



lingoda

# The Tell-Tale Heart

READING

LEVEL  
Advanced

NUMBER  
C1\_1037R\_EN

LANGUAGE  
English



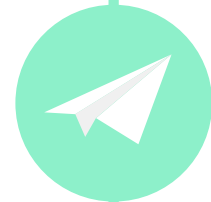


## Goals

- Can understand a complex literary excerpt from The Tell-Tale Heart.
- Can evaluate tones and techniques and explain what makes a story scary or not.



When the world is **black as pitch**, and the clock strikes **midnight**, you may perceive a **mournful** presence beside you. For in the middle of the night your **senses are sharpened**, and it is easy to feel **mortal terror**.





**Tell your teacher**

**Have you ever read a  
scary story? Do you  
like horror films?  
What do you think of  
the horror genre?**



Tell your teacher

Are you afraid of anything?



heights

mice

the dark

ghosts



**Tell your teacher**

**What do you think of when you hear these words?**



haunted

mad

evil

creak

midnight

suspect

dreadful

groan

furious



## The Tell-Tale Heart



True! nervous, very, very dreadfully nervous I had been and am; but why *will* you say that I am mad? The disease had sharpened my senses, not destroyed, not dulled them. Above all was the sense of hearing acute. I heard all things in the heaven and in the earth. I heard many things in hell. How then am I mad? Hearken! and observe how healthily, how calmly I can tell you the whole story.

It is impossible to say how first the idea entered my brain, but, once conceived, it haunted me day and night. Object there was none. Passion there was none. I loved the old man. He had never wronged me. He had never given me insult. For his gold I had no desire.



## The Tell-Tale Heart



I think it was his eye! Yes, it was this! One of his eyes resembled that of a vulture—a pale blue eye with a film over it. Whenever it fell upon me my blood ran cold, and so by degrees, very gradually, I made up my mind to take the life of the old man, and thus rid myself of the eye forever.

Now this is the point. You fancy me mad. Madmen know nothing. But you should have seen *me*. You should have seen how wisely I proceeded; with what caution, with what foresight, with what dissimulation, I went to work! I was never kinder to the old man than during the whole week before I killed him.





## True or false?

	TRUE	FALSE
1. The man believes that he is mad.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. The man says that his sense of hearing had been heightened.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. The old man was haunting the story teller.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. The narrator had been wronged by the old man.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. The story teller wanted to kill the old man because of his eye.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. He was very kind to the old man in the week before he killed him.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



Why are these things mentioned in the story?

A



B



C



D





## The Tell-Tale Heart

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 so 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.





## The Tell-Tale Heart

It took me an hour to place my whole head within the opening so far that I could see him as he lay upon his bed. Ha! would a madman have been so wise as this? And then when my head was well in the room I undid the lantern cautiously—oh, so cautiously—cautiously (for the hinges creaked), I undid it just so much that a single thin ray fell upon the vulture eye.





## The Tell-Tale Heart

And this I did for seven long nights, every night just at midnight, but I found the eye always closed, and so it was impossible to do the work, for it was not the old man who vexed me, but his Evil Eye.

And every morning, when the day broke, I went boldly into the chamber and spoke courageously to him, calling him by name in a hearty tone, and inquiring how he had passed the night. So you see he would have been a very profound old man, indeed, to suspect that every night, just at twelve, I looked in upon him while he slept.



## The Tell-Tale Heart

Upon the eighth night I was more than usually cautious in opening the door. A watch's minute hand moves more quickly than did mine. Never before that night had I felt the extent of my own powers, of my sagacity. I could scarcely contain my feelings of triumph. To think that there I was opening the door little by little, and he not even to dream of my secret deeds or thoughts. I fairly chuckled at the idea, and perhaps he heard me, for he moved on the bed suddenly as if startled. Now you may think that I drew back—but no. His room was as black as pitch with the thick darkness (for the shutters were close fastened through fear of robbers), and so I knew that he could not see the opening of the door, and I kept pushing it on steadily, steadily.



Do you know the meaning of these words from the text?

thrust

cunningly

vex

hearty

sagacity

chuckled



## Fill in the gaps

Using the words on the previous slide, fill in the gaps. You may change the form of the word if necessary.

1. The man \_\_\_\_\_ his head into the old man's room slowly.
2. In the morning, the narrator spoke to the old man in a \_\_\_\_\_ tone.
3. The old man's evil eye \_\_\_\_\_ the story teller, not the old man himself.
4. The narrator describes the movement of his head as \_\_\_\_\_.
5. The story teller \_\_\_\_\_ at the idea that the old man had no idea about his secret nightly entrances.
6. On the eighth night, the narrator feels the extent of his power and \_\_\_\_\_.







## The Tell-Tale Heart

I had my head in, and was about to open the lantern when my thumb slipped upon the tin fastening, and the old man sprang up in the bed, crying out, "Who's there?"

