



Edgar Allan Poe and Figurative Language

By: Amanda Martin

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Language Arts
Grades 9-12



Introduction

Edgar Allan Poe was an extremely unique writer. In this lesson, students will investigate two of his poems, “The Raven” and “The Valley of Unrest,” to uncover all of the elements of figurative language used within them.

Learning Objectives

- ([CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.9-10.4](#)) Students will determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the cumulative impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone.
- ([CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.9-10.5](#)) Students will demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.
- ([CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.9-10.5.A](#)) Students will interpret figures of speech in context and analyze their role in the text.

Materials Needed

- Journals or paper
- “The Raven”
- “The Valley of Unrest”

Procedure

1. Read Edgar Allan Poe’s “The Raven” to the class. Discuss the overall tone and construction of the poem as a whole class.
2. Students will later be conducting their own “investigation” of figurative language using a different Poe work, but students must have an understanding of the different types of figurative language first. Introduce/review the different types of figurative language with the class (imagery, personification, metaphor, simile, allusion, etc.). Ask students to take notes in their journals or on a piece of paper in order to better retain the information provided for each (it will be crucial during the remainder of the lesson).

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3. Students will now play a game to practice identifying the different types of figurative language. Divide the class into two teams. One member of each team will come to the front to answer the question at hand. On the board, display an example of figurative language (some examples are provided below). The first person to correctly identify the type of figurative language used (personification, simile, etc.) wins a point for their team. Play the game at least until every team member has had a chance to answer.
4. On the board, display the poem, "The Valley of Unrest." Students should work individually to dissect the poem for figurative language. For each example, students must also identify which type of figurative language it is classified as. (If desired, you may use the Prezi presentation [found here](#) to conduct a classroom discussion about the poem.)

Figurative Language Examples:

- He was as red as a cherry. SIMILE
- All the world's a stage. METAPHOR
- I've told you a million times. HYPERBOLE
- It was the best of times, it was the worst of times. ALLUSION
- The car danced across the field. PERSONIFICATION

Evaluation

Student learning should be evaluated by the student's ability to decipher the figurative language located in "The Valley of Unrest." Please review student work for accuracy in correctly identifying the types of figurative language examples found in the text as well.