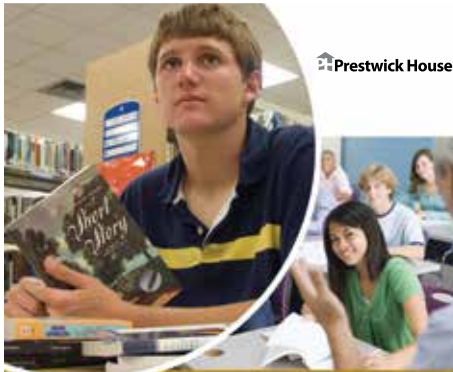




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The Gold-Bug

by Edgar Allan Poe

written by Lisa Perelli

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The Gold-Bug

Biography

Edgar Allan Poe (1809-1849) is considered to be one of the greatest writers of the American Romanticism period and is famous for both his poetry and his prose.

Although born in Boston, Massachusetts, to actors Elizabeth Poe and David Poe, Jr. on January 19, 1809, Edgar Poe was raised in Richmond, Virginia by the family of John Allan. Both of Poe's parents died before his second birthday. Poe was renamed Edgar Allan Poe and, though not formally adopted by the Allan family, was well educated in both England and Richmond. He eventually had a falling out with Mr. Allan and moved to Boston without continued financial support. Their relationship remained stormy through the years.

Poe later enlisted in the military under the name Edgar A. Perry, but was discharged, with John Allan's support, after only two years. He later enrolled at West Point, but left in 1831, having already published two books of poetry, *Tamerlane and Other Poems* in 1826 and *Al Aaraaf, Tamerlane and Minor Poems* in 1829.

For the next ten years, Poe continued to write poetry and prose prolifically but did not always find publishers for his work. Poe's work tended toward the macabre and was not always well-received by his literary peers. He also edited magazines and wrote literary criticism and is considered the creator of the American short story. Poe also developed a keen interest in cryptography, which plays a role in the story "The Gold Bug."

In 1836, Poe married his 14-year old cousin Virginia Clemm. The couple lived with Virginia's mother for many years while Poe struggled to make a living at his writing. Because he suffered from melancholy and alcoholism, he was not often regularly employed. After Virginia's death from tuberculosis in 1847, the author turned to alcohol more frequently, which caused him increasingly notable physical and emotional impairment.

On October 3, 1849, Poe was found wandering the streets of Baltimore, Maryland, wearing someone else's clothing. He was disconcerted and ill. Poe died the morning of October 7, 1849, and the circumstances of his death remain unknown. He is buried in Westminster Cemetery in Baltimore City.

The Gold-Bug

Objectives

By the end of this Unit, the student will be able to:

1. understand and follow the development of the plot.
2. identify how setting plays an important part in the story.
3. discuss the role of coincidence in the story.
4. consider possible motifs in the story, including:
 - intellect vs. superstition/logic vs. chance.
 - how expectations can shape outcomes.
5. comment on the characters' roles in the story and their relationships to each other.
6. identify and analyze the role of the narrator.
7. discuss point of view and how it connects the reader to the story.
8. cite examples of humor in the text and explain its role in the story.

1. How does coincidence play an important part in the beginning of the story?

2. What qualities does Legrand possess that enhance his ability to solve the cipher and discover the treasure?

3. How does each character react to finding the treasure?

4. How is the setting important to the story?

5. Consider the role of the narrator in the story. How does his point of view affect the development of the story and the reader's relationship to it?
