and non-verbal responses, they understand complex information, they consider their own and others' point of view, apply prior knowledge to new situations, change beliefs and justify their own understanding.

Students demonstrate respect for the individuality of others and have compassion with others in local, national, and global context acknowledging the diversity of individual, they recognize and describe peer influence on their behaviour.

Students seek and respond to feedback from peers, teachers and other adults and explain how their ideas have changed to develop and refine the content knowledge and understanding.

Explain the purpose of a range of thinking tools and use them in appropriate context, they use specific language to describe their knowledge and reflect, modify their ideas. Describe and explain changes that may occur in their ideas and beliefs over times

## READING

### What is Reading?

"Reading" is the process of looking at a series of written symbols and getting meaning from them. When we read, we use our eyes to receive written symbols (letters, punctuation marks and spaces) and we use our brain to convert them into words, sentences and paragraphs that communicate something to us.

Reading can be silent (in our head) or aloud (so that other people can hear).

Reading is a *receptive* skill - through it we *receive* information. But the complex process of reading also requires the skill of speaking, so that we can pronounce the words that we read. In this sense, reading is also a productive skill in that we are both receiving information and transmitting it (even if only to ourselves).

### Why Read?

You probably know that even in your own language reading is regarded as important because it can be entertaining and educational, can open up new worlds and enrich your life, and can improve hand-eye co-ordination and enhance social skills.

But for learning a foreign language, in this case English, reading in that language has additional important benefits that can help you learn the language faster and more completely.

Reading is an essential skill for language learners. When your reading skills improve, your listening, speaking and writing skills improve too. Here are some of the specific reasons why English learners are encouraged to read in English:

- The constant repetition of words and patterns in reading helps you learn and remember vocabulary and grammar structures.
- Reading helps you become familiar with the rhythm of English. Over time it will start to feel natural and you will notice when a sentence or phrase doesn't seem right.



- Unlike conversation, reading is something you can do on your own.
- Reading is not expensive, often free.
- Good reading skills can improve your other language skills. You need to learn to read before you can write.
- Reading is the best way to learn and remember the proper spelling of words.
- Listening as you read aloud can help you improve your pronunciation skills.

If you want to improve your English, learn to love reading in English. The best readers often get the best grades, jobs and opportunities.

### **The Reading Process**

Reading is a process that involves recognizing words, leading to the development of comprehension. According to research, reading is a process that negotiates the meaning between the text and its reader. The reading process involves three stages.

The first is the **pre-reading** stage, which allows the reader to activate background knowledge, preview the text, and develop a purpose for reading. A strategy for students to utilize during this stage is to look at the title of the selection and list all the information that comes to mind about the title.

The second stage occurs **during reading**, when the reader makes predictions as they read and then confirms or revises the predictions. For example, double-entry journal enable the reader to write the text from the reading on one side and their personal reaction on the other side.

The final stage occurs **after reading** and allows the reader to retell the story, discuss the elements of a story, answer questions and/or compare it to another text. For example, students can create summaries, where they take a huge selection and reduce it to its main points for more concise understanding.

Comprehension is an intentional, active, and interactive process that occurs before, during and after a person reads a particular piece of writing.

## Reading Comprehension

Reading comprehension has two elements that complete the process. The first element is vocabulary knowledge. The reader must be able to understand the vocabulary used by the writer. The second element is text comprehension, where the reader puts together the vocabulary and different comprehension strategies to develop an understanding of the text. **Comprehension**, or the mental process that allows the reader to understand the text, begins before the reader starts the text and continues even after the reading has finished. There are some specific strategies that can be used to increase comprehension:

1. Skimming, or allowing the reader to glance over the material to gain an overall view of text.
2. Synthesizing, or putting together information to keep track of what is happening in the text.
3. Self-questioning, which occurs when reader engages in active learning.

Without comprehension, reading is just looking at symbols on the page.

### What exactly *is* reading comprehension?

Simply put, reading comprehension is the act of understanding what you are reading. While the definition can be simply stated the act is not simple to teach, learn or practice. Reading comprehension is an intentional, active, interactive process that occurs before, during and after a person reads a particular piece of writing.

Reading comprehension is one of the pillars of the act of reading. When a person reads a text he engages in a complex array of cognitive processes. He is simultaneously using his awareness and understanding of phonemes (individual sound “pieces” in language), phonics (connection between letters and sounds and the relationship between sounds, letters and words) and ability to comprehend or construct meaning from the text. This last component of the act of reading is reading comprehension. It cannot occur independent of the other two elements of the process. At the same time, it is the most difficult and most important of the three.

There are two elements that make up the process of reading comprehension: **vocabulary knowledge** and **text comprehension**. In order to understand a text the reader must be able to comprehend the vocabulary used in the piece of writing. If the individual words don't make the sense then the overall story will not either. Children can draw on their prior knowledge of vocabulary, but they also need to continually be taught new words. The best vocabulary instruction occurs at the point of need. Parents and teachers should pre-teach new words that a child will encounter in a text or aid her in understanding unfamiliar words as she comes upon them in the writing. In addition to being able to understand each distinct word in a text, the child also has to be able to put them together to develop an overall conception of what it is trying to say. This is text comprehension. Text comprehension is much more complex and varied than vocabulary knowledge. Readers use many different text comprehension strategies to develop reading comprehension. These include monitoring for understanding, answering and generating questions, summarizing and being aware of and using a text's structure to aid comprehension.

### **How does reading comprehension develop?**

As you can see, reading comprehension is incredibly complex and multifaceted. Because of this, readers do not develop the ability to comprehend texts quickly, easily or independently. Reading comprehension strategies must be taught over an extended period of time by parents and teachers who have knowledge and experience using them. It might seem that once a child learns to read in the elementary grades he is able to tackle any future text that comes his way. This is not true. Reading comprehension strategies must be refined, practiced and reinforced continually throughout life. Even in the middle grades and high school, parents and teachers need to continue to help their children develop reading comprehension strategies. As their reading materials become more diverse and challenging, children need to learn new tools for comprehending these texts. Content area materials such as textbooks and newspaper, magazine and journal articles pose different reading comprehension challenges for young people and thus require different comprehension strategies. The development of reading comprehension is a lifelong process that changes based on the depth and breadth of texts the person is reading.

## **Why is reading comprehension so important?**

Without comprehension, reading is nothing more than tracking symbols on a page with your eyes and sounding them out. Imagine being handed a story written in Egyptian hieroglyphics with no understanding of their meaning. You may appreciate the words aesthetically and even be able to draw some small bits of meaning from the page, but you are not truly reading the story. The words on the page have no meaning. They are simply symbols. People read for many reasons but understanding is always a part of their purpose. Reading comprehension is important because without it reading doesn't provide the reader with any information.

Beyond this, reading comprehension is essential to life. Much has been written about the importance of functional literacy. In order to survive and thrive in today's world individuals must be able to comprehend basic texts such as bills, housing agreements (leases, purchase contracts), directions on packaging and transportation documents (bus and train schedules, maps, travel directions). Reading comprehension is a critical component of functional literacy. Think of the potentially dire effects of not being able to comprehend dosage directions on a bottle of medicine or warnings on a container of dangerous chemicals. With the ability to comprehend what they read, people are able not only to live safely and productively, but also to continue to develop socially, emotionally and intellectually

## SHORT STORY

A *short story* is fictional work of prose that is shorter in length than a novel. Edgar Allan Poe, in his essay "The Philosophy of Composition," said that a short story should be read in one sitting, anywhere from a half hour to two hours. In contemporary fiction, a short story can range from 1,000 to 20,000 words.

Because of the shorter length, a short story usually focuses on one plot, one main character (with a few additional minor characters), and one central theme, whereas a novel can tackle multiple plots and themes, with a variety of prominent characters. Short stories also lend themselves more to experimentation — that is, using uncommon prose styles or literary devices to tell the story. Such uncommon styles or devices might get tedious, and downright annoying, in a novel, but they may work well in a short story.

A short story is, in some ways, like a photograph- a captured moment of time that is crystalline, though sometimes mysterious, arresting, though perhaps delicate. But while a photo may or may not suggest consequences, a short story always does. In the story's moment of time something important, something irrevocable has occurred. The change may be subtle or obvious, but it is definite and definitive.

