



# **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 quizzes 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

TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>Exercise 1</b>	--	<b>Parts of Speech</b> <b>25 multiple choice questions</b>	<b>... 5</b>
<b>Exercise 2</b>	--	<b>Proofreading: Spelling, Capitalization, and Punctuation</b> <i>12 multiple choice questions</i>	<b>... 7</b>
<b>Exercise 3</b>	--	<b>Proofreading: Spelling, Capitalization, and Punctuation</b> <i>12 multiple choice questions</i>	<b>... 8</b>
<b>Exercise 4</b>	--	<b>Simple, Compound, and Complex Sentences</b> <i>25 multiple choice questions</i>	<b>... 9</b>
<b>Exercise 5</b>	--	<b>Complements</b> <i>25 multiple choice questions on direct object, indirect object, predicate nominative, predicate adjective, and object of preposition</i>	<b>... 11</b>
<b>Exercise 6</b>	--	<b>Phrases</b> <i>25 multiple choice questions on infinitive, gerund, participial, appositive, and prepositional phrases</i>	<b>... 13</b>
<b>Exercise 7</b>	--	<b>Verbals</b> <i>25 multiple choice questions on infinitives, gerunds, and participles</i>	<b>... 15</b>
<b>Exercise 8</b>	--	<b>Clauses</b> <i>25 multiple choice questions</i>	<b>... 17</b>

SHORT STORIES by Edgar Allan Poe – Grammar and Style

TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>Exercise 9</b>	--	<b>Style: Figurative Language</b> <i>25 multiple choice questions on metaphor, simile, personification, hyperbole, and onomatopoeia</i>	<b>... 19</b>
<b>Exercise 10</b>	--	<b>Style: Poetic Devices</b> <i>25 multiple choice questions on assonance, consonance, alliteration, repetition, and rhyme</i>	<b>... 21</b>
<b>Exercise 11</b>	--	<b>Style: Sensory Imagery</b> <i>25 multiple choice questions</i>	<b>... 23</b>
<b>Exercise 12</b>	--	<b>Style: Allusions and Symbols</b> <i>25 multiple choice questions</i>	<b>... 25</b>
<b>Exercise 13</b>	--	<b>Style: Literary Analysis – Selected Passage 1</b> <i>6 multiple choice questions</i>	<b>... 27</b>
<b>Exercise 14</b>	--	<b>Style: Literary Analysis – Selected Passage 2</b> <i>6 multiple choice questions</i>	<b>... 29</b>
<b>Exercise 15</b>	--	<b>Style: Literary Analysis – Selected Passage 3</b> <i>6 multiple choice questions</i>	<b>... 31</b>
<b>Exercise 16</b>	--	<b>Style: Literary Analysis – Selected Passage 4</b> <i>6 multiple choice questions</i>	<b>... 33</b>
<b>Answer Key</b>	--	<b>Answers to Exercises 1-16</b>	<b>... 35</b>
<b>Glossary</b>	--	<b>Grammar Terms</b>	<b>... 37</b>
<b>Glossary</b>	--	<b>Literary Terms</b>	<b>... 47</b>

**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.

**EXERCISE 9            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.

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**EXERCISE 12      STYLE: ALLUSIONS AND SYMBOLS**

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

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5 emphasis that, at each lapse of an hour, the musicians of the orchestra were constrained to pause,  
6 momentarily, in their performance, to hearken to the sound; and thus the waltzers perforce 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. The underlined words in Line 3 are an example of . . .  
a. metaphor b. simile c. personification d. onomatopoeia
- \_\_\_ 3. 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 perforce 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)

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