*The Black Cat*

by Edgar Allen Poe

 **Student Guide**

This short story is another example of the horror genre and contains gothic elements such as: high emotion, fear of the unknown, and the use of words that indicate fear and anger. This story reflects the inner turmoil’s of Poe’s own life and focuses on his obsessions with death, dying, and being buried alive.

**Mini-Lesson:**  Literary Devices and Figures of Speech (5)

Literary Device

**Allusion – \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

Figure of Speech

**Symbolism –**

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**Foreshadowing –**

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**Irony –**

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**Anaphora –**

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**Vocabulary (10)**

solicit

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phantasm \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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docility

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sagacious

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gossamer

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uncongenial

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conflagration

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pertinacity

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felicity

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**Questions**

**Directions:** Answer the questions in complete sentences.

**Content Questions (20)**

1. What did the narrator do to the cat after returning home intoxicated one night? Why did he do this? (2)
2. How did the narrator feel about what he did to the cat? (2)
3. What are some reasons the narrator gives for hanging Pluto? (2)
4. What happened the night he hung Pluto? Was this a coincidence? (2)
5. Why did the narrator begin to dislike the new cat? (2)
6. Why wouldn’t the narrator harm the new cat? (2)
7. What did the narrator do to his wife in the cellar? Explain how this happened and why it happened. (2)
8. How did he conceal the body? (2)
9. Why does the narrator blame the cat for his wife’s death? (2)
10. Did the narrator regret killing his wife? Explain (2)

**Literary Element Question(s) (23)**

**Directions:**  Answer the questions in complete sentences using the **RACE** strategy. Remember to use details from the text. Please use your own sheet of notebook paper.

**R-**Restate (the Question)

**A-**Answer (the Question)

**C-**Cite (Give page(s) # & “Quote” information from the story)

**E-**Explain/Expand (Answer the question “So what?” & “What does that mean?”)

1. What is the point of view of the story?

**Example:** The short story is told from the first person point of view. This is evident with the use of the personal pronoun, “I”. Specifically, at the beginning of the story, the narrator states, “…I am about to pen, I neither expect or solicit belief” (pg.1), this demonstrates the point of view of the story.

1. What is the setting? (5)
2. What are two possible themes? Explain with support. (5)
3. Who are the characters? (Major/Minor) (5)

**Narrator**:

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**Narrator’s Wife**:

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**First Black Cat**:

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**Second Black Cat**:

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**Policemen**:

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**Servant**:

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1. What is the mood? (2)
2. Allusion: Pluto (Refer to a dictionary) (1)
3. What does the black cat **symbolize**? (2)
4. Provide an example of **foreshadowing, irony**, and **anaphora** in the story. (3)

**Critical Question(s) (10)**

1. In a well constructed paragraph, explain how the short story, “The Black Cat” compares to “The Tell Tale Heart”? List three similarities.