I kept quite still and said nothing. For a whole hour I did not move a muscle, and in the meantime I did not hear him lie down. He was still sitting up in the bed, listening; just as I have done night after night hearkening to the death watches in the wall.

Presently I heard a slight groan, and I knew it was the groan of mortal terror. It was not a groan of pain or of grief—oh, no! it was the low stifled sound that arises from the bottom of the soul when overcharged with awe. I knew the sound well. Many a night, just at midnight, when all the world slept, it has welled up from my own bosom, deepening, with its dreadful echo, the terrors that distracted me. I say I knew it well. I knew what the old man felt, and pitied him, although I chuckled at heart.



## The Tell-Tale Heart

I knew that he had been lying awake ever since the first slight noise when he had turned in the bed. His fears had been ever since growing upon him. He had been trying to fancy them causeless, but could not. He had been saying to himself, "It is nothing but the wind in the chimney, it is only a mouse crossing the floor," or "It is merely a cricket which has made a single chirp." Yes, he has been trying to comfort himself with these suppositions; but he had found all in vain. *All in vain*, because Death in approaching him had stalked with his black shadow before him and enveloped the victim. And it was the mournful influence of the unperceived shadow that caused him to feel, although he neither saw nor heard, to *feel* the presence of my head within the room.



## The Tell-Tale Heart

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—until at length a single dim ray like the thread of the spider shot out from the crevice and fell upon the vulture eye.

It was open, wide, wide open, and I grew furious as I gazed upon it. I saw it with perfect distinctness—all a dull blue with a hideous veil over it that chilled the very marrow in my bones, but I could see nothing else of the old man's face or person, for I had directed the ray as if by instinct precisely upon the damned spot.





## The Tell-Tale Heart

And now have I not told you that what you mistake for madness is but over-acuteness of the senses? Now, I say, there came to my ears a low, dull, quick sound, such as a watch makes when enveloped in cotton. I *knew* that sound well, too. It was the beating of the old man's heart. It increased my fury, as the beating of a drum stimulates the soldier into courage.





## Talk about the pictures

What order do these things appear in the text? Can you remember why they are mentioned?





## Complete the sentences

**Complete the sentences with phrases from the text.**

1. For an hour, the narrator did not...
2. The old man gave a groan of...
3. The narrator pitied the old man but...
4. The old man wanted to believe his fears were...
5. The old man's imaginings had been...
6. The narrator opened the door very...
7. The eye chilled \_\_\_\_\_ in the narrator's bones.
8. The beating of the old man's heart stimulated...



## Tell your teacher

Look at the phrases from the previous page. When might you do these things?



give a groan of  
mortal terror

not move a  
muscle

pity someone

do something  
stealthily

be chilled to the  
marrow in your  
bones

try to imagine a  
noise was  
something else



## Discuss the story

**Do you think this story is scary? Why (not)? In your answer, reference the different writing techniques used in the story.**



setting

feeling

suspense

metaphor

narrator

simile





## Reflect on the quote

**Thinking about what you talked about in the previous exercise, discuss this quote from the text.**

**What do you think the narrator is talking about here? What do you think of the writing? Can you relate to what he is talking about?**

“

...it was the low stifled sound that arises from the bottom of the soul when overcharged with awe. I knew the sound well. Many a night, just at midnight, when all the world slept, it has welled up from my own bosom, deepening, with its dreadful echo, the terrors that distracted me.

”



## Over to you

Now it's time to tell your own story! Use the images below to help you. You can put them in whatever order you like. Try to use some of the vocabulary and phrases you have learnt from the text, and don't forget – make it chilling!





## Reflect on the lesson

Take a moment to review any new **vocabulary, phrases, language structures** or **grammar points** you have come across for the first time in this lesson.

Review them with your teacher one more time to make sure you don't forget!





## Answer key

### Exercise p. 9

1. F, 2. T, 3. F, 4. F, 5. T, 6. T

### Exercise p. 10

A. His sense of hearing is acute. B. He heard many things in hell. C. He doesn't want the old man's gold. D. He compares the old man's eye to a vulture.

### Exercise p. 15

**thrust**: move something forcefully, **cunningly**: in a sly or tricky way, **vex**: annoy, **hearty**: friendly/loud, **sagacity**: wisdom, **chuckled**: laughed

