

**Non-Fiction Excerpt: "The Black Death" by History.com**  
**Non-Fiction Article: "Bubonic Plague Found in Oregon Teenager" by Christine Hauser, NY Times**  
**Poetry: "The Seven Ages of Man" by William Shakespeare,**  
**Literature: "Masque of the Red Death" by Edgar Allan Poe**

---

- Symbol (n)** something tangible that represents something intangible in literature.
- Symbolism (n)** the practice of representing things by symbols, or of investing things with a symbolic meaning or character based on context.
- Allegory (n)** a bunch of interconnected symbols put together to represent a much larger symbol or picture

**How to identify a symbol in the text:**

1. Repetition – repeat appearance in the text
  2. Connection – seems connected with a character or event
  3. Description – author spends a long time describing it
- 

**Excerpt from "The Black Death" posted by history.com**

“The Black Death arrived in Europe by sea in October 1347 when 12 Genoese trading ships docked at the Sicilian port of Messina after a long journey through the Black Sea. The people who gathered on the docks to greet the ships were met with a horrifying surprise: Most of the sailors aboard the ships were dead, and those who were still alive were gravely ill. They were overcome with fever, unable to keep food down and delirious from pain. Strangest of all, they were covered in mysterious black boils that oozed blood and pus and gave their illness its name: the “Black Death.” The Sicilian authorities hastily ordered the fleet of “death ships” out of the harbor, but it was too late: Over the next five years, the mysterious Black Death would kill more than 20 million people in Europe—almost one-third of the continent’s population.”

---

**Type 1:**

**FIVE LINES - What is the sickest you’ve ever been? What flashbacks or feelings do you remember from this experience? What was the cure?**

---

---

---

---

---

## **“Bubonic Plague Found in Oregon Teenager” by Christine Hauser, New York Times**

The authorities in Oregon have confirmed a case of the bubonic plague in a teenage girl who was believed to have contracted the disease from a flea bite.

Plague is rare and treatable with antibiotics if caught early, but federal authorities have been puzzled by an increase in cases this year.

In a statement, state and local health officials in Oregon said they thought the girl was infected during a hunting trip on Oct. 16 near Heppner, a city located at the foothills of the Blue Mountains in the northeastern region of the state.

She fell ill on Oct. 21 and was hospitalized days later. She is now in the intensive care unit.

There have been no other reported recent cases, the statement said.

Plague is an infectious bacterial disease that is carried by wild rodents and transmitted to their fleas, who then carry the infection to other animals or humans through bites. Symptoms include fever, chills, headache, weakness and a cough.

Bubonic plague affects the lymph nodes. Two other types of plague are septicemic, a blood infection, and the most contagious form, pneumonic, which infects the lungs. It is not transmitted from human to human unless the patient also has a lung infection and is coughing.

Antibiotics can beat all forms of plague if an infection is caught early. Untreated, it is fatal in 66 percent to 93 percent of cases. With treatment, mortality has been reduced to about 16 percent, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

In recent decades, an average of seven human plague cases have been reported each year, according to the disease centers. Since April 1, there have been at least 11 cases in the United States of plague in humans, three of them fatal, affecting residents of Arizona, California, Colorado, Georgia, New Mexico, and Oregon, the C.D.C. said in August.

“It is unclear why the number of cases in 2015 is higher than usual,” a statement from the disease centers said.

Two of the reported cases were linked to Yosemite National Park.

The statement from Oregon’s health authorities said only eight human cases had been diagnosed in the state since 1995, and no deaths have been reported.

**Type 2:**

Based on the article, “Bubonic Plague Found in Oregon Teenager,” create a clear topic sentence using the S “T” A r t strategy.

In \_\_\_\_\_  
**Source:** magazine, newspaper (If your paper is handwritten, underline the source. If typed, *italicize*.)

article \_\_\_\_\_  
**Title** of the article in quotes; capitalize all “big” words, over five letters long, and all nouns and verbs

\_\_\_\_\_ → \_\_\_\_\_

**Author:** In general, you can use just the last name of the author(s). If there is more than one, list all authors. If no author is named, write “the author(s)”. **right verb**, for example: argue(s), explain(s), propose(s), discuss(es), any verb describing the purpose of the reading. Avoid: says, tells, or writes.

**topic:** In a few words, describe what the article is about. If possible, do not include exact words from the title in the description of the topic.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.

