

The tell-tale heart essay

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Suspenseful, nerve-racking, tense, and scary are all words that can be used to describe The Tell-Tale Heart. The Tell-Tale Heart by Edgar Allan Poe is a dark, eerie story filled with suspense and tension. Anyone who has read this story would be able to describe it using similar words; but that is not all that it is filled with. The Tell-Tale Heart is a horror short story filled with many different literary devices and many examples to go along with them. This essay will be on three of the many literary devices used in this story; imagery, repetition, and humor.

One of the many literary devices used by Poe in this story is imagery.

Imagery is used to create a vivid picture in your mind. It allows the reader to visualize the setting and/or actions in the story. Poe uses imagery very frequently in this story. An example of this would be when the narrator snuck into the old man's bedroom and accidentally woke him up, and then shone the light from the lantern onto the "vulture eye." "When I had waited a long time, very patiently, without hearing him lie down, I resolved to open a little--a very, very little crevice in the lantern.

So I opened it-- you cannot imagine how stealthily, stealthily-- until, at length a simple dim ray, like the thread of the spider, shot from out the crevice and fell full upon the vulture eye." This example explains how carefully the narrator shone the light on the old man's eye. ".. at length a simple dim ray, like the thread of the spider, shot from out the crevice and fell full upon the vulture eye" is an example of imagery. Poe is trying to give the reader a visual of how the ray of light was so thin and precise on the old man's eye.

This example describes the light coming out of the lantern in such vivid detail that the reader can imagine exactly what the light looks like. This literary device is important because if the reader can visualize exactly what is going on, it may help to trigger some emotions and picture the story as the writer intended. Another literary device often used by Poe in this story is repetition. Repetition is used by authors frequently because it adds more atmosphere to the story by adding emotion; in this case, suspense and fear. A week before the murder, every night around midnight the narrator would open the door to the old man's bedroom.

“ And every night, about midnight, I turned the latch of his door and opened it--oh so gently! And then, when I had made an opening sufficient for my head, I put in a dark lantern, all closed, closed, that no light shone out, and then I thrust in my head. Oh, you would have laughed to see how cunningly I thrust it in! I moved it slowly--very, very slowly, so that I might not disturb the old man's sleep. ” In four sentences, repetition was used twice to describe how carefully the narrator would open the door and make his way inside to see the old man's “ evil eye”.

The author may have chosen to use repetition for this scenario because in the narrator's point of view, he is risking getting caught by the old man. If he got caught sneaking into the room, this could have ruined the narrators plans to murder the old man or things could have gotten out of control. When repetition is being used, the reader slows down slightly. This is because the author wants us to feel the tension and suspense that the character is feeling. All the emotion triggered by repetition causes the reader

to anticipate what happens next. The third literary device used by Poe is Humor.

Humor is used to alleviate a tough situation. An example of humor in The Tell-Tale Heart would be when the narrator was cleaning up the remains of the old man's dead body. " There was nothing to wash out--no stain of any kind--no blood-spot whatever. I had been too wary for that. A tub had caught all--ha! ha! " This example explains that there was no blood to be wiped up because it was all in the tub. The humor behind this is when he laughs at the end. Throughout the entire story, the narrator is trying to convince the reader that he is not insane.

But doesn't laughing at the fact that you murdered someone without creating a mess make you a little insane? Where is the humor in taking away someone else's life? Poe demonstrates the humor in this story in many other ways and they all lead to one assumption; the narrator is insane. Humor is important in the story because it keeps the atmosphere of this story consistent. The way Poe used humor in this story successfully makes the mood tense and makes the reader eager to keep reading due to the suspense they are feeling. These three literary devices helped to shape the story in a very powerful way.

The way Poe used imagery, repetition, and humor were magnificent because by using these literary devices, Poe made the reader feel the suspense and tension the character in the story was feeling. Poe also triggered emotions inside of the reader. This is very, very important because it is a gateway for the reader to relate to the story. If the reader can relate to the story then their opinion on it is almost always positive. Poe is a brilliant man who used <https://assignbuster.com/the-tell-tale-heart-essay-essay-samples/>

many literary devices to support his story. By doing so he achieved success by getting through to his readers using emotions.