

Lesson Plan

Lesson: Allegorical Meaning in Edgar Allen Poe's The Masque of the Red Death

Length: 30 to 40 minutes

Age or Grade Level Intended: 10th Grade (Sophomore)

Academic Standard(s):

10.3.7: Evaluate the significance of various literary devices, including figurative language, imagery, allegory (the use of fictional characters 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. (Core Standard)

Performance Objective(s):

Given the story *The Masque of the Red Death*, students will be able to recognize all allegorical meanings in the story with 100% accuracy.

Given an allegory chart, students will be able to fill in the allegorical meanings of *The Masque of the Red Death* with 100% accuracy.

Assessment:

Advance Preparation by Teacher:

Have copies of *The Masque of the Red Death* for the students to read.

Have the students read Edgar Allen Poe's story the night before for homework so they are prepared to discuss the short story.

Have copies of the allegorical chart that is attached to the lesson plan.

Procedure:

Introduction/Motivation:

Ask students if they know the story of the tortoise and the hare. Have one of the students' who does know this story explain it to the class. When he/she is done, explain that this story is an example of an allegorical story. Then explain to the class that we will be discussing allegorical stories and the allegorical meaning behind the story they have just read, *The Masque of the Red Death*.

Step-by-Step Plan:

1. Ask the students what *The Masque of the Red Death* is about. If they have a hard time explaining, help them out by giving a few hints. This story is about a young prince named Prospero, who is wealthy and very arrogant. He lives during the time when red death was sweeping his country and hundreds of people were dying from this ghastly disease. He decides to hold a party to try for wealthy people so they will be safe from the disease. Unexpectedly, a ghoulish figure dressed like a corpse interrupts the party, killing anyone in his way until he finally kills Prospero.
 - Key questions to help them along with the summary.
 - Who is the main character? (Prince Prospero)
 - What is he like? (Wealthy, arrogant)
 - What does he do in the story? (Holds a party)
 - What happens during the party? (Red death comes and kills Prospero)
2. After the brief summary of the story, explain to the students that this is a literal reading of the story. If they do not know what that means, explain that a literal meaning is when someone only reads what is actually happening.
3. Then explain to the students that we are going to look at the allegorical meaning of this story. Ask if anyone knows what an allegorical meaning is. If they do not know, explain to them that an allegorical meaning/story is where different things such as characters, names, objects, etc. are symbols for the underlying point of the story.
4. Then give an example of an allegorical symbol in the story.
 - Example: Prince Prospero's name. What does his name look or sound like? (Prosperous) How does this relate to his character? (He is extremely wealthy) What does his character symbolize? (Upper class)
5. Then put the student's into groups of four. After they are sitting in their groups, pass out the allegorical chart worksheet. Explain to the students that for the next

- ten to fifteen minutes, they will be working on one of the symbols shown on this chart. Assign each group one of the symbols. Make sure to walk around the room and answer any questions students might have.
6. After the students have had enough time to finish this activity, have each group explain what the allegorical meaning is behind their symbol. Remind students that they should be filling out their charts as the student's relay the information, since they will be handing them in at the end of the class.
 7. When the students are finished, explain to the students that allegorical stories have one more part- a moral. Every allegorical story has a moral or lesson that it is trying to teach. For example, in the tortoise and the hare, the moral of the story is to take your time. You do not have to be quick to be successful. Ask the students to take three to five minutes to write down on their chart what they think the moral of the story is. Remind them to work on this separately, not in their groups.
 8. When they have had adequate time, ask the students to pass in their papers. Then ask the students what they wrote down as the moral of the story. If none of them know, explain that the moral of this story is that wealth will not save you from everything, like death. There is no escaping death, and everyone is on the same playing field when death is concerned.

Closure:

Adaptations/Enrichment:

Student with Learning disability in reading comprehension

Let this student listen to the story on an audio tape. Make sure to read the directions of the allegory chart out loud to the whole class. Since they are working in groups, the student will have help when he/she is trying to find their answers.

Student with ADHD

Give this student step by step instructions on what they should do. Make sure they are only focusing on one task at a time. Assign a job for this student within their group, like finding a specific example in the book to back up their answer.

Student with Gifts and Talents in Creativity

Self-Reflection:

How did the lesson plan go?

Did it run smoothly?

Could the students keep up with my pace?

Do the students now know what an allegorical story is?