### Exercise p. 16

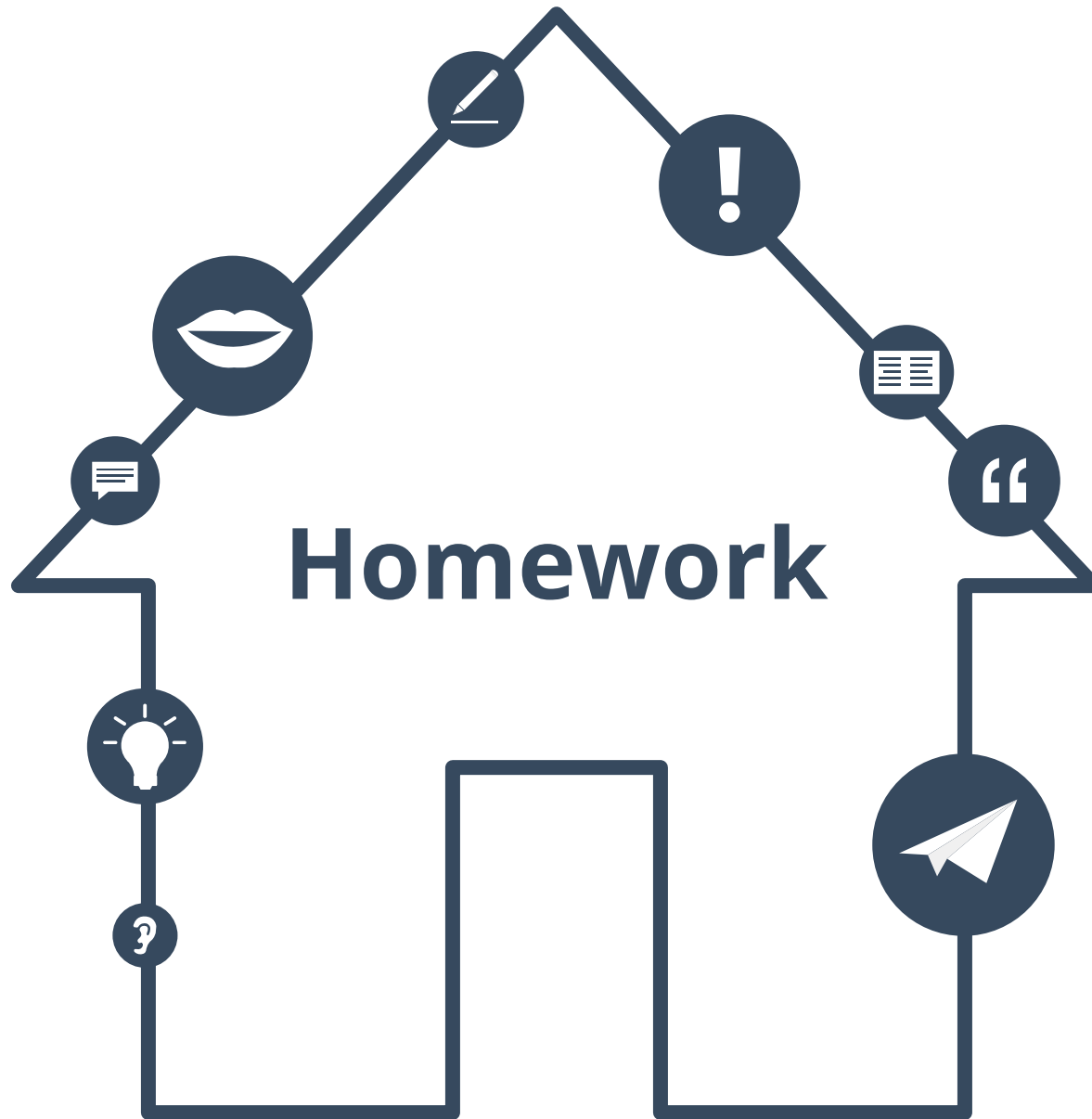
1. thrust, 2. hearty, 3. vexed, 4. cunning, 5. chuckled, 6. sagacity

### Exercise p. 21

1. lantern, 2. mouse, 3. eye, 4. drum

### Exercise p. 22

1. move a muscle, 2. mortal terror, 3. chuckled at him, 4. causeless, 5. all in vain, 6. stealthily, 7. the very marrow, 8. the narrator into courage





## Choose the correct answer

1. To describe how he felt when the old man's eye fell on him, the narrator says his blood...

- a. went cold.                      b. turned cold.                      c. ran cold.                      d. felt cold.

2. Why did the narrator undo the lantern cautiously?

- a. It was very bright.                      b. The hinges creaked.                      c. He was frightened.                      d. The room was very dark.

3. On the eighth night, the narrator could \_\_\_\_\_ his feelings of triumph.

- a. scarcely contain                      b. hardly hold in                      c. barely keep down                      d. almost burst with

4. The old man's room was black as...

- a. night.                      b. his heart.                      c. pitch.                      d. thunder.



## Choose the correct answer

5. The old man sprang up in bed. This means he sat up...

- a. cunningly.                      b. cautiously.                      c. slowly.                      d. quickly.

6. The groan the old man gave was stifled. This means it was...

- a. full of fear.                      b. quiet.                      c. very loud.                      d. scary.

7. The narrator talks about the shadow of death upon the man. Which word does he use to describe its influence?

- a. mournful                      b. frightening                      c. perceived                      d. terrifying

8. The narrator says that his senses are over-acute. This means that...

- a. he is mad.                      b. he can't trust his senses.                      c. he can see ghosts.                      d. his senses are heightened.



## Homework answer key

1. C, 2. B, 3. A, 4. C, 5. D, 6. B, 7. A, 8. D





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