**SETTING** -- The time and location in which a story takes place is called the setting. For some stories the setting is very important, while for others it is not. There are several aspects of a story's setting to consider when examining how setting contributes to a story (some, or all, may be present in a story):

- a) **place** - geographical location. Where is the action of the story taking place?
- b) **time** - When is the story taking place? (historical period, time of day, year, etc)
- c) **weather conditions** - Is it rainy, sunny, stormy, etc?
- d) **social conditions** - What is the daily life of the characters like? Does the story contain local colour (writing that focuses on the speech, dress, mannerisms, customs, etc. of a particular place)?
- e) **mood or atmosphere** - What feeling is created at the beginning of the story? Is it bright and cheerful or dark and frightening?

**PLOT** -- The plot is how the author arranges events to develop his basic idea; It is the sequence of events in a story or play. The plot is a planned, logical series of events having a beginning, middle, and end. The short story usually has one plot so it can be read in one sitting. There are five essential parts of plot:

a) **Introduction** - The beginning of the story where the characters and the setting is revealed.

b) **Rising Action** - This is where the events in the story become complicated and the conflict in the story is revealed (events between the introduction and climax).

c) **Climax** - This is the highest point of interest and the turning point of the story. The reader wonders what will happen next; will the conflict be resolved or not?

d) **Falling action** - The events and complications begin to resolve themselves. The reader knows what has happened next and if the conflict was resolved or not (events between climax and denouement).

e) **Denouement** - This is the final outcome or untangling of events in the story.

It is helpful to consider climax as a three-fold phenomenon: 1) the main character receives new information 2) accepts this information (realizes it but does not necessarily agree with it) 3) acts on this information (makes a choice that will determine whether or not he/she gains his objective).

**CONFLICT**-- Conflict is essential to plot. Without conflict there is no plot. It is the opposition of forces which ties one incident to another and makes the plot move. Conflict is not merely limited to open arguments, rather it is any form of opposition that faces the main character. Within a short story there may be only one central struggle, or there may be one dominant struggle with many minor ones.

**There are two types of conflict:**

1) **External** - A struggle with a force outside one's self.

2) **Internal** - A struggle within one's self; a person must make some decision, overcome pain, quiet their temper, resist an urge, etc.

There are four kinds of conflict:

- 1) **Man vs. Man** (physical) - The leading character struggles with his physical strength against other men, forces of nature, or animals.
- 2) **Man vs. Circumstances** (classical) - The leading character struggles against fate, or the circumstances of life facing him/her.
- 3) **Man vs. Society** (social) - The leading character struggles against ideas, practices, or customs of other people.
- 4) **Man vs. Himself/Herself** (psychological) - The leading character struggles with himself/herself; with his/her own soul, ideas of right or wrong, physical limitations, choices, etc.

**CHARACTER** -- There are two meanings for the word character:

- 1) The person in a work of fiction.
- 2) The characteristics of a person.

### ***Persons in a work of fiction - Antagonist and Protagonist***

Short stories use few characters. One character is clearly central to the story with all major events having some importance to this character - he/she is the PROTAGONIST. The opposer of the main character is called the ANTAGONIST.

### ***The Characteristics of a Person -***

In order for a story to seem real to the reader its characters must seem real. Characterization is the information the author gives the reader about the characters themselves. The author may reveal a character in several ways:

- a) his/her physical appearance
- b) what he/she says, thinks, feels and dreams
- c) what he/she does or does not do
- d) what others say about him/her and how others react to him/her

Characters are convincing if they are: consistent, motivated, and life-like (resemble real people)

### **Characters are...**

1. **Individual** - round, many sided and complex personalities.
2. **Developing** - dynamic, many sided personalities that change, for better or worse, by the end of the story.
3. **Static** - Stereotype, have one or two characteristics that never change and are emphasized e.g. brilliant detective, drunk, scrooge, cruel stepmother, etc.

### **POINT OF VIEW**

Point of view, or p.o.v., is defined as the angle from which the story is told.

1. **Innocent Eye** - The story is told through the eyes of a child (his/her judgment being different from that of an adult) .
2. **Stream of Consciousness** - The story is told so that the reader feels as if they are inside the head of one character and knows all their thoughts and reactions.
3. **First Person** - The story is told by the protagonist or one of the characters who interacts closely with the protagonist or other characters (using pronouns I, me, we, etc). The reader sees the story through this person's eyes as he/she experiences it and only knows what he/she knows or feels.
4. **Omniscient**- The author can narrate the story using the omniscient point of view. He can move from character to character, event to event, having free access to the thoughts, feelings and motivations of his characters and he introduces information where and when he chooses. There are two main types of omniscient point of view:
  - a) **Omniscient Limited** - The author tells the story in third person (using pronouns they, she, he, it, etc). We know only what the character knows and what the author allows him/her to tell us. We can see the thoughts and feelings of characters if the author chooses to reveal them to us.
  - b) **Omniscient Objective** – The author tells the story in the third person. It appears as though a camera is following the characters, going anywhere, and recording only what is seen and heard. There is no comment on the characters or their thoughts. No



interpretations are offered. The reader is placed in the position of spectator without the author there to explain. The reader has to interpret events on his own.

**THEME** -- The theme in a piece of fiction is its controlling idea or its central insight. It is the author's underlying meaning or main idea that he is trying to convey. The theme may be the author's thoughts about a topic or view of human nature. The title of the short story usually points to what the writer is saying and he may use various figures of speech to emphasize his theme, such as: symbol, allusion, simile, metaphor, hyperbole, or irony.

Some simple examples of common themes from literature, TV, and film are:

- things are not always as they appear to be
- Love is blind
- Believe in yourself
- People are afraid of change
- Don't judge a book by its cover

## “The Dot”

By: Peter H. Reynolds

Genre: Realistic Fiction

**Vocabulary:** draw, colors, over, drew, great, sign, show

**Read the words-** (In art class we draw with pencils. Then we mix colors and paint over the drawings. I drew a great big cat. Let me sign it. Then I will show it to you.)

Art class was over, but Vashti sat glued to her chair. Her paper was empty.

Vashti’s teacher leaned over the blank paper. “Ah! A polar bear in a snowstorm,” she said.

Very funny!” said Vashti, “I just CAN’T draw!”

Her teacher smiled. “Just make a mark and see where it takes you.”

Vashti grabbed a marker and gave the paper a good, strong jab. “There!”

Her teacher picked up the paper and studied it carefully. “Hmmmmm.”

She pushed the paper toward Vashti and quietly said, “Now sign it.”

Vashti thought for a moment. “Well, maybe I can’t draw, but I CAN sign my name.”

The next week, when Vashti walked into art class, she was surprised to see what was hanging above her teacher’s desk.

It was the little dot she had drawn- HER DOT! All framed in swirly gold!

“Hmmp! I can make a better dot than THAT”

She opened her never-before-used set of watercolors and set to work. Vashti painted and painted.

A red dot. A purple dot. A yellow dot. A blue dot.

The blue mixed with the yellow. She discovered that she could make a GREEN dot.

Vashti kept experimenting. Lots of little dots in many colors.

“If I can make little dots, I can make BIG dots too.” Vashti splashed her colors with a bigger brush and bigger paper to make bigger dots.

Vashti even made a dot by NOT painting a dot.

At the school art show a few weeks later. Vashti’s many dots made quite a splash.

Vashti noticed a little boy gazing up at her.

You’re a really great artist. I wish I could draw,” he said.

“I bet you can,” said Vashti. “ME? No, not me. I can’t draw a straight line with a ruler.

Vashti smiled. She handed the boy a blank sheet of paper. “Show me.”

The boy’s pencil shook as he drew his line.

Vashti stared at the boy’s squiggle. And then she said...

“Sign it.”

### **Comprehension Questions:**

1. Why is Vashti’s paper empty?
2. In what ways can you relate to Vashti?
3. Where does this story take place?
4. How do you think Vashti feels about her drawing framed in gold? Why
5. What colors does Vashti use to make her green dot?
6. What do you think the author means by the phrase “made quite a splash”? Why do you think he chose these words?
7. What do we learn about Vashti when she tells the boy “I bet you can”?

### **Spelling**

1. eat
2. sea

### **Amazing Words: To Build Oral Vocabulary**

1. **create**- when you create something, you make something new.

