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grammar, style, and proofreading exercises

The Grammar Dog Guide to Short Stories by Edgar Allan Poe

The Fall of the House of Usher

The Masque of the Red Death

The Pit and the Pendulum

The Tell-Tale Heart

The Cask of Amontillado

**All exercises use sentences from the stories.
Includes over 250 multiple choice questions.**

About Gramwardog

Gramwardog was founded in 2001 by Mary Jane McKinney, a high school English teacher and dedicated grammarian. She and other experienced English teachers in both high school and college regard grammar and style as the key to unlocking the essence of an author.

Their philosophy, that grammar and literature are best understood when learned together, led to the formation of Gramwardog.com, a means of sharing knowledge about the structure and patterns of language unique to specific authors. These patterns are what make a great book *a great book*. The arduous task of analyzing works for grammar and style has yielded a unique product, guaranteed to enlighten the reader of literary classics.

Gramwardog's strategy is to put the author's words under the microscope. The result yields an increased appreciation of the art of writing and awareness of the importance and power of language.



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SHORT STORIES by Edgar Allan Poe – Grammar and Style
All exercises use sentences from the short stories.

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SAMPLE EXERCISES - SHORT STORIES by Edgar Allan Poe

EXERCISE 5 COMPLEMENTS

Identify the complements in the following sentences. Label the underlined words:

d.o. = direct object

i.o. = indirect object

p.n. = predicate nominative

o.p. = object of preposition

p.a. = predicate adjective

From *The Fall of the House of Usher*

- ___ 1. Although, as boys, we had been even intimate associates, yet I really knew little of my friend.
- ___ 2. His reserve had been always excessive and habitual.
- ___ 3. Minute fungi overspread the whole exterior, hanging in a fine tangled web-work from the eaves.

EXERCISE 6 PHRASES

Identify the phrases in the following sentences. Label the underlined words:

par – participial

ger = gerund

inf = infinitive

appos = appositive

prep = prepositional

From *The Fall of the House of Usher*

- ___ 1. Beyond this indication of extensive decay, however, the fabric gave little token of instability.
- ___ 2. Its proprietor, Roderick Usher, had been one of my boon companions in boyhood; but many years had elapsed since our last meeting.
- ___ 3. Noticing these things, I rode over a short causeway to the house.

STYLE: FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE

Identify the figurative language in the following sentences. Label the underlined words:

m = metaphor *s* = simile *p* = personification *o* = onomatopoeia *h* = hyperbole

From *The Fall of the House of Usher*

- ___ 1. I looked upon the scene before me – upon the mere house, and the simple landscape features of the domain – upon the bleak walls – upon the vacant eye-like windows . . .
- ___ 2. But, in his disordered fancy, the idea had assumed a more daring character, and trespassed, under certain conditions, upon the kingdom of inorganization.
- ___ 3. . . the huge antique panels to which the speaker pointed, threw slowly back, upon the instant, their ponderous and ebony jaws.

SAMPLE EXERCISES - SHORT STORIES by Edgar Allan Poe

EXERCISE 12 STYLE: ALLUSIONS AND SYMBOLS

Identify the type of allusion or symbol used in the following sentences. Label the underlined words or phrases:

a. history b. death c. religion d. insanity e. folklore/superstition f. disease

From The Fall of the House of Usher

- ___1. The writer spoke of acute bodily illness – of a mental disorder which oppressed him – and of an earnest desire to see me . . .
- ___2. It was, he said, a constitutional and a family evil, and one for which he despaired to find a remedy . . .
- ___3. The brother had been led to his resolution (so he told me) by consideration of the unusual character of the malady of the deceased . . . and of the remote and exposed situation of the burial-ground of the family.

EXERCISE 13 STYLE: LITERARY ANALYSIS – SELECTED PASSAGE 1

Read the following passage the first time through for meaning.

It was in this apartment, also, that there stood against the western wall, a gigantic clock of ebony. Its pendulum swung to and fro with a dull, heavy, monotonous clang; and when the minute-hand made the circuit of the face, and the hour was to be stricken, there came from the brazen lungs of the clock a sound which was clear and loud and deep and exceedingly musical, but of so peculiar a note and emphasis that, at each lapse of an hour, the musicians of the orchestra were constrained to pause, momentarily, in their performance, to hearken to the sound; and thus the waltzers perforce ceased their evolutions, and there was a brief disconcert of the whole gay company; and, while the chimes of the clock yet rang, it was observed that the giddiest grew pale, and the more aged and sedate passed their hands over their brows as if in confused reverie of meditation. But when the echoes had fully ceased, a light laughter at once pervaded the assembly; the musicians looked at each other and smiled as if at their own nervousness and folly, and made whispering vows, each to the other, that the next chiming of the clock should produce in them no similar emotion; and then, after the lapse of sixty minutes, (which embrace three thousand and six hundred seconds of the Time that flies,) there came yet another chiming of the clock, and then were the same disconcert and tremulousness and meditation as before. (From The Masque of the Red Death)

Read the passage a second time, marking figurative language, sensory imagery, poetic devices, and any other patterns of diction and rhetoric, then answer the questions below.

- 1 It was in this apartment, also, that there stood against the western wall, a gigantic clock of ebony. Its
- 2 pendulum swung to and fro with a dull, heavy, monotonous clang; and when the minute-hand made
- 3 the circuit of the face, and the hour was to be stricken, there came from the brazen lungs of the clock
- 4 a sound which was clear and loud and deep and exceedingly musical, but of so peculiar a note and
- 5 emphasis that, at each lapse of an hour, the musicians of the orchestra were constrained to pause,

SAMPLE EXERCISES - SHORT STORIES by Edgar Allan Poe

6 momentarily, in their performance, to hearken to the sound; and thus the waltzers performe ceased
7 their evolutions, and there was a brief disconcert of the whole gay company; and, while the chimes
8 of the clock yet rang, it was observed that the giddiest grew pale, and the more aged and sedate
9 passed their hands over their brows as if in confused reverie of meditation. But when the echoes
10 had fully ceased, a light laughter at once pervaded the assembly; the musicians looked at each other
11 and smiled as if at their own nervousness and folly, and made whispering vows, each to the other,
12 that the next chiming of the clock should produce in them no similar emotion; and then, after the
13 lapse of sixty minutes, (which embrace three thousand and six hundred seconds of the Time that
14 flies,) there came yet another chiming of the clock, and then were the same disconcert and
15 tremulousness and meditation as before. (From *The Masque of the Red Death*)

- ___1. The underlined word in Line 2 is an example of . . .
a. metaphor b. simile c. personification d. onomatopoeia
- ___2. ALL of the following descriptions are parallel in meaning EXCEPT . . .
a. *the musicians of the orchestra were constrained to pause* (Line 5)
b. *the waltzers performe ceased their evolutions* (Lines 6-7)
c. *while the chimes of the clock yet rang* (Line 7-8)
d. *when the echoes had fully ceased* (Line 9-10)
- ___3. The PREDOMINANT sensory imagery in the passage is . . .
a. sight b. sound c. touch d. taste e. smell