



presents

A large orange oval with a thin white border contains a dark brown silhouette of a crow or raven standing and facing left. Overlaid on the silhouette is the title "SHUDDERSOME" in a large, black, jagged, horror-style font, and "TALES OF POE" in a smaller, red, serif font below it.

SHUDDERSOME
TALES OF POE

Adapted from Edgar Allan Poe
by Lindsay Price

Directed by
Christopher J. Murphy

Education Guide



In 1934, Dr. Clive McAllister, president of the Old Fort Players (now the Civic Theatre), appointed a committee to create a junior or children’s theater branch of the organization. The committee established the philosophy that the new “Children’s Theatre” would develop poise, better diction, and self-esteem for children through dramatic instruction. They would give at least one play a year, and awaken enthusiasm in children for beauty in art and integrity in dramatic literature.

The first class began with an enrollment of a whopping 40 students, each of which paid just \$1.00 for 8 classes! The first production, “The Steadfast Tin Soldier,” was performed at the Majestic Theatre in Fort Wayne and had a cast of 75 young people. Tickets were only 10 cents for children and 25 cents for adults.

In 1954, the Majestic Theatre was deemed unsafe for children by the fire department and so the Children’s Theatre spent the next 10 years at various locations in the city. By the time it rejoined the Civic Theatre at the Old Palace Theatre, it had a new name, the “Fort Wayne Youtheatre.” In 1973, both organizations moved to their current home in the Arts United Center on E. Main Street in downtown Fort Wayne. The Youtheatre became autonomous in 1984.

In 1978, Broadway star Harvey Cocks became the Executive Director of Youtheatre. Even after retiring from that position, Harvey has remained as our Artist in Residence; and after 40+ years, he is still inspiring young actors and actresses! In 2010, he was joined by Leslie Hormann, who served as Executive/Artistic Director until 2018.

Youtheatre is currently managed by Executive/Artistic Director Todd Espeland, who came to us in 2018 after serving as Artistic Director of the Kalamazoo Civic Theatre. He is joined by Assistant Director/Director of Outreach Christopher J. Murphy, Administrative Assistant/Marketing Director Megan Ebbeskotte and a staff of outstanding local artists who serve as teachers, guest directors, choreographers, music directors and designers.

For over three quarters of a century, Youtheatre has produced classes, camps and theatrical productions for the artists and audiences of northeast Indiana. Our touring “Storybook Theatre” troupe takes literature-based shows into the community. In 2018, our Linda L. Ruffolo “Young Heroes of Conscience Series, which has spotlighted the likes of Anne Frank, Ryan White, Harriet Tubman and Ruby Bridges, won the “Mayor’s Arts Award.”

As the fifth oldest active children’s theatre in the nation, Youtheatre is dedicated to its mission to “educate, engage and entertain” through quality theatrical experiences.



What is SHUDDERSOME?

shuddersome

shud·der·some | \ 'shədə(r)səm \

Definition of *shuddersome*

: marked by or producing shudders the crime story and the unexpected and shuddersome ending — *Encore*



Shuddersome: Tales of Poe is a play by Lindsay Price of Theatrefolk Publishing. The play, made up of dramatizations of short stories and poems by 19th century author Edgar Allan Poe, can be performed in various forms and lengths by using or omitting various included tales.

Summer 2018- Fort Wayne Youtheatre first performs *Shuddersome* as a Rising Stars summer camp, using two well-known Poe stories, “The Tell-Tale Heart” and “The Masque of the Red Death” along with a lesser known and light-hearted story entitled “Lionizing.”

Fall 2018- Youtheatre’s Storybook Theatre troupe subsequently toured the show in fall 2018, substituting “Red Death” with “The Raven.”

Summer 2020- Searching in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic for material to adapt to an online radio theatre camp, Youtheatre returns to the summer 2018 version of *Shuddersome*, adding “Masque of the Red Death” back in.

Fall 2020- With the COVID-19 pandemic preventing a physical tour, the Storybook troupe adapts the fall 2018 version as a radio play in collaboration with WBOI 89.1FM and the University of Saint Francis School of Music Technology.

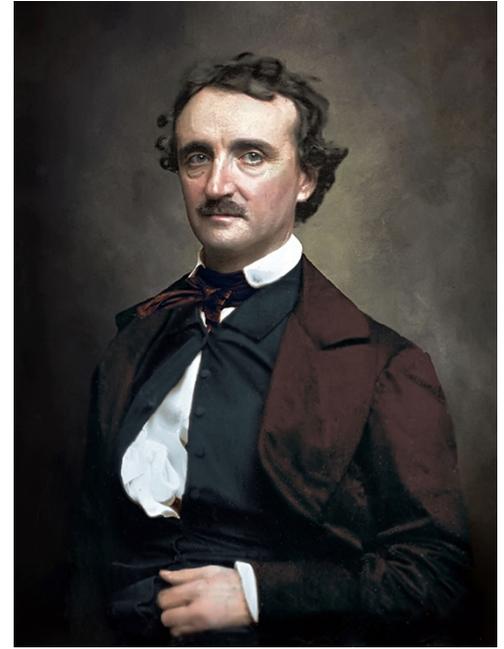


Photos from Youtheatre’s 2018 fall Storybook Theatre tour of *Shuddersome: Tales of Poe*.