---

**Grammar Edit: Find the FIVE (5) grammar mistakes.**

“Plague” posted by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Plague is a disease that effects humans and other mammals. It is caused by the bacterium, *Yersinia pestis*. Humans usually get plague after being bitten by a rodent flea that is carrying the plague bacterium or by handling an animal infected with plague. Plague is infamous for killing millions of people in Europe during the Middle ages. Today modern antibiotics are affective in treating plague. Without prompt treatment, the disease can cause serious illness or death. Presently, human plague infections continue to occur in the western United States, but significiantly more cases occur in parts of Africa and Asia.

“The Seven Ages of Man” by William Shakespeare, *As You Like It*, II.vii.

All the world's a stage,  
And all the men and women merely players,  
They have their exits and entrances,  
And one man in his time plays many parts,  
His acts being seven ages. At first the infant,  
Mewling and puking in the nurse's arms.  
Then, the whining schoolboy with his satchel  
And shining morning face, creeping like snail  
Unwillingly to school. And then the lover,  
Sighing like furnace, with a woeful ballad  
Made to his mistress' eyebrow.  
Then a soldier,  
Full of strange oaths, and bearded like the pard,  
Jealous in honour, sudden, and quick in quarrel,  
Seeking the bubble reputation  
Even in the cannon's mouth. And then the  
justice

In fair round belly, with good capon lin'd,  
With eyes severe, and beard of formal cut,  
Full of wise saws, and modern instances,  
And so he plays his part. The sixth age shifts  
Into the lean and slipper'd pantaloon,  
With spectacles on nose, and pouch on side,  
His youthful hose well sav'd, a world too wide,  
For his shrunk shank, and his big manly voice,  
Turning again towards childish treble, pipes  
And whistles in his sound.

Last scene of all,  
That ends this strange eventful history,  
Is second childishness and mere oblivion,  
Sans teeth, sans eyes, sans taste, sans  
everything.

Type 2:

1. What does “players” mean in line 2?
2. What are the seven ages of man? List each stage.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_
7. \_\_\_\_\_

3. Paraphrase the last three lines (put it in your own words)

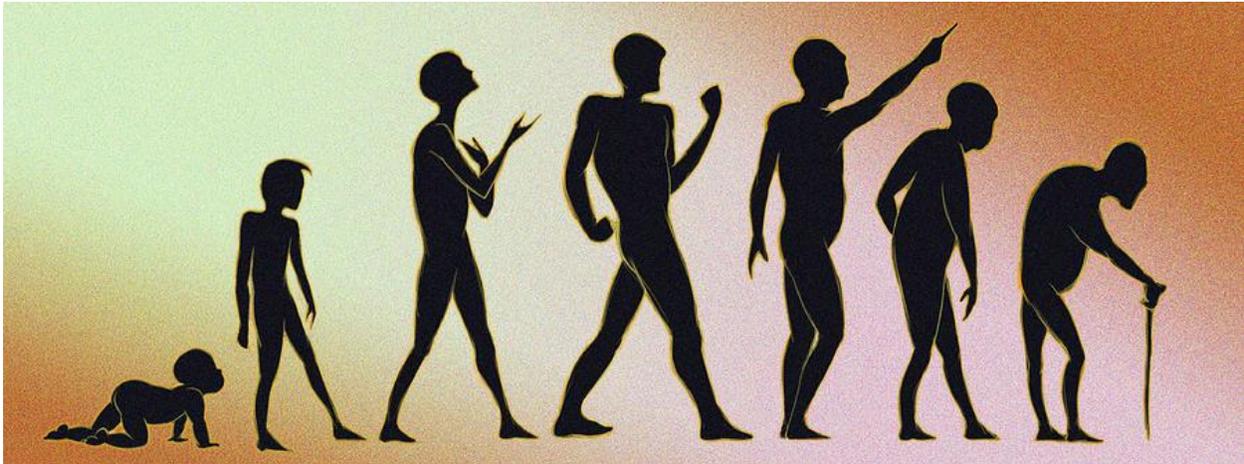
**Type 2: Image Analysis**

**THREE LINES:** How does the picture below depict the seven ages of man?

---

---

---



**Type 3: Summarize the meaning of the entire poem in only 30 words using ONE (1) buzz word.**

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

- FCA #1:      Summary is ONLY 30 words                      5 POINTS**
- FCA #2:      Summary includes ONE (1) buzz word              2 POINTS**
- FCA #3:      Summary is the correct interpretation                      3 POINTS**

