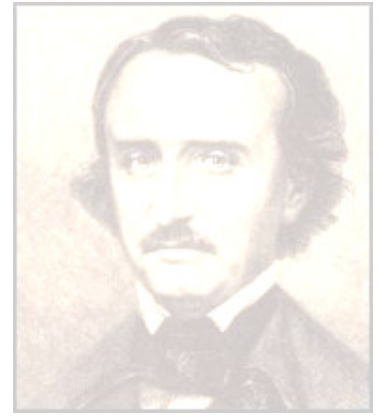


STORY: THE CASK OF AMONTILLADO (BY: EDGAR ALLAN POE)

Questions for Class Discussion:



1- "The Cask of Amontillado" uses a first-person narrator (a narrator that is a character

in the story), and, sometimes, first-person narrators can be unreliable.

- How reliable or unreliable do you regard the narrator?
- Are there any ways that the narrator might be manipulating the truth?
- How would you describe the narrator's attitude toward himself and his actions?

2- The narrator never specifies why he hates Fortunato. Instead, he states only that Fortunato caused "a thousand injuries" to the narrator and eventually "ventured upon insult."

- What is your general impression of Fortunato?
- Do any of Fortunato's words and actions support the narrator's belief that Fortunato is worthy of hatred?
- Do any of Fortunato's words and actions refute the narrator's belief that Fortunato is worthy of hatred?

3- What is the subject of this tale? Does it have an abstract as well as a concrete subject? Explain.

4- What elements of the setting do you think most effectively underscore or heighten the general atmosphere of the story?

5- Tone is revealed by the attitude an author has toward his story. What could you say concerning the tone of this story?

6- Is it possible to demonstrate that the author's choice of words, concrete images, and figures of speech in this story aid in creating the atmosphere of it. Explain and provide examples.

7- How does Poe's use of the carnival setting contribute to the atmosphere of the story? Does Fortunato's costume also add to the effect? Why?

8- Reread the conversation between Fortunato and Montresor that follows Fortunato's coughing spell. Are Montresor's words *ironic*? Can they be taken in more than one way? Explain. What other *ironies* do you detect? In what way is the last sentence *ironic*?

9- Explain the revenge process in "The Cask of Amontillado" and "The Count of Monte Cristo." Use the info below to think about your answer.

→ Dantes is a sailor who is falsely accused of treason by his best friend Fernand (The Count of Monte Cristo)

→ Fortunato was a connoisseur of wine and Montresor of revenge. (The Cask of Amontillado)

10- "Theme" can be defined as "a comment about the human condition that a writer makes through his or her work," and a theme or themes are often what make a work of literature relevant to all of our lives.

- Can you identify one or more themes in "The Cask of Amontillado"? In other words, can you identify any general comments about life and the human condition that Poe is suggesting through the specifics of this story?
- Can you think of any other stories, books, or movies (other than "The Count of Monte Cristo" that convey a similar theme?

11- "The Cask of Amontillado" is a chilling story, but Poe also uses humorous elements as the narrator recounts his experience with Fortunato.

- Can you identify elements in the story that might be regarded as humorous?
- What does the humor add to the story?
- Can you think of any other stories, books, or movies that blend horror and humor in a similar way?

