

Name: _____ Date: _____

Exploring Mood

Mood is the feeling you get from reading a piece of writing. Another way to describe mood is *atmosphere*. When you walk into a place, it has an atmosphere that makes you feel a certain way; when you “walk into” a story, it too has an atmosphere that creates a feeling. Writers create mood through word choice, imagery, dialogue, setting, and plot.

suspense [suh-SPENS]:

a feeling of nervousness or excitement caused by wondering what will happen

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In this activity, you will analyze how the writer creates a **suspenseful** mood in each scene.

PROLOGUE

Read the summary of dialogue from the prologue below and the explanation of how it creates suspense.

Detail: The Ravens say that Edgar Allan Poe, author of “The Tell-Tale Heart,” wrote “bloodcurdling tales” about murder, morgues, gargoyles, and graveyards.

How this creates suspense: This gives the audience a clue that the story they are about to hear will be spooky and strange—that it will likely involve a murder or some other sort of death.

SCENE 1

1. Below are two plot points that build suspense in Scene 1. We explained how one detail creates suspense. You explain how the other one does.

Detail: The Old Man tells the Villain that he does not look well.

How this creates suspense: The Old Man’s comment creates uneasiness; the audience gets the feeling that something is not right about the Villain and wonders, anxiously, what is going to happen.

Detail: The Villain explains that his “blood ran cold” when he looked at the Old Man’s eye and tells the audience that he decided to kill the Old Man.

How this creates suspense: _____

SCENE 2

2. The playwright does not go right to the Old Man's murder, but rather draws the scene out, slowly building up to the moment when the Villain pounces on the Old Man. Explain how the writer stretches out the time before the murder and how this creates suspense.

SCENE 3

3. In Scene 3, the Villain has already killed the Old Man, so there's no more suspense about that. About what new event does the playwright begin to build suspense in Scene 3? Explain.

SCENE 4

4. The details below all create suspense in the play. Choose TWO details from the list and explain how they create suspense.

- ☐ The Villain serves the police officers tea above the spot where the Old Man's body is hidden.
- ☐ As the officers drink their tea, the Villain grows pale and begins to sweat and fidget.
- ☐ The police officers chat lightly throughout the scene, talking about tea and the countryside.
- ☐ The Villain and the audience begin to hear the Old Man's heart beating ever more loudly from under the floorboards.

How the first detail I chose creates suspense: _____

How the second detail I chose creates suspense: _____

WHOLE PLAY

5. *Suspenseful* is not the only word that can be used to describe the mood of the play. Choose one other word that describes the mood. You may choose a word from the list below or come up with your own word.

angry

dreamy

nightmarish

confused

exciting

relieved

creepy

festive

sad

Another word that describes the mood of the play is _____.

6. Write two details from the play that help create the mood you identified in question 5. Explain how each detail helps create that mood.

Detail: _____

How this creates the mood: _____

Detail: _____

How this creates the mood: _____

Name: _____ Date: _____

Exploring Mood

Mood is the feeling you get from reading a piece of writing. Writers create mood through the words they choose, the images they create, the setting, and what characters say and do.

suspense [suh-SPENS]:

a feeling of nervousness or excitement caused by
wondering what will happen



In this activity, you will analyze (carefully study) how the writer creates a
suspenseful mood in three different scenes.

SCENE 1

1. What happens: The Old Man tells the Villain that he does not look well.

How this creates suspense: The Old Man's comment gives the audience the feeling that something is not right about the Villain. The audience starts to worry about what is going to happen.

2. What happens: The Villain says that he decided to kill the Old Man because of the Old Man's sickly eye.

How this creates suspense— Check one of the boxes below.

- ☐ The Villain's statement shows that the Villain thinks the Old Man's eye is gross.
- ☐ The Villain's statement helps the audience understand why the Villain wanted to kill the Old Man.
- ☐ The Villain's statement makes the audience begin to worry about what the Villain will do to the Old Man.

SCENE 2

3. What creates suspense in Scene 2? Check the box next to the BEST answer.

- ☐ The playwright draws the scene out, leading up to the murder very slowly.
- ☐ The Ravens, the Villain, and the Old Man all scream “Ahhhhh!” at the moment of the murder.
- ☐ At the end of the scene, the Villain says, “The eye would trouble me no more.”

Explain your answer. How does the detail you chose create suspense?

SCENE 4

4. The details below all create suspense in the play. Choose TWO details from the list and explain how they create suspense.

- ☐ The Villain serves the police officers tea above the spot where the Old Man’s body is hidden.
- ☐ As the officers drink their tea, the Villain grows pale and begins to sweat and fidget.
- ☐ The police officers chat lightly throughout the scene, talking about tea and the countryside.
- ☐ The Villain and the audience begin to hear the sound of the Old Man’s heart beating ever more loudly from under the floorboards.

