

## The Masque of the Red Death

- Read and listen the story the “The masque of the red death” by Edgar Allan Poe using digital formats.

### Story:

[https://www.ibiblio.org/ebooks/Poe/Red\\_Death.pdf](https://www.ibiblio.org/ebooks/Poe/Red_Death.pdf)

### Youtube platform:

The Masque of the Red Death:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f86Au0PkzPU>

(Version 1)

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FCMPz\\_MJk\\_Y](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FCMPz_MJk_Y)

(Version 2)

**Strategy:** Learn vocabulary by context.

The Masque of the Red Death is a Gothic short story written by Edgar Allan Poe. The story takes place during a terrible plague known as the Red Death, a disease that causes sharp pains, bleeding, and death within a short time. As thousands of people die across the country, Prince Prospero decides to protect himself and his wealthy friends by hiding inside a large and luxurious abbey. He believes that by isolating themselves from the outside world, they can escape the plague.

Inside the castle, the prince organizes extravagant parties, music, dancing, and entertainment to distract everyone from the suffering outside. After several months, he holds a magnificent masquerade ball in seven decorated rooms, each with a different color. The last room is black with red windows, creating a frightening atmosphere that most guests avoid. In this room, there is also a large ebony clock whose loud sound interrupts the party every hour, making everyone feel nervous and reminding them of the passing of time.

At midnight, the guests notice a mysterious figure dressed like a victim of the Red Death, with bloodstains on the costume and face. Prince Prospero becomes furious because he thinks the stranger is mocking the disease. He chases the figure through the seven rooms with a dagger, but when he finally confronts it in the black room, the prince suddenly falls dead. The guests rush toward the stranger and discover that there is nobody beneath the costume. Soon, all of them die as the Red Death enters the abbey.

The story ends with the idea that death is unavoidable and that wealth, power, and isolation cannot protect people from fate. Poe uses symbols such as the colored rooms, the clock, and the masked figure to create a dark atmosphere and to represent the passage of life and the certainty of death.

I. En las preguntas de la 1 a la 5, marque la letra correcta A-H

<p><b>The Masque of the Red Death</b> <b>Questions:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. The deadly disease that spreads throughout the country in the story.</li><li>2. The main character who invites his friends to the abbey.</li><li>3. The event celebrated inside the castle with costumes and dancing.</li><li>4. The dark room with red windows that frightens the guests.</li><li>5. The object that makes a loud sound every hour during the party.</li></ol>	<p><b>Items:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>A. Ebony clock</li><li>B. Prince Prospero</li><li>C. Red Death</li><li>D. Masquerade ball</li><li>E. Black room</li><li>F. Abbey</li><li>G. Stranger</li><li>H. Musicians</li></ol>
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**Section 2: Instructions / Signs**

Choose the correct context for each instruction.

6. 

- A. In the abbey  
B. At door of the seventh room  
C. At door of the sixth room

7. 

- A. At the cemetery  
B. In the church  
C. At the party

8. **Stay inside the castle to avoid the Red Death.**

- A. At the harbor
- B. In the abbey
- C. In the village

9. **Do not approach the mysterious stranger.**

- A. At the masquerade ball
- B. In the library
- C. At the entrance of the city

10. **Remain silent when the ebony clock strikes.**

- A. During the celebration
- B. At the battlefield
- C. In the kitchen

#### The Masque of the Red Death — Conversations

11. I'm afraid of the Red Death spreading into the abbey.
  - A. You should open all the doors immediately.
  - B. Don't worry, the castle walls will protect us.
  - C. Diseases are never dangerous.
12. That mysterious guest looks terrifying.
  - A. Yes, his costume resembles a victim of the plague.
  - B. Everyone at the party looks exactly the same.
  - C. The guests are laughing at the prince.
13. Why does everyone become silent when the clock sounds?
  - A. The music becomes louder every hour.
  - B. They want to leave the party forever.
  - C. The clock reminds them of time and death.

14. Prince Prospero looks very angry tonight.  
A. He is planning to leave the abbey tomorrow.  
B. He wants to cancel the masquerade ball.  
C. He is upset because of the strange visitor.
15. Nobody wants to enter the black room.  
A. The dark decorations make the guests feel afraid.  
B. It is the brightest room in the castle.  
C. The musicians are performing there.

### ***The Masque of the Red Death by Edgar Allan Poe***

The story *The Masque of the Red Death* by Edgar Allan Poe is one of the most famous gothic tales in literature. Prince Prospero tries to escape a terrible disease known as the Red Death by hiding in his castle with wealthy guests. A magnificent masquerade party is (16) \_\_\_ inside the abbey while the suffering population is ignored outside. The colorful rooms are carefully (17) \_\_\_ to create a mysterious atmosphere, and strange music (18) \_\_\_\_\_ constantly played during the celebration.