The Playwright: Lindsay Price

Lindsay Price is the Vice President of Theatrefolk Inc. and the co-creator of the Drama Teacher Academy. She has been involved with theatre education for over 25 years as a playwright, adjudicator, workshop instructor, resource writer, curriculum supervisor, professional development creator and keynote speaker. Her plays have been performed in schools all over the world with over 1000 productions a year.

The Author: Edgar Allan Poe



The name Poe brings to mind images of murderers and madmen, premature burials, and mysterious women who return from the dead. His works have been in print since 1827 and include such literary classics as “The Tell-Tale Heart,” “The Raven,” and “The Fall of the House of Usher.” This versatile writer’s work includes short stories, poetry, a novel, a textbook, a book of scientific theory, and hundreds of essays and book reviews. He is widely acknowledged as the inventor of the modern detective story and an innovator in the science fiction genre. Poe’s reputation today rests primarily on his tales of terror as well as on his haunting lyric poetry. But much of what we know about Poe himself is wrong, the product of a biography written by one of his enemies in an attempt to defame the author’s name.

The real Poe was born to traveling actors in Boston on January 19, 1809, but within three years both of his parents had died. Poe was taken in by the wealthy tobacco merchant John Allan, while his brother and sister went to live with other families.

In 1826 Poe attended the University of Virginia, earning high grades and high debt. By the end of his first term Poe was so desperately poor that he burned his furniture to keep warm. Humiliated by his poverty, Poe was forced to drop out of school and return home, but when he visited the home of his fiancée, Elmira Royster, only to discover that she had become engaged to another man.

Broke and alone, Poe turned to Baltimore—his late father’s home—and called upon relatives in the city. One of Poe’s cousins robbed him in the night but another relative, Poe’s aunt Maria Clemm, became a new mother to him and welcomed him into her home. Clemm’s daughter, Virginia, first acted as a courier to carry letters to Poe’s lady loves but soon became the object of his desire.

While Poe was in Baltimore, John Allan died, leaving Poe out of his will. Poor but determined, Poe started publishing his short stories, one of which won a contest sponsored by the *Saturday Visitor*. As a result, Poe finally found his life’s work as a magazine writer. Within a year Poe helped make the *Messenger* the most popular magazine in the south.

At the age of twenty-seven, Poe married Virginia, age thirteen. The marriage proved a happy one but money was always tight. Poe wrote for a number of different magazines, but in spite of his growing fame, was still barely able to make a living. For the publication of his first book of short stories, *Tales of the Grotesque and Arabesque*, he was paid with twenty-five copies of his book. He would soon become a champion for the cause of higher wages for writers as well as for an international copyright law. To change the face of the magazine industry, he proposed starting his own journal, but he failed to find the necessary funding.

The January 1845 publication of “The Raven” made Poe a household name. He was again living in New York and was famous enough to draw large crowds to his lectures—and demand better pay for his work. He published two books that year, and briefly lived his dream of running his own magazine, *Broadway Journal*. The failure of the venture and his wife’s deteriorating health drove him from the city in 1846. He moved to a tiny cottage in the country where, in the winter of 1847, Virginia died of tuberculosis at the age of twenty-four. Her death devastated Poe and left him unable to write for months. His critics assumed he would soon be dead. They were right. Poe only lived another two years.

He returned to Richmond in the summer of 1849 and reconnected with his first fiancée, Elmira, who was now a widow. They became engaged and intended to marry after Poe’s return from a trip to Philadelphia and New York. However, on the way to Philadelphia, Poe stopped in Baltimore and disappeared for five days. He was found in the bar room of a public house that was being used as a polling place for an election. He was sent to Washington College Hospital, where Poe spent the last days of his life far from home and surrounded by strangers. Neither Poe’s mother-in-law nor his fiancée knew what had become of him until they read about it in the newspapers. Poe died on October 7, 1849 at the age of forty. The exact cause of Poe’s death remains a mystery.



During the Golden Age of Radio, families gathered around the radio just as would later gather to watch television.

Radio: The Internet of the 1930s



Some of radio's most popular stars.

The Golden Age of Radio was an era of radio in the United States where it was the dominant electronic home entertainment medium. It began with the birth of commercial radio broadcasting in the early 1920s and lasted through the 1950s, when television gradually superseded radio as the medium of choice for scripted programming, variety and dramatic shows.

Radio was the first broadcast medium, and during this period people regularly tuned in to their favorite radio programs and families gathered to listen to the home radio in the evening. According to a 1947 C. E. Hooper survey, 82 out of 100 Americans were found to be radio listeners. A variety of new entertainment formats and genres were created for the new medium, many of which later migrated to television: radio plays, mystery serials, soap operas, quiz shows, talent shows, daytime and evening variety hours, situation comedies, play-by-play sports, children's shows, cooking shows, and more.

