



EDGAR ALLAN POE

The Haunted Palace

Drawing, Poetry Analysis, and Extended Metaphor

GRADES 9-12 | 60-75 MINUTES

Editable PowerPoint + Print PDFs

Students draw before they interpret

They build a literal palace from Poe's details first. The metaphor remains hidden until the second half of the lesson.

**READ THE PLACE FIRST.
DISCOVER THE MIND
AFTERWARD.**

Textual evidence matters more than artistic skill.



The palace on paper

PART ONE • DRAW

Sketch the palace as Poe describes it. Label several choices with a word, phrase, or line number from the poem. Show the contrast between what it was and what it becomes.

YOUR PALACE

EVIDENCE 1 Detail from the poem _____

Why it belongs in my drawing _____

EVIDENCE 2 Detail from the poem _____

Why it belongs in my drawing _____

Accuracy matters more than artistic skill.

THE HAUNTED PALACE

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The interpretation grows from the poem

Students trace the tonal shift, find the human clues, and build the extended metaphor themselves.

PART TWO | THE SHIFT

Something beautiful becomes corrupted

Track the change before deciding what it means.

STANZAS I-IV

fair
radiant
golden
happy
musical
glowing

ordered
ruled
full of harmony

STANZAS V-VI

evil
sorrow
desolate
dim
discordant
hideous

chaotic
overtaken
no longer joyful

What has been lost? What has taken its place?

PLOTTING SOMETHING | THE HAUNTED PALACE

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BEFORE + AFTER

PALACE DETAIL

HUMAN FEATURE

WHAT IT MAY SUGGEST

PART TWO | LOOK AGAIN

The palace begins to look human

Poe placed the clues in plain sight.

PALACE DETAIL	HUMAN CLUE
“reared its head”	head or whole person
Monarch Thought rules	mind and reason
two luminous windows	eyes
pearl and ruby door	mouth, lips, and teeth
echoes and music	speech and thought

What might the palace represent?

PLOTTING SOMETHING | THE HAUNTED PALACE

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PLOTTING SOMETHING

The palace becomes Roderick’s self-portrait

Students connect specific details from the poem to the narrator’s observations and finish with an evidence-based claim.

Roderick inside the poem

PART TWO • CONNECT TO THE STORY

Roderick composed and performs “The Haunted Palace.” Read it as a possible self-portrait, then connect it to what the narrator has observed.

1

What does the poem suggest Roderick believes has happened to his mind?

2

Which detail from the story makes that interpretation convincing?

3

Why might Roderick express this idea through a palace instead of stating it directly?

SYNTHESIS

How does “The Haunted Palace” deepen our understanding of Roderick Usher? Write one strong claim and support it with a specific detail from the poem or story.

THE HAUNTED PALACE

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STUDENT
RESPONSE

TEACHER
GUIDANCE

Roderick inside the poem

ANSWER GUIDANCE | PAGE 7

Accept other interpretations when students support them with accurate details.

1. RODERICK'S MIND

Roderick seems to believe that his mind was once noble and rational but has been invaded by fear, illness, or madness. Thought no longer rules the inner kingdom.

2. STORY EVIDENCE

Students may use Roderick's extreme sensitivity to light and sound, nervous agitation, despair, isolation, fixation on the house, unusual music, or fear of an approaching collapse.

3. WHY A PALACE

The palace lets Roderick express his condition indirectly. It also joins his mind to the Usher family and the physical house, which makes the poem feel like a warning about all three.

SAMPLE SYNTHESIS

“The Haunted Palace” shows that Roderick sees his mind as a once beautiful and ordered place that has been overtaken by disorder. The ‘discordant melody’ inside the corrupted palace reflects his loss of mental harmony, while the red-lit windows suggest that even his perception has become distorted.

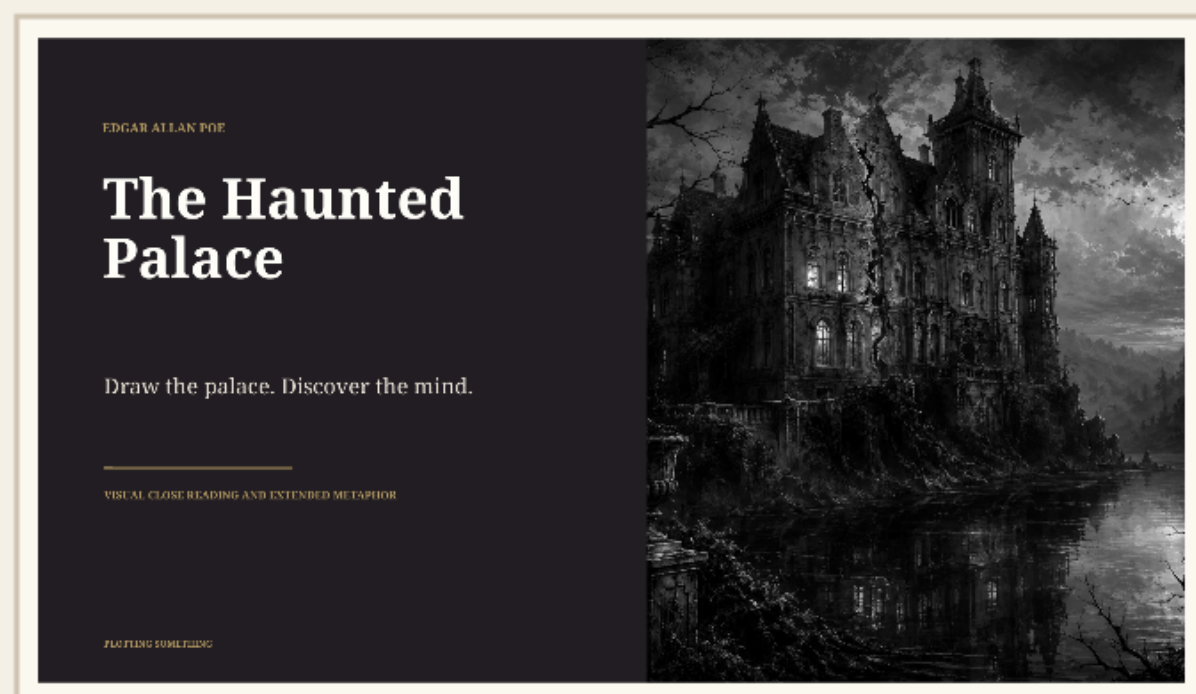
THE HAUNTED PALACE | TEACHER GUIDE

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COMPLETE STAND-ALONE LESSON

Everything needed for two class periods



15

teaching
slides

7

student pages

11

guide + key
pages



INCLUDES

Editable PowerPoints
Print-ready PDFs
Speaker notes
Answer guidance

No additional Usher unit required

Works inside “The Fall of the House of Usher”
or as a focused poetry lesson.