The guests move from room to room and are frequently filled (19) \_\_\_ feelings of fear and confusion whenever the black clock chimes. Expensive costumes are (20) \_\_\_ by the nobles, although many of them appear disturbing and unnatural. In the middle of the party, an unknown figure dressed as a victim of the Red Death suddenly appears and is immediately (21) \_\_\_ by everyone in the castle. Prince Prospero becomes furious and orders the stranger to be captured; however, nobody dares to approach the mysterious guest.

At the end of the story, the masked figure is finally confronted by the prince, but the terrible truth is soon (22) \_\_\_ by all the guests: the visitor is not human. One by one, the nobles are (23) \_\_\_ by the deadly plague, and silence takes over the castle forever.

#### **Options:**

16. A. holding B. held C. hold  
17. A. decorated B. decorate C. decorating  
18. A. was B. is C. are  
19. A. for B. by C. of  
20. A. worn B. wear C. wearing  
21. A. notice B. noticed C. noticing  
22. A. realized B. realize C. realizing  
23. A. destroying B. destroy C. destroyed

### ***The Masque of the Red Death***

In *The Masque of the Red Death* by Edgar Allan Poe, the author shows that nobody can escape death, no matter how rich or powerful they are. Prince Prospero tries to protect himself and his friends from the terrible disease called the Red Death by hiding inside a luxurious castle. They spend their time dancing and celebrating while people outside suffer and die. This behavior represents selfishness and ignorance toward human suffering.

The seven colored rooms inside the castle symbolize the different stages of life, from birth to death. The last room, which is black and red, represents the end of life and fear of death. At the end of the story, a mysterious figure dressed as a victim of the Red Death appears in the party. Although the prince tries to stop him, he dies immediately. Soon, everyone in the castle dies as well.

Poe uses symbols, colors, and a dark atmosphere to teach that death is inevitable and that human beings cannot avoid their destiny. The story also criticizes people who use wealth and power to ignore reality instead of helping others.

24. Where did Prince Prospero and his friends hide from the Red Death?
  - A. In a hospital
  - B. In a castle
  - C. In a church
  - D. In a forest
25. What were the people inside the castle doing during the party?
  - A. Studying
  - B. Fighting
  - C. Feasting and rejoicing
  - D. Sleeping
26. What does the black and red room symbolize in the story?
  - A. Happiness
  - B. Wealth
  - C. Nature
  - D. Death
27. Who appeared mysteriously during the celebration?
  - A. A king
  - B. A doctor
  - C. A masked figure
  - D. A soldier
28. What happened at the end of the story?
  - A. Everyone escaped safely
  - B. The prince became king
  - C. The disease disappeared
  - D. Everyone died from the Red Death

### **Edgar Allan Poe's Personal Experience and *The Masque of the Red Death***

Edgar Allan Poe's life was marked by sadness, illness, and death, and these experiences strongly influenced his writing. Throughout his life, Poe lost many important people,

including his mother, his foster mother, and later his wife, Virginia, who died from tuberculosis. Because of these painful experiences, Poe developed a deep interest in themes such as death, fear, loneliness, and human suffering.

In *The Masque of the Red Death*, Poe reflects his personal fears about disease and the inevitability of death. The story describes a deadly plague that kills thousands of people, while Prince Prospero tries to escape reality by hiding in a luxurious castle. This situation may represent Poe's belief that no person, regardless of social class or wealth, can avoid death.

The dark atmosphere of the story also mirrors the emotional suffering Poe experienced during his life. Through symbolism and mystery, the author expresses the idea that human beings are vulnerable and powerless against time and destiny. Therefore, Poe transformed his personal pain into literature, creating stories that continue to impact readers around the world.

29. Why did Edgar Allan Poe frequently write about death and suffering?
  - A. Because he enjoyed writing happy stories
  - B. Because he had painful personal experiences
  - C. Because he wanted to become famous
  - D. Because he studied medicine
30. What can be inferred about Prince Prospero's behavior in the story?
  - A. He wanted to help sick people
  - B. He accepted death peacefully
  - C. He tried to ignore reality and danger
  - D. He was poor and lonely
31. Why is the atmosphere of the story described as dark and mysterious?
  - A. To reflect Poe's emotional suffering
  - B. To make the story funny
  - C. To describe a real castle
  - D. To create a romantic setting
32. What idea does Poe communicate through the Red Death?
  - A. Wealth can solve all problems
  - B. Death is unavoidable for everyone
  - C. Princes are stronger than diseases
  - D. People should live in castles
33. What can readers conclude about Poe's literature based on the text?
  - A. His stories are mostly scientific
  - B. His works were inspired by personal tragedies
  - C. He only wrote about fantasy worlds
  - D. His stories avoid emotional topics

