

## THE MASTER OF SUSPENSE

### 1. Uwagi ogólne

Materiał został przygotowany dla studentów filologii polskiej lub obcej na II stopniu studiów, ale jego fragmenty mogą zostać wykorzystane również na innych kierunkach jako dodatkowe ćwiczenie na rozumienie tekstu pisanego lub rozumienie ze słuchu. Doskonale wpisuje się w tematykę Halloween, ale może zostać omówiony w dowolnym momencie roku, bo nie ma tu bezpośrednich nawiązań do tego święta.

### 2. Poziom zaawansowania: B2+, C1, C1+

### 3. Czas trwania opisanych ćwiczeń: 90 minut

### 4. Cele dydaktyczne

Zasadniczym celem tych zajęć jest rozwijanie u studentów sprawności rozumienia tekstu pisanego, w tym również klasyki amerykańskiej poezji. Aby studenci mogli osiągnąć te cele, dwa główne teksty (artykuł oraz poemat) zostały wzbogacone o zadania wymagające dyskusji, odgadywanie znaczenia nowych słów na podstawie kontekstu oraz notowanie brakujących wyrazów ze słuchu.

Dodatkowym celem jest wprowadzenie specjalistycznego słownictwa służącego do analizy tekstów poetyckich w języku angielskim (np. onomatopeja, metafora, aliteracja). Studenci filologii znają znaczenie tych wyrazów w języku ojczystym, a zatem analiza poematu *The Raven* nie powinna nastęrczać trudności. W grupach słabszych można się posiłkować pytaniami pomocniczymi.

## 5. Uwagi i sugestie

### Proponowany schemat lekcji

Lekcja przybliży życie i twórczość Edgara Allana Poe – ikony literatury amerykańskiej i światowej, który powinien być znany studentom filologii. Można wprowadzić temat, pisząc na tablicy imię i nazwisko artysty i pytając studentów, czy znają (czytali lub słyszeli) jego dzieła.

Pierwsza część lekcji (ćwiczenia 1–2) stanowi przypomnienie podstawowych faktów z biografii pisarza. Najpierw studenci w parach lub małych grupach próbują ustalić poprawne odpowiedzi, a następnie sprawdzają je, czytając notę biograficzną. Ćwiczenie 2, również do wykonania w parach lub małych grupach, pozwoli studentom lepiej się zapoznać z tekstem i poradzić sobie z nieznanym słownictwem przy użyciu kontekstu.

Druga część lekcji (ćwiczenia 3–5) dotyczy słynnego poematu *The Raven*. Wprowadzamy go (w skróconej formie) w formie nieco humorystycznej – dzieło to jest pokazane w kreskówce *The Simpsons*, a studenci uzupełniają brakujące słowa. Następnie starają się samodzielnie przeanalizować znaczenie utworu oraz użyte w nim narzędzia literackie. Dla słabszych grup dodano krótki słowniczek najtrudniejszych słów, który w grupach mocniejszych można pominąć.

Ostatnia część lekcji (ćwiczenia 6–8) dotyczy opowiadania *The Tell-Tale Heart*. Jeśli brakuje czasu, można ćwiczenie 6 potraktować jako pracę domową, a jedynie obejrzeć z grupą film animowany i przejść bezpośrednio do dyskusji na podsumowanie lekcji.

# THE MASTER OF SUSPENSE

**I. How much do you know about Edgar Allan Poe? Try to answer the following questions in pairs, then read the biographical note to check.**

1. What kind of works did Poe write?

.....

2. What's the popular image of the author? Is it true?

.....

3. What were the 3 career paths that he tried?

.....

4. How did he cope with poverty in his youth?

.....

5. Why was his marriage considered scandalous by some?

.....

6. What was Poe's primary job?

.....

7. Which piece made him famous?

.....

8. How did he die?

.....

1.

The name Poe brings to mind images of murderers and madmen, premature burials, and mysterious women who return from the dead. His works have been in print since 1827 and include such literary classics as *The Tell-Tale Heart*, *The Raven*, and *The Fall of the House of Usher*. This versatile writer's oeuvre includes short stories, poetry, a novel, a textbook, a book of scientific theory, and hundreds of essays and book reviews. He is widely acknowledged as the inventor of the modern detective story and an innovator in the science fiction genre, but he made his living as America's first great literary critic and theoretician. Poe's reputation today rests primarily on his tales of terror as well as on his haunting lyric poetry.

2.