How the first detail I chose creates suspense: _____

How the second detail I chose creates suspense: _____

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Close-Reading Questions

The Tell-Tale Heart

1. Describe the mood of the prologue. Which words and phrases create that mood? (mood, author's craft)
2. Based on his description of the Old Man in Scene 1, what can you tell about the Villain's state of mind? (character, inference)
3. Reread the beginning of Scene 2, up to when the Villain says, "On the eighth night—." What feeling do these lines create? (mood)

4. Later in Scene 2, the Villain says that looking at the Old Man's eye "chilled the very marrow in my bones." What does this expression mean? (figurative language)
5. In Scenes 3 and 4, the inspectors always speak in the same order. Why might the author have written their lines this way? (author's craft)
6. At the end of Scene 4, why does the Villain confess? (character motivation)

Critical-Thinking Questions

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Vocabulary:

The Tell-Tale Heart

1. **agape (uh-GAYP)** *adjective*; If your mouth is agape, it is open wide in surprise, wonder, or shock. You might find your mouth agape at the sight of a dolphin jumping out of the water or at the news that you've just won a million dollars.
2. **blather (BLATH-er)** *verb*; To blather is to talk on and on in a foolish way.
3. **dissemble (dih-SEM-buhl)** *verb*; To dissemble is to conceal your true motives or thoughts—to hide what you really mean or what you really intend to do.
4. **keen (keen)** *adjective*; *Keen* means “sharp, intense, and focused.” When a sense such as sight or smell is keen, it is strong and very sensitive. If you have a keen interest in robotics, you are extremely interested in robotics. *Keen* can also mean “interested and enthusiastic,” as in, “Julie is keen on going for a walk after dinner, but Aaron would rather sit on the couch and relax.”
5. **mortal (MAWR-tl)** *adjective or noun*; As an adjective, *mortal* can mean “certain to die” or “causing death.” A human being is mortal because all human beings eventually die. (A vampire, on the other hand, is *immortal*—that is, not mortal.) *Mortal* can also describe something that is intense or severe; for example, you might have a mortal fear of spiders.

As a noun, *mortal* means “a human being.”
6. **skulk (skuhl-k)** *verb*; To skulk is to prowl or sneak around. *Skulk* is usually used to describe someone who is sneaking around because he or she is up to no good. Thieves might skulk around a house they are planning to rob.
7. **stifle (STY-fuhl)** *verb*; *Stifle* can mean “kill by depriving of oxygen.” To stifle something can also be to stop it, cut it off, or hold it back. You might stifle a giggle while someone is telling a serious story to avoid being rude. You might stifle a friend who's about to give away a secret.
8. **vex (veks)** *verb*; If something vexes you, it irritates, annoys, worries, or puzzles you. You may be vexed by a difficult question on a test, a jar that you can't open, or a friend's refusal to attend your birthday party.

Directions: In the space below, list any other words from the play whose definitions you are not sure about. For each word, use context clues to try to figure out the meaning. Then look up the word in a few different dictionaries. Discuss the meaning of the word with your teacher or another adult. Then write a definition for the word and one example sentence.

Vocabulary Practice

The Tell-Tale Heart

Directions: Fill in the circle next to the best answer to each question.

1. Who is more likely to have his mouth **agape**?
Ⓐ Sam, who just learned that he won an award he wasn't expecting
Ⓑ Joseph, who is washing the dishes
2. When would Jasmine be more likely to **stifle** a yawn?
Ⓐ while she is getting ready for bed
Ⓑ while she is competing in a public debate
3. Which is an example of **skulking**?
Ⓐ tiptoeing across the room because a baby is sleeping nearby
Ⓑ creeping into a room to sneak up on someone
4. Which person would more likely be described as having **keen** senses?
Ⓐ Sean, who is riding his bike and hears loud honking from cars
Ⓑ Evelyn, who is sitting on her porch and smells the roses blooming next door

Directions: Choose the word or phrase that is most similar in meaning to each word in bold.

5. **vex**

- Ⓐ agree
- Ⓑ discipline
- Ⓒ upset
- Ⓓ ignore

7. **mortal**

- Ⓐ loud
- Ⓑ slow
- Ⓒ old
- Ⓓ deadly

6. **dissemble**

- Ⓐ pretend
- Ⓑ wrap
- Ⓒ build
- Ⓓ request

8. **blather**

- Ⓐ protest
- Ⓑ chatter
- Ⓒ laugh
- Ⓓ guess

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The Tell-Tale Heart Quiz

Directions: Read *The Tell-Tale Heart*. Then answer the questions below.