### **The Socio-Cultural and Political Context of *The Masque of the Red Death* Compared to the Present**

*The Masque of the Red Death* was written by Edgar Allan Poe in 1842, during a period when society was affected by poverty, social inequality, and deadly diseases. In the 19th

century, medical knowledge was limited, and epidemics such as tuberculosis and cholera caused fear and suffering among the population. Wealthy people often lived separated from the poor, creating strong social divisions. This reality is reflected in the story, where Prince Prospero and the nobles isolate themselves in a luxurious castle while the rest of society suffers outside.

Politically, the period was marked by instability and distrust in authorities. Many governments were unable to protect citizens from economic crises and diseases. Poe criticized the selfishness of the upper classes and showed how power and wealth could create indifference toward human suffering.

Today, society still faces similar problems. During global crises such as pandemics, social inequality becomes more visible. Some people have access to better healthcare, protection, and resources, while vulnerable populations suffer the most. In this sense, Poe's story remains relevant because it reminds readers that no social class is completely protected from tragedy.

Although modern science and technology have advanced, fear, isolation, and inequality continue to exist in contemporary society. Therefore, *The Masque of the Red Death* can be understood not only as a horror story, but also as a social criticism that connects the past with present-day realities.

34. What is the author's main purpose in the text?
  - A. To describe the life of kings in the 19th century
  - B. To compare historical and current social problems
  - C. To explain how castles were built
  - D. To criticize modern technology
35. Why does the text mention modern pandemics?
  - A. To show that Poe's ideas are still relevant today
  - B. To prove that diseases are stronger now
  - C. To explain scientific discoveries
  - D. To describe medical treatments
36. What criticism of society can be identified in Poe's story?
  - A. People study too much literature
  - B. Poor people have too much power
  - C. Wealthy people ignore the suffering of others
  - D. Governments support all citizens equally
37. According to the text, what similarity exists between the 19th century and the present?
  - A. People no longer fear diseases
  - B. Social inequality continues to affect society
  - C. Technology has disappeared
  - D. Castles are still used for protection
38. What can readers conclude from the final paragraph?
  - A. Horror stories are only for entertainment

- B. Science has solved all social problems
- C. Poe's story still has meaning in the modern world
- D. Modern society is completely different from the past

### **The Masque of the Red Death – Vocabulary and Grammar Reading (B1–C1)**

Fear and disease have always influenced literature and society. In *The Masque of the Red Death*, a deadly plague is rapidly (38) \_\_\_ throughout the kingdom, causing panic among the population. Prince Prospero, who is wealthy and powerful, decides to isolate himself and his guests inside a luxurious castle that is carefully (39) \_\_\_ to keep danger outside.

Inside the castle, extravagant celebrations are continuously (40) \_\_\_ while thousands of people suffer beyond the walls. The prince believes that wealth can protect him from reality; however, Poe suggests that death cannot be permanently (41) \_\_\_ by anyone.

The mysterious masked figure later appears during the celebration. Although the guests are initially (42) \_\_\_ by fear, nobody dares to confront the stranger immediately. The dark rooms of the castle are symbolically (43) \_\_\_ to represent different stages of life, ending in the black room associated with death.

Throughout the story, human arrogance is strongly (44) \_\_\_ by the author through symbolism and atmosphere. The nobles attempt to ignore the suffering outside; meanwhile, the Red Death silently enters the castle. Ethical and social responsibility are indirectly (45) \_\_\_ in the story, especially through the selfish behavior of the upper class.

Ultimately, Poe demonstrates that all human beings are equally vulnerable. Lasting lessons about fear, mortality, and social inequality are (46) \_\_\_ through the tragic ending of the story.

#### **Options:**

- 38. A. spread B. spreading C. spreads D. spreaded
- 39. A. designed B. designing C. design D. designs
- 40. A. held B. holding C. hold D. holds
- 41. A. avoid B. avoided C. avoiding D. avoids
- 42. A. paralyze B. paralyzing C. paralyzed D. paralysis
- 43. A. arrange B. arranged C. arranging D. arrangement
- 44. A. criticize B. criticizing C. criticized D. criticism
- 45. A. question B. questioning C. questioned D. questions
- 46. A. gained B. gain C. gaining D. gains