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# THE OVAL PORTRAIT

Grade Levels: 10-13+

13 minutes

MEDIA GUILD



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## DESCRIPTION

A young woman marries an obsessive painter who literally paints the life out of his devoted wife. Based on Edgar Allan Poe's short story of the same name.

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## ACADEMIC STANDARDS

### Subject Area: Language Arts

- ◆ Standard: Uses reading skills and strategies to understand and interpret a variety of literary texts
  - Benchmark: Understands the effects of author's style and complex literary devices and techniques on the overall quality of a work (e.g., tone; irony; mood; figurative language; allusion; diction; dialogue; symbolism; point of view; voice; understatement and overstatement; time and sequence; narrator; poetic elements, such as sound, imagery, personification)

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## INSTRUCTIONAL GOALS

1. To discover and explore classic literature.
2. To illustrate that Edgar Allan Poe's writing is still relevant.
3. To stimulate further reading of classic literature.
4. To demonstrate the power of figurative language.

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## AFTER SHOWING

### Discussion Items and Questions

1. Why did the gentleman spend the night in an abandoned chateau?
2. What was unusual about the oval portrait?
3. What did the gentleman learn about the painting from the book?
4. Why did the wife agree to have her portrait painted?
5. Do you think the painter truly loved his wife? Why or why not?
6. Can you imagine a similar situation today? Explain.

7. Think of a different title for this story. Explain why your title would work.
8. What do you think happened next? Why?

### Applications and Activities

1. Research Edgar Allan Poe's life. Write an essay comparing Poe to the painter. How were they alike and how were they different? In your conclusion, state whether you think Poe based the painter on his own life.
2. Poe describes the chateau in great detail. Write a description of a place that you are familiar with, using sensory detail and figurative language. Let your reader see this place through your eyes.
3. Write five journal entries as if you were the wife. Reveal what she was thinking and feeling during the story.

### RELATED RESOURCES



#### Captioned Media Program

- Edgar Allan Poe: Terror of the Soul #3236
- The Gold Bug #1376
- The Telltale Heart #3186



### World Wide Web



The following Web sites complement the contents of this guide; they were selected by professionals who have experience in teaching deaf and hard of hearing students. Every effort was made to select accurate, educationally relevant, and "kid-safe" sites. However, teachers should preview them before use. The U.S. Department of Education, the National Association of the Deaf, and the Captioned Media Program do not endorse the sites and are not responsible for their content.

- **THE EDGAR ALLAN POE SOCIETY OF BALTIMORE**

<http://www.eapoe.org/>

Click on topics such as "General Topics About Poe," "The Works of Edgar Allan Poe," and "Poe in Baltimore (with a chronology)" to know more about this famous literary writer.

- **CONTENTS OF AMERICAN LITERARY CLASSICS**

[http://www.rdlthai.com/ellsa\\_contents1.html](http://www.rdlthai.com/ellsa_contents1.html)

Highlights the process of understanding and writing a short story. Gives the five elements of a short story and uses selected examples from different short stories.