

MANCHESTER COLLEGE
Department of Education

LESSON PLAN by: Laura Ahnert

Lesson: Pre-test/ Post-test “The Masque of the Red Death”

Length: 47 minutes

Age or Grade Intended: 10th Grade English

Academic Standard(s):

10.3.7 Evaluate the significance of various literary devices, including imagery, allegory (the use of fictional figures and actions to express truths about human experiences), and symbolism (the use of a symbol to represent an idea or theme), and explain their appeal.

Performance Objectives:

Provided with an allegory chart, the students will evaluate examples of allegory in the story by filling in an explanation for each of the four examples provided with 90% accuracy.

Provided with a quiz, the students will complete the quiz as a pre-test with 70% accuracy.

Assessment:

Because the students’ assignment was to read the story the night before the lesson, I will begin today’s lesson with a short 10 question quiz as a pre-test to assess how much of the story they understood without explanation.

After discussing the story, I will have the students fill out an allegory chart, containing 4 different symbols with underlying meanings as their post-test.

Advanced Preparation by Teacher:

Have enough copies of the quiz for each student.

Have book open to the story and ready to discuss.

Have 4 copies of the group activity, 1 for each group.

Have enough copies of the allegory chart for each student.

Procedure:

Introduction/Motivation: Can anyone tell me what an allegory is? According to our text book, an allegory is a narrative that is both literal and symbolic.

Literally, the story is of Prince Prospero, who has retreated to the countryside to escape the Red Death. Prospero gives a fabulous party that ends disastrously. Allegorically, Poe’s

story depicts the foolhardiness of attempting to deny one's morality and fate. The allegory emphasizes that neither fortress nor social station can save a person: Death finds us all.

I want to assess how well you read the story, so here is a short 10 question quiz I would like for you to take. Give the students about 10 minutes to complete the quiz, then pick it up for pre-test statistics.

Step-by-Step Plan:

1. Have the students number off by fours to create four groups.
2. Pass out one group activity paper to each group.
3. Read the directions to the groups.
4. Assign each group a character from the story.
 - Group 1: Prince Prospero
 - Group 2: The guests
 - Group 3: A peasant that was locked out
 - Group 4: The Red Death
5. Give the groups 10-15 minutes to answer the questions, then have each group present their answers to the class.
6. After the groups present, hand out the allegory charts.
7. Have the students fill out the symbolic meanings behind Prince Prospero, the clock, the red death and the 7 rooms.
8. Pick up this chart as the post-test. If there is not enough time for the students to finish it, assign it as homework.

Closure: Today we learned about allegory in the short story "The Masque of the Red Death." We looked at possible differing viewpoints in the story, as well as different symbols using the allegory chart. If you did not finish the allegory chart, please take it home as homework. They will be collected tomorrow.

Adaptations/Enrichment:

For LD students:

- The students may have their quiz read to them out loud.
- These students can feel more comfortable working in a group smaller than the entire class and have their opinions and ideas heard.
- These students will have the other students in their group to lean on and work in a joint effort with.
- The students may have help with the allegory chart by having it read to them, or explained in more detail.

For ADD students:

- I have provided written instructions. I will also read these instructions out loud to the class.
- By having the students work in their poetry groups, they will be working on cooperative learning skills and small group social skills.

Self-Reflection:

How did the students do on the quiz?

Was it okay to hold them responsible for reading the material outside of class?

How did the students work in their groups?

How did the students respond to the allegory chart after having read the story by themselves?

Would it have been better to switch the

Name: _____

The Masque of the Red Death Quiz

1. The events of this story are related to...
 - A. a popular ballroom dance
 - B. a spreading, infectious disease
 - C. a nickname for Prince Prospero
 - D. costumes for masquerade balls

2. What is unusual about where the masquerade takes place?
 - A. There is a ballroom as large as the entire imperial suite in Prince Prospero's palace.
 - B. Musicians play in a curved hall while guests dance in colored chambers.
 - C. It begins at sundown and does not end until an ebony clock strikes.
 - D. There are colored rooms that are not connected to each other or situated along a straight hall.

3. "Gaudy and fantastic appearances" are created at the masquerade ball by...
 - A. the prince who wears a frightening costume and dances in several rooms
 - B. a man in a red mask who enters the various rooms and does a bizarre dance
 - C. flames that shine through red glass windows in each of many rooms along a hallway
 - D. the guests who take turns putting on a red mask, which makes them act in strange ways.