1. Which detail should definitely be included in a summary of the play?

- (A) The Villain murders the Old Man.
- (B) The Old Man was snoring when the Villain crept into his room.
- (C) Four ravens followed the Villain out of the bedroom as he left to make tea.
- (D) The Officer enjoyed the tea that the Villain served.

2. In Scene 1, the line “It was like the eye of a vulture” contains

- (A) personification of a vulture.
- (B) a simile that describes the Old Man’s eye as vulture-like.
- (C) a metaphor comparing a vulture’s eye to the Villain’s eye.
- (D) foreshadowing that the Old Man will be awake when the Villain returns.

3. Which of the following best describes the narrator?

- (A) an old man with a sickly eye
- (B) a kind man who keeps ravens as pets
- (C) a madman obsessed with another man’s sickly eye
- (D) a lonely man without any friends

4. What is the main purpose of Scene 2?

- (A) to characterize the Old Man as foolish
- (B) to show the murder of the Old Man
- (C) to emphasize the importance of the ravens
- (D) to suggest that the Villain is a rational man

5. Why is it important that the Officer, Sergeant, and Constable stay so long in the house?

- (A) to show how friendly they are
- (B) to characterize the three men as bad at their jobs
- (C) to provide enough time for the Villain to become upset and confess
- (D) to provide enough time for the ravens to explain the men’s actions

6. Which of the following lines from the play best supports your answer to question 5?

- (A) Officer: “The countryside must be nice this time of year.”
- (B) Raven 2: “It wasn’t a buzzing at all. It was a ticking.”
- (C) Constable: “Thank you kindly for the tea, young man.”
- (D) Villain: “I can bear it no more . . . I did it! I confess it! Tear up the floor!”

Constructed-Response Questions



Directions: Write your answers to the questions below on the back of this paper or type them up on a computer.

7. How does the Villain’s state of mind change over the course of Scenes 3 and 4? How do you know? Explain, using text evidence to support your answer.

8. Explain the role of the ravens in the play. Support your answer with text evidence.

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The Tell-Tale Heart Quiz

Directions: Read *The Tell-Tale Heart*. Then answer the questions below.

1. Which detail should definitely be included in a summary of the play? (A summary tells the main points of something.)
 - (A) The Villain murders the Old Man.
 - (B) The Old Man was snoring when the Villain crept into his room.
 - (C) Four ravens followed the Villain out of the bedroom as he left to make tea.
 - (D) The Officer enjoyed the tea that the Villain served.
2. In Scene 1, the line “It was like the eye of a vulture” contains a simile: a comparison using *like* or *as*. What does this simile tell you?
 - (A) Vultures’ eyes look a lot like human eyes.
 - (B) The Old Man’s eye looked like a vulture’s eye.
 - (C) Vultures cannot see very well.
 - (D) When the Old Man moved, he looked like a vulture flying.
3. Which of the following best describes the narrator?
 - (A) a man with a sickly eye
 - (B) a man who keeps ravens as pets
 - (C) a man obsessed with another man’s sickly eye
 - (D) a man without any friends
4. What is the main event of Scene 2?
 - (A) the Villain bumping into the dresser
 - (B) the murder of the Old Man
 - (C) the ravens flying out of the room
 - (D) the Old Man waking up
5. The Officer, Sergeant, and Constable stay in the house long enough to have tea. Why is this important to the play?
 - (A) It shows how friendly the three men are.
 - (B) It shows that the three men like tea.
 - (C) It gives the Villain time to become upset and confess what he did.
 - (D) It gives the ravens time to explain the men’s actions.
6. Which line from the play best supports your answer to question 5?
 - (A) Officer: “The countryside must be nice this time of year.”
 - (B) Raven 2: “It wasn’t a buzzing at all. It was a ticking.”
 - (C) Constable: “Thank you kindly for the tea, young man.”
 - (D) Villain: “I can bear it no more . . . I did it! I confess it! Tear up the floor!”

Constructed-Response Questions



Directions: Write your answers to the questions below on the back of this paper or type them up on a computer.

7. Describe how the Villain feels in Scene 3 and explain how you know. Use text evidence to support your answer.
8. How do the ravens help tell the story? Support your answer with text evidence.

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Literary Elements and Devices

Identifying the basic elements of a literary work can help you understand it better.

Use this activity to help you understand *The Tell-Tale Heart*.

See *Scope's* "Glossary of Literary Terms" for definitions of the words that appear in bold.

