

Subject: English

Mr. Velasquez

State Standard

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.11-12.3

Weeks of: 3/17/20-3/20/20 and 3/23/20-3/27/20

Read the following two stories:

Story #1: La Llorona: The Weeping Woman, retold by Joe Hayes

Story #2: The Tell-Tale Heart, an adapted story by Edgar Allan Poe

For each story write and define all the:

- Literary terms
- Selection vocabulary.
- Write a sentence per each vocabulary word.
- Answer all the questions at the end of each story.

Find and write the following:

- Characters:** List the main characters and briefly describe them.
- Setting:** Tell where and when the story takes place. Be specific.
- Problem:** Describe the main character's problem.
- Solution:** Tell how the problem was solved, and how the story ended.

La Llorona: The Weeping Woman

retold by Joe Hayes

Words to Know

LITERARY TERM

cause and effect any event or action that leads to a certain result

SELECTION VOCABULARY

humble not proud

increased became greater in degree

dashing very stylish

serenade sing below someone's
window to get his or her attention

haughty proud acting, stuck up

engaged planning to get married

ignored did not pay attention to

pitifully very sadly

burial burying the dead

This is a story that the old ones have been telling to children for hundreds of years. It is a sad tale, but it lives strong in the memories of the people, and there are many who swear that it is true.

Long years ago in a **humble** little village there lived a fine looking girl named María. Some say she was the most beautiful girl in the world! And because she was so beautiful, María thought she was better than everyone else.

As María grew older, her beauty **increased**. And her pride in her beauty grew too. When she was a young woman, she would not even look at the young men from her village. They weren't good enough for her!

María is very beautiful, but she thinks she's better than anyone else. What problems do you think her self-image might cause?

"When I marry," María would say, "I will marry the most handsome man in the world."

And then one day, into María's village rode a man who seemed to be just the one she had been talking about. He was a **dashing** young ranchero—the son of a wealthy rancher from the southern plains.

He could ride like a Comanche! In fact, if he owned a horse, and it grew tame, he would give it away and go rope a wild horse from the plains. He thought it wasn't manly to ride a horse if it wasn't half wild.

He was handsome! And he could play the guitar and sing beautifully. María made up her mind—that was the man for her! She knew just the tricks to win his attention.

If the ranchero spoke when they met on the pathway, she would turn her head away. When he came to her house in the evening to play his guitar

This dashing young ranchero sounds like everything María could ever want. However, there are hints that he may not be the perfect husband for her after all. What are these hints?



and serenade her, she wouldn't even come to the window. She refused all his costly gifts.

The young man fell for her tricks. "That **haughty** girl, María!" he said to himself. "I know I can win her heart. I swear I'll marry that girl."

And so everything turned out as María planned. Before long, she and the rancho became **engaged** and soon they were married.

At first, things were fine. They had two children and they seemed to be a happy family together.

But after a few years, the rancho went back to the wild life of the prairies. He would leave town and be gone for months at a time. And when he returned home, it was only to visit his children. He seemed to care nothing for the beautiful María. He even talked of setting María aside and marrying a woman of his own wealthy class.

As proud as María was, of course she became very angry with the rancho. She also began to feel anger toward her children, because he paid attention to them, but just **ignored** her.

One evening, as María was strolling with her two children on the shady pathway near the river, the rancho came by in a carriage. An elegant lady sat on the seat beside him. He stopped and spoke to his children, but he didn't even look at María. He whipped the horses on up the street.

When she saw that, a terrible rage filled María, and it all turned against her children. And although it is sad to tell, the story says that in her anger María seized her two children and threw them into the river!

But as they disappeared down the stream, she realized what she had done! She ran down the bank of the river, reaching out her arms to them. But they were long gone.

On and on ran María, driven by the fear that filled her heart, until finally she sank to the ground and lay still.

What do you think of María's tricks to win the rancho's attention? Is she wise or foolish in using the approach she uses?

The rancho loses interest in María. His new feelings will begin a chain of unhappy events. As you read, notice the effects his behavior has on María.

Extreme anger can make people do terrible things. Why do you think María turns against her children?

The next morning, a traveler brought word to the villagers that a beautiful woman lay dead on the bank of the river. That is where they found María, and they laid her to rest where she had fallen.

But the first night María was in the grave, the villagers heard the sound of crying down by the river. At first they thought it was only the wind they were hearing. But when they listened more carefully, they heard words: "Aaaaiiii . . . my children," a voice sobbed **pitifully**. "Where are my children?"

And they saw a woman walking up and down the bank of the river, dressed in a long white robe, the way they had dressed María for **burial**.

On many a dark night they saw her walk the river bank. But more often they would hear her cry for her children. And so they no longer spoke of her as María. They called her La Llorona—the weeping woman. And by that name she is known to this day.

There are many names the people could have given María. Why do you think they chose La Llorona, or the Weeping Woman?



And they still warn the young ones, "When it grows dark, get inside the house. La Llorona may be about, looking for her children. Be careful! She might mistake you for one of her own."