## **Masque of the Red Death Vocabulary**

**Use this list to help with the understanding of the story.**

Pestilence (n) – any epidemic disease with a high death rate  
Dissolution (n) – the termination or disintegration of a relationship  
Ban (n) – a decree that prohibits something  
Dauntless (adj) – invulnerable to a fear or intimidation  
Sagacious (adj) – skillful in statecraft or management  
Hale (adj) – exhibiting or restored to vigorous good health  
August (adj) – of or befitting a lord  
Ingress (n) – the act of entering  
Egress (n) – the act of coming out; becoming apparent  
Contagion (n) – any disease easily transmitted by contact  
Buffoon (n) – a person who amuses others by ridiculous behavior  
Vista (n) – the visual perception of a region  
Hue (n) – the quality of a color determined by its dominant wavelength  
Shroud (v) – to form a cover like a burial garment  
Profusion (n) – the property of being extremely abundant  
Pendulum (n) – an apparatus in which an object is mounted to swing freely  
Brazen (adj) – made of or resembling brass, as in color or hardness  
Lapse (n) – a break or intermission in the occurrence of something  
Constrained (adj) – lacking spontaneity; not natural  
Hearken (v) – to listen; used mostly in the imperative  
Disconcert (v) – to cause to lose one's composure  
Pervade (v) – to spread or diffuse through  
Embellishment (n) – a superfluous ornament  
Writhe (v) – to move in a twisting or contorted motion  
Gaiety (n) – a festive merry feeling  
Cessation (n) – a stopping  
Disapprobation (n) – pronouncing as wrong or morally capable  
Decorum (n) – propriety in manners and conduct  
Propriety (n) – correct behavior  
Gaunt (adj) – very thin especially from disease or hunger or cold  
Visage (n) – the human face  
Blasphemous (adj) – grossly irreverent toward what is held to be sacred  
Robust (adj) – sturdy and strong in form, constitution, or construction  
Attain (v) – reach a destination, either real or abstract  
Illimitable (adj) – without limits in extent or size or quantity

**While reading...**

**Highlight the following symbols as they occur:**

**castellated walls, masks, clock, the rooms, and the Red Death**

## **THE MASQUE OF THE RED DEATH**

**by Edgar Allan Poe**

**(1842)**

*THE "Red Death" had long devastated the country.* No pestilence had ever been so fatal, or so hideous. Blood was its Avatar and its seal --the redness and the horror of blood. There were sharp pains, and sudden dizziness, and then profuse bleeding at the pores, with dissolution. The scarlet stains upon the body and especially upon the face of the victim, were the pest ban which shut him out from the aid and from the sympathy of his fellow-men. And the whole seizure, progress and termination of the disease, were the incidents of half an hour.

But the Prince Prospero was happy and dauntless and sagacious. When his dominions were half depopulated, he summoned to his presence a thousand hale and light-hearted friends from among the knights and dames of his court, and with these retired to the deep seclusion of one of his castellated abbeys. This was an extensive and magnificent structure, the creation of the prince's own eccentric yet august taste. A strong and lofty wall girdled it in. This wall had gates of iron. The courtiers, having entered, brought furnaces and massy hammers and welded the bolts. They resolved to leave means neither of ingress or egress to the sudden impulses of despair or of frenzy from within. The abbey was amply provisioned. With such precautions the courtiers might bid defiance to contagion. The external world could take care of itself. In the meantime it was folly to grieve, or to think. The prince had provided all the appliances of pleasure. There were buffoons, there were improvisatori, there were ballet-dancers, there were musicians, there was Beauty, there was wine. All these and security were within. Without was the "Red Death."

It was toward the close of the fifth or sixth month of his seclusion, and while the pestilence raged most furiously abroad, that the Prince Prospero entertained his thousand friends at a masked ball of the most unusual magnificence.

It was a voluptuous scene, that masquerade. But first let me tell of the rooms in which it was held. There were seven --an imperial suite. In many palaces, however, such suites form a long and straight vista, while the folding doors slide back nearly to the walls on either hand, so that the view of the whole extent is scarcely impeded. Here the case was very different; as might have been expected from the duke's love of the bizarre. The apartments were so irregularly disposed that the vision embraced but little more than one at a time. There was a sharp turn at every twenty or thirty yards, and at each turn a novel effect. To the right and left, in the middle of each wall, a tall and narrow Gothic window looked out upon a closed corridor which pursued the windings of the suite. These windows were of stained glass whose color varied in accordance with the prevailing hue of the decorations of the chamber into which it opened. That at the eastern extremity was hung, for example, in blue --and vividly blue were its windows. The second chamber was purple in its ornaments and tapestries, and here the panes were purple. The third was green throughout, and so were the casements. The fourth was furnished and lighted with orange --the fifth with white --the sixth with violet. The seventh apartment was closely shrouded in black velvet tapestries that hung all over the ceiling and down the walls, falling in heavy folds upon a carpet of the same material and hue. But in this chamber only, the color of the windows failed to correspond with the decorations. The panes here were scarlet --a deep blood color. Now in no one of the seven apartments was there any lamp or candelabrum, amid the profusion of golden ornaments that lay scattered to and fro or depended from