Section 1: Characters

1. For the characters of the Villain, the Old Man, and one other character of your choice: (1) decide whether the character is **major** or **minor**; (2) briefly describe the character, including his or her appearance, personality, and background; and (3) decide whether the character is **static** or **dynamic** and explain why.

A. THE VILLAIN is a ☐ **major** ☐ **minor** (check one) character.

Description: _____

He is a ☐ **static** ☐ **dynamic** (check one) character. I think so because _____

B. THE OLD MAN is a ☐ **major** ☐ **minor** (check one) character.

Description: _____

He is a ☐ **static** ☐ **dynamic** (check one) character. I think so because _____

C. is a ☐ **major** ☐ **minor** (check one) character.

Description: _____

He is a ☐ **static** ☐ **dynamic** (check one) character. I think so because _____

2. Describe the role of the ravens in the play. Support your answer with details from the text.

Section 2: Figurative Language

3. A **metaphor** compares two unlike things to illuminate a particular quality or aspect of one of those things. In Scene 2, the Villain uses a metaphor to describe the Old Man. Find the metaphor and explain what it means.

4. **Onomatopoeia** refers to the use of words that sound like the thing they are describing, or to those words themselves. *Hiss*, *growl*, and *honk* are examples of onomatopoeia. Choose one example of onomatopoeia in the play and explain what it adds to the story.

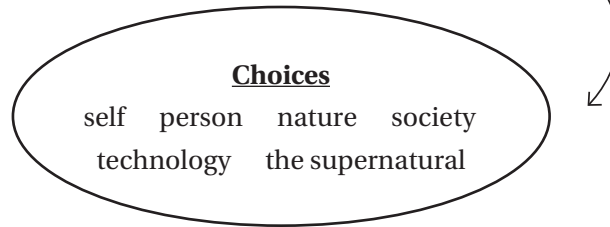
Section 3: Plot and Structure

5. *Mundane* means unimportant, dull, or boring. What makes the **dialogue** between the Officer, Sergeant, and Constable in Scene 4 mundane? What purpose does their dialogue serve in the play?

6. A. What is the main **conflict** the **protagonist** faces?

B. Is this conflict **internal** or **external**? _____

C. Another way to describe this **conflict** is: person vs. _____ .



7. How is the main conflict resolved?

Section 4: Suspense

8. Choose a scene from the play and provide at least two examples of how the author creates suspense in that scene. Your examples can be lines, words, or plot points.

Identifying Mood

Mood is the feeling the reader gets from a work of literature. Another way to describe mood is atmosphere. When you walk into a place, it has an atmosphere that makes you feel a certain way; when you “walk into” a text, it too has an atmosphere that makes you feel a certain way. For example, the mood could be *calm*, *creepy*, *romantic*, *gloomy*, or *tense*. Authors create mood through word choice, imagery, dialogue, setting, and plot. The mood can stay the same from the beginning to the end of a text, or it can change.

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Mood Words

Mood is the feeling the reader gets from a work of literature. There are *many* different words you can use to describe the mood of a piece of writing. Here are some to get you started. They are organized into groups of words with similar meanings. We've left space in each box so you can add your own words.

angry

aggravated, enraged, hostile, irate,
violent

happy

content, joyful, delighted, ecstatic, elated

boring

dreary, dull, uneventful, tiring

loving

warm, delicate, romantic, touching,
sympathetic

calm

quiet, serene, tranquil, mellow, harmonious

sad

depressed, melancholy, mournful, tragic,
gloomy

exciting

exhilarating, lively, rousing, thrilling,
energetic

scary

creepy, nightmarish, spooky, haunting,
threatening

fun

amusing, bouncy, cheerful, playful

worried

anxious, nervous, restless, suspenseful, tense,
uneasy

Note: *Scope* does not accept Google Docs. If you are e-mailing your entry, please send a .pdf or .doc file.

Poe Contest

In a well-organized paragraph, explain how the author creates a suspenseful mood in *The Tell-Tale Heart*. Support your ideas with text evidence. Five winners will get *Doll Bones* by Holly Black.

Entries will be judged on:

- ⇒ a clearly stated central idea
- ⇒ use of supporting evidence
- ⇒ good organization and transitions
- ⇒ grammar, spelling, and punctuation

My name: _____

My home phone number: _____ My grade: _____

My teacher's name: _____ My teacher's e-mail: _____

School name: _____

School address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____

School phone number: _____

My parent or legal guardian consents
to my participation in this contest.

Parent's or legal guardian's signature: _____

Include this form with your written entry and send both to: scopemag@scholastic.com
or mail them to: Poe Contest, c/o *Scope*, P.O. Box 712, New York, NY 10013-0712

ENTRIES MUST BE RECEIVED BY October 20, 2016!