4. Few people dare to enter the black apartment because...
 - A. faces look frightening there, and an ebony clock makes a strange sound.
 - B. without light, no one can see or dance without causing injury to others.
 - C. it is the room where Prince Prospero wears the masque of the Red Death.
 - D. in this room a strange voice can be heard whose origins no one can trace.

5. Prince Prospero is a person who basically desires...
 - A. good company and entertainment
 - B. to face pain and suffering with courage
 - C. to be surrounded by people in simple clothes
 - D. others to share their feelings with him

6. When Prince Prospero confronts the strangely masked guest, the prince...
 - A. challenges the guest to a duel and then draws his sword in order to fight
 - B. demands that the masked guest leave since he or she was not invited
 - C. draws a dagger, then chases the masked guest by going from room to room
 - D. asks for the mask and costume so that he can wear them
7. An allegory is a narrative story...
 - A. with an unexpected turning point and climax in its plot
 - B. told by a narrator who knows more about events than other characters
 - C. that uses imaginary characters to tell about a historical event
 - D. in which characters and settings stand for abstract ideas or moral qualities
8. In "The Masque of the Red Death," the red mask probably stands for...
 - A. the bubonic plague that had been killing much of the population of 14th century Europe
 - B. the desire that all people had to become a prince or princess
 - C. Prince Prospero's wish to be anything but ordinary
 - D. the people in 14th century Europe who survived the bubonic plague
9. In "The Masque of the Red Death," Prince Prospero stands for...
 - A. a terrible, deadly disease that had been spreading through Europe
 - B. a future people who learned how to fight infectious diseases successfully
 - C. anyone who believed they could fool death by their cleverness
 - D. weak people who were easily infected by and died from bubonic plague
10. Which statement expresses the theme of this allegory?
 - A. Money can buy you happiness.
 - B. Laugh and the world laughs with you.
 - C. Live life to the fullest.
 - D. Death can master life.

The Masque of the Red Death Answer Key

1. The events of this story are related to...
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Masque of the Red Death Group Activity

In groups, answer the following questions on a separate sheet of paper from the viewpoint of your assigned character. Then, present your answers to the class.

1. How would you describe yourself? (Bloom's: Knowledge)
2. What is happening around you, and how is it affecting you? (Bloom's: Comprehension)
3. If you could pick another character to interview, who would it be and what is one question you would ask them? (Bloom's: Application)
4. How is your character a part of the allegorical context of the story? (Bloom's: Analysis)
5. Elaborate on how your character feels about their position in the story. (Bloom's: Synthesis)
6. What is your opinion of the other characters? (Bloom's: Evaluation)
 - ~Prince Prospero
 - ~The Partyers
 - ~The Red Death
 - ~The peasants that are locked out

Name: _____

Allegory Chart

An allegory is a narrative that is really a double story. One story takes place on the surface. Under the surface the story's characters and events represent abstract ideas or states of being.

Symbol	Meaning
Prince Prospero	
The Clock	
The Red Death	
The Seven Rooms	

Lesson to be learned from the story

Allegory Chart: Possible Answers

Symbol	Meaning
Prince Prospero	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Financial prosperity Wealth at the time lay in the hands of the elite and left the peasantry to suffer.
The clock	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Death's final judgment Regular (hourly) reminder of their lives ticking away. Cannot stop or slow down time Time "flies" Last chime = death
The Red Death	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Death Equality: It attacks the poor and rich alike. Death comes to everyone. Possibly the bubonic plague
The Seven Rooms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Represent the stages of life Running from east to west. Sunrise to sunset, representing the lifecycle of a day.) Human journey from life to death. 1st room: Blue = birth 2nd room: Purple = growth. A mixture of blue (birth) and red (life) 3rd room: Green = youth, in the spring of life. 4th room: Orange = Summer and autumn of life. 5th room: White = Age. Growing older. 6th room: Violet = Shadowy color representative of darkness and coming death. 7th room: Black = "ominous endpoint" and the red window is associated with blood, fear, and death. The revelers do not go into the Black room because they fear death. This is the order in which the Red Death walks, and also the order in which Prince Prospero chases the Red Death. He dies in the Black room.

Lesson to be learned from the story

- An allegory about life and death and the powerlessness of humans to evade the grip of death.

Sources:

Allegorical meanings:

Shmoop University. (2011). *The masque of the red death*. Retrieved from <http://www.shmoop.com/masque-of-red-death/symbolism-imagery.html>

Quiz:

The masque of the red death. In *Holt Assessment Literature, Reading, and Vocabulary* (pp. 122-124). Austin, Texas: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.