Teacher Notes



Interpreting Edgar Allen Poe's *The Raven*

Activity 1
Exploring *The Raven*

Activity at a Glance

◆ Subject: English

◆ Subject Area: English/Language Arts

◆ Category: Literary Genres

◆ Topic: Poetry

◆ Grade Level: 8 - 10

Prerequisites: None

◆ Total Teaching Time: 60 minutes

Materials

♦ TI-83 Plus

◆ TI External Keyboard

◆ StudyCards[™] app on each student's TI-83 Plus

◆ StudyCards[™] Creator on the teacher's
 PC

 ◆ TI Connect and a TI Connectivity cable or TI-Navigator™ Classroom Network

 Student Work Sheet: The Raven by Edgar Allan Poe

♦ Resource File: RAVENVOC.8xv

Activity Overview

Students will read *The Raven* and attempt to give a brief synopsis of the poem. This activity presents a classic American poem to students who have never read Poe's work and/or reacquaints students who have read it to gain a better understanding of Poe's use of alliteration, symbolism, and rhyme.

Tip

Get students involved early on by assigning one stanza to each from *The Raven*. (Note: There are 18 stanzas in the poem.) Allow 10 minutes for students to read the poem to themselves. Prior to beginning, teachers should let students know that they will be seeking a summary of what is read from any volunteers. Also direct students to write down words and expressions from the poem that they are not familiar with. Ask for these prior to the oral reading so that these words and expressions can be defined and the pronunciation perfected to prevent errors and encourage a smooth reading.

Directions

Before the Activity Begins

Students should have their devices and keyboards ready for typing.

Since there are 18 stanzas in the poem, assign one stanza to each student in the class to read aloud. Give the students 10 minutes to read the entire poem, and then to reread the stanza assigned to them for oral presentation.

Tell the students to record any words or phrases that they encounter and are not sure of either the meaning or pronunciation. These should be recorded in a new NoteFolio[™] file on the TI-83 Plus.

Note: To facilitate understanding of this poem, the teacher can assemble a StudyCards™ file containing words and phrases that may pose problems for students. A StudyCards™ file, **RAVENVOC.8xv**, is available with this activity that contains some of the more commonly problematic words and phrases. You can use this as a starting point for your class and add or delete cards to suit your need. Each card in the file is titled with the number of the line where the word or phrase first is used in the poem. These numbers correspond to the numbers on the lines of the poem that is included at the end of this activity. (Many definitions are taken or derived from the *Webster's New Universal Unabridged Dictionary*, 2nd Edition (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1983).)

During the Activity

When the students have read the poem, ask for words and phrases that they had trouble with. Explain the meaning of each word or phrase they mention and help with the pronunciation, if necessary.

Have the students read *The Raven* aloud. Students should read their assigned stanza in correct order.

After the students have finished reading the poem aloud, call on individual students and ask them to give a verbal summary of *The Raven*.

Have the students enter at least three questions that they have concerning "The Raven" into a new NoteFolio™ file on their TI-83 Plus handhelds.

When students are finished with this exercise, have each student share at least one question aloud with the class that will be addressed by the instructor and/or classmates. Allow 15- 25 minutes for this exercise.

Accessing the NoteFolio™ Application on the TI-83 Plus

The following procedure enables you to access the NoteFolio[™] Application. It assumes that the software is already installed on the device.

Note: NoteFolio[™] App is most efficiently used on the TI-83 Plus with the TI Keyboard.

- Turn on the device and press APPS to display the list of installed applications.
 Select the NoteFlio Application by using to scroll to it in the list.
- Press ENTER. Press any key to clear the NoteFolio[™] App Introduction screen. A blank (new) NoteFolio[™] App file is initially displayed.





3. Students should complete the assignment.

Note: If you are not using a TI Keyboard, remember to press the ALPHA key to type letters.

4. When the file is complete, press **MENU**. Students can save the file under a new name by selecting **Save As**.



When the new file name is entered, press **OK** (the Y= key).

To exit the application, press **MENU** and select **6**: **Exit**.



After the Activity

After students have a better of idea of what *The Raven* is about and have better grasped Poe's use of rhyme and alliteration, they should be prepared to think of ways that the poem would be written in contemporary English; how they would write *The Raven* in their own words.

Student Work Sheet "The Raven" by Edgar Allan Poe

Name:	
Date:	

Once upon a midnight dreary, while I pondered, weak and weary, Over many a quaint and curious volume of forgotten lore While I nodded, nearly napping, suddenly there came a tapping,				
			As of some one gently rapping, rapping at my chamber door.	
			"'Tis some visitor," I muttered, "tapping at my chamber door	5
Only this and nothing more."	6			
Ah, distinctly I remember it was in the bleak December;	7			
And each separate dying ember wrought its ghost upon the floor.	8			
Eagerly I wished the morrow;vainly I had sought to borrow	9			
From my books surcease of sorrow sorrow for the lost Lenore	10			
For the rare and radiant maiden whom the angels name Lenore	11			
Nameless here for evermore.	12			
And the silken, sad, uncertain rustling of each purple curtain	13			
Thrilled mefilled me with fantastic terrors never felt before;	14			
So that now, to still the beating of my heart, I stood repeating	15			
"'Tis some visitor entreating entrance at my chamber door	16			
Some late visitor entreating entrance at my chamber door;	17			
This it is and nothing more."	18			
Presently my soul grew stronger; hesitating then no longer,	19			
"Sir," said I, "or Madam, truly your forgiveness I implore;	20			
But the fact is I was napping, and so gently you came rapping,	21			
And so faintly you came tapping, tapping at my chamber door,	22			
That I scarce was sure I heard you" here I opened wide the door;	23			
Darkness there and nothing more.	24			