the roof. There was no light of any kind emanating from lamp or candle within the suite of chambers. But in the corridors that followed the suite, there stood, opposite to each window, a heavy tripod, bearing a brazier of fire that protected its rays through the tinted glass and so glaringly illumined the room. And thus were produced a multitude of gaudy and fantastic appearances. But in the western or black chamber the effect of the fire-light that streamed upon the dark hangings through the blood-tinted panes, was ghastly in the extreme, and produced so wild a look upon the countenances of those who entered, that there were few of the company bold enough to set foot within its precincts at all.

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 or 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.

But, in spite of these things, it was a gay and magnificent revel. The tastes of the duke were peculiar. He had a fine eye for colors and effects. He disregarded the decora of mere fashion. His plans were bold and fiery, and his conceptions glowed with barbaric lustre. There are some who would have thought him mad. His followers felt that he was not. It was necessary to hear and see and touch him to be sure that he was not.

He had directed, in great part, the moveable embellishments of the seven chambers, upon occasion of this great fete; and it was his own guiding taste which had given character to the masqueraders. Be sure they were grotesque. There were much glare and glitter and piquancy and phantasm --much of what has been since seen in "Hernani." There were arabesque figures with unsuited limbs and appointments. There were delirious fancies such as the madman fashions. There was much of the beautiful, much of the wanton, much of the bizarre, something of the terrible, and not a little of that which might have excited disgust. To and fro in the seven chambers there stalked, in fact, a multitude of dreams. And these --the dreams -- writhed in and about, taking hue from the rooms, and causing the wild music of the orchestra to seem as the echo of their steps. And, anon, there strikes the ebony clock which stands in the hall of the velvet. And then, for a moment, all is still, and all is silent save the voice of the clock. The dreams are stiff-frozen as they stand. But the echoes of the chime die away --they have endured but an instant --and a light, half-subdued laughter floats after them as they depart. And now again the music swells, and the dreams live, and writhe to and fro more merrily than ever, taking hue from the many-tinted windows through which stream the rays from the tripods. But to the chamber which lies most westwardly of the seven, there are now none of the maskers who venture; for the night is waning away; and there flows a ruddier light through the blood-colored panes; and the blackness of the sable drapery appals; and to him whose foot falls upon the sable carpet, there comes from the near clock of ebony a muffled peal more solemnly emphatic than any which reaches their ears who indulge in the more remote gaieties of the other apartments.

But these other apartments were densely crowded, and in them beat feverishly the heart of life. And the revel went whirlingly on, until at length there commenced the sounding of midnight upon the clock. And then the music ceased, as I have told; and the evolutions of the waltzers were quieted; and there was an uneasy cessation of all things as before. But now there were twelve strokes to be sounded by the bell of the clock; and thus it happened, perhaps, that more of thought crept, with more of time, into the meditations of the thoughtful among those who revelled. And thus, too, it happened, perhaps, that before the last echoes of the last chime had utterly sunk into silence, there were many individuals in the crowd who had found leisure to become aware of the presence of a masked figure which had arrested the attention of no single individual before. And the rumor of this new presence having spread itself whisperingly around, there arose at length from the whole company a buzz, or murmur, expressive of disapprobation and surprise --then, finally, of terror, of horror, and of disgust.

In an assembly of phantasms such as I have painted, it may well be supposed that no ordinary appearance could have excited such sensation. In truth the masquerade license of the night was nearly unlimited; but the figure in question had out-Heroded Herod, and gone beyond the bounds of even the prince's indefinite decorum. There are chords in the hearts of the most reckless which cannot be touched without emotion. Even with the utterly lost, to whom life and death are equally jests, there are matters of which no jest can be made. The whole company, indeed, seemed now deeply to feel that in the costume and bearing of the stranger neither wit nor propriety existed. The figure was tall and gaunt, and shrouded from head to foot in the habiliments of the grave. The mask which concealed the visage was made so nearly to resemble the countenance of a stiffened corpse that the closest scrutiny must have had difficulty in detecting the cheat. And yet all this might have been endured, if not approved, by the mad revellers around. But the mummer had gone so far as to assume the type of the Red Death. His vesture was dabbled in blood --and his broad brow, with all the features of the face, was besprinkled with the scarlet horror.

