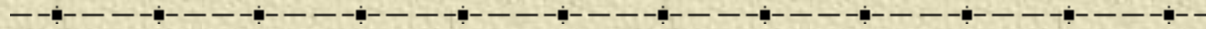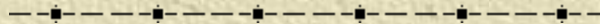# "The Tell-Tale Heart"

Lesson Concept: Mood in Fictional Short Stories

Essential Question #1

How do effective writers create mood in their short stories?

A writer uses literary "tools" to create mood such as carefully selecting details like descriptive words, dialogue, imagery, and setting; relying on sounds and rhythms; and using symbolism.

Essential Question #2

How does visualization help readers understand the mood?

Visualization helps a reader form a mental picture based on the written description, which leads to and intensifies the atmosphere or feeling created by the story.

Word Splash

In your notes, write the words "Horror Tales."

Write down anything that comes to mind about that topic—both for films as well as literature. Be sure to think of words that describe horror tales as well as examples of them.

Characteristics of Horror Tales

* Characters face mysterious forces both within and outside themselves.

* Writers explore the conflict in the human soul.

* Writers fully understand the frightening power of the unknown and the supernatural.

Edgar Allan Poe

As you listen to the biography of Poe's life, make a list of ten (10) facts that are significant to understanding the author.

Story Preview

The narrator's chilling tale sinks readers into the darkness of his mind as well as the pitch-black room in which the crime took place.

Think of a place to read this story that might enhance the mood. Where would you want to read it?

Vocabulary

This story contains some difficult words.
How many do you already know?

Acute	Hypocritical
Audacity	Stealthily
Conceived	Stifled
Crevice	Vehemently
Derision	Vex

Vocabulary Activity

Use at least four of the vocabulary words in a sentence to describe your favorite horror movie or novel.

Acute	Hypocritical
Audacity	Stealthily
Conceived	Stifled
Crevice	Vehemently
Derision	Vex

Definitions

Acute: (adj.) sharp or keen

Audacity: (n.) shameless daring or boldness

Conceived: (adj.) thought of

Crevice: (n.) a crack

Derision: (n.) ridicule

Hypocritical: (adj.) false or deceptive; pretending to be something you're not

Stealthily: (adv.) cautiously or secretly

Stifled: (adj.) smothered

Vehemently: (adv.) with intense emotion

Vex: (v.) to disturb or to annoy

Post-Reading Activity #1

How does Poe's use of first-person point of view affect the way information is conveyed in "The Tell-Tale Heart"? Do you think it makes the story better?

Answer this question in your notes.

Post-Reading Activity #2

Characteristics of Horror Tales

Does the characteristic "Characters face mysterious forces both within and outside themselves" apply to "The Tell-Tale Heart"?

In your notes, state your opinion on this idea and provide at least two examples from the text to support your thoughts.