- |           |  |
|-----------|--|
| 3. each   | 2. <b>doodle</b> - A doodle is a scribble.   |
| 4. team   | 3. <b>imagination</b> - If you have a good imagination, you can see things in your mind that aren't there or you can think of unusual ideas. |
| 5. please |  |
| 6. dream  | 4. <b>carve</b> - carve means "to make by cutting."  |
| 7. treat  | 5. <b>hobby</b> - A hobby is something people do for fun in their spare time.  |
| 8. beach  |  |
| 9. clean  | 6. <b>inspiration</b> - An inspiration is a sudden, bright idea.   |
| 10. lean  |  |

- Bonus:** colors
7. **masterpiece**- A masterpiece is a great piece sign of work.
8. **sculptor**- A sculptor is an artist who makes or carves things out of stone, wood, metal, or another material.

**Correct & Rewrite the following sentences.**

1. they went to the see
2. would you please eat your pees
3. we played at the beech by the see
4. I dreem of being a artist?

**Independent Writing:**

How does Vashti make a dot by not painting a dot?

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SCORE: \_\_\_\_\_ (the teacher will score the writing piece)

**READ THE STORY:** This is a one-minute fluency self-check test” Get someone to time you for one-minute and see how many words you can read within that minute. You can practice for several days so that you can get used to being timed, circle the number of words you read in one minute. (Please remember that it isn’t always important-about how many words you can read in one minute if you can’t retell what you have read.) Don’t forget to circle your one minute time when you turn your homework in on Friday.

### **A Day at the Beach**

“Mom, may we please go to the beach?” asked	9
Jean.	10
“Help me clean. Then we can go.”	17
Jean put her things away. She dusted. She dried	26
the dishes. She put them on the shelf. Jean	35
hurried to get everything done.	40
Then they went to the beach. It was prettier than	50
the last time. The sea was so blue!	58
Jean and her mom walked in the sand. They saw	68
a little seal on a rock. They picked up shells.	78
They picked up sea glass.	83
Jean felt the heat of the sun. This was one of the	95
happiest days of her life.	100

## THE TELL-TALE HEART

by Edgar Allan Poe

1843

TRUE! --nervous --very, very dreadfully nervous I had been and am; but why will you say that I am mad? The disease had sharpened my senses --not destroyed --not dulled them. Above all was the sense of hearing acute. I heard all things in the heaven and in the earth. I heard many things in hell. How, then, am I mad? Hearken! and observe how healthily --how calmly I can tell you the whole story.

It is impossible to say how first the idea entered my brain; but once conceived, it haunted me day and night. Object there was none. Passion there was none. I loved the old man. He had never wronged me. He had never given me insult. For his gold I had no desire. I think it was his eye! yes, it was this! He had the eye of a vulture --a pale blue eye, with a film over it. Whenever it fell upon me, my blood ran cold; and so by degrees --very gradually --I made up my mind to take the life of the old man, and thus rid myself of the eye forever.

Now this is the point. You fancy me mad. Madmen know nothing. But you should have seen me. You should have seen how wisely I proceeded --with what caution --with what foresight --with what dissimulation I went to work! I was never kinder to the old man than during the whole week before I killed him. And every night, about midnight, I turned the latch of his door and opened it --oh so gently! And then, when I had made an opening sufficient for my head, I put in a dark lantern, all closed, closed, that no light shone out, and then I thrust in my head. Oh, you would have laughed to see how cunningly I thrust it in! I moved it slowly --very, very slowly, so that I might not disturb the old man's sleep. It took me an hour to place my whole head within the opening so far that I could see him as he lay upon his bed. Ha! would a madman have been so wise as this, And then, when my head was well in the room, I undid the lantern cautiously--oh, so cautiously --cautiously (for the hinges creaked) --I undid it just so much that a single thin ray fell upon the vulture eye. And this I did for seven long nights --every night just at midnight --but I found the eye always closed; and so it was impossible to do the work; for it was not the old man who vexed me, but his Evil Eye. And every morning, when the day broke, I went boldly into the chamber,

and spoke courageously to him, calling him by name in a hearty tone, and inquiring how he has passed the night. So you see he would have been a very profound old man, indeed, to suspect that every night, just at twelve, I looked in upon him while he slept.

Upon the eighth night I was more than usually cautious in opening the door. A watch's minute hand moves more quickly than did mine. Never before that night had I felt the extent of my own powers --of my sagacity. I could scarcely contain my feelings of triumph. To think that there I was, opening the door, little by little, and he not even to dream of my secret deeds or thoughts. I fairly chuckled at the idea; and perhaps he heard me; for he moved on the bed suddenly, as if startled. Now you may think that I drew back --but no. His room was as black as pitch with the thick darkness, (for the shutters were close fastened, through fear of robbers,) and so I knew that he could not see the opening of the door, and I kept pushing it on steadily, steadily.

I had my head in, and was about to open the lantern, when my thumb slipped upon the tin fastening, and the old man sprang up in bed, crying out --"Who's there?"

I kept quite still and said nothing. For a whole hour I did not move a muscle, and in the meantime I did not hear him lie down. He was still sitting up in the bed listening; --just as I have done, night after night, hearkening to the death watches in the wall.

Presently I heard a slight groan, and I knew it was the groan of mortal terror. It was not a groan of pain or of grief --oh, no! --it was the low stifled sound that arises from the bottom of the soul when overcharged with awe. I knew the sound well. Many a night, just at midnight, when all the world slept, it has welled up from my own bosom, deepening, with its dreadful echo, the terrors that distracted me. I say I knew it well. I knew what the old man felt, and pitied him, although I chuckled at heart. I knew that he had been lying awake ever since the first slight noise, when he had turned in the bed. His fears had been ever since growing upon him. He had been trying to fancy them causeless, but could not. He had been saying to himself --"It is nothing but the wind in the chimney --it is only a mouse crossing the floor," or "It is merely a cricket which has made a single chirp." Yes, he had been trying to comfort himself with these suppositions: but he had found all in vain. All in vain; because Death, in approaching him had stalked with his black shadow before him, and enveloped the victim.

And it was the mournful influence of the unperceived shadow that caused him to feel -- although he neither saw nor heard --to feel the presence of my head within the room.

When I had waited a long time, very patiently, without hearing him lie down, I resolved to open a little --a very, very little crevice in the lantern. So I opened it --you cannot imagine how stealthily, stealthily --until, at length a simple dim ray, like the thread of the spider, shot from out the crevice and fell full upon the vulture eye.

It was open --wide, wide open --and I grew furious as I gazed upon it. I saw it with perfect distinctness --all a dull blue, with a hideous veil over it that chilled the very marrow in my bones; but I could see nothing else of the old man's face or person: for I had directed the ray as if by instinct, precisely upon the damned spot.

And have I not told you that what you mistake for madness is but over-acuteness of the sense? --now, I say, there came to my ears a low, dull, quick sound, such as a watch makes when enveloped in cotton. I knew that sound well, too. It was the beating of the old man's heart. It increased my fury, as the beating of a drum stimulates the soldier into courage.

But even yet I refrained and kept still. I scarcely breathed. I held the lantern motionless. I tried how steadily I could maintain the ray upon the eye. Meantime the hellish tattoo of the heart increased. It grew quicker and quicker, and louder and louder every instant. The old man's terror must have been extreme! It grew louder, I say, louder every moment! --do you mark me well I have told you that I am nervous: so I am. And now at the dead hour of the night, amid the dreadful silence of that old house, so strange a noise as this excited me to uncontrollable terror. Yet, for some minutes longer I refrained and stood still. But the beating grew louder, louder! I thought the heart must burst. And now a new anxiety seized me --the sound would be heard by a neighbour! The old man's hour had come! With a loud yell, I threw open the lantern and leaped into the room. He shrieked once --once only. In an instant I dragged him to the floor, and pulled the heavy bed over him. I then smiled gaily, to find the deed so far done. But, for many minutes, the heart beat on with a muffled sound. This, however, did not vex me; it would not be heard through the wall. At length it ceased. The old man was dead. I removed the bed and examined the corpse. Yes, he was stone,



stone dead. I placed my hand upon the heart and held it there many minutes. There was no pulsation. He was stone dead. His eye would trouble me no more.

If still you think me mad, you will think so no longer when I describe the wise precautions I took for the concealment of the body. The night waned, and I worked hastily, but in silence. First of all I dismembered the corpse. I cut off the head and the arms and the legs.

I then took up three planks from the flooring of the chamber, and deposited all between the scantlings. I then replaced the boards so cleverly, so cunningly, that no human eye --not even his --could have detected anything wrong. There was nothing to wash out --no stain of any kind --no blood-spot whatever. I had been too wary for that. A tub had caught all --ha! ha!