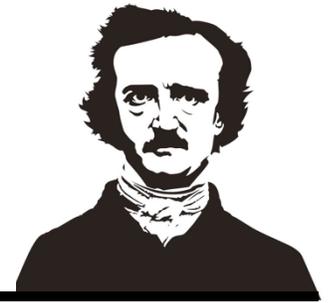
In the 1950s, television superseded radio as the most popular broadcast medium. Many early TV shows like “I Love Lucy,” “Burns & Allen” & “The Jack Benny Show” were just continuations of shows originated on radio. Commercial radio programming shifted to narrower formats of news, talk, sports and music. Religious broadcasters, listener-supported public radio and college stations provide their own distinctive formats.



President Franklin D. Roosevelt was the first to use the radio. His “Fireside Chats” were a powerful tool for communicating with the American people before TV or internet.

About the Stories...

Youtheatre’s current version of *Shuddersome* is comprised of two short stories (one mystery, one comedy) and one poem by Poe. Below is a brief synopsis of each.



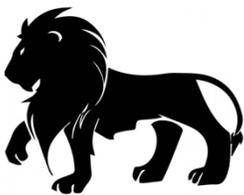
"The Raven" is a narrative poem by American writer Edgar Allan Poe. First published in January 1845, the poem is often noted for its musicality, stylized language, and supernatural atmosphere. It tells of a talking raven's mysterious visit to a distraught man, tracing his slow fall into madness. The man, often identified as a student, is lamenting the loss of his love, Lenore. Sitting on a bust of Pallas, the raven seems to further distress the protagonist with its constant repetition of the word "Nevermore". The poem uses folklore and mythological influences to create a creepy atmosphere.

Featuring: Ella Antibus, Josiah Beights, Alivia Wheeler, Olivia Nifong, Brenner Newsom, Owen Newsom, Zidon Spradling, Emma Humbarger



"The Tell-Tale Heart" is a short story by Poe, first published in 1843. It is related by an unnamed narrator who endeavors to convince the reader of the narrator’s sanity while simultaneously describing a murder the narrator committed. The victim was an old man with a filmy "vulture-eye", as the narrator calls it. The narrator emphasizes the careful calculation of the murder, attempting the perfect crime, complete with dismembering and hiding the body under the floorboards. Ultimately, the narrator's guilt results in hearing a thumping sound, which the narrator interprets as the dead man's beating heart and he confesses to the police. The story is an example of the “Howdunnit” murder-mystery in which the audience knows from the start WHO the murderer is and learns HOW as the story unfolds.

Featuring: Emma Humbarger as Young, Josiah Beights as Old, Owen Newsom as Police 1, Ella Antibus as Police 2 with Zidon Spradling, Alivia Wheeler, Olivia Nifong & Owen Newsom as The Voices

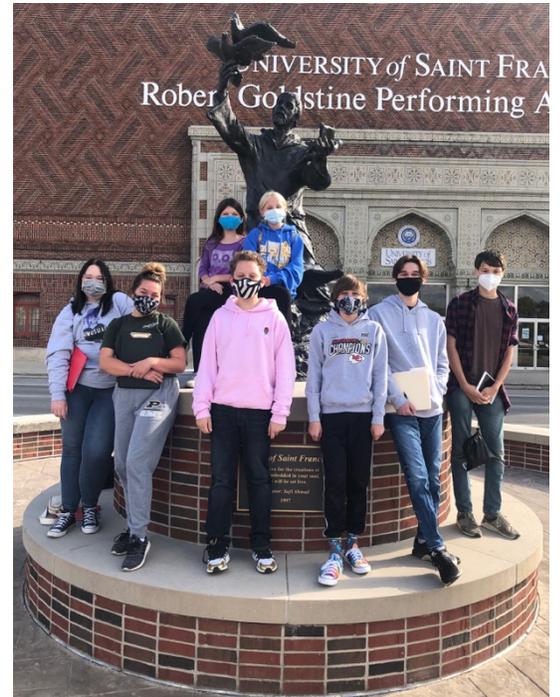


"Lionizing" is a satire, meaning it uses humor and exaggeration to expose people's stupidity, particularly politics and other topical issues. To “lionize” is to give great attention to a celebrity; and the story, written by Poe in 1835, is a satire of unearned celebrity. It is narrated by Robert, who seeks fame because of his extremely oversized nose. In his hometown, Robert becomes a “big fish in a small pond” before leaving for the big city and becoming the talk of the town. When he encounters another man with a very large nose, they challenge one another to a duel. Robert shoots the man’s nose off and quickly loses his celebrity status as the man with NO nose at all becomes the darling of the day! Poe’s view of fame here could easily apply to social media and reality TV stars who are famous for...being famous.

Featuring: Brenner Newsom as Robert Jones, Olivia Nifong as Robert’s Mother, Owen Newsom as Robert’s Father, Alivia Wheeler as the Duchess, Ella Antibus as the Marquis, Emma Humbarger as the Countess, Olivia Nifong as the Artist, Josiah Beights as the Prince, Zidon Spradling as the Elector

Putting It Together...

