

American Literature
Study Guide - House of Usher.tgt

Name: _____ Date: _____

Element of Setting	Description and Contribution to Atmosphere and Mood
1. Exterior of house	
2. Interior of house	
3. Physical surroundings	

1. Many Gothic stories take place in huge, dark castles or mansions. Think about the setting of this story and how it conveys atmosphere and mood. For each element of the setting listed in the boxes on the left, write notes describing what it looks like and how it contributes to the atmosphere and mood of the story. (5 points each)

Recall the characters and events in the story. Then answer each question in sentences or phrases.

2. How does the narrator feel when he first sees the House of Usher?
3. Why is the narrator shocked at Roderick's appearance?
4. What do Roderick's paintings and music seem to express?

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5. Where is the lady Madeline's temporary tomb?
6. What does the narrator learn as he and Roderick gaze on the lady Madeline in her coffin?
7. What does the narrator see when Roderick opens the window during the storm?
8. Why does the narrator start reading Roderick a story?
9. What causes the sounds that the narrator hears as he is reading?
10. What happens when the door swings open?
11. What does the narrator do at the end of the story?

Answer one of the following questions based on your understanding of "The Fall of the House of Usher." Write your answer on a separate sheet of paper. (10 points)

12. Poe believed that all elements of a story must contribute to a single unified effect. What unified effect does Poe strive for in this story, and how do the different elements-setting, action, characters, and dialogue-contribute to that effect?

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13. There are many interpretations of "The Fall of the House of Usher." One interpretation suggests that Usher's nervousness and weakness are the results of Madeline Usher's being a vampire. Using details from the story, write an analysis of the story that supports this interpretation.

Answer the following question based on your own experience and knowledge. Write your answer on a separate sheet of paper. (10 points)

14. In many of Poe's stories, he focuses on the imagination and how it can overpower even the most logical minds. Do you think it is possible for people's imaginations to control their lives and overcome their common sense? Explain.