When I had made an end of these labors, it was four o'clock --still dark as midnight. As the bell sounded the hour, there came a knocking at the street door. I went down to open it with a light heart, --for what had I now to fear? There entered three men, who introduced themselves, with perfect suavity, as officers of the police. A shriek had been heard by a neighbour during the night; suspicion of foul play had been aroused; information had been lodged at the police office, and they (the officers) had been deputed to search the premises.

I smiled, --for what had I to fear? I bade the gentlemen welcome. The shriek, I said, was my own in a dream. The old man, I mentioned, was absent in the country. I took my visitors all over the house. I bade them search --search well. I led them, at length, to his chamber. I showed them his treasures, secure, undisturbed. In the enthusiasm of my confidence, I brought chairs into the room, and desired them here to rest from their fatigues, while I myself, in the wild audacity of my perfect triumph, placed my own seat upon the very spot beneath which reposed the corpse of the victim.

The officers were satisfied. My manner had convinced them. I was singularly at ease. They sat, and while I answered cheerily, they chatted of familiar things. But, ere long, I felt myself getting pale and wished them gone. My head ached, and I fancied a ringing in my ears: but still they sat and still chatted. The ringing became more distinct: --It continued and became

more distinct: I talked more freely to get rid of the feeling: but it continued and gained definiteness --until, at length, I found that the noise was not within my ears.

No doubt I now grew very pale; --but I talked more fluently, and with a heightened voice. Yet the sound increased --and what could I do? It was a low, dull, quick sound --much such a sound as a watch makes when enveloped in cotton. I gasped for breath --and yet the officers heard it not. I talked more quickly --more vehemently; but the noise steadily increased. I arose and argued about trifles, in a high key and with violent gesticulations; but the noise steadily increased. Why would they not be gone? I paced the floor to and fro with heavy strides, as if excited to fury by the observations of the men --but the noise steadily increased. Oh God! what could I do? I foamed --I raved --I swore! I swung the chair upon which I had been sitting, and grated it upon the boards, but the noise arose over all and continually increased. It grew louder --louder --louder! And still the men chatted pleasantly, and smiled. Was it possible they heard not? Almighty God! --no, no! They heard! --they suspected! --they knew! --they were making a mockery of my horror!--this I thought, and this I think. But anything was better than this agony! Anything was more tolerable than this derision! I could bear those hypocritical smiles no longer! I felt that I must scream or die! and now --again! --hark! louder! louder! louder! louder!

"Villains!" I shrieked, "dissemble no more! I admit the deed! --tear up the planks! here, here! --It is the beating of his hideous heart!"

## **Vocabulary Worksheet**

**Foresight:** Thoughtful regard for the future

**Dissimulation:** Hidden under a false appearance

**Vexed:** Troubled, distressed, caused agitation

**Sagacity:** Sound judgment

**Hearkening:** Giving careful attention

**Awe:** A mixed feeling of reverence, fear, and wonder

**Distinctness:** Unmistakable, clearly defined

**Over-acuteness:** Very keen

**Concealment:** A means of hiding

**Waned:** To grow gradually less

**Scantlings:** Small quantities or amounts

**Suavity:** Gracefulness, politeness

**Bade:** Urged, compelled

**Audacity:** Bold courage, daring

**Reposed:** To lay at rest

**Derision:** Contempt, ridicule

### **COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS**

1. What does the story's title mean?

2. The narrator claims he is not mad. What evidence do we have that he is?

3. What does the narrator do with the dead man's body?

4. Why does the narrator want to kill the old man?

5. The narrator visits the old man's bedroom every night for seven nights before killing him on the eighth night. What finally causes him to commit the act?

6. The two controlling symbols in the story are the eye and the heart. What might these two symbols represent?

A) The old man's eye:

B) The beating heart:

7. Vocabulary Words: Sagacity, stealthily, over-acuteness.

## Appointment with Love

by S. I. Kishor

Six minutes to six, said the great round clock over the information booth in Grand Central Station. The tall young Army lieutenant who had just come from the direction of the tracks lifted his sunburned face, and his eyes narrowed to note the exact time. His heart was pounding with a beat that shocked him because he could not control it. In six minutes, he would see the woman who had filled such a special place in his life for the past thirteen months, the woman he had never seen, yet whose written words had been with him and sustained him unfailingly.

He placed himself as close as he could to the information booth, just beyond the ring of people besieging the clerks ....

Lieutenant Blandford remembered one night in particular, the worst of the fighting, when his place had been caught in the midst of a pack of Zeros. He had seen the grinning face of one of the enemy pilots.

In one of his letters, he had confessed to her that he often felt fear, and only a few days before this battle, he had received her answer: "Of course you fear...all brave men do. Didn't King David fear? That's why he wrote the Twenty-third Psalm. Next time you doubt, yourself, I want you to hear my voice reciting to you: 'Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I shall fear no evil, for Thou art with me'...." And he had remembered; he had heard her imagined voice, and it had renewed his strength and skill.

Now he was going to hear her real voice. Four minutes to six. His face grew sharp.

Under the immense, starred roof, people were walking fast, like threads of color being woven into a gray web. A girl passed close to him, and Lieutenant Blandford started. She was wearing a red flower in her suit lapel, but it was a crimson sweet pea, not the little red rose they had agreed upon. Besides, this girl was too young, about eighteen, whereas Hollis Meynell had frankly told him she was thirty. "Well, what of it?" he had answered. "I'm thirty-two." He was twenty-nine.

His mind went back to that book--the book the Lord Himself must have put into his hands out of the hundreds of Army library books sent to the Florida training camp. *Of Human Bondage*, it was; and throughout the book were notes in a woman's writing. He had always hated that writing-in habit, but these remarks were different. He had never believed that a woman could see into a man's heart so tenderly, so understandingly. Her name was on the bookplate: Hollis Meynell. He had got hold of a New York City telephone book and found her address. He had written, she had answered. Next day he had been shipped out, but they had gone on writing.

For thirteen months, she had faithfully replied, and more than replied.

When his letters did not arrive, she wrote anyway, and now he believed he loved her, and she loved him.

But she had refused all his pleas to send him her photograph. That seemed rather bad, of course. But she had explained: "If your feeling for me has any reality, any honest basis, what I look like won't matter. Suppose I'm beautiful. I'd always be haunted by the feeling that you had been taking a chance on just that, and that kind of love would disgust me. Suppose I'm plain (and you must admit that this is more likely), then I'd always fear that you were going on writing to me only because you were lonely and had no one else. No, don't ask for my picture. When you come to New York, you shall see me and then you shall make your decision. Remember, both of us are free to stop or to go on after that--whichever we choose ...." One minute to six ... he pulled hard on his cigarette.

Then Lieutenant Blandford's heart leaped higher than his plane had ever done.

A young woman was coming toward him. Her figure was long and slim; her blond hair lay back in curls from her delicate ears. Her eyes were blue as flowers; her lips and chin had a gentle firmness. In her pale green suit, she was like springtime come alive.

He started toward her, entirely forgetting to notice that she was wearing no rose, and as he moved, a small, provocative smile curved her lips. "Going my way, soldier?" she murmured.

Uncontrollable, he made one step closer to her. Then he saw Hollis Meynell.

She was standing almost directly behind the girl, a woman well past forty, her graying hair tucked under a worn hat. She was more than plump; her thick-ankled feet were thrust into low-heeled shoes. But she wore a red rose in the ruffled lapel of her brown coat.

The girl in the green suit was walking quickly away.

Blandford felt as though he were being split in two, so keen was his desire to follow the girl, yet so deep was his longing for the woman whose spirit had truly companioned and upheld his own; and there she stood. Her pale, plump face was gentle and sensible; he could see that now. Her gray eyes had a warm, kindly twinkle.

Lieutenant Blandford did not hesitate. His fingers gripped the small, worn, blue leather copy of *Of Human Bondage*, which was to identify him to her. This would not be love, but it would be something previous, something perhaps even rarer than love--a friendship for which he had been and must ever be grateful ....

He squared his broad shoulders, saluted and held the book out toward the woman, although even while he spoke he felt choked by the bitterness of his disappointment.

"I'm Lieutenant John Blandford, and you--you are Miss Meynell. I'm so glad you could meet me. May--may I take you to dinner?"

The woman's face broadened into a tolerant smile. "I don't know what this is all about, son," she answered. "That young lady in the green suit--the one who just went by--begged me to wear this rose on my coat. And she said that if you asked me to go with you, I should tell you that she's waiting for you in that big restaurant across the street. She said it was some kind of test. I've got two boys with Uncle Sam myself, so I didn't mind to oblige you."

