

# Literary style and themes edgar allan poe



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Edgar Allan Poe was a nineteenth-century writer and literary critic. Poe believed poetry must take beauty as its sole province, leaving logic and truth to prose (Salem 877). The poet must do everything in his/her power to create an intense impression of beauty, rhythm, rhyme, imagery, and the subject matter.

It seems that when Poe writes about beauty it makes him feel satisfied and helps him cope with the rough life he grew up in. Poe is also intrigued with writing about romance. Poe often ties in beauty with romance in many of his poems as it seems easy for him to do so.

Poe was influenced by earlier literary figures and movements. In the use of his demonic and grotesque styled writing, Poe was inspired by stories from E. T. A. Hoffman and other gothic novels of Ann Radcliffe. The romantic movement of the early 19th century really reflects on Poe's works. Poe's life was very depressing, which inspired his dark stories. He was separated from his parents and siblings at birth, going on to watch the rest of his family die around him. These dark events that occurred really bring out Poe's creepy style of writing. This is what Poe was known for.

Poe has had a major impact in the world of literature since he began publishing in the mid-1800s. His texts expressed how sensory detail could be implemented into writing. Poe's works also established and really brought out mood through his word play. Poe influenced Conan Doyle, the creator of Sherlock Holmes. Since then, there have been a list of detective novels published throughout the world. The style Poe used in his writing forever impacted the authors writing.

In the poem Annabel Lee, mood plays an important part to the poem. The mood is sadness and darkness. The poem talks about two young lovers lives. His love, Annabel Lee, dies on a cold night. Her death will never stop Poe from loving her. Poe severely misses her comfort and little happiness she provided in his life. He misses her so much that he lies down in her tomb with her at night. This portrays the dark mood within this poem.

Rhythm is another one of Poe's specialties. In the first stanza of the poem, Poe rhymes with the two words sea and Lee. He then uses the word Lee and rhymes it with me. Rhyme is used to make poetry flow better. As for Poe, rhythm is important in the foundation of writing. He puts a play on words by setting patterns and then messing with it to make his writing flow. The longer lines sometimes rhyme and sometimes don't, but the shorter lines always end in the same sound.

Symbolism plays a key role in Annabel Lee. One specific example is the sea. The sea comes up repeatedly throughout the poem. The sea symbolizes loneliness and coldness. This specifically reflects upon Poe after Annabel Lee dies in the poem. The most obvious form of symbolism comes from Annabel Lee herself. Poe cannot take his mind off her. She was pretty and young, seemingly meant for Poe. The poem doesn't give any detail about her appearance or her looks. Therefore, she symbolizes the impossible, pure beauty and love. The readers must put together an image of what they think Annabel Lee looks like.

Tone is how the author feels about the subject of the work. In The Raven, Poe feels sympathetic towards the narrator. The speaker goes through a

tough loss which is the death of Lenore. It is in a cold December and embers in the fireplace are going out. This contributes to how the narrator feels which is absolute loss. The tone is also despairing as the narrator realizes his life will never be the same without Lenore. The tone is clear as the poem unfolds itself through the narrator's emotions.

The word nevermore is used excessively in this poem. The repetitive use of the word is used to exaggerate the emotions the narrator is going through after losing Lenore. The repetition brings out the importance of a specific statement. Nevermore extracts the ultimate despair and hopelessness the speaker is feeling. Poe was excellent at making words have a great impact in his writing. The Raven is one poem that expresses Poe's writing skill with the use of repetition.

Imagery is visually descriptive of figurative language, especially in a literary work. Imagery emerges through the black bird, the raven. This bird conveys a sense of death which is found through the description of the poem.

Imagery is especially found from the word nevermore. This word creates an imagination by the narrator of doom. Nevermore relates to Lenore which visually is seen as a relationship that will never be in favor of the narrator.

In the opening line of Poe's To Helen, the speaker addresses his Helen. This reflects the famous Helen of Greek Mythology. In line 7, the hyacinth hair is mentioned. This adjective is used to show death, but also beauty. A reference to the Nais is made in line 8. The Nais were beautiful maidens associated with water as suggested by Greek Mythology. Another reference

to Greek Mythology is made in line 14 when the Psyche is addressed. The Psyche is a symbol of love and inspiration between God and mortal.

Literary techniques are used to produce a special effect in writing. In lines 1-2 a simile is used which states Helen, thy beauty is to me like those Nicean barks of yore. This simile is used to compare the beauty of Helen to the beauty of the Nicean barks. In line 3, personification is used as it reads that gently, o'er perfumed sea. The writer gave the sea a human like quality of being over perfumed. Alliteration is used in line 4 when the poem says the weary, way worn wanderer bore. This shows an occurrence of the same letter at the beginning of closely connected words. Poe uses literary techniques to bring clarity and convey clear meanings in his poetry.

Poe references this poem entirely towards Helen, hence the title, To Helen. Poe loves Greek Mythology and the lady is believed to be a very beautiful Greek woman named Helen who was kidnapped by an Asian guy named Paris. The idea of Helen to Poe is that she is made of beauty. Helen is believed to be the most famous symbol of beauty in all of western literature written. This Helen represents Jane Stith Stanard, which was the mother of his childhood friend Rob. Jane was a mother figure to Poe. Poe said Stanard was the first purely ideal love of my soul (Velella). This really expresses the love Poe felt from this significant lady. Poe also said that she was the truest, tenderest of this world's most womanly souls, and an angel to my forlorn and darkened nature (Velella). This quote dedicates a spot of Stanard in Poe's heart. She soon dies not long after Poe meets her and forever mourns over her death.

Many of Poe's poems have comparisons. For instance, Poe presents a lot of death and tragedy in many of his poems and short stories. All his characters go through distress which usually results in death. The theme of darkness comes from the loss of loved ones and those Poe had good relations with. Readers tend to get a feel of how Poe handles struggles through his writing. Poe uses similar writing in all poems to send a message towards readers. This message is vividly defined as sad. The reader gets to experience all of Poe's emotions by the pain represented in the theme of darkness.

All of Poe's poems can relate back to his own life in some way. An online article explains that there is a psychological intensity that is characteristic of Poe's writings (Poetry). His life was filled with horrifying events. Nothing ever really worked out for Poe other than the fact he put his life on paper with an imaginary twist. It was Poe's particular genius that in his work he gave consummate artistic form both to his personal obsessions and those of previous literary generations, at the same time creating new forms which provided a means of expression for future artists (Poetry). This quote reveals the fact that Poe liked to write about things from his personal life along with things from other literary generations.

Poe's grotesque and scary poems have one specific thing in common: they are all written in 1st person point of view. The use of first person narration allows Poe to consider his stories and poems to mirror his life and reflect upon himself. Only Poe can write what he feels, and his expressions seem to be best portrayed in his writing. Poe's use of 1st person is extremely effective. It allows the reader to get engaged and motivated by his fun use of language throughout his stories. The 1st person perspective lets the

audience learn basic information about Poe which can only be picked up through close interpretation of his writing.