

Literary Analysis of “The Masque of the Red Death”

Advanced Eng. B | Essay 1 | AY 24-25

Ms. Martocello



Literary Analysis Essay of “The Masque of the Red Death” by Edgar Allen Poe

Objective:

- Edgar Allan Poe's *The Masque of the Red Death* is a haunting story filled with rich symbolism and profound themes. For this essay, you will write 2–3 pages analyzing one or more themes and symbols in the story. Your essay should include textual evidence to support your claims and demonstrate a deep understanding of how Poe's use of literary elements enhances the story's meaning.
- MLA formatting rules can be found here: [General MLA Format Guide](#)
- Citation guide and creator can be found here: [Citation Machine](#)
 - *always double check what it gives you! Citation Machine is meant as a starting point, it does make mistakes.*

Analyzing Themes and Symbolism in The Masque of the Red Death

Instructions:

1. Introduction:

- Briefly summarize the plot of *The Masque of the Red Death* and provide some background on Edgar Allan Poe.
- State your thesis, focusing on the theme(s) or symbol(s) you will analyze.

2. Body Paragraphs:

- Discuss how Poe uses symbolism to convey deeper meanings. (e.g., What do the colors of the rooms symbolize? What might the clock or the figure of the Red Death represent?)
- Analyze one or more of the story's themes, such as the inevitability of death, the illusion of control, or the futility of wealth in the face of mortality.
- Include evidence from the text (direct quotes or detailed references) and explain how it supports your argument.

3. Conclusion:

- Restate your thesis and summarize your main points.
- Reflect on how the themes and symbols make *The Masque of the Red Death* relevant to readers today.

Possible Topics to Explore:

1. The Inevitability of Death:

- How does Poe use the figure of the Red Death to represent death's unavoidable nature?
- How do the actions of Prince Prospero and his guests reflect humanity's attempts to escape death?

2. The Use of Symbolism:

- What do the seven colored rooms represent? Could they symbolize stages of life, moods, or something else?
- How does the ebony clock contribute to the story's mood and themes?

3. The Role of Wealth and Privilege:

- How does the story critique the idea that wealth or social status can protect people from universal truths like mortality?

4. Mood and Atmosphere:

- How does Poe's use of imagery and setting build a sense of dread?
- How does the gothic atmosphere tie into the story's larger themes?

5. The Consequences of Denial:

- How does Prince Prospero's response to the Red Death reflect denial or arrogance? What is the ultimate result of his actions?

Grading Criteria:

- Thesis and Argument: Clear, focused, and well-developed thesis.
- Textual Evidence: Effective use of quotes and details from the text to support claims.
- Analysis: Insightful explanation of how the themes and symbols relate to the story's meaning.
- Organization: Logical flow of ideas, with clear introductions, body paragraphs, and conclusions.
- Conventions: Proper grammar, punctuation, and adherence to essay format.

Feel free to choose the topic that interests you the most and approach the essay in a way that reflects your understanding of Poe's work. Be creative and thoughtful in your analysis!

STORY CAN BE FOUND HERE: [CLICK HERE](#)

AUDIO STORY CAN BE FOUND HERE: [CLICK HERE](#)

EDGAR ALLEN POE BIOGRAPHY: [CLICK HERE](#)

Formatting and Submission

- Length: 2–3 pages, double-spaced.
- Font: Times New Roman, 12-point.
- Formatting: Follow MLA rules for formatting.
 - Include a header with your last name and page number.
 - Use proper MLA heading (your name, teacher's name, course, date).
 - Include a centered title.
- Works Cited: Include a properly formatted MLA Works Cited page for all references.
- Email/share/hand-in with Ms. Martocello on or before 12/8

FINAL ESSAY DUE 12/8

Email: Martocello@schoolnova.org

See Rubric On Next Page

Literary Analysis of “The Masque of the Red Death”

Advanced Eng. B | Essay 1 | AY 24-25

Ms. Martocello



Literary Analysis Essay of “The Masque of the Red Death” by Edgar Allen Poe RUBRIC

Criteria	4 - Excellent	3 - Proficient	2 - Developing	1 - Needs Improvement
Thesis and Argument	Thesis is clear, focused, and well-developed.	Thesis is clear but may lack depth.	Thesis is unclear or underdeveloped.	Thesis is missing or unrelated to the topic.
Textual Evidence	Strong, well-integrated quotes/details support claims.	Adequate evidence supports claims.	Limited or weak use of textual evidence.	No evidence or irrelevant references.
Analysis	Insightful and deep analysis of themes and symbols.	Analysis is thoughtful but lacks depth.	Minimal analysis with surface-level insights.	No analysis or major misunderstandings.
MLA Formatting	Perfect MLA format, including in-text citations and Works Cited.	Minor MLA errors.	Frequent MLA formatting issues.	Formatting does not follow MLA rules.
Organization	Logical flow with clear intro, body, and conclusion.	Mostly logical but may have minor issues.	Disorganized or lacks clear sections.	Lacks structure or coherence.
Conventions	Excellent grammar, punctuation, and formatting.	Minor errors in grammar, punctuation, or format.	Frequent errors that distract from content.	Errors severely interfere with readability

FINAL ESSAY DUE 12/8

Email: Martocello@schoolnova.org