

Name: _____

Date: _____

Current Unit _____

Team: _____

“The Fall of the House of Usher” Reading Guide

Describe the mood, or atmosphere, of the first paragraph. _____

Why does Poe use long sentences in the first paragraph? (Think about the effect it has.)

What are some of the words that the narrator uses to describe the house? _____

What is the point of view? _____

What is the setting? _____

Define “tarn.” _____

Why is the narrator visiting the house of Usher? _____

Even though the narrator and Roderick Usher were _____, the narrator admits that he

_____.

Explain the following quotation: “I had learned, too, the very remarkable fact, that the stem of the Usher race, all time-honoured as it was, had put forth, at no period, any enduring branch; in other words, that the entire family lay in the direct line of descent, and had always, with very trifling and very temporary variation, so lain.” You do not need to steal and spit that whole quote!

The “House of Usher” refers to both the _____ and the _____.

The narrator implies that the house and the family are _____ in their fates.

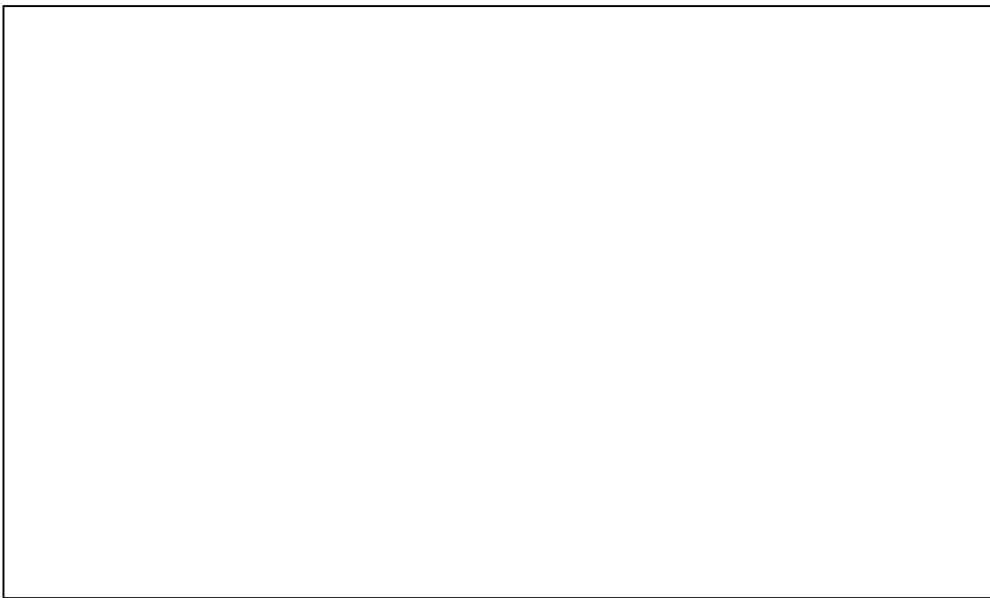
Define “fissure.” _____

Describe the house. _____

Who does the narrator meet on the staircase? _____

What does the narrator say about this person? _____

Draw Roderick's room.



What about this room makes it seem, or feel, gothic? Or what words create a gothic feeling?

The narrator is shocked at how much Usher's _____ has changed. What are some of the words the narrator uses to describe this change? _____

Does the narrator of the story have a name? _____

Usher's speech varies from _____ to _____.

Describe Roderick Usher's illness and where it came from. _____

Usher says that he is not afraid of _____, rather is afraid of _____ himself. Why do you think he is afraid of _____?

Usher believes that the _____ is causing his illness. He believes that the _____ is _____.

Who else lives in the house with Usher? What is their relationship? _____

Describe Roderick's sister's disease. _____

(Catalepsy is a symptom of certain nervous disorders. It is an abnormal state characterized by a trancelike level of consciousness and constantly maintained immobility.)

What happens to Madeline the night that the narrator arrives? _____

Think back to the biography that we watched on Edgar Allan Poe. Why is it appropriate that Madeline, the only female character in the story, becomes ill and dies? _____

List some of the activities that the narrator and Roderick Usher do together to occupy themselves in the days after Madeline's death. _____

Are any of the narrator's efforts to cheer up Usher helping? Explain why or why not.

Define "hypochondriac." _____

Roderick Usher enjoyed playing the _____ and creating _____ to go with his impromptu performances. In particular, the narrator remembers one performance titled _____.

Who is the ruler in the poem? _____

What is the tone of "The Haunted Palace" in stanzas I-IV? _____

This poem explains the "_____ " of the house of Usher, and its gradual _____ out of the spotlight.

How does the tone of "The Haunted Palace" change in stanzas V-VI? _____

Does the narrator believe that the house is actually making Roderick sick? _____

Roderick informs the narrator that he wishes to hold Madeline's body for a _____ in the family vault because he fears that _____

In relation to the narrator's sleeping chamber, where is the family's vault located?

The vault was once used as a _____. Why do you think a family of the Usher's status would need a _____ in their house? _____

The door of the vault made an

Roderick and Madeline are not just brother and sister; they are actually _____.

Before they close the lid on Madeline's coffin, the narrator notices that Madeline still has _____ in her cheeks and a slight _____ on her face.

What happens to Roderick in the days after they bury Madeline? _____

As a result of Roderick's condition, the narrator says the he begins _____

Explain the narrator's feelings during his final night in the house of Usher. _____

What had the narrator "not seen"?

(A *tempest* is a storm. *Tempestuous* means stormy.)

To calm Roderick down, the narrator begins to read _____

While the narrator is reading, he begins to notice _____

What does Roderick begin to do? _____

Roderick buried Madeline _____. What detail(s) foreshadowed this turn of events?

(*Foreshadowing* is a literary device in which the author indirectly suggests certain plot developments will occur later in the story.)

Match the events happening in “Mad Trist” to the events happening in the house of Usher. (*Draw lines to match*)

The death-cry of the dragon

The rending of her coffin

The breaking of the hermit’s door
the vault

Her struggles from within the coppered archway of

The clangour of the shield

The grating of the iron hinges of her prison

Describe Madeline after her escape. _____

How does Roderick die? _____

What happens to the house of Usher? _____

Identify the gothic elements in “The Fall of the House of Usher.”

What did you like or dislike about this story? _____

Do you think this story would make a good scary movie in our society?