Just as the bizarre characters in Poe's stories have captured the public imagination, so too has Poe himself. He is often seen as a morbid, mysterious figure lurking in the shadows of moonlit cemeteries or crumbling castles. This is the Poe of legend. But much of what we know about Poe is wrong, the product of a biography written by one of his enemies in an attempt to defame the author's name.

3.

The real Poe was born to traveling actors in Boston on January 19, 1809, but within three years both of his parents had died. Poe was taken in by the wealthy tobacco merchant John Allan and his wife Frances Valentine Allan in Richmond, Virginia, while his brother and sister went to live with other families. Mr. Allan reared Poe to be a businessman and a Virginia gentleman, but Poe dreamt of emulating his childhood hero, the British poet Lord Byron. The backs of some of Allan's ledger sheets reveal early poetic verses scrawled in a young Poe's handwriting and show how little interest Edgar had in the tobacco business.

4.

In 1826 Poe left Richmond to attend the University of Virginia, where he excelled in his classes but accumulated considerable debt. The miserly Allan had sent Poe to college with less than a third of the funds he needed, and Poe soon took up gambling to raise money to pay his expenses. By the end of his first term Poe was so desperately poor that he burned his furniture to keep warm. Humiliated by his poverty and furious with Allan, Poe was forced to drop out of school and return to Richmond. However, matters continued to worsen. He visited the home of his fiancée, Elmira Royster, only to discover that she had become engaged to another man.

5.

The heartbroken Poe's last few months in the Allan mansion were punctuated with increasing hostility toward Allan until Poe finally stormed out of the home in a quixotic quest to become a great poet and to find adventure. He accomplished the former by publishing his first book *Tamerlane* when he was only eighteen; to achieve the latter, he enlisted in the United States Army. Two years later he entered the United States Military Academy at West Point while continuing to write and publish poetry. But after only eight months at West Point Poe was thrown out.

6.

Broke and alone, Poe turned to Baltimore – his late father's home – and called upon relatives in the city. One of Poe's cousins robbed him in the night but another relative, Poe's aunt Maria Clemm, became a new mother to him and welcomed him into her home. Clemm's daughter, Virginia, first acted as a courier to carry letters to Poe's lady loves but soon became the object of his desire.

7.

At the age of twenty-seven, Poe brought Maria and Virginia Clemm to Richmond and married Virginia, who was not yet fourteen. The marriage proved a happy one but money was always tight. He eventually gained an editorial position at the *Southern Literary Messenger* in Richmond. It was at this magazine that Poe finally found his life's work as a magazine writer. However, he soon felt dissatisfied with his low pay and lack of editorial control at the *Messenger*. He moved to New York City and to Philadelphia a year later, where he wrote for a number of different magazines.

8.

The January 1845 publication of *The Raven* made Poe a household name. He was again living in New York City and was now famous enough to draw large crowds to his lectures – he also began demanding better pay for his work. He published two books that year, and briefly lived his dream of running his own magazine but the failure of the venture, his wife's deteriorating health, and rumors spreading about Poe's relationship with a married woman, drove him from the city in 1846. He moved to a tiny cottage in the country where in 1847 Virginia died of tuberculosis at the age of twenty-four. Her death devastated Poe and left him unable to write for months.

9.

He returned to Richmond in the summer of 1849 and reconnected with his first fiancée, Elmira Royster Shelton who was now a widow. They became engaged and intended to marry in Richmond after Poe's return from a trip to Philadelphia and New York. However, on the way to Philadelphia, Poe stopped in Baltimore and disappeared for five days. He was found in the bar room of a public house and sent to Washington College Hospital, where he spent the last days of his life. Neither Poe's mother-in-law nor his fiancée knew what had become of him until they read about it in the newspapers. Poe died on October 7, 1849 at the age of forty. The exact cause of Poe's death remains a mystery.

Adapted from: <http://www.poemuseum.org/poes-biography>.

## II. Find in the biographical note the words/phrases that match the following definitions.

- excellent at doing many different things, learning quickly (para. 1) – .....
- all the works written by one author (para. 1) – .....
- a particular type of writing, with all the characteristics of the type (para. 1) – .....
- fascinated by unpleasant subjects, especially death (para. 2) – .....
- write something libelous about someone, meant to create a bad opinion (para. 2) – .....

- trying to be like someone else because you admire them (para. 3) – .....
- an attempt to fulfill plans or ideas which are impractical (para. 5 – 2 words) – .....
- the first / the second of the two things mentioned (para. 5 – 2 expressions) – .....
- a very well-known person or brand (para. 8 – 2 words) – .....
- made him feel extremely sad and depressed (para. 8) – .....