They tell of many children down through the years who have been chased by the crying ghost—and of some who have even been caught!

Is the story really true? Who knows? Some claim that it is. Others say that it isn't. But the old ones still tell it to the children, just as they heard it themselves when they were young. And in the same way the children who hear it today will some day tell it to their own children and grandchildren.

Literature Practice

Answer these questions on a separate sheet of paper.

1. Write at least three things about the rancho that impressed María.
 2. The story doesn't say why the rancho loses interest in María. Why do you think he does?
 3. How does María's pride finally cause her unhappiness?
 4. How do you think the people from María's village feel when she is found dead? Explain your answer.
 5. Why do people now call María, La Llorona, or the Weeping Woman?
 6. Why do you think people have told this story to children for hundreds of years?
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The Tell-Tale Heart

an adapted story by Edgar Allan Poe

Words to Know

LITERARY TERMS

imagery writers use special words or images to make the reader aware of how something in a story looks, sounds, or feels

first-person point of view the main character tells the story, using *I* to refer to himself or herself

SELECTION VOCABULARY

haunted reappeared, often in a scary way

passion a strong or deep feeling

film a thin coat of something

triumph an important success

shutters attached window covers that can be opened

muffled less loud

furious very angry

intense something that is very strong

seized grabbed suddenly

corpse a dead body

foul play dishonest behavior, murder

paced walked back and forth

Nervous—very, very nervous I had been and am. But why do you say that I am mad? The disease had sharpened my senses—not destroyed or dulled them. Especially sharp was the sense of hearing. I heard all things in heaven and on earth. I heard many things in hell. How, then, am I mad? Listen! See how clearly and calmly I can tell you the whole story.

It is impossible to say how the idea first entered my brain. But once it was born, it **haunted** me day

This story is told from the first-person point of view. This means that all the action of the story is seen through the eyes of the narrator. The narrator is the person telling the story.

and night. There was no reason for it. There was no **passion** to it. I loved the old man. He had never wronged me. He had never insulted me. I had no desire for his gold.

I think it was his eye! Yes, it was this! He had the eye of a vulture. It was a pale blue eye with a **film** over it. Whenever it looked at me, my blood ran cold. And so very gradually I made up my mind to take the life of the old man. This way I would be rid of the eye forever.

Now this is the point. You think I am mad. Madmen know nothing. But you should have seen *me*. You should have seen how wisely, how carefully I went to work. I was never kinder to the old man than during the whole week before I killed him. Every night, about midnight, I turned his door knob. I opened his door—oh, so gently.

The opening I made was large enough for my head. I put in a dark lantern, all closed, so that no light shone out. Then I thrust in my head. You would have laughed to see how smartly I thrust it in! I moved it very, very slowly so that I might not disturb the old man's sleep. Ha!—Would a madman have been so wise as this?

Then, when I was in the room, I undid the lantern carefully—oh, so carefully. I undid it just enough so that a single thin ray fell upon the vulture eye. This I did for seven long nights—every night just at midnight. But I found the eye always closed. So it was impossible to do the work. For it was not the old man that annoyed me, but his Evil Eye.

Every morning, when day broke, I went boldly into his room. I spoke bravely to him. I called him by his first name in a friendly tone and asked how he had passed the night. So he would have been a very smart man indeed to suspect what I did every night at midnight.

On the eighth night I was more careful than ever

How does the narrator describe himself? Do you think he can tell his story calmly and clearly? Why or why not?

Notice the imagery Poe uses to describe the old man's eye. It looks like "the eye of a vulture," and it is "a pale blue eye with a film over it." How does this description make you feel about the old man's eye?

The narrator is very careful in describing how he enters the old man's room. For seven nights he has done the same thing. What do you think will happen on the eighth night?



in opening the door. Never before that night had I *felt* the strength of my powers—of my wisdom. I could hardly hold in my feelings of triumph. There I had been opening the door little by little each night. He *did* not even dream of my secret deeds or thoughts.

I almost laughed at the idea, and perhaps he heard me. For he moved on the bed suddenly, as if he were startled. Now you may think that I drew back—but no. His room was pitch black, for the **shutters** were closed. So I knew he could not see the opening of the door. I kept pushing it open steadily, steadily.

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

I kept quite still and said nothing. For a whole hour I did not move a muscle. During that hour I did not hear him lie down. He was sitting up in the bed listening.

Soon, I heard a slight groan. It was not a groan of pain or of grief. Oh, no! It was the low, muffled sound that comes up from the soul when it is filled with fear. I knew the sound well. Many a night, just at midnight, it had welled up from my own chest. With its awful echo, it deepened the terrors that disturbed me. I knew what the old man felt, and I pitied him, although I chuckled at heart.

I waited a long time without hearing him lie down. I decided to make a slight opening in the lantern. I did so quietly—you cannot imagine how quietly. Finally, a single dim ray shot out from the opening and fell upon the vulture eye.

The eye was open, wide open. I grew furious as I gazed upon it. I saw it perfectly. It was a dull blue, with a disgusting veil over it that chilled my very bones. But I could see nothing else of the old man's body. For I had directed the light right upon the spot.