Deep into that darkness peering, long I stood there wondering, fearing,	25
Doubting, dreaming dreams no mortal ever dared to dream before;	26
But the silence was unbroken, and the stillness gave no token,	27
And the only word there spoken was the whispered word "Lenore!"	28
This I whispered, and an echo murmured back the word "Lenore!"	29
Merely this and nothing more.	30
Back into the chamber turning, all my soul within me burning,	31
Soon again I heard a tapping somewhat louder than before.	32
"Surely," said I, "surely that is something at my window lattice	33
Let me see, then, what thereat is, and this mystery explore	34
Let my heart be still a moment and this mystery explore;	35
"'Tis the wind and nothing more!"	36
Open here I flung the shutter, When, with many a flirt and flutter	37
In there stepped a stately Raven of the Saintly days of yore.	38
Not the least obeisance made he; not a minute stopped or stayed he;	39
But, with mein of lord or lady, perched above my chamber door	40
Perched upon my bust of Pallas just above my chamber door	41
Perched, and sat, and nothing more.	42
Then this ebony bird beguiling my sad fancy into smiling,	43
By the grave and stern decorum of the countenance it wore,	44
"Though thy crest be shorn and shaven, thou," I said, "art sure no craven,	45
Ghastly grim and ancient Raven wandering from the Nightly shore	46
Tell me what thy lordly name is on the Night's Plutonian shore!"	47
Quoth the Raven, "Nevermore."	48
Much I marvelled this ungainly fowl to hear discourse so plainly,	49
Though its answer little meaning little relevancy bore;	50
For we cannot help agreeing that no living human being	51
Ever yet was blessed with seeing bird above his chamber door	52
Bird or beast upon the sculptured bust above his chamber door,	53
With such name as "Nevermore."	54

But the Raven, sitting lonely on the placid bust, spoke only	55
That one word, as if his soul in that one word he did outpour.	56
Nothing farther then he utterednot a feather then he fluttered	57
Till I scarcely more than muttered "Other friends have flown before	58
On the morrow he will leave me, as my hopes have flown before."	59
Then the bird said "Nevermore."	60
Startled at the stillness broken by reply so aptly spoken,	61
"Doubtless," said I, "what it utters is its only stock and store	62
Caught from some unhappy master whom unmerciful Disaster	63
Followed fast and followed faster till his songs one burden bore	64
Till the dirges of his Hope that melancholy burden bore	65
Of 'Nevernevermore.'"	66
But the Raven still beguiling all my sad soul into smiling,	67
Straight I wheeled a cushioned seat in front of bird, and bust and door;	68
Then, upon the velvet sinking, I betook myself to linking	69
Fancy unto fancy, thinking what this ominous bird of yore	70
What this grim, ungainly, ghastly, gaunt, and ominous bird of yore	71
Meant in croaking "Nevermore."	72
This I sat engaged in guessing, but no syllable expressing	73
To the fowl whose fiery eyes now burned into my bosom's core;	74
This and more I sat divining, with my head at ease reclining	75
On the cushion's velvet lining that the lamp-light gloated o'er,	76
But whose velvet violet lining with the lamp-light gloating o'er,	77
She shall press, ah, nevermore!	78
Then, methought, the air grew denser, perfumed from an unseen censer	79
Swung by Seraphim whose foot-falls tinkled on the tufted floor.	80
"Wretch," I cried, "Thy God hath lent theeby these angels he hath sent thee	81
Respiterespite and nepenthe from thy memories of Lenore,	82
Quaff, oh quaff this kind nepenthe and forget this lost Lenore!"	83
Quoth the Raven "Nevermore."	84

"Prophet!" said I, "thing of evil! prophet still, if bird or devil!	85	
Whether Tempest sent, or whether tempest tossed thee here ashore,		
Desolate yet all undaunted, on this desert land enchanted	87	
On this home by Horror hauntedtell me truly, I implore	88	
Is there is there balm in Gilead? tell me tell me, I implore!"	89	
Quoth the Raven "Nevermore."	90	
"Prophet!" said I, "thing of evil! - prophet still, if bird or devil!	91	
By that Heaven that bends above us - by that God we both adore	92	
Tell this soul with sorrow laden if, within the distant Aidenn,	93	
It shall clasp a sainted maiden whom the angels name Lenore	94	
Clasp a rare and radiant maiden whom the angels name Lenore."	95	
Quoth the Raven "Nevermore."	96	
"Be that word our sign of parting, bird or fiend!" I shrieked, upstarting	97	
"Get thee back into the tempest and the Night's Plutonian shore!	98	
Leave no black plume as a token of that lie thy soul hath spoken!	99	
Leave my loneliness unbroken!quit the bust above my door!	100	
Take thy beak from out my heart, and Take thy form from off my door!"	101	
Quoth the Raven "Nevermore."	102	
And the Raven, never flitting, still is sitting, still is sitting	103	
On the pallid bust of Pallas just above my chamber door;	104	
And his eyes have all the seeming of a demon's that is dreaming,	105	
And the lamp-light o'er him streaming throws his shadow on the floor;		
And my soul from out that shadow that lies floating on the floor	107	
Shall be liftednevermore!	108	