**III. Watch a film showing a staging of *The Raven*, Poe's most famous poem, and supply the missing words in the text.**

Find the film at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bLiXjaPqSyY>.

**THE RAVEN (abridged)**

Once upon a ..... dreary, while I pondered, weak and weary,  
 Over many a quaint and curious volume of forgotten lore,  
 While I nodded, nearly napping, suddenly there came a tapping,  
 As of someone gently rapping, rapping at my chamber door.  
 “‘Tis some visitor,” I muttered, “tapping at my chamber door;  
 Only this, and nothing more.”

Ah, distinctly I remember, it was in the bleak .....,  
 And each separate dying ember wrought its ghost upon the floor.  
 Eagerly I wished the morrow; vainly I had sought to borrow  
 From my books surcease of sorrow, sorrow for the lost Lenore,  
 For the rare and radiant maiden whom the angels name Lenore,  
 Nameless here forevermore.

And the silken sad uncertain rustling of each purple .....,  
 Thrilled me – filled me with fantastic terrors never felt before;  
 So that now, to still the beating of my heart, I stood repeating,  
 “‘Tis some visitor entreating entrance at my chamber door,  
 Some late visitor entreating entrance at my chamber door.  
 This it is, and nothing more.”

Presently my soul grew stronger; hesitating then no longer,  
 “Sir,” said I, “or madam, truly your forgiveness I implore;  
 But the fact is, I was napping, and so gently you came rapping,  
 And so faintly you came tapping, tapping at my chamber door,  
 That I scarce was sure I heard you.” Here I opened wide the door; –  
 ..... there, and nothing more. (...)

Back into the chamber turning, all my soul within me burning,  
 Soon again I heard a tapping, something louder than before,  
 "Surely," said I, "surely, that is something at my window ....."  
 Let me see, then, what thereat is, and this mystery explore.  
 Let my heart be still a moment, and this mystery explore.  
 "'Tis the wind, and nothing more."

Open here I flung the shutter, when, with many a flirt and flutter,  
 In there stepped a stately raven, of the saintly days of ....."  
 Not the least obeisance made he; not a minute stopped or stayed he;  
 But with mien of lord or lady, perched above my chamber door.  
 Perched upon a bust of Pallas, just above my chamber door,  
 Perched, and sat, and nothing more. (...)

"Though thy crest be shorn and shaven thou," I said, "art sure no craven,  
 Ghastly, grim, and ancient raven, wandering from the ..... shore.  
 Tell me what the lordly name is on the Night's Plutonian shore."  
 Quoth the raven, "Nevermore." (...)

Then, methought, the ..... grew denser, perfumed from an unseen censer  
 Swung by seraphim whose footfalls tinkled on the tufted floor.  
 "Wretch," I cried, "thy God hath lent thee -- by these angels he hath  
 Sent thee respite -- respite and nepenthe from thy memories of Lenore!  
 Quaff, O quaff this kind nepenthe, and forget this lost Lenore!"  
 Quoth the raven, "Nevermore!" (...)

"Be that word our sign of parting, bird or fiend!" I shrieked, upstarting--  
 "Get thee back into the tempest and the Night's Plutonian shore!  
 Leave no black plume as a token of that lie thy soul hath spoken!  
 Leave my loneliness unbroken! -- quit the bust above my door!  
 Take thy beak from out my ....., and take thy form from off my door!"  
 Quoth the raven, "Nevermore."

And the raven, never flitting, still is sitting, still is sitting  
 On the pallid bust of Pallas just above my chamber door;  
 And his eyes have all the seeming of a ..... 's that is dreaming.  
 And the lamplight o'er him streaming throws his shadow on the floor;  
 And my soul from out that shadow that lies floating on the floor  
 Shall be lifted -- nevermore!

**IV. Explain the poem in your own words. You may use the questions and the glossary to help you.**

1. Where's the narrator? What time is it? What's he doing?
2. Who is Lenore? What happened to her?
3. What did he hear? What did he think it was?
4. Who is he talking to? Who is at the door?
5. How does he feel after he heard the sound again?
6. Who entered the room? What does he look like? Why did he sit in that place?
7. Why is the narrator talking to the bird? What does the bird say?
8. What does the narrator want from the bird?
9. Why is the narrator shouting?
10. What is the situation now? What does the bird symbolize?