When the eyes of Prince Prospero fell upon this spectral image (which with a slow and solemn movement, as if more fully to sustain its role, stalked to and fro among the waltzers) he was seen to be convulsed, in the first moment with a strong shudder either of terror or distaste; but, in the next, his brow reddened with rage.

"Who dares?" he demanded hoarsely of the courtiers who stood near him --"who dares insult us with this blasphemous mockery? Seize him and unmask him --that we may know whom we have to hang at sunrise, from the battlements!"

It was in the eastern or blue chamber in which stood the Prince Prospero as he uttered these words. They rang throughout the seven rooms loudly and clearly --for the prince was a bold and robust man, and the music had become hushed at the waving of his hand.

It was in the blue room where stood the prince, with a group of pale courtiers by his side. At first, as he spoke, there was a slight rushing movement of this group in the direction of the intruder, who at the moment was also near at hand, and now, with deliberate and stately step, made closer approach to the speaker. But from a certain nameless awe with which the mad assumptions of the mummer had inspired the whole party, there were found none who put forth hand to seize him; so that, unimpeded, he passed within a yard of the prince's person; and, while the vast assembly, as if with one impulse, shrank from the centres of the rooms to the walls, he made his way uninterruptedly, but with the same solemn and measured step which had distinguished him from the first, through the blue chamber to the purple --through the purple to the green --through the green to the orange --through this again to the white --and even thence to the violet, ere a decided movement had been made to arrest him. It was then, however, that the Prince Prospero, maddening with rage and the shame of his own momentary cowardice, rushed hurriedly through the six chambers, while none followed him on account of a deadly terror that had seized

upon all. He bore aloft a drawn dagger, and had approached, in rapid impetuosity, to within three or four feet of the retreating figure, when the latter, having attained the extremity of the velvet apartment, turned suddenly and confronted his pursuer. There was a sharp cry --and the dagger dropped gleaming upon the sable carpet, upon which, instantly afterwards, fell prostrate in death the Prince Prospero. Then, summoning the wild courage of despair, a throng of the revellers at once threw themselves into the black apartment, and, seizing the mummer, whose tall figure stood erect and motionless within the shadow of the ebony clock, gasped in unutterable horror at finding the grave-cerements and corpse-like mask which they handled with so violent a rudeness, untenanted by any tangible form.

And now was acknowledged the presence of the Red Death. He had come like a thief in the night. And one by one dropped the revellers in the blood-bedewed halls of their revel, and died each in the despairing posture of his fall. And the life of the ebony clock went out with that of the last of the gay. And the flames of the tripods expired. *And Darkness and Decay and the Red Death held illimitable dominion over all.*

## THE END

---

### Type 2 Questions:

1. THREE LINES: Since time is referenced so often, what is its importance to the story? And what is the meaning behind the hourly striking of the clock?

---

---

---

2. What are the four adjectives that describe the social setting and decorum of the party?

---

---

---

---

3. THREE LINES: When the narrator speaks of dreams at the party, he says the dreams, "stalked," "writhed," and "stand." What literary device is being used and because of this literary element, what do the dreams symbolize?

---

---

---

---

4. In 30 words, summarize the description of the Red Death.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

5. What is the order and the possible color symbolism behind the rooms?

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

5. \_\_\_\_\_

6. \_\_\_\_\_

7. \_\_\_\_\_

**Common Color Symbolism**

- A. **Red:** immoral; the color of the life principle, blood, passion, emotion, anger, danger, or daring; often associated with fire
- B. **Black:** seen as a cold and negative aspect suggesting passivity, death, ignorance, or evil;
- C. **White:** innocence, life, light, purity, or enlightenment
- D. **Green:** inexperience, hope; new life, immaturity; a combination of blue and yellow, it mediates between heat and cold and high and low; it is a comforting, refreshing human color; it is the color of plant life
- E. **Yellow:** rotting, heat, decay, violence, decrepitude, old age, and the approach of death
- F. **Blue:** cool, calm, peaceful
- G. **Orange:** energy
- H. **Purple:** royalty, bruising or pain

**Type 3 Short Response – 10 PTS.**

**Based on the story, “Masque of the Red Death,” what is the ALLEGORY?**

**FCA #1: Response should begin with the topic sentence:**

**“In Edgar Allan Poe’s short story “Masque of the Red Death,” the allegory behind all of the symbols is \_\_\_\_\_.”**

**1 PT**

**FCA #2: Response should be AT LEAST six sentences in length.**

**2 PTS**

**FCA #3: Response should include the terms: symbolism, life, death, & TWO (2) buzz words**

**7 PTS**