### **COMPREHENSION QUESTION**

1. Why did the woman NOT send her picture? Was this a good or bad choice? What does it say about her character?
2. Why did he NOT go with the younger woman right away? What does his hesitation say about his character? What words best describe his character?
3. What is at the core of their attraction to each other?

4. Do you think these characters would have a good chance of being together in a positive relationship five or ten years down the road? Why?
5. They got to “know” each other by corresponding by phone and letters. A modern day equivalent might be Facebook chat, Tinder, texting, or dating websites. Can you really get to know someone over these types of correspondence? Can you “love” someone after getting to know him or her on the Internet?
6. Do you think they will live happily ever after? Why or why not?
7. What should take place or what should they discuss before taking their relationship to another level (getting engaged, for example)?
8. Again, thinking about modern technology (Facebook chat, Tinder, texting, or dating websites), is this a common way for people to meet? If not, what is most common in your opinion?

## THE NECKLACE

by Guy De Maupassant

(1850~1893)

She was one of those pretty and charming girls who, as if by a mistake of destiny, are born in a family of employees. She had no dowry, no expectations, no means of becoming known, understood, loved, wedded by any rich distinguished man; and so she let herself be married to a petty clerk in the Bureau of Public Instruction.

She was simple in her dress because she could not be elaborate, but she was as unhappy as if she had fallen from a higher rank, for with women there is no inherited distinction of higher and lower. Their beauty, their grace, and their natural charm fill the place of birth and family. Natural delicacy, instinctive elegance, a lively wit, are the ruling forces in the social realm, and these make the daughters of the common people the equals of the finest ladies.

She suffered intensely, feeling herself born for all the refinements and luxuries of life. She suffered from the poverty of her home as she looked at the dirty walls, the worn-out chairs, the ugly curtains. All those things of which another woman of her station would have been quite unconscious tortured her and made her indignant. The sight of the country girl who was maid of all work in her humble household filled her almost with desperation. She dreamed of echoing halls hung with Oriental draperies and lighted by tall bronze candelabra, while two tall footmen in knee breeches drowsed in great armchairs by reason of the heating stove's oppressive warmth. She dreamed of splendid parlors furnished in rare old silks, of carved cabinets loaded with priceless bric-a-brac, and of entrancing little boudoirs just right for afternoon chats with bosom friends — men famous and sought after, the envy and the desire of all the other women.

When she sat down to dinner at a little table covered with a cloth three days old, and looked across at her husband as he uncovered the soup and exclaimed with an air of rapture, "Oh, the delicious stew! I know nothing better than that," she dreamed of dainty dinners, of shining silverware, of tapestries which peopled the walls with antique figures



and strange birds in fairy forests; she dreamed of delicious viands served in wonderful dishes, of whispered gallantries heard with a sphinxlike smile as she ate the pink flesh of a trout or the wing of a quail.

She had no dresses, no jewels, nothing; and she loved nothing else. She felt made for that alone. She was filled with a desire to please, to be envied, to be bewitching and sought after. She had a rich friend, a former schoolmate at the convent, whom she no longer wished to visit because she suffered so much when she came home. For whole days at a time she wept without ceasing in bitterness and hopeless misery.

Now, one evening her husband came home with a triumphant air, holding in his hand a large envelope.

“There,” said he, “there is something for you.”

She quickly tore open the paper and drew out a printed card, bearing these words:

“The Minister of Public Instruction and Mme. Georges Ramponeau request the honor of M. and Mme. Loisel’s company at the palace of the Ministry, Monday evening, January 18<sup>th</sup>.”

Instead of being overcome with delight, as her husband expected, she threw the invitation on the table with disdain, murmuring:

“What do you wish me to do with that?”

“Why, my dear, I thought you would be pleased. You never go out, and this is such a fine opportunity! I had awful trouble in getting it. Everyone wants to go; it is very select, and they are not giving many invitations to clerks. You will see the official world.”

She looked at him irritation, and said, impatiently:

“What do you expect me to put on my back if I go?”

He had not thought of that. He stammered:

“Why, the dress you go to the theater in. It seems all right to me.”

He stopped, stupefied, distracted, on seeing that his wife was crying. Two great tears descended slowly from the corners of her eyes toward the corners of her mouth. He stuttered:

“What’s the matter? What’s the matter?”

By a violent effort she subdued her feelings and replied in a calm voice, as she wiped her wet cheeks:

“Nothing. Only I have no dress and consequently I cannot go to this ball. Give your invitation to some friend whose wife has better clothes than I.”

He was in despair, but began again:

“Let us see, Mathilde. How much would it cost, a suitable dress, which you could wear again on future occasions, something very simple?”

She reflected for some seconds, computing the cost, and also wondering what sum she could ask without bringing down upon herself an immediate refusal and an astonished exclamation from the economical clerk.

At last she answered hesitatingly:

“I don’t know exactly, but it seems to me that with four hundred francs I could manage.”

He turned a trifle pale, for he had been saving just that sum to buy a gun and treat himself to a little hunting trip the following summer, in the country near Nanterre, with a few friends who went there to shoot larks on Sundays.

However, he said:

“Well, I think I can give you four hundred francs. But see that you have a pretty dress.”

The day of the ball drew near, and Madame Loisel seemed sad, restless, anxious. Her dress was ready, however. Her husband said to her one evening:

“What is the matter? Come, now, you’ve been looking queer these last three days.”

And she replied:

“It worries me that I have no jewels, not a single stone, nothing to put on. I shall look wretched enough. I would almost rather not go to this party.”

He answered:

“You might wear natural flowers. They are very fashionable this season. For ten francs you can get two or three magnificent roses.”

She was not convinced.

“No; there is nothing more humiliating than to look poor among a lot of rich women.”

But her husband cried:

“How stupid you are! Go and find your friend Madame Forestier and ask her to lend you some jewels. You are intimate enough with her for that.”

She uttered a cry of joy.

“Of course. I had not thought of that.”

The next day she went to her friend’s house and told her distress.

Madame Forestier went to her handsome wardrobe, took out a large casket, brought it back, opened it and said to Madame Loisel:

“Choose, my dear.”

She saw first of all some bracelets, then a pearl necklace, then a Venetian cross of gold set with precious stones of wonderful workmanship. She tried on the ornaments before the glass, hesitated, could not make up her mind to part with them, to give them back. She kept asking:

“You have nothing else?”

“Why, yes. But I do not know what will please you.”

All at once she discovered, in a black satin box, a splendid diamond necklace, and her heart began to beat with boundless desire. Her hands trembled as she took it. She

fastened it around her throat, over her high-necked dress, and stood lost in ecstasy as she looked at herself.

Then she asked, hesitating, full of anxiety:

“Would you lend me that, —only that?”

“Why, yes, certainly.”

She sprang upon the neck of her friend, embraced her rapturously, then fled with her treasure.

The day of the ball arrived. Madame Loisel was a success. She was prettier than the others, elegant, gracious, smiling, and crazy with joy. All the men stared at her, asked her name, tried to be introduced. All the cabinet officials wished to waltz with her. The minister noticed her.

She danced with delight, with passion, intoxicated with pleasure, forgetting all in the triumph of her beauty, in the glory of her success, in a sort of mist of happiness, the result of all this homage, all this admiration, all these awakened desires, this victory so complete and so sweet to the heart of woman.

She left about four o'clock in the morning. Her husband had been dozing since midnight in a little deserted anteroom with three other gentlemen, whose wives were having a good time.

He threw about her shoulders the wraps which he had brought for her to go out in, the modest wraps of common life, whose poverty contrasted sharply with the elegance of the ball dress. She felt this and wished to escape, that she might not be noticed by the other women who were wrapping themselves in costly furs.

Loisel held her back.

“Wait here, you will catch cold outside. I will go and find a cab.”

But she would not listen to him, and rapidly descended the stairs. When they were at last in the street, they could find no carriage, and began to look for one, hailing the cabmen they saw passing at a distance.

They walked down toward the Seine in despair, shivering with the cold. At last they found on the quay one of those ancient nocturnal cabs that one sees in Paris only after dark, as if they were ashamed to display their wretchedness during the day.

They were put down at their door in the Rue des Martyrs, and sadly mounted the steps to their apartments. It was all over, for her. And as for him, he reflected that he must be at his office at ten o'clock.

She took off the wraps which covered her shoulders, before the mirror, so as to take a final look at herself in all her glory. But suddenly she uttered a cry. She no longer had the necklace about her neck!