**GLOSSARY:**

- quaint – strange
- lore – wisdom
- wrought – cast
- surcease – the end
- Pallas = Athena – the goddess of wisdom in Greek mythology
- crest – a pointed group of feathers on the top of a bird's head
- craven – completely lacking courage, cowardly
- Pluto – the king of the Underworld in Greek mythology
- quoth – says
- methought – it seemed to me
- seraphim – angels of a higher order
- respite – relief
- nepenthe – a drug of forgetfulness in Egyptian and Greek mythologies
- quaff – drink
- fiend – monster

**V. Find examples of the following poetic devices. What's their function?**

1. Alliteration (repetition of the consonant sounds at the beginning of words)
2. Assonance (repetition of the vowel sounds, usually within words)
3. Simile (comparing something with something else, using the word 'like' or 'as')
4. Metaphor (describing something as if it was something else but without the word 'like')
5. Onomatopoeia (using words that sound like the thing that they are describing)
6. Personification (ascribing human characteristics to animals or objects)
7. Imagery (using poetic phrases to represent some idea an object is supposed to carry)
8. Repetition

9. Rhymes / internal rhymes
10. Number of syllables in a verse

**VI. Read the plot summary of *The Tell-Tale Heart* and circle the correct options.**

*The Tell-Tale Heart* is a first-person narrative of an unnamed narrator who insists he is sane but suffering **from / at / on** a disease (nervousness) which causes “over-acuteness of the senses.” The old man with **who / whom / which** he lives has a clouded, pale, blue “vulture-like” eye which **enervates / distresses / distinguishes** the narrator so much that he plots to murder the old man. The narrator says that he loves the old man but hates only the eye. The narrator insists that his careful precision in committing the murder shows that he cannot **possibly / even / eventually** be insane. For seven nights, the narrator opens the door of the old man’s room, **because / so that / in order to** shine a sliver of light onto the “evil eye.” However, the old man’s vulture-eye is always closed, **causing / putting / making** it impossible to “do the work.” On the eighth night, the old man awakens after the narrator’s hand slips and makes a noise, interrupting the narrator’s **overnight / nightly / night-time** ritual. But the narrator does not draw **out / off / back** and, after some time, decides to open his lantern. A single thin ray of light shines out and lands precisely on the “evil eye,” revealing that it is **wide / widely / widen** open. Hearing the old man’s heart beating loudly and dangerously fast from terror, the narrator decides to strike, jumping out with a loud yell and smothering the old man with his own bedding. The narrator then dismembers the body and conceals the pieces under the floorboards, making **surely / it / certain** to hide all signs of the crime. Even **if / so / though**, the old man’s scream during the night causes a neighbor to **tell / call / report** to the police. The narrator invites the three arriving officers in to look around. He claims that the screams heard were his own in a nightmare and that the man is absent **in / from / out of** the country. Confident that they will not find any evidence of the murder, the narrator brings chairs for them and they sit in the old man’s room, on the very **place / point / spot** where the body is concealed, yet they suspect nothing, as the narrator has a pleasant and **easy / simple / airy** manner about him. The narrator begins to feel uncomfortable and notices a ringing in his ears. As the ringing grows louder, the narrator **arrives / comes / makes** to the conclusion that it is the heartbeat of the old man coming from under the floorboards. The sound increases steadily, though the officers seem to **put / keep / pay** no attention to it. Terrified by the violent beating of the heart, and convinced that the officers are aware **of / that / it** not only the heartbeat, but his guilt as well, the narrator breaks **up / down / out** and confesses. He tells them to tear up the floorboards to **reveal / conceal / unearth** the body.

**VII. Watch an animated movie showing *The Tell-Tale Heart*. How do you feel about the story?**

Find the film at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k7d7qVgNj8g> – 7:47.

**VIII. Discuss in pairs.**

1. Would you read Poe's works for pleasure?
2. Have the tales and the poems aged well? Are they still fascinating – and disturbing – after almost 200 years?

## KEY

### I. How much do you know about Edgar Allan Poe? Try to answer the following questions in pairs, then read the biographical note to check.