- **Sept. 1, 2020:** 30+ actors age 8-18 audition via video or in-person at the Arts United Center for the virtual tour of *Shuddersome* and Youtheatre’s mainstage production of *Stuart Little*.
- **Sept. 7- Sept. 25, 2020:** *Shuddersome*’s cast of 8 and director Christopher J. Murphy rehearse six times (2 hours each) online via Zoom. While they run all three plays, emphasis is put on a different one in each rehearsal. Sound effects are added later in the process.
- **Sept. 29, 2020:** Wearing masks and practicing social-distancing, the cast assembles at the Arts United Center for their first and ONLY in-person rehearsal.



The Shuddersome cast outside USF.

- **Oct. 2, 2020:** Director Christopher J. Murphy takes the cast to record the show at the University of Saint Francis Dept. of Music Technology. Recording out of order and allowing for retakes, the session takes roughly 3 hours.
- **Oct. 5, 2020:** The audio files are turned over to WBOI’s Ben Clemmer & Steve Mullaney, who spend time over two weeks editing the show into the finished product.
- **Oct. 26, 2020:** WYTR’s *Shuddersome* recording, along with this Education Guide, is made public.



Recording Shuddersome at the University of Saint Francis School of Music Technology in downtown Fort Wayne, Indiana.

“The Raven” Explained...

The Raven may be one of the world’s most famous poems, but what the heck is it about? Poe’s early 19th century language and ancient references aren’t easily understood by a 21st century reader. Below is a stanza by stanza explanation to help you be confused “nevermore!”

1st Stanza

Once upon a midnight dreary, while I pondered, weak and weary,
Over many a quaint and curious volume of forgotten lore—
While I nodded, nearly napping, suddenly there came a tapping,
As of some one gently rapping, rapping at my chamber door.
“‘Tis some visitor,” I muttered, “tapping at my chamber door—
Only this and nothing more.”



The opening line of this poem proves to be quite theatrical; initiating with the classic, “once upon a -” and introducing a typical melodramatic, “weak and weary” character who is evidently lost in thought during a particularly boring night. He claims to be thinking and “pondering” over volumes of old traditions of knowledge. As he nods off to sleep while reading, he is interrupted by a tapping sound. It sounds as if someone is “gently” knocking on his “chamber door”. He mutters to himself that it must be a visitor, since what else could it possibly be?

2nd Stanza

Ah, distinctly I remember it was in the bleak December;
And each separate dying ember wrought its ghost upon the floor.
Eagerly I wished the morrow;—vainly I had sought to borrow
From my books surcease of sorrow—sorrow for the lost Lenore—
For the rare and radiant maiden whom the angels name Lenore—
Nameless here for evermore.

We are quickly jolted from the scene of the stranger knocking at the door into the thoughts of the speaker. Here, he pauses to educate the reader, that this sight was taking place during the “bleak” December when “dying” embers from a fire were casting “ghost” like shadows on the floor. He was wishing for the night to pass faster, desperately trying to escape the sadness of losing Lenore, by busying himself in his books. It becomes very obvious that Lenore was someone important to him, as he describes her as a “rare and radiant maiden”, and it also becomes evident that she had died since she was now “nameless forevermore” in the world.

3rd Stanza

And the silken, sad, uncertain rustling of each purple curtain
Thrilled me—filled me with fantastic terrors never felt before;
So that now, to still the beating of my heart, I stood repeating
“‘Tis some visitor entreating entrance at my chamber door—
Some late visitor entreating entrance at my chamber door;—
This it is and nothing more.”

The movement of the curtains, even seem “sad” and “uncertain” to him. Watching these curtains rustle and listening to the knocking was turning his miserable and quiet mood into one of anxiety and fear. To calm himself and his quickening heartbeat, he repeated to himself that it was just some visitor who had come to see him in these late hours and “nothing more”.

4th Stanza

Presently my soul grew stronger; hesitating then no longer,
“Sir,” said I, “or Madam, truly your forgiveness I implore;
But the fact is I was napping, and so gently you came rapping,
And so faintly you came tapping, tapping at my chamber door,
That I scarce was sure I heard you”—here I opened wide the door;—
Darkness there and nothing more.



The character begins to build some confidence as he draws closer towards the door to see who would come to see him at such an hour. He calls out, apologizing to a “Sir” or “Madame”, he had been napping and the ‘tapping’ at the door was so light that he wasn’t even sure that there was actually someone knocking at the door. As he is saying this, he opens the door only to find nothing but the darkness of the night.

5th Stanza

Deep into that darkness peering, long I stood there wondering, fearing,
Doubting, dreaming dreams no mortal ever dared to dream before;
But the silence was unbroken, and the stillness gave no token,
And the only word there spoken was the whispered word, “Lenore?”
This I whispered, and an echo murmured back the word, “Lenore!”—
Merely this and nothing more.

Finding nothing on the other side of the door leaves him stunned. He stands there staring into the darkness with his mind racing. How could he have heard the clear continuous knocking at the door only to find nothing...physical? Now because he had been pining for Lenore, she quickly comes to mind, so he whispers her name into the empty night “Lenore?” and an echo whispers back “Lenore!”.

6th Stanza

Back into the chamber turning, all my soul within me burning,
Soon again I heard a tapping somewhat louder than before.
“Surely,” said I, “surely that is something at my window lattice;
Let me see, then, what thereat is, and this mystery explore—
Let my heart be still a moment and this mystery explore;—
’Tis the wind and nothing more!”

