The Masque of the Red Death

Name\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

STORY CLUES

medieval castle

Prince

“the redness and horror of blood”

grand costume party

seven apartments

clock chimes midnight

masked stranger

dagger

“unutterable horror”

“blood-bedewed halls”

death

# **Use the terms to write a prediction of the plot of the story “The Masque of the Red Death”**

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**“Masque of the Red Death”**

**by Edgar Allan Poe**

**Before Reading**

**Poe’s Life Connection…Building Background Knowledge**:

Who in Poe’s life was afflicted by tuberculosis?

How does the disease sometimes manifest itself?

**Literary Term Review**: write brief definitions in your own words



setting



personification



simile



symbol



protagonist



antagonist



imagery



**After Reading-**

**ANSWER IN COMPLETE SENTENCES:**

**1.  “The ‘Red Death’ had long devastated the country. In this sentence, devastated means\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.**

**2. In this story, the color red represents \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.**

**3. Which detail proves that the Red Death was a horrible plague?**

**4: Even though Prince Prospero is the Protagonist, he isn't necessarily the "good guy." Why is he still considered the protagonist?**

**5: Why is the "Red Death" the antagonist of the story?**

**6: What does the following passage mean?**  
*”****The courtiers, having entered, brought furnaces and massy hammers and welded the bolts. They resolved to leave means neither of ingress or egress to the sudden impulses of despair or of frenzy from within.”***

**7: Why did the people at the masque (party) tend to avoid the black room with red windows?**

**8: What is the author's tone in the story?**

**9: Once the disease, Red Death, was contracted, the progression of the disease looked like\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_and a person lived for \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.**

**10: Why was Prince Prospero angry with the masked figure?**

**11: Why did Prince Prospero decide to confront the masked figure?**

**12: What is the theme of the story?**

**13: What effect did the large Ebony clock have on the guests every time it chimed?**

**14: Use five vivid words to describe the Red Death image.**

**15: *“The mask which concealed the visage was made so nearly to resemble the countenance of a stiffened corpse that the closest scrutiny must have had difficulty in detecting the cheat.”*  Explain what this means.**

In the column on the left, sequence the following events in the correct narrative order from 1 to 15. Use your text as needed to check for accuracy.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Narrative Order**  **1-15** | **Story Events** | **Letter of**  **Corresponding**  **Quote** |
|  | Pauses occur in music and dancing. |  |
|  | Prince Prospero dies. |  |
|  | Six rooms are described. |  |
|  | The clock stops. |  |
|  | Prince Prospero and friends seclude themselves. |  |
|  | Mystery Guest is described. |  |
|  | Intruder moves through rooms. |  |
|  | Prospero holds masked ball. |  |
|  | Intruder is unmasked. |  |
|  | The clock strikes midnight. |  |
|  | Red death devastates country. |  |
|  | Prince Prospero is enraged. |  |
|  | Seventh room is described. |  |
|  | Mystery guest is noticed. |  |
|  | Clock is described. |  |

In the column on the right, write the letter of the quotation from the story on the next page that corresponds with the event.

a. “And the revel went whirling on, until at length there commenced the sounding of midnight upon the clock…But now there were twelve strokes to be sounded by the bell of the clock; and thus it happened, perhaps, that more of thought crept, with more time, into the medications of the thoughtful among those who reveled.”

b. “And the life of the ebony clock went out with that of the last of the gay. And the flames of the tripods expired. And Darkness and Decay and the Red Death held illimitable dominion over all.”

c. “The ‘Red Death’ has long devastated the country. No pestilence had ever been so fatal, or so hideous. Blood was its Avatar and its seal—the redness and the horror of blood.”

d. “When the eyes of Prince Prospero fell upon this spectral image, he was seen to be convulsed, in the first moment with a strong shudder of terror or distaste; but, in the next, his brow reddened with rage.”

e. “It was in this apartment, also, that there stood against the western wall, a gigantic clock of ebony. Its pendulum swung to and fro with a dull, heavy, monotonous clang…”

f. “There was a sharp cry—and the dagger dropped gleaming upon the sable carpet, upon which, instantly afterward, fell prostrate in death the Prince Prospero.”

g. “It was toward the close of the fifth or sixth month of his seclusion, and while the pestilence raged most furiously abroad, that the Prince Prospero entertained his thousand friends at a masked ball of the most unusual magnificence.”

h. “Then summoning the wild courage of despair, a throng of the revelers at once threw themselves into the black apartment, and, seizing the mummer whose tall figure stood erect and motionless within the shadow of the ebony clock, gasped in unutterable horror at finding the grave cerements and corpse-like mask, which they handled with so violent a rudeness, untenanted by any tangible form.

i. “And thus too, it happened, perhaps, that before the last echoes of the last chime had utterly sunk into silence, there were many individuals in the crowd who had found leisure to become aware of the presence of a masked figure which had arrested the attention of no single individual before.”

j. “But the Prince Prospero was happy and dauntless and sagacious. When his dominions were half depopulated, he summoned to his presence a thousand hale and lighthearted friends from among the knights and dames of his court, and with these retired to the deep seclusion of one of his castellated abbeys.”

k. “…but with the same solemn and measured step which had distinguished him from the first, through the blue chamber to the purple—through the purple to the green—through the green to the orange—through this again to the white—and even thence to the violet, ere a decided movement had been made to arrest him.”

l. “That at the eastern extremity was hung, for example, in blue—and vividly blue were its windows. The second chamber was purple in its ornaments and tapestries, and here the panes were purple. The third was green throughout, and so were the casements. The fourth was furnished and lighted with orange—the fifth with white—the sixth with violet.”

m. “The figure was tall and gaunt, and shrouded from head to foot in the habiliments of the grave. The mask which concealed the visage was made so nearly to resemble the countenance of a stiffened corpse that the closest scrutiny must have had difficulty in detecting the cheat…But the mummer had gone so far as to assume the type of the Red Death. His vesture was dabbled in blood—and his broad brow, with all the features of the face, was besprinkled with the scarlet horror.”

n. “The seventh apartment was closely shrouded in black velvet tapestries that hung all over the ceiling and down the walls, falling in heavy folds upon a carpet of the same material and hue. But in this chamber only, the color of the windows failed to correspond with the decorations. The panes here were scarlet—a deep blood color.”

o. “…and when the minute-hand made the circuit of the face, and the hours was to be stricken, there came from the brazen lungs of the clock a sound which was clear and loud and deep and exceedingly musical, but of so peculiar a note and emphasis that at each lapse of an hour, the musicians of the orchestra were constrained to pause, momentarily, in their performance to hearken to the sound; and thus the waltzers perforce ceased their evolutions…”