1. What kind of works did Poe write?

*Short stories, poetry, a novel, a textbook, a book of scientific theory, essays and book reviews.*

2. What's the popular image of the author? Is it true?

*He is considered a mysterious figure mostly preoccupied with the macabre. However, some biographies written by his enemies are libelous and partly false.*

3. What were the 3 career paths that he tried?

*Tobacco business, the army, writing.*

4. How did he cope with poverty in his youth?

*Gambled, burned furniture to keep warm, started writing.*

5. Why was his marriage considered scandalous by some?

*His wife, only 14 when they married, was his blood relative (cousin).*

6. What was Poe's primary job?

*A magazine writer.*

7. Which piece made him famous?

*"The Raven".*

8. How did he die?

*He died in hospital but the causes are unknown.*

### II. Find in the biographical note the words/phrases that match the following definitions.

- excellent at doing many different things, learning quickly (para. 1) – *versatile*
- all the works written by one author (para. 1) – *oeuvre*
- a particular type of writing, with all the characteristics of the type (para. 1) – *genre*
- fascinated by unpleasant subjects, especially death (para. 2) – *morbid*
- write something libelous about someone, meant to create a bad opinion (para. 2) – *defame*
- trying to be like someone else because you admire them (para. 3) – *emulating*
- an attempt to fulfill plans or ideas which are impractical (para. 5 – 2 words) – *a quixotic quest*

- the first / the second of the two things mentioned (para. 5 – 2 expressions) – *the former / the latter*
- a very well-known person or brand (para. 8 – 2 words) – *a household name*
- made him feel extremely sad and depressed (para. 8) – *devastated*

### III. Watch a film showing a staging of *The Raven*, Poe's most famous poem, and supply the missing words in the text.

Find the film at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bLiXjaPqSyY>.

#### THE RAVEN (abridged)

Once upon a **midnight** dreary, while I pondered, weak and weary,  
Over many a quaint and curious volume of forgotten lore,  
While I nodded, nearly napping, suddenly there came a tapping,  
As of someone gently rapping, rapping at my chamber door.  
“‘Tis some visitor,” I muttered, “tapping at my chamber door;  
Only this, and nothing more.”

Ah, distinctly I remember, it was in the bleak **December**,  
And each separate dying ember wrought its ghost upon the floor.  
Eagerly I wished the morrow; vainly I had sought to borrow  
From my books surcease of sorrow, sorrow for the lost Lenore,  
For the rare and radiant maiden whom the angels name Lenore,  
Nameless here forevermore.

And the silken sad uncertain rustling of each purple **curtain**  
Thrilled me – filled me with fantastic terrors never felt before;  
So that now, to still the beating of my heart, I stood repeating,  
“‘Tis some visitor entreating entrance at my chamber door,  
Some late visitor entreating entrance at my chamber door.  
This it is, and nothing more.”

Presently my soul grew stronger; hesitating then no longer,  
“Sir,” said I, “or madam, truly your forgiveness I implore;  
But the fact is, I was napping, and so gently you came rapping,  
And so faintly you came tapping, tapping at my chamber door,  
That I scarce was sure I heard you.” Here I opened wide the door; –  
**Darkness** there, and nothing more. (...)

Back into the chamber turning, all my soul within me burning,  
Soon again I heard a tapping, something louder than before,  
“Surely,” said I, “surely, that is something at my window **lattice**

Let me see, then, what thereat is, and this mystery explore.  
 Let my heart be still a moment, and this mystery explore.  
 “‘Tis the wind, and nothing more.”

Open here I flung the shutter, when, with many a flirt and flutter,  
 In there stepped a stately raven, of the saintly days of **yore**  
 Not the least obeisance made he; not a minute stopped or stayed he;  
 But with mien of lord or lady, perched above my chamber door.  
 Perched upon a bust of Pallas, just above my chamber door,  
 Perched, and sat, and nothing more. (...)

“Though thy crest be shorn and shaven thou,” I said, “art sure no craven,  
 Ghastly, grim, and ancient raven, wandering from the **nightly** shore.  
 Tell me what the lordly name is on the Night’s Plutonian shore.”  
 Quoth the raven, “Nevermore.” (...)

Then, methought, the **air** grew denser, perfumed from an unseen censer  
 Swung by seraphim whose footfalls tinkled on the tufted floor.  
 “Wretch,” I cried, “thy God hath lent thee – by these angels he hath  
 Sent thee respite – respite and nepenthe from thy memories of Lenore!  
 Quaff, O quaff this kind nepenthe, and forget this lost Lenore!”  
 Quoth the raven, “Nevermore!” (...)

“Be that word our sign of parting, bird or fiend!” I shrieked, upstarting--  
 “Get thee back into the tempest and the Night’s Plutonian shore!  
 Leave no black plume as a token of that lie thy soul hath spoken!  
 Leave my loneliness unbroken! – quit the bust above my door!  
 Take thy beak from out my **heart**, and take thy form from off my door!”  
 Quoth the raven, “Nevermore.”