The narrator finally turns away from the empty doorway, full of fire; he had just heard her name whispered back to him... was he insane? Was any of this real? ‘Soon again’, he hears tapping; this time louder than before and it gives the impression that it was coming from the window this time. Again his heart starts to beat faster, as he moves towards the window wanting to “explore” this mystery. He tells himself that it must be the wind and ‘nothing more’.

7th Stanza

Open here I flung the shutter, when, with many a flirt and flutter,
In there stepped a stately Raven of the saintly days of yore;
Not the least obeisance made he; not a minute stopped or stayed he;
But, with mien of lord or lady, perched above my chamber door—
Perched upon a bust of Pallas just above my chamber door—
Perched, and sat, and nothing more.



He makes an effort to fling open the window, and with a little commotion, in comes a raven. The narrator describes the raven as one who looked rather royal, and like it belonged in the righteous or impressive times of the past. The raven does not even acknowledge the speaker, flies in with the air of an aristocrat, and rests on the statue above the chamber door of “Pallas” (also known as Athena, the goddess of wisdom). Then, it just sits there doing “nothing more”.

8th Stanza

Then this ebony bird beguiling my sad fancy into smiling,
By the grave and stern decorum of the countenance it wore,
“Though thy crest be shorn and shaven, thou,” I said, “art sure no craven,
Ghastly grim and ancient Raven wandering from the Nightly shore—
Tell me what thy lordly name is on the Night’s Plutonian shore!”
Quoth the Raven “Nevermore.”

The entrance of this raven actually puts a smile on the face of the narrator. The bird was so out of place in his chamber but it still “wore” a serious expression as it sat there. The speaker then turns to treat *the raven* as a noble individual and asks him what his name is in a very dramatic manner. *The raven* simply replies with ‘nevermore’.

9th Stanza

Much I marvelled this ungainly fowl to hear discourse so plainly,
Though its answer little meaning—little relevancy bore;
For we cannot help agreeing that no living human being
Ever yet was blessed with seeing bird above his chamber door—
Bird or beast upon the sculptured bust above his chamber door,
With such name as “Nevermore.”

The narrator is very shocked at actually hearing *the raven* speak as if it were a natural thing for him. He doesn’t understand how “nevermore” answers the question. So he claims that no one alive or dead has ever witnessed the scene that was before him: a raven sitting on a statue of Pallas named “nevermore”.

10th Stanza

But the Raven, sitting lonely on the placid bust, spoke only
That one word, as if his soul in that one word he did outpour.
Nothing farther then he uttered—not a feather then he fluttered—
Till I scarcely more than muttered “Other friends have flown before—
On the morrow he will leave me, as my Hopes have flown before.”
Then the bird said “Nevermore.”

After speaking that one word, *the raven* did not utter another word. He sat there, motionless and quiet, on the statue. The narrator returns to his grim mood and mutters about having friends who left him feeling abandoned, just like this bird will likely do. On hearing this, the bird again says: “Nevermore”.



11th Stanza

Startled at the stillness broken by reply so aptly spoken,
“Doubtless,” said I, “what it utters is its only stock and store
Caught from some unhappy master whom unmerciful Disaster
Followed fast and followed faster till his songs one burden bore—
Till the dirges of his Hope that melancholy burden bore
Of ‘Never—nevermore’.”

The sudden reply from *the raven* startles the narrator. He comes to the conclusion that *the raven* only knows this one word that it has learned from “some unhappy master”. He imagines that the master of this raven must have been through a lot of hardships and so he probably always used the word “nevermore” a great deal. That is where he believes the bird picked it up.

12th Stanza

But the Raven still beguiling all my fancy into smiling,
Straight I wheeled a cushioned seat in front of bird, and bust and door;
Then, upon the velvet sinking, I betook myself to linking
Fancy unto fancy, thinking what this ominous bird of yore—
What this grim, ungainly, ghastly, gaunt, and ominous bird of yore
Meant in croaking “Nevermore.”

The speaker admits that he cannot help but be fascinated by this raven. He sets up his chair so that he is seated right in front of the bird, watching it intently. He starts to focus his thoughts on *the raven*, and what it could possibly mean by repeating the specific word of “nevermore”.

13th Stanza

This I sat engaged in guessing, but no syllable expressing
To the fowl whose fiery eyes now burned into my bosom’s core;
This and more I sat divining, with my head at ease reclining
On the cushion’s velvet lining that the lamp-light gloated o’er,
But whose velvet-violet lining with the lamp-light gloating o’er,
She shall press, ah, nevermore!

He sits there coming up with theories to explain *the raven* and its behavior to himself, without actually speaking aloud in the company of this bird. Even so, he felt as though its “fiery eyes” could see through him, straight to his heart. So he continues to ponder and be lost in thought as he reclines on a soft velvet cushion highlighted by the lamplight in the room. The sight of the cushion gleaming in the light sends him spiraling into the heart-wrenching reminder that Lenore will never get a chance to touch that cushion again, now that she’s gone.

