



Encyclopedia Britannica:

Edgar Allan Poe, (born January 19, 1809, Boston, Massachusetts, U.S.—died October 7, 1849, Baltimore, Maryland), American short-story writer, poet, critic, and editor who is famous for his cultivation of mystery and the macabre.

You're about to listen and read *The Tell-Tale Heart*, a story by Edgar Allan Poe.

Listen to first clip and choose the correct option for missing words. Clip 1 _____

True! — nervous — very, very dreadfully nervous I had been and am; but why will you say that I am mad? The disease had _____ my senses — not _____ — not dulled them. Above all was the sense of hearing _____. 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.

- a) fastened/destroyed/mute**
- b) shortened/described/acute**
- c) sharpened/destroyed/acute**

Clip 2 _____

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. I think it was his eye! yes, it was this! He had the eye 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.

Object in this context means:

- a) a person or thing to which a specified action or feeling is directed
- b) a reason for doing something or the result you wish to achieve by doing it
- c) a material thing that can be seen and touched
- d) a noun or noun phrase that is affected by the action of a verb or that follows a preposition

Before you read and listen the next excerpt, match the pairs of the words and definitions. Does the narrator sound sane or insane? Why do you think so?

dissimulation

in a way that deliberately avoids potential problems

the **latch** of his door

in a cheerful and friendly manner

I thrust in my head push suddenly or violently

cunningly good hiding

cautiously in a clever and deceitful way

in a hearty tone the mechanism that slides into the edge of the door and retracts or protrudes with the turn of the door knob

Clip 3

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. 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. 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. 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.

Clip 4 *Listen and read this snippet*

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.

Listen to the next part of the story and decide whether the statements are true or false. Clip 5

1. The old man sprang in the bed and cried out "Get out of here!" **T** **F**
2. For the whole hour the narrator did not move a muscle. **T** **F**
3. The old man fell fast asleep again. **T** **F**
4. The narrator knew what the old man felt, and pitied him, although he chuckled at heart.
T **F**
5. The old man 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."
T **F**

Listen to Clip 6 **Click all the adjectives and adverbs you hear in it:**

impatiently ferociously furious dull patiently
dangerously stealthily cautiously cunningly
precisely hideous scarcely vehemently

Clip 7

1. What "low, dull, quick sound" came to the narrator's ears?
2. What did the narrator feel?
3. What did he do to the old man?

Clip 8.

1. What "wise precautions" did the narrator take for the concealment of the body?
2. What time was it when he "had made an end of these labors"?
3. Why did the police officers come?

CLIP 9

How does the story finish?