I have told you that what you mistake for madness is a sharpness of my senses. Now I say *that* what came to my ears was a low, dull, quick sound. It was a sound such as a watch makes when it is covered with 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 the drum stirs the soldier's courage.

Yet, I kept still. I hardly breathed. I did not move the lantern. I tried to hold the ray of light steadily upon the eye. Meantime the horrible beating of the heart continued. It grew quicker and quicker, and louder and louder. The old man's terror **must** have been rather **intense**.

It grew louder, I say, louder every moment! Do you hear me? I told you that I am nervous. So I am. Now at this dead hour of the night, in the awful silence of that old house, this strange noise excited

The narrator insists, for the third time, that he is not mad. He also says his hearing is very sharp. As you continue to read, do you agree that he is not mad? Why or why not?

Poe uses imagery to help you feel and hear the old man's heartbeat. As you read this, do you feel the terror of the old man? How do you think the narrator feels at this moment?

me to great terror. The beating grew louder, louder! I thought the heart would burst.

Now a new worry **seized** me. The sound would soon be heard by a neighbor! The old man's hour had come. With a loud yell, I threw open the lantern and jumped into the room.

He cried out once—only once. In an instant, I dragged him to the floor and pulled the heavy bed over him. I then smiled happily to find the deed done. But for many minutes the heart beat on with a muffled sound. This, however, did not bother me. It would not be heard through the wall. Finally it stopped. The old man was dead.

I removed the bed and examined the **corpse**. Yes, he was stone dead. I placed my hand upon the heart and held it there for many minutes. There was no pulse. He was dead. His eye would trouble me no more.

Do you still think me mad? You will think so no longer when I describe how I hid the body. I worked quickly, but in silence. I took up three planks from the floor. Then I placed the body under the boards and replaced them. I did this so cleverly that no human eye—not even his—could have found anything wrong.

When I had finished, it was four o'clock, still dark as midnight. There came a knocking at the street door. I went down to open it with a light heart. For what had I *now* to fear?

Three men entered. They introduced themselves as officers of the police. A cry had been heard by a neighbor during the night. Someone suspected **foul play**. The police had been called, and these men were ordered to search the house.

I smiled, for *what* had I to fear? The cry, I said, was my own in a dream. The old man, I said, was away in the country. I took my visitors all over the house. I told them to search—search well.

Finally, I led them to *his* room. I showed them his treasures, safe and secure. I brought chairs into the

Note the use of short sentences. This helps the reader understand how frightened the narrator now feels.

The narrator tells the reader the old man is dead three times. Why do you think the narrator needs to repeat this?

Who is the narrator referring to when he says, "not even his"?

room and told them to rest *here*. I placed myself in a chair above the very spot where the victim was buried!

The officers were satisfied. I was at ease. They sat and talked of familiar things. But before long, I felt myself getting pale and wished them gone. My head ached, and I thought I heard a ringing in my ears. The ringing became clearer. I talked more freely to get rid of the sound. But it continued. Finally, I found that the noise was not within my ears.

The sound increased—and what could I do? It was *a low, dull, quick sound, much like a watch makes when it is covered with cotton*. I gasped for breath—yet the officers did not hear it. I talked more quickly, more forcefully. But the noise steadily increased.





I paced the floor. But the noise steadily increased. Oh, God! What could I do? I swung the chair upon which I had been sitting and scraped it upon the boards. But the noise continued.

It grew louder—louder—*louder!* And still the men talked pleasantly. Was it possible they did not hear it? No! They heard. They suspected. They *knew*. They were making a fool of me.

Anything was better than this agony! I could bear those awful smiles no longer. I felt I must scream or die! And now again, listen! louder! louder! *louder!*

“Villains!” I cried. “Search no more! I admit the deed. Tear up the planks! Here—here! It is the beating of his awful heart!”

As the story closes, Poe uses punctuation to show the reader how upset the narrator has become. It also helps the reader to see how calm the police officers are. This difference helps the reader to feel the mood of the characters.

Seeing is Believing

It is 1962. You are sitting in a movie theater watching *Tales of Terror*. The movie is based on the horror stories of Edgar Allan Poe. The popcorn you are eating reaches your mouth much more slowly as the scenes flash by. In one, you watch a man being buried alive behind a brick wall. In another, you hear the horrible screams of a man being tortured. Do you ever wonder how these scenes are done? The magic is done with special effects. The screams you hear are from a sound track that is added to the film after the action is done. Shadowy background lights add to the creepy feeling you get while watching a horror movie. Those weird, twisted faces can be done with special make-up. Huge hairy spiders, ghosts flying through the air, or madmen screaming in terror—all are skillfully done to make you really believe what you see!

Literature Practice

Answer these questions on a separate sheet of paper.

1. Does the narrator think he is mad? Explain your answer.
 2. What does the narrator do in the old man's room each night?
 3. Why does the narrator murder the old man?
 4. Why do you think the narrator tells the police that he has killed the old man?
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