14th Stanza

Then, methought, the air grew denser, perfumed from an unseen censer
Swung by Seraphim whose foot-falls tinkled on the tufted floor.
“Wretch,” I cried, “thy God hath lent thee—by these angels he hath sent thee
Respite—respite and nepenthe from thy memories of Lenore;
Quaff, oh quaff this kind nepenthe and forget this lost Lenore!”
Quoth the Raven “Nevermore.”

Here the narrator seems to start hallucinating, perhaps he is lost too deep in his thoughts. He starts to feel as though the air around him is getting thicker with perfume or a scent. He thinks he is seeing angels there who are bringing this perfume /scent to him. He calls himself a wretch, for God must be sending him a message to forget Lenore, comparing the scent to “nepenthe” (an illusory medicine for sorrow from ancient Greek mythology). He yells at himself to drink this medicine and forget the sadness he feels for the loss of Lenore. Almost as if on cue, *the raven* says: “nevermore”.

15th Stanza

“Prophet!” said I, “thing of evil!—prophet still, if bird or devil!—
Whether Tempter sent, or whether tempest tossed thee here ashore,
Desolate yet all undaunted, on this desert land enchanted—
On this home by Horror haunted—tell me truly, I implore—
Is there—is there balm in Gilead?—tell me—tell me, I implore!”
Quoth the Raven “Nevermore.”

Now he starts to scream at the bird, calling it a prophet and a thing of evil. He doesn’t know what to think of the bird, did Satan (the tempter) or a storm send this bird his way? He continues, and describes that even through shouting the raven is unbothered. He calls his home a desert land, haunted and full of horror. He asks *the raven* if there is possible hope of any good or peace in the future, and of course *the raven* says: “nevermore”.

16th Stanza

“Prophet!” said I, “thing of evil!—prophet still, if bird or devil!
By that Heaven that bends above us—by that God we both adore—
Tell this soul with sorrow laden if, within the distant Aidenn,
It shall clasp a sainted maiden whom the angels name Lenore—
Clasp a rare and radiant maiden whom the angels name Lenore.”
Quoth the Raven “Nevermore.”

He continues to call *the raven* a prophet and thing of evil as he dramatically keeps accepting the word of *the raven* as the answer to his questions. He then asks for *the raven* to tell him if he will ever get to hold Lenore again, and predictably *the raven* says: nevermore.

17th Stanza

“Be that word our sign of parting, bird or fiend!” I shrieked, upstarting—
“Get thee back into the tempest and the Night’s Plutonian shore!
Leave no black plume as a token of that lie thy soul hath spoken!
Leave my loneliness unbroken!—quit the bust above my door!
Take thy beak from out my heart, and take thy form from off my door!”
Quoth the Raven “Nevermore.”

The raven’s answers throw the narrator into a fit as he is consumed by sorrow. He screams at *the raven*, commanding it to leave and go back to the storm it came from and to not even leave a trace of it being present in his chamber. He wants to live in his loneliness without accepting the reality of it. He does not want anything to do with the answers that the bird has given him. He continues to yell at the bird to leave and *the raven* simply replies with: nevermore (implying that it will not go).

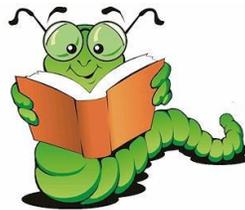


18th Stanza

And the Raven, never flitting, still is sitting, still is sitting
On the pallid bust of Pallas just above my chamber door;
And his eyes have all the seeming of a demon's that is dreaming,
And the lamp-light o'er him streaming throws his shadow on the floor;
And my soul from out that shadow that lies floating on the floor
Shall be lifted—nevermore!

The speaker ends his story by saying that *the raven* is still there, sitting on the statue of Pallas; almost demon-like in the way its eyes gleam. The lamplight hits *the raven*: casting a shadow on the floor that has trapped his soul within it... and he will never be freed from it.

Edgar Allan Poe ends his narrative with a quiet and still character. Quite a change from the last stanzas; it is almost as if he has come to terms with the reality of the situation. As if we are now watching the character from the outside of his head, whilst all the commotion is taking place internally. However, the character lets the reader know that all is not well. *The Raven* still sits on the statue of Pallas and it looks demon-like whilst casting a shadow that traps him forever. That is significant because it gives the reader closure. It tells the reader that even though the character welcomed the feelings of loss and grief when he opened the window of realization, he despises them now. These emotions appear to him as demonic. And the shadow the cast over him; meaning the mood that is created from these feelings has a permanent hold on his soul. He has been defeated by his feelings after facing them, and he will find peace: nevermore.



SUGGESTED READING & VIEWING

BOOKS & STORIES...

THE MURDERS IN THE RUE MORGUE by Edgar Allan Poe

THE CASK OF AMONDILLADO by Edgar Allan Poe

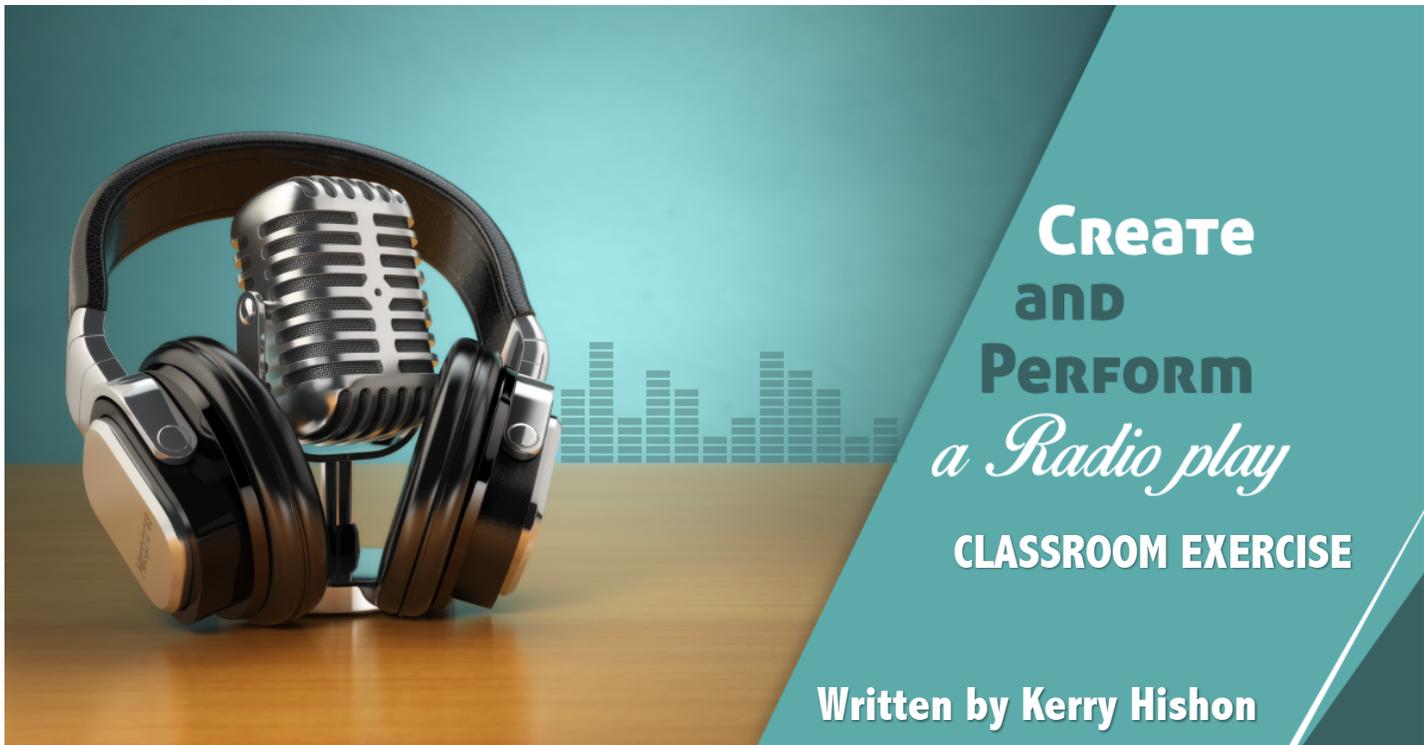
THE BLACK CAT by Edgar Allan Poe

ANNABEL LEE by Edgar Allan Poe

FILM...

EDGAR ALLAN POE: BURIED ALIVE (Documentary available on Vimeo)

THE HOUSE OF USHER starring Vincent Price



The Drama Teacher Resource Company

Radio plays are theatrical performances that are purely auditory; they're meant to be performed on the radio, hence the name! There is no visual aspect, so performers must rely on their vocal performances as well as sound effects and music to convey the story to the audience.

Radio plays are fantastic for students to practice and develop many performance skills like projection, diction, and emoting without the pressure of actually getting up and performing in front of others. It also gives students the opportunity to creatively work with playwriting, selecting appropriate music, and creating sound effects.

The following exercise gives students the chance to create their own radio play using a children's story as the source material. (Grimm's Fairytales are make particularly good material because they contain good villains and suspenseful moments similar to the horror stories of the Golden Age of Radio.) They will then have the opportunity to perform their play for the rest of the class (either a live or pre-recorded performance).

1. Selecting the Source Material

Students will form groups of 4-6. In their groups, students will select a children's story to adapt into a radio play.

2. Writing the Play

Students will adapt the children's story into a script. Remind students to follow the radio play script formatting. Many radio plays use a narrator to set the tone of the story, switch between scenes ("Meanwhile, back at the ranch..."), and to keep the action going between character's lines. Focus on creating really clear, strong, descriptive lines by using adjectives and "sense" words (sight, smell, taste, touch, sound) to set the mood. For example:

- "Jessica sauntered into the room in a shimmering green evening gown."
- "The scent of freshly-baked cinnamon cookies made Mike's mouth water."
- "A frightened Kyle peeked out the window to see a tall, sinister-looking man skulking around the garbage cans."
- "The wolf grinned menacingly, revealing a huge set of glistening-white, razor-sharp teeth."