Her husband, already half undressed, inquired: "What is the matter?"

She turned madly toward him.

"I have-I have-I no longer have Madame Forestier's necklace."

He stood up, distracted.

"What!--how!--it is impossible!"

They looked in the folds of her dress, in the folds of her cloak, in the pockets, everywhere. They could not find a trace of it.

He asked:

"You are sure you still had it when you left the ball?"

"Yes. I felt it on me in the vestibule at the palace."

"No. And you, you did not notice it?"

"No."

They looked at each other thunderstruck. At last Loisel put on his clothes again.

“I am going back,” said he, “over every foot of the way we came to see if I cannot find it.”

So he started. She remained in her ball dress without strength to go to bed, sitting on a chair, with no fire, her mind a blank.

Her husband returned about seven o'clock. He had found nothing.

He went to police headquarters, to the newspapers to offer a reward, to the cab companies, everywhere, in short where a trace of hope led him.

She watched all day, in the same state of blank despair before this frightful disaster.

Loisel returned in the evening with cheeks hollow and pale; he had found nothing.

“You must write to your friend,” said he, “that you have broken the clasp of her necklace and that you are having it repaired. It will give us time to turn around.”

She wrote as he dictated.

At the end of a week they had lost all hope.

And Loisel, looking five years older, declared:

“We must consider how to replace the necklace.”

The next day they took the box which had contained it, and went to the place of the jeweler whose name they found inside. He consulted his books.

“It was not I, madame, who sold the necklace; I must simply have furnished the casket.”

Then they went from jeweler to jeweler, looking for an ornament like the other, consulting their memories, both sick with grief and anguish.

They found, in a shop at the Palais Royal, a string of diamonds which seemed to them exactly what they were looking for. It was worth forty thousand francs. They could have it for thirty-six thousand.

So they begged the jeweler not to sell it for three days. And they made an arrangement that he should take it back for thirty-four thousand francs if the other were found before the end of February.

Loisel had eighteen thousand francs which his father had left him. He would borrow the rest.

He did borrow, asking a thousand francs of one, five hundred of another, five louis here, three louis there. He gave notes, made ruinous engagements, dealt with usurers, with all the tribe of money lenders. He compromised the rest of his life, risked his signature without knowing if he might not be involving his honor; and terrified by the anguish yet to come, by the black misery about to fall upon him, by the prospect of every physical privation and every mental torture, he went to get the new necklace, and laid down on the dealer's counter thirty-six thousand francs.

When Madame Loisel took the necklace back to Madame Forestier, the latter said coldly:

“You should have returned it sooner, for I might have needed it.”

She did not open the case, to the relief of her friend. If she had detected the substitution, what would she have thought? What would she have said? Would she have taken her friend for a thief?

Madame Loisel now knew the horrible life of the needy. But she took her part heroically. They must pay this frightful debt. She would pay it. They dismissed their maid; they gave up their room; they rented another, under the roof.

She came to know the drudgery of housework, the odious labors of the kitchen. She washed the dishes, staining her rosy nails on the greasy pots and bottoms of the saucepans. She washed the dirty linen, the shirts and the dishcloths, which she hung to dry on a line; she carried the garbage down to the street every morning, and carried up the water, stopping at each landing to rest. And, dressed like a woman of the people, she went to the fruiterer's, the grocer's, the butcher's, her basket on her arm, bargaining, abusing, defending sou by sou her miserable money.

Each month they had to pay some notes, renew others, obtain more time.

The husband worked every evening, neatly footing up the account books of some tradesman, and often far into the night he sat copying manuscript at five sous a page.

And this life lasted ten years.

At the end of ten years they had paid everything-everything, with the exactions of usury and the accumulations of compound interest.

Madame Loisel seemed aged now. She had become the woman of impoverished households—strong and hard and rough. With hair half combed, with skirts awry, and reddened hands, she talked loud as she washed the floor with great swishes of water. But sometimes, when her husband was at the office, she sat down near the window and thought of that evening at the ball so long ago, when she had been so beautiful and so admired.

What would have happened if she had not lost that necklace? Who knows, who knows? How strange life is, how changeable! How little a thing is needed for us to be lost or to be saved!

But one Sunday, as she was going for a walk in the Champs Elysees to refresh herself after the labors of the week, all at once she saw a woman walking with a child. It was Madame Forestier, still young, still beautiful, still charming.

Madame Loisel was agitated. Should she speak to her? Why, of course. And now that she had paid, she would tell her all. Why not?

She drew near.

“Good morning, Jeanne.”

The other, astonished to be addressed so familiarly by this woman of the people, did not recognize her. She stammered:

“But—madame—I do not know you. You must have made a mistake.”

“No, I am—Mathilde Loisel.”



Her friend uttered a cry!

“Oh! My poor Mathilde, how changed you are!”

“Yes, I have had days hard enough since I saw you, days wretched enough—and—all because of you!”

“Of me? How so?”

“You remember that necklace of diamonds that you lent me to wear to the ministerial ball?”

“Yes. Well?”

“Well, I lost it.”

“How can that be? You returned it to me.”

“I returned to you another exactly like it. These ten years we’ve been paying for it. You know it was not easy for us, who had nothing. At last it is over, and I am very glad.”

Madame Forestier was stunned.

“You say that you bought a diamond necklace to replace mine?”

“Yes; you did not notice it, then? They were just alike.”

And she smiled with a proud and naive pleasure.

Madame Forestier, deeply moved, took both her hands.

“Oh, my poor Mathilde! Why, my necklace was paste. It was worth five hundred francs at most.”

## **VOCABULARY**

rueful

dishevelled

aghast

adulation

pauper

chic

dowry

usurer

vexation

### **LITERARY TERMS**

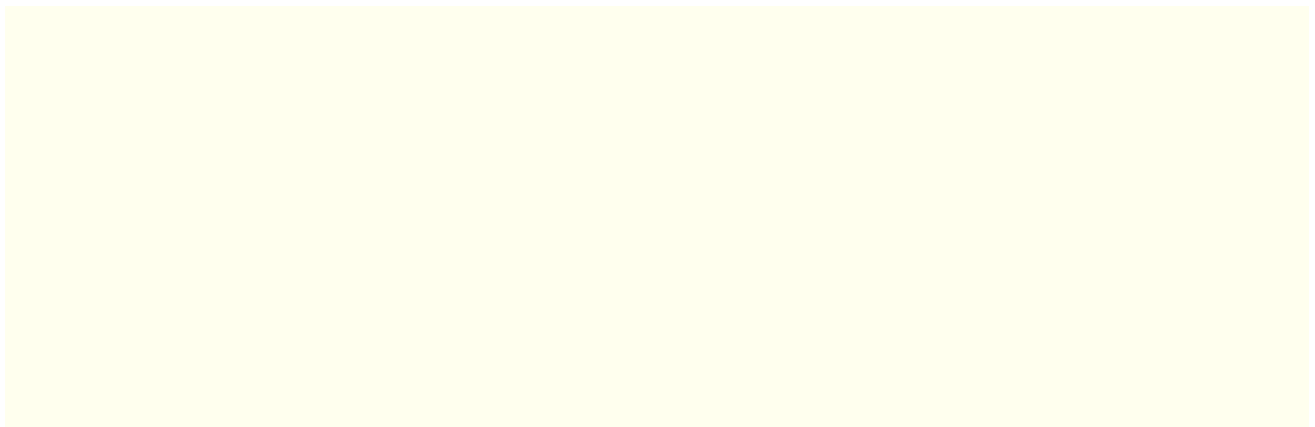
1. Describe how the author creates the setting?
2. Who is the protagonist in the story
3. What is the main conflict in this story?
4. Describe the mood of the story
5. Who is the narrator? From what point of view is the story told?
6. What is the theme of the story
7. From what point of view is the story told?
8. What is the climax of the story?
9. Which type(s) of irony did you find in the story? Be sure to explain the irony you found.

### **COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS**

Answer the following questions.

1. Why did M. Loisel expect his wife to be pleased to receive the invitation from the Minister of Education?
2. Describe Mme Loisel 's reaction on reading the invitation.
3. Why had M. Loisel been saving 400 Francs?
4. Compare and contrast the life of Mme. Loisel before and after the disappearance of the necklace.

