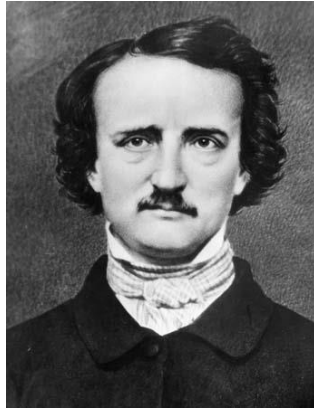


“The Tell-Tale Heart” by Edgar Allan Poe



Name _____ L.A. Period _____

Your score _____ out of 30 points possible
(Covers plot elements, comprehension,
mood, character traits, and setting)

Pre-Reading Guide for "Tall-Tale Heart"

Name _____ Period _____ (5 pts.)

Describe five things that you usually find in a scary/horror story:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Read the following statements. If you agree with them, put a check in the YOU column. Then, AFTER we read the story, go back and put a check in the AUTHOR column if you feel the author agrees with that statement.

YOU AUTHOR STATEMENT

- | | | |
|-----|-------|--|
| ___ | _____ | 1. People who are insane know that they are insane. |
| ___ | _____ | 2. Sane people sometimes imagine that they hear things. |
| ___ | _____ | 3. If you commit a crime, the worst punishment is the guilt afterward. |
| ___ | _____ | 4. Often it's the small annoying things about people that can be the most irritating and infuriating. |
| ___ | _____ | 5. All people are basically afraid of the same things. |
| ___ | _____ | 6. When you've done something wrong, wondering if you'll be caught can cause great stress and anxiety. |

After reading "Tell-Tale Heart" by Poe, answer the following questions using short answers. They do need to be in complete sentences; answer each part of the question thoroughly.

1. Who is telling this story (narrating)? Is it first, second, or third person?
2. What is your first impression of the narrator? What does he try convincing the reader of?
3. How does the narrator feel about the old man in general? What, then, specifically, is it about the old man that troubles/bothers the narrator? Why? How often does the narrator mention this "thing" in the story?
4. What does the narrator tell us he does every night? Why?
5. How does the narrator react when the old man shouts, "Who's there?" What character trait does the narrator show in his reaction to the old man's question?
6. Describe the old man's state of mind.

7. What sound does the narrator hear?

8. What do the narrator's repeated statements about being sane indicate about his character?

9. How does the narrator feel immediately after he commits the murder? Do his feelings change? If so, how and why?

10. (a) At first, how does the narrator behave in the presence of the police? (b) What sound drives the narrator to change his behavior? (c) What do you think causes his paranoia?

11. Give **two direct and specific examples** from the story that the author uses to create an atmosphere of horror or suspense. These are sentences that set or enhance the MOOD of the story.

12. When did you find the narrator most frightening? Explain.

13. The story reveals only the narrator's thoughts. (a) Do you trust the narrator's account of what happened? Why or why not? (b) How would the description of the police officer's visit be different if it revealed one of the officer's perspectives?

14. (a) Using the chart, describe three character traits of the narrator. (b) Give examples that show these traits.

Character	Trait	Example
Example: The Narrator	Nervousness	He is afraid the neighbors will hear the beating heart.

15. (a) Which of the story's characters are *round characters* and which are *flat characters*? (b) Why do readers generally care more about what happens to round characters than flat ones?