3. Choosing Appropriate Music and Sound Effects

Students will choose at least 3 clips of music (one for the beginning of the piece, one for a significant part of the middle of the piece, and one for the end) to use in the play, as well as at least 5 sound effects. These sound effects can be found online or in a sound effects library, or they can be created live. Students must ensure that the music and sound effects are appropriate for the scene while not overpowering the vocal performances.

4. Casting and Rehearsing the Play

Students will each take a role in the play and develop an appropriate character voice for their part: focusing on clear diction and enunciation, and showing emotion. Remember that there are no visuals, they have only their voice to work with. Students should rehearse their roles so they are comfortable and familiar with their words. Performances do not have to be off-book, but it will be MUCH easier if students are well-rehearsed.

NOTE: If there are not enough roles to go around, one student can be solely in charge of performing the sound effects, or the narrator role should be split up. Alternatively, students can adapt their play to include more characters.

5. Performing the Piece

Students have two options to perform the piece:

LIVE: Students will perform the piece live in front of the rest of the class. The rest of the class will face away from the performers while they are presenting, so the group cannot use visual clues to tell the story. Music and sound effects will be performed as part of the presentation, either performed live or by utilizing prepared music and sound effects (on a computer, CD player, or MP3 player).

PRE-RECORDED: Most cell phones come with an audio recorder, or students can create their performance using a microphone and audio recording software on their computers (like Audacity or Adobe Audition). Music and sound effects will be performed during the recording, either performed live or by utilizing prepared music and sound effects. The recorded performance will be brought to the class and played for the rest of the class to listen to.

Distance Learning Adaptation

This adaptation is a simplified exploration of radio plays and found sounds that can be done as a full class on a video conferencing app, such as Zoom.

1. Select a two-person scene. There are lots of good free ones on the Theatrefolk resource page – my favourites are “The Big Lie” from *Ten/Two*, “Pretty Girl/Plain Girl” from *Ten/Two*, and “Josie and Pete” from *Somewhere, Nowhere*.
2. Give students access to the scene. If possible, have students print out the scene so they can highlight and make notes on the page; alternatively, they can make notes in a separate word document or in a notebook.
3. Have students read the scene to themselves individually. Then, have volunteers read the scene aloud.
4. In a radio play, there are no visuals, so the atmosphere needs to be shown through sound. As a group, identify moments in the scene where sound effects could be added. For example, in “Josie and Pete,” there is a stage direction that says Josie opens a paper lunch bag. Look for less obvious moments as well. In the same scene, Josie enters through a doorway, and Pete starts to pace around the room. Those are moments that could include sound effects as well.
5. Once students are satisfied that they have found all the moments that sound effects could be added, have them work through each moment and figure out how they would make the sound effect using found objects from their homes. For example, when Pete starts to pace around the room, a student could take a pair of shoes and walk around the room, or put them on their hands and make footstep sounds. What kind of shoes does Pete wear – sneakers, boots, leather-soled dress shoes? They all sound different. What would the students choose and why? Experiment with different sounds.
6. Have students consider how they can make the sounds clear through their device microphones. Where do they need to place the microphone to get the best volume, or an interesting effect (such as an echo)? As well, how they could make sound effects from items they don’t have. For example, what could students use to make a paper lunch bag sound if they didn’t have an actual paper lunch bag? Would a piece of notebook paper make a similar sound? What about a piece of newspaper?
7. At the end of class, have students write and submit a brief response for the following Exit Slip: What was one thing you learned from today’s exercise?

SPECIAL THANKS:



MILES FULWIDER
JARED SCHNEIDER
JORDAN KORTENBER
MARK EVERETTS



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BEN CLEMMER, WBOI
STEVE MULLANEY, WBOI

Most Youtheatre Stories are Literature Based and on the recommended reading list of Library of Congress

Language Arts Standard: Perceive, identify, describe and analyze the distinguishing characteristics of form, structure and style of story.

- Retell story identifying plot, theme, characters, and setting.
- Recall story plot utilizing chronological order.

Language Arts Standard: Evaluate Theatre/Literary work based on critical perception and analysis.

- Share perception of theatre experience in the area of voice, movement, mood and motivation.
- Make suggestions for alternative endings.
- Analyze and critique story and performance through creative writing.
- Create a similar story through creative writing.

Language Arts Standard: Use Theatre /Literary work to develop affective areas of self-concept, problem solving and interpersonal skills.

- React to feelings of self and others within a production.
- Identify conflict within story as it relates to self and others.
- Compare and contrast problems and resolutions found in different stories and real life situations.
- Express personal attitudes, values, and belief systems as it relates to theatre piece.
- Interact freely in conversations, class discussions and dramatic activities.
- Contribute to the solving of problems through dramatization/improvisation.

Language Arts Standard: Examine Theatre /Literary work in a historical and multicultural context.

- Identify similarities and differences between characters from diverse cultures depicted.
- Identify historical differences/figures in different time frames depicted in story.
- Identify significance of historical aspects in story.

Exploring Aesthetics: A Philosophical Basis for Life!

Attending live theatre helps children value its importance to the community and helps develop a lifelong commitment and love of Theatre and Literature. Students experience aesthetic growth through appreciation of Theatre. Students discover through experience that making art is an essential human activity. It requires collaboration, and enhances creative thinking.