5. Why was Mme Loisel anxious to hurry away from the ball?
6. What efforts were made to find Mme Forestier's necklace?
7. Describe in your own words how the Loisels life changed after they had paid for the new necklace.
8. What was Mme Forestier reaction when seeing Mme Loisel before she figured out who she was?
9. What was Mme Forestier's reaction when the necklace was returned?
10. Do you think Mme Loisel recognized good quality jewelry? Give reasons.
11. Why was Mathilde unhappy with her life at the opening of the story?
12. Do you think M. Loisel enjoyed the ball? Give reasons to support your answer.
13. How did M. Loisel contribute to the cost of the new necklace?



## THE CASK OF AMONTILLADO

by Edgar Allan Poe

(1846)

THE thousand injuries of Fortunato I had borne as I best could, but when he ventured upon insult I vowed revenge. You, who so well know the nature of my soul, will not suppose, however, that gave utterance to a threat. At length I would be avenged; this was a point definitely, settled --but the very definitiveness with which it was resolved precluded the idea of risk. I must not only punish but punish with impunity. A wrong is unredressed when retribution overtakes its redresser. It is equally unredressed when the avenger fails to make himself felt as such to him who has done the wrong.

It must be understood that neither by word nor deed had I given Fortunato cause to doubt my good will. I continued, as was my in to smile in his face, and he did not perceive that my to smile now was at the thought of his immolation.

He had a weak point --this Fortunato --although in other regards he was a man to be respected and even feared. He prided himself on his connoisseurship in wine. Few Italians have the true virtuoso spirit. For the most part their enthusiasm is adopted to suit the time and opportunity, to practise imposture upon the British and Austrian millionaires. In painting and gemmary, Fortunato, like his countrymen, was a quack, but in the matter of old wines he was sincere. In this respect I did not differ from him materially; --I was skilful in the Italian vintages myself, and bought largely whenever I could.

It was about dusk, one evening during the supreme madness of the carnival season, that I encountered my friend. He accosted me with excessive warmth, for he had been drinking much. The man wore motley. He had on a tight-fitting parti-striped dress, and his head was surmounted by the conical cap and bells. I was so pleased to see him that I thought I should never have done wringing his hand.

I said to him --"My dear Fortunato, you are luckily met. How remarkably well you are looking to-day. But I have received a pipe of what passes for Amontillado, and I have my doubts."

"How?" said he. "Amontillado, A pipe? Impossible! And in the middle of the carnival!"

"I have my doubts," I replied; "and I was silly enough to pay the full Amontillado price without consulting you in the matter. You were not to be found, and I was fearful of losing a bargain."

"Amontillado!"

"I have my doubts."

"Amontillado!"

"And I must satisfy them."

"Amontillado!"

"As you are engaged, I am on my way to Luchresi. If any one has a critical turn it is he. He will tell me --"

"Luchresi cannot tell Amontillado from Sherry."

"And yet some fools will have it that his taste is a match for your own."

"Come, let us go."

"Whither?"

"To your vaults."

"My friend, no; I will not impose upon your good nature. I perceive you have an engagement. Luchresi--"

"I have no engagement; --come."

"My friend, no. It is not the engagement, but the severe cold with which I perceive you are afflicted. The vaults are insufferably damp. They are encrusted with nitre."

"Let us go, nevertheless. The cold is merely nothing. Amontillado! You have been imposed upon. And as for Luchresi, he cannot distinguish Sherry from Amontillado."

Thus speaking, Fortunato possessed himself of my arm; and putting on a mask of black silk and drawing a roquelaire closely about my person, I suffered him to hurry me to my palazzo.

There were no attendants at home; they had absconded to make merry in honour of the time. I had told them that I should not return until the morning, and had given them explicit orders not to stir from the house. These orders were sufficient, I well knew, to insure their immediate disappearance, one and all, as soon as my back was turned.

I took from their sconces two flambeaux, and giving one to Fortunato, bowed him through several suites of rooms to the archway that led into the vaults. I passed down a long and winding staircase, requesting him to be cautious as he followed. We came at length to the foot of the descent, and stood together upon the damp ground of the catacombs of the Montresors.

The gait of my friend was unsteady, and the bells upon his cap jingled as he strode.

"The pipe," he said.

"It is farther on," said I; "but observe the white web-work which gleams from these cavern walls."

He turned towards me, and looked into my eyes with two filmy orbs that distilled the rheum of intoxication.

"Nitre?" he asked, at length.

"Nitre," I replied. "How long have you had that cough?"

"Ugh! ugh! ugh! --ugh! ugh! ugh! --ugh! ugh! ugh! --ugh! ugh! ugh! --ugh! ugh! ugh!"

My poor friend found it impossible to reply for many minutes.

"It is nothing," he said, at last.

"Come," I said, with decision, "we will go back; your health is precious. You are rich, respected, admired, beloved; you are happy, as once I was. You are a man to be missed. For me it is no matter. We will go back; you will be ill, and I cannot be responsible. Besides, there is Luchresi --"

"Enough," he said; "the cough's a mere nothing; it will not kill me. I shall not die of a cough."

"True --true," I replied; "and, indeed, I had no intention of alarming you unnecessarily --but you should use all proper caution. A draught of this Medoc will defend us from the damp.

Here I knocked off the neck of a bottle which I drew from a long row of its fellows that lay upon the mould.

"Drink," I said, presenting him the wine.

He raised it to his lips with a leer. He paused and nodded to me familiarly, while his bells jingled.

"I drink," he said, "to the buried that repose around us."

"And I to your long life."

He again took my arm, and we proceeded.

"These vaults," he said, "are extensive."

"The Montresors," I replied, "were a great and numerous family."

"I forget your arms."

"A huge human foot d'or, in a field azure; the foot crushes a serpent rampant whose fangs are imbedded in the heel."

"And the motto?"

"Nemo me impune lacessit."

"Good!" he said.

The wine sparkled in his eyes and the bells jingled. My own fancy grew warm with the Medoc. We had passed through long walls of piled skeletons, with casks and puncheons intermingling, into the inmost recesses of the catacombs. I paused again, and this time I made bold to seize Fortunato by an arm above the elbow.

"The nitre!" I said; "see, it increases. It hangs like moss upon the vaults. We are below the river's bed. The drops of moisture trickle among the bones. Come, we will go back ere it is too late. Your cough --"

"It is nothing," he said; "let us go on. But first, another draught of the Medoc."

I broke and reached him a flagon of De Grave. He emptied it at a breath. His eyes flashed with a fierce light. He laughed and threw the bottle upwards with a gesticulation I did not understand.

I looked at him in surprise. He repeated the movement --a grotesque one.

"You do not comprehend?" he said.

"Not I," I replied.

"Then you are not of the brotherhood."

"How?"

"You are not of the masons."

"Yes, yes," I said; "yes, yes."

"You? Impossible! A mason?"

"A mason," I replied.



"A sign," he said, "a sign."

"It is this," I answered, producing from beneath the folds of my roquelaire a trowel.

"You jest," he exclaimed, recoiling a few paces. "But let us proceed to the Amontillado."

"Be it so," I said, replacing the tool beneath the cloak and again offering him my arm. He leaned upon it heavily. We continued our route in search of the Amontillado. We passed through a range of low arches, descended, passed on, and descending again, arrived at a deep crypt, in which the foulness of the air caused our flambeaux rather to glow than flame.

At the most remote end of the crypt there appeared another less spacious. Its walls had been lined with human remains, piled to the vault overhead, in the fashion of the great catacombs of Paris. Three sides of this interior crypt were still ornamented in this manner. From the fourth side the bones had been thrown down, and lay promiscuously upon the earth, forming at one point a mound of some size. Within the wall thus exposed by the displacing of the bones, we perceived a still interior crypt or recess, in depth about four feet, in width three, in height six or seven. It seemed to have been constructed for no especial use within itself, but formed merely the interval between two of the colossal supports of the roof of the catacombs, and was backed by one of their circumscribing walls of solid granite.

It was in vain that Fortunato, uplifting his dull torch, endeavoured to pry into the depth of the recess. Its termination the feeble light did not enable us to see.

"Proceed," I said; "herein is the Amontillado. As for Luchresi --"

"He is an ignoramus," interrupted my friend, as he stepped unsteadily forward, while I followed immediately at his heels. In niche, and finding an instant he had reached the extremity of the niche, and finding his progress arrested by the rock, stood stupidly bewildered. A moment more and I had fettered him to the granite. In its surface were two iron staples, distant from each other about two feet, horizontally. From one of these depended a short chain, from the other a padlock. Throwing the links about his waist, it was

but the work of a few seconds to secure it. He was too much astounded to resist.