And the raven, never flitting, still is sitting, still is sitting  
 On the pallid bust of Pallas just above my chamber door;  
 And his eyes have all the seeming of a **demon’s** that is dreaming.  
 And the lamplight o’er him streaming throws his shadow on the floor;  
 And my soul from out that shadow that lies floating on the floor  
 Shall be lifted – nevermore!

**IV. Explain the poem in your own words. You may use the questions and the glossary to help you.**

*Przykładowa odpowiedź:*

*It was late at night, terrible weather. The narrator was sitting in his room (studio), reading and napping, when he heard knocking on the door. Thinking it was*

*just a guest, he stood up to open it. But then he remembered Lenore – his late love (fiancée?), who had died in December. He became scared and started reassuring himself, even practicing the speech he'd give to the guest. However, there was no one outside. On closing the door he heard the knocking again. Thinking it was the wind, he opened the door again and there he saw a majestic raven. The bird walked in and sat on the bust of Pallas (the symbol of wisdom), making no noise. The narrator became angry and started shouting, demanding to know its name and comparing it to death (Plutonian shore). The bird refused. Then the narrator started begging the bird to help him forget about his lost love but the bird refused again (Nevermore!). The narrator decided to get rid of the bird and tried to drive it out of the room – the bird said it would never leave. And so it was – the bird is still sitting there, reminding the narrator about his sorrow (symbol of loss and death), and will always stay there.*

#### V. Find examples of the following poetic devices. What's their function?

1. Alliteration – *weak and weary*
2. Assonance – *wrought its ghost upon the floor*
3. Simile – *there came a tapping as of someone gently rapping*
4. Metaphor – *each separate dying ember wrought its ghost upon the floor*
5. Onomatopoeia – *silken sad uncertain rustling of each purple curtain*
6. Personification – *stepped a stately raven with a mien of lord or lady; quoth the raven*
7. Imagery – *the tempest, black plumes of the bird, shadows on the floor*
8. Repetition – *Nevermore; Leave no black plume // Leave my loneliness*
9. Rhymes / internal rhymes – *floor-Lenore; still the beating-visitor entreating*
10. Number of syllables in a verse – *16 (8+8), the last verse in each stanza is shorter*

*All these poetic devices help create the mood of ominousness, mystery, hopelessness and despair. They add sound effects, make the poem clearer in the listeners' imagination.*

#### VI. Read the plot summary of *The Tell-Tale Heart* and circle the correct options.

*The Tell-Tale Heart* is a first-person narrative of an unnamed narrator who insists he is sane but suffering **from** a disease (nervousness) which causes “over-acute-ness of the senses.” The old man with **whom** he lives has a clouded, pale, blue “vulture-like” eye which **distresses** the narrator so much that he plots to murder the old man. The narrator says that he loves the old man but hates only the eye. The narrator insists that his careful precision in committing the murder shows that he cannot **possibly** be insane. For seven nights, the narrator opens the door of the old man's room, **in order to** shine a sliver of light onto the “evil eye.” However, the old man's vulture-eye is always closed, **making** it impossible to “do the

work.” On the eighth night, the old man awakens after the narrator’s hand slips and makes a noise, interrupting the narrator’s **nightly** ritual. But the narrator does not draw **back** and, after some time, decides to open his lantern. A single thin ray of light shines out and lands precisely on the “evil eye,” revealing that it is **wide** open. Hearing the old man’s heart beating loudly and dangerously fast from terror, the narrator decides to strike, jumping out with a loud yell and smothering the old man with his own bed. The narrator then dismembers the body and conceals the pieces under the floorboards, making **certain** to hide all signs of the crime. Even **so**, the old man’s scream during the night causes a neighbor to **report** to the police. The narrator invites the three arriving officers in to look around. He claims that the screams heard were his own in a nightmare and that the man is absent **from** the country. Confident that they will not find any evidence of the murder, the narrator brings chairs for them and they sit in the old man’s room, on the very **spot** where the body is concealed, yet they suspect nothing, as the narrator has a pleasant and **easy** manner about him. The narrator begins to feel uncomfortable and notices a ringing in his ears. As the ringing grows louder, the narrator **comes** to the conclusion that it is the heartbeat of the old man coming from under the floorboards. The sound increases steadily, though the officers seem to **pay** no attention to it. Terrified by the violent beating of the heart, and convinced that the officers are aware **of** not only the heartbeat, but his guilt as well, the narrator breaks **down** and confesses. He tells them to tear up the floorboards to **reveal** the body.