Withdrawing the key I stepped back from the recess.

"Pass your hand," I said, "over the wall; you cannot help feeling the nitre. Indeed, it is very damp. Once more let me implore you to return. No? Then I must positively leave you. But I must first render you all the little attentions in my power."

"The Amontillado!" ejaculated my friend, not yet recovered from his astonishment.

"True," I replied; "the Amontillado."

As I said these words I busied myself among the pile of bones of which I have before spoken. Throwing them aside, I soon uncovered a quantity of building stone and mortar. With these materials and with the aid of my trowel, I began vigorously to wall up the entrance of the niche.

I had scarcely laid the first tier of the masonry when I discovered that the intoxication of Fortunato had in a great measure worn off. The earliest indication I had of this was a low moaning cry from the depth of the recess. It was not the cry of a drunken man. There was then a long and obstinate silence. I laid the second tier, and the third, and the fourth; and then I heard the furious vibrations of the chain. The noise lasted for several minutes, during which, that I might hearken to it with the more satisfaction, I ceased my labours and sat down upon the bones. When at last the clanking subsided, I resumed the trowel, and finished without interruption the fifth, the sixth, and the seventh tier. The wall was now nearly upon a level with my breast. I again paused, and holding the flambeaux over the mason-work, threw a few feeble rays upon the figure within.

A succession of loud and shrill screams, bursting suddenly from the throat of the chained form, seemed to thrust me violently back. For a brief moment I hesitated, I trembled. Unsheathing my rapier, I began to grope with it about the recess; but the thought of an instant reassured me. I placed my hand upon the solid fabric of the catacombs, and felt satisfied. I reapproached the wall; I replied to the yells of him who clamoured. I re-echoed, I aided, I surpassed them in volume and in strength. I did this, and the clamourer grew still.

It was now midnight, and my task was drawing to a close. I had completed the eighth, the ninth and the tenth tier. I had finished a portion of the last and the eleventh; there remained but a single stone to be fitted and plastered in. I struggled with its weight; I placed it partially in its destined position. But now there came from out the niche a low laugh that erected the hairs upon my head. It was succeeded by a sad voice, which I had difficulty in recognizing as that of the noble Fortunato. The voice said--

"Ha! ha! ha! --he! he! he! --a very good joke, indeed --an excellent jest. We will have many a rich laugh about it at the palazzo --he! he! he! --over our wine --he! he! he!"

"The Amontillado!" I said.

"He! he! he! --he! he! he! --yes, the Amontillado. But is it not getting late? Will not they be awaiting us at the palazzo, the Lady Fortunato and the rest? Let us be gone."

"Yes," I said, "let us be gone."

"For the love of God, Montresor!"

"Yes," I said, "for the love of God!"

But to these words I hearkened in vain for a reply. I grew impatient. I called aloud --

"Fortunato!"

No answer. I called again --

"Fortunato!"

No answer still. I thrust a torch through the remaining aperture and let it fall within. There came forth in return only a jingling of the bells. My heart grew sick; it was the dampness of the catacombs that made it so. I hastened to make an end of my labour. I forced the last stone into its position; I plastered it up. Against the new masonry I re-erected the old rampart of bones. For the half of a century no mortal has disturbed them. In pace requiescat!

## VOCABULARY

**cask** (noun) - a large wooden barrel, typically used for wine

**amontillado** (noun) - a wine from Spain; a pale kind of sherry

**borne** (verb) - past tense of "bear," which means to tolerate or carry

**avenge** (verb) - to get revenge for; to punish an injuring party or wrongdoer

**preclude** (verb) - to prevent; to hinder, block or impede

**impunity** (noun) - freedom from punishment, harm, or loss

**redress** (verb) - to make right; remedy or rectify; make amends for

**retribution** (noun) - punishment imposed on a wrongdoer for repayment or revenge

**immolation** (noun) - killing or offering as a sacrifice; to set oneself on fire

**connoisseur** (noun) - a person with expert knowledge or training, especially in the fine arts

**imposture** (noun) - fraud; trickery; deception under a false or assumed character

**accost** (verb) - to approach and speak to boldly or aggressively, as with a demand or request

**abscond** (verb) - to depart secretly; withdraw and hide oneself

**catacombs** (noun) - underground cemetery in tunnels with chambers or recesses for graves

**gait** (noun) - the speed or manner of moving on foot

**orb** (noun) - a sphere or spherical object

**rheum** (noun) - a watery or thin mucous discharge from the eyes or nose

**repose** (noun) - the act of resting or the state of being at rest

**gesticulate** (verb) - to make gestures especially while speaking, for emphasis

**grotesque** (adj.) - abnormal and hideous; distorted and unnatural in shape or size

**trowel** (noun) - tool with a flat, pointed blade used to level and spread cement or mortar

**recoil** (verb) - to shrink back, as in fear or extreme dislike; to spring back, as in firing a gun

**circumscribe** (verb) - encircle; define the boundaries of

**termination** (noun) - end or limit of something; conclusion

**niche** (noun) - a hollow area in a wall for holding a statue or urn; a crevice or recess

**fetter** (verb) - to restrict the freedom of with chains; (noun) a chain or shackle for the ankles

**implore** (verb) - to beg for urgently; beseech

**hearken** (verb) - to listen attentively

**aperture** (noun) - opening; gap; slit

## **COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS**

1. *What is the meaning of the phrase "A wrong is unredressed when retribution overtakes its redresser."?*
2. *Where and when is the story set? Give reasons for your answer.*
3. *Why does Montresor make sure Fortunato has drunk a lot of wine?*
4. *What is Luchesi's role in the story?*
5. *What preparations had Montresor made for his revenge?*
6. *Why does Montresor appear concerned about Fortunato's health?*
7. *Describe Fortunato's character.*
8. *Discuss how the Poe uses setting to enhance the mood (atmosphere) of horror in the story.*
9. *Why do you think Montresor succeeded in leading Fortunato to the niche without raising his suspicions?*
10. *Why did Montresor go to such lengths to get his revenge? After all, he could merely have run Fortunato through with his sword.*

*11. To what extent can the narrator be relied upon to give an accurate portrayal of events? How might the reader's view of his actions change if the story were written in the third person?*

## **LEARNING OUTCOME**

### **LISTENING COMPREHENSION**

- Employ appropriate listening skills when listening to descriptive and long narrative text
- Employ projective listening strategies with longer stories
- Listen to determine conflicting information aired over the radio and television
- Listen for clues to determine pictorial representations of what is talked about in a listening text

### **VOCABULARY ENHANCEMENT**

- Develop strategies for coping with unknown words and ambiguous sentences structures and discourse
- Identify the derivation of words
- Define words from context and through word analysis
- Use collocations of difficult words as aids in unlocking vocabulary
- Arrive at the meaning of structurally complex and ambiguous sentences by separating kernel sentences from modification structures and expansions

### **ORAL LANGUAGE FLUENCY**

- Ask for and give information, and express needs, opinions feelings, and attitudes explicitly and implicitly in an information talk.
- Formulate responses to questions noting the types of questions raised(yes or no, wh-questions, alternative, modals, embedded)
- Make inquiries
- Give information obtained from mass media, news papers, radio, television
- High light important points in an information talk using multi- media resources.

### **READING COMPREHENSION**

- Evaluate content element features and properties of a reading or viewing selection set of criteria developed in consultation(with peers and the teacher)
- Explain visual- verbal relationships illustrated in tables, graphs, information

- maps used in content area texts
- Transcode information from linear to non-linear text and vice-versa
  - Organize information illustrated in tables, graphs and maps

## **VIEWING COMPREHENSION**

- Discuss position and negative messages conveyed by a program viewed
- React appropriately and provide suggestions based on an established fact
- Decode the meaning of unfamiliar words using structural analysis
- Follow talk directions shown after viewing
- Interpret the big ideas/key concepts implied by the facial expressions of interlocutors.

## **LITERATURE**

- Show understanding and appreciation for the different genres with emphasis on type contributed by Asian countries (haiku, tanka, etc)
- Point out the elements of plays and play
- Determine the macro- discourse patterns of essays and the macro-discourse signals to establish meaning relationships in the essay
- Determine the authors tone and purpose for writing the essay
- Point out how the choice of title, space allotment, imagery, choice of words, figurative language, etc contribute to the theme
- Express appreciation for sensory images in literary forms show understanding of the text by paraphrasing